

APPENDIX

Commission on Accreditation

MASTER'S DEGREE AND
IN SOCIAL WORK

DEGREE PROGRAMS

Handbook of Accreditation Standards and Procedures

REVISED JULY 1984

1. The Commission on Accreditation of Social Work Education (CASWE) is the national body responsible for the accreditation of social work education programs. The Commission's primary concern is to ensure that social work education programs meet the highest standards of quality and are consistent with the philosophy and objectives of the social work profession.

2. The Commission's standards and procedures are designed to provide a framework for the accreditation of social work education programs. These standards and procedures are based on the Commission's research and experience and are intended to be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of a wide variety of social work education programs.

3. The Commission's standards and procedures are intended to be used by social work education programs as a guide to self-improvement and to ensure that they are meeting the highest standards of quality. The Commission's standards and procedures are also intended to be used by the public as a guide to the quality of social work education programs.

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COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION/111 Eighth Avenue, New York, New York 10011

Council on Social Work Education
Handbook of
Accreditation
Standards
and Procedures

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PART I

*Accreditation
Standards
and
Procedures*

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Baccalaureate Standards

ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

To be eligible for accreditation review, the program and the institution of which it is part must meet the standards that follow. In addition, the institution shall be legally organized and authorized to operate as a postsecondary educational institution under the laws of the state in which it is located and shall be in compliance with all local, state and federal laws and regulations. The commission reserves the right to initiate an evaluation of an accredited program whenever circumstances indicate questionable compliance with the accreditation standards.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 1

The program shall be an integral part of an educational institution accredited to award the baccalaureate degree. This institutional accreditation shall be by a regional accrediting agency recognized by COPA.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 2

The review of the program by the Commission on Accreditation must be authorized by the chief executive officer of the institution.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 3

The institution shall indicate on its transcript or other permanent institutional record that the student has completed a program of preparation for beginning social work practice and shall limit such certification to students who have successfully completed the program in its entirety.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 4

The program shall specify that social work is a major and that its principal educational objective is to prepare students for beginning professional social work practice. (See Curriculum Policy Statement, 6.8-6.10.)

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ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 5

The institution shall identify and describe the program in its catalog and, in any reference to accreditation, shall specify the educational level for which accreditation has been received.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 6

The program shall have a designated director whose educational credentials include either a master's or baccalaureate degree in social work and who holds a full-time appointment in the educational institution. A program director who holds a baccalaureate degree in social work but not a social work master's degree must also have a doctoral degree in social work.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 7

Program faculty members who teach the content on social work practice and coordinate field instruction shall hold master's degrees in social work and shall have had experience in professional social work practice. (Cross-reference with Baccalaureate Evaluative Standard 5.3.)

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 8

The institution shall have stated affirmative action procedures and a stated policy against discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, ethnic or national origin, handicap, or age.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 9

Unless the program is applying for candidacy status, it shall have a curriculum plan that has already been fully implemented or that will be fully implemented during the current academic year. (For differential criteria for candidacy and initial accreditation, see Section 3.)

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 10

Unless the program is applying for candidacy status, it shall either have graduated a class of students or be preparing to graduate a class of students during the current academic year. (For differential criteria for candidacy and initial accreditation, see Section 3.)

EVALUATIVE STANDARDS

To obtain accreditation, a program must meet the following requirements:

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 1 Objectives

The educational program shall have specified objectives, and they shall be reflected in the implementation of the program. (See Curriculum Policy Statement, especially 4.1, 4.2, and 6.1-6.3.)

- 1.1 The program's objectives shall be consistent with professional and institutional goals.
- 1.2 The program's objectives shall be consistent with the ethics and values of the profession.
- 1.3 The educational objectives of the program shall include attention to providing a high quality of educational preparation for entry into beginning social work practice with individuals, families, groups, and communities.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 2 Outcomes

The expected educational outcomes of the program shall be explicated. (Cross-reference with Baccalaureate Evaluative Standard 5.5.)

- 2.1 The expected outcomes shall be consistent with the program's objectives.
- 2.2 The expected outcomes shall be supported by the total program, including the design and content of the class and field curriculum.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 3 Autonomy

The administrative unit of the social work program shall have sufficient autonomy to realize the program's objectives. (For a definition of *autonomy*, see Glossary.)

- 3.1 The autonomy of the social work program shall be assured through the program's having its own budget; an established governance and administrative structure; reasonable participation in curriculum decisions; participation in the recruitment and retention of personnel and in promotion and tenure decisions; support staff assigned to the program; and other resources and authority required for the achievement of specified program objectives. (Cross-reference with Baccalaureate Evaluative Standard 5.5.)

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 4 Curriculum

The curriculum and methods of instruction shall be consistent with the Curriculum Policy Statement for baccalaureate social work education.

- 4.1 There shall be a clear plan for the organization, implementation, and evaluation of the class and field curriculum.
- 4.2 The program shall have clearly defined procedures for assuring that students have acquired the liberal arts perspective before they enter social work courses, for which such content is a prerequisite. (See Curriculum Policy Statement, 6.4-6.7.)
- 4.3 The program shall assume responsibility for a field practicum that is a clearly designed educational experience and shall have clearly articulated standards for selecting agencies for the practicum, for selecting field instructors, and for evaluating student learning in the practicum. (Cross-reference with Baccalaureate Evaluative Standard 4.5; see also Curriculum Policy Statement, 7.18-7.21.)
- 4.4 The methods of instruction shall reflect the cognitive and affective components of learning appropriate to the attainment of the specified objectives of the program. Instructional methods shall be designed to stimulate students' capacities and to involve students in their professional learning.
- 4.5 Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience shall not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of the courses in the professional foundation areas specified in the Curriculum Policy Statement. (See Curriculum Policy Statement, 7.6-7.21.)

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EVALUATIVE STANDARD 5 Faculty

The program shall have full-time faculty adequate in number and in range of expertise, based on educational background and experience in professional practice, to achieve its specified objectives.

- 5.1 The program shall have a minimum of two full-time faculty members with master's degrees in social work whose primary assignment is to the program.
- 5.2 There shall be sufficient continuity in the assignment of a core of full-time faculty who hold master's degrees in social work to ensure the stability of the essential functions of the program.
- 5.3 Faculty who teach the content on social work practice and coordinate field instruction shall hold master's degrees in social work and shall have had two years or more of post-master's degree experience in professional social work practice. (Cross-reference with Baccalaureate Eligibility Standard 7.)
- 5.4 In determining faculty assignments, workload credit shall be given for the time needed to engage in student advising, to select and evaluate field instruction settings, to provide liaison between field settings and students, to evaluate student performance, to perform administrative tasks, to discharge community obligations related to the purposes of the program, to participate in activities of professional organizations, and to engage in professional development activities. Due recognition should be given for the time necessary to engage in research, publications, and other scholarly production.
- 5.5 The responsibilities of the core of full-time faculty shall include the design, modification, approval, implementation, and evaluation of the program's curriculum and educational policies; systematic and continuous evaluation of program outcomes in the light of the specified objectives of the program; the teaching of practice and other social work courses; the coordination of field instruction; and the maintenance of program integrity.
- 5.6 The program shall have a mechanism by which practitioners and social agencies contribute to educational policies and curriculum content. The program shall provide evidence of its utilization of this mechanism.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 6 Faculty Rights

The program or institution shall have policies and practices that assign the faculty the rights and responsibilities necessary for the achievement of high-quality professional education.

- 6.1 Faculty shall participate in the formulation of policies related to the hiring, retention, promotion, and tenure of program personnel and to other governance procedures of the institution.
- 6.2 Information about grievance and appeal procedures shall be made available to all faculty to ensure that they are fully informed.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 7 Program Director

The program director shall have primary responsibility for the coordination and educational leadership of the program, with adequate time and appropriate resources to fulfill those responsibilities.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 8 Admissions

The program shall clearly articulate and implement criteria and processes of admission that are compatible with those of the institution.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 9 Advisement

The program's advisement system shall be clearly specified for program faculty and students.

- 9.1 Professional social work advisement shall be carried out by full-time faculty whose educational credentials include either a master's degree in social work or a baccalaureate degree in social work plus a social work doctorate and who are fully knowledgeable about the baccalaureate program.
- 9.2 Professional social work advisement shall orient students and assist them in assessing their aptitude and motivation for a career in social work, allow for early and periodic evaluation of each student's performance, guide students in their selection of areas of course work, and assess with students the field settings that best meet their educational needs and career goals.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 10 Student Rights

The program shall have policies and practices that specify students' rights and responsibilities.

- 10.1 The program shall provide opportunities for students to organize in their interests as students and shall encourage such organization.
- 10.2 In a manner consistent with the policies of the institution, the program shall enable students to participate in the formulation and modification of policies affecting academic and student affairs.
- 10.3 The program shall make explicit the criteria for evaluating students' academic and field performance.
- 10.4 The program's policies and practices shall include procedures for terminating a student's enrollment in the social work program.
- 10.5 Information about grievance and appeal procedures shall be made available to all students to ensure that they are fully informed on such matters.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 11 Nondiscrimination

Every aspect of the program's organization and implementation shall be conducted without discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, handicap, or political or sexual orientation.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 12 Cultural Diversity

The program shall make specific, continuous efforts to assure the enrichment of the educational experience it offers by reflecting racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity throughout the curriculum and in all categories of persons related to the program. (See Curriculum Policy Statement, 7.3-7.5.)

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- 12.1 The program shall make specific, continuous efforts—in its recruitment, retention, promotion, tenure, assignment, and remuneration of program personnel, including class, field, research, and other faculty; administration; and support staff—to assure equity (see Glossary) to all program personnel from racial and ethnic minority groups.
- 12.2 The program shall make specific, continuous efforts, through recruitment, student admissions, field placements, and financial aid, to assure equity to students from racial and ethnic minority groups.
- 12.3 Courses throughout the curriculum, including the field practicum, shall have clearly articulated objectives, outlines, and content incorporating diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural perspectives.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 13 Women

The program shall make specific, continuous efforts to assure the enrichment of the educational experience it offers by including women in all categories of persons related to the program and by incorporating content on women's issues into the curriculum. (See Curriculum Policy Statement, 7.3-7.5.)

- 13.1 The program shall make specific, continuous efforts to assure equity (see Glossary) to women in the recruitment, retention, promotion, tenure, assignment, and remuneration of faculty and staff.
- 13.2 The program shall make specific, continuous efforts to assure equity to women in its admissions policies, field placements, and financial aid.
- 13.3 Courses throughout the curriculum, including the field practicum, shall incorporate clearly articulated objectives, outlines, and content on the role and status of women.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 14 Resources

The program's budgetary resource allocation from the educational institution shall be sufficient to carry out the specified program objectives. (Cross-reference with Baccalaureate Evaluative Standards 5, 12, and 13.)

- 14.1 The allocation shall be stable enough to permit program planning and implementation by faculty and administration.
- 14.2 The administration of the institution and the program shall provide the physical facilities and equipment necessary for the attainment of the program's objectives.
- 14.3 The administration of the institution and the program shall provide the library holdings necessary for the attainment of the program's objectives.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 15 Experimental or Innovative Programs

Experimental or innovative programs are time-limited projects that introduce significant planned change into the course of study, the resource configuration, or some other program component in an effort to test, expand, or improve the program's existing educational provisions. Experimental or innovative programs are encouraged to the extent that they are conceived and implemented in

a way that ensures their quality and integrity. *Significant planned change* means that the projected experiment or innovation does not comply with one or more of the accrediting standards.

- 15.1 Plans for any experimental or innovative program shall be submitted to the Commission on Accreditation for approval prior to their implementation.
- 15.2 Such plans shall include a design for evaluating the effectiveness of the experiment or innovation.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 16 Alternative Programs

Alternative programs introduce change into one or more components of a program already accredited by the commission. If such alterations do not constitute substantive changes, the program shall, as part of the self-study process at the time of submitting materials for accreditation, include information about the alternative program and its evaluation results.

- 16.1 If, however, an alternative program involves substantive change, the program shall submit the planning documents and evaluation design for the commission's approval prior to implementing the changes. (For a definition of *substantive change*, see Glossary.)
- 16.2 An alternative program that involves collaborative arrangements or that offers the equivalent of one or more academic years of the social work degree program, whether the class or field curriculum or both, in an off-campus location shall submit a proposal to the Commission on Accreditation for approval prior to the implementation of the program. Such proposals shall include an evaluation component.

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Master's Standards

ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

To be eligible for accreditation review, the program and the institution of which it is part must meet the standards that follow. In addition, the institution shall be legally organized and authorized to operate as a postsecondary educational institution under the laws of the state in which it is located and shall be in compliance with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations. The commission reserves the right to initiate an evaluation of an accredited program whenever circumstances indicate questionable compliance with accreditation standards.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 1

The program shall be an integral part of an educational institution accredited to award the master's degree. This institutional accreditation shall be by a regional accrediting agency recognized by COPA.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 2

The review of the program by the Commission on Accreditation must be authorized by the chief executive officer of the institution.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 3

The program shall specify that it prepares students for entry into advanced social work practice. (See Curriculum Policy Statement, especially 6.11-6.14 and 7.22-7.27.)

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 4

The program shall specify in any reference to accreditation the educational level for which accreditation has been received.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 5

A social work program offering a master's degree must have a full-time dean or director as its chief executive officer. (Cross-reference with Master's Evaluative Standard 6.)

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 6

The master's program shall provide for two academic years of full-time study in professional education, including the field practicum. A minimum of one academic year of the program must be taken in full-time status, as defined by the educational institution; this definition must apply uniformly to all social work students. An academic year is defined as two consecutive semesters or three quarters.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 7

The institution shall have stated affirmative action procedures and a stated policy against discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, creed, ethnic or national origin, handicap, or age.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 8

Unless the program is applying for candidacy status, it shall have a curriculum plan that has already been fully implemented or that will be fully implemented during the current academic year. (For differential criteria for candidacy and initial accreditation, see Section 3.)

ELIGIBILITY STANDARD 9

Unless the program is applying for candidacy status, it shall have graduated a class of students or be preparing to graduate a class of students during the current academic year. (For differential criteria for candidacy and initial accreditation, see Section 3.)

EVALUATIVE STANDARDS

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 1 Objectives

The educational program preparing students for entry into the advanced practice of social work shall have specified objectives consistent with the mission of the institution, and these objectives shall be reflected in the implementation of the program.

- 1.1 The program's objectives shall be consistent with professional goals and the goals of the institution.
- 1.2 The program's objectives shall be consistent with the ethics and values of the profession.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 2 Outcomes

The expected educational outcomes of the program shall be explicated. (Cross-reference with Master's Evaluative Standard 9.1.)

- 2.1 The expected outcomes shall be consistent with the program's objectives.

- 2.2 The expected outcomes shall be supported by the total program including the design and content of the class and field curriculum.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 3 **Autonomy**

The program shall have sufficient autonomy to realize its objectives. (For a definition of *autonomy*, see Glossary; see also Master's Evaluative Standard 9.)

- 3.1 Autonomy shall include the program's having its own budget; an established governance and administrative structure; reasonable participation in curriculum decisions; participation in the recruitment and retention of personnel and in promotion and tenure decisions; support staff assigned to the program; and other resources and authority required for the achievement of specified program objectives.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 4 **Curriculum**

The curriculum and methods of instruction shall be consistent with the Curriculum Policy Statement for master's social work education.

- 4.1 There shall be a clear plan for the organization, implementation, and evaluation of the class and field curriculum.
- 4.2 The program shall provide a field practicum that is a clearly designed educational experience and shall have clearly articulated standards for selecting agencies for the practicum, for selecting field instructors, and for evaluating student learning in the practicum. (See Curriculum Policy Statement, 7.18-7.21; cross-reference with Master's Evaluative Standard 4.4.)
- 4.3 The methods of instruction shall reflect the cognitive and affective components of learning appropriate to the attainment of the specified objectives of the program. Instructional methods shall be designed to stimulate students' capacities and to involve students in their professional learning.
- 4.4 Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience shall not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of the courses in the professional foundation areas specified in the Curriculum Policy Statement. (See Curriculum Policy Statement, 7.6-7.21.)

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 5 **Admissions**

The program shall clearly articulate and implement criteria and processes of admission that are compatible with those of the parent institution.

- 5.1 Only candidates who have earned a bachelor's degree shall be admitted to the master's degree program in social work.
- 5.2 The program shall be accountable for each exception to this requirement.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 6 **Program Director**

The chief executive officer of the program shall have demonstrated leadership ability through

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academic and other experience in the field of social work and shall provide educational and administrative direction to the program. Usually, the educational credentials of the chief executive officer include a master's degree from an accredited program in social work or a doctorate from a program in social work.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 7 Faculty

The program shall have full-time faculty adequate in number and in range of expertise, based on educational background and experience in professional practice, to achieve its specified objectives.

- 7.1 The core of full-time faculty shall be sufficient in number, qualifications, and competence to achieve the program's objectives.
- 7.2 Faculty who teach required practice courses or direct the field practicum shall hold credentials that include a master's degree in social work; they shall also have post-master's degree experience in professional social work practice.
- 7.3 Responsibility for providing educational experiences shall be vested in a full-time, experienced, knowledgeable faculty who identify with the profession of social work. Part-time and adjunct faculty may provide flexibility and breadth to the program as a supplement to the full-time faculty.
- 7.4 In determining faculty assignments, workload credit shall be given for the time needed to engage in student advising, to select and evaluate field instruction settings, to provide liaison between field settings and students, to evaluate student performance, to perform administrative tasks, to discharge community obligations related to the purposes of the program, to participate in activities of professional organizations, and to engage in professional development activities. Due recognition should be given for time to engage in research, publications, and other scholarly production.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 8 Faculty Rights

The program or institution shall have policies and practices that specify the rights and responsibilities of the faculty.

- 8.1 Information about grievance and appeal procedures shall be made available to all faculty to ensure that they are fully informed.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 9 Faculty Responsibilities

In a manner consistent with the policies of the institution, the faculty of the program shall have responsibility for educational policy and curriculum.

- 9.1 The program faculty shall have responsibility for educational policy and curriculum, including the design, modification, approval, implementation, and systematic and continuous evaluation of the program and its outcomes in the light of its specific objectives.
- 9.2 The faculty shall be responsible for educational policy relating to the admission, advising, retention, and graduation of students.

- 9.3 The faculty shall be responsible for providing continuous and systematic guidance to students as they progress through the professional educational program.
- 9.4 The program shall have a mechanism by which practitioners and social agencies contribute to educational policies and curriculum content. The program shall provide evidence of its utilization of this mechanism.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 10 Advisement

The program's advisement system shall be clearly specified for program faculty and students.

- 10.1 Professional social work advisement shall orient students and assist them in assessing their aptitude and motivation for a career in social work, allow for early and periodic evaluation of each student's performance, guide students in their selection of areas of course work, and assess with students the field settings that best meet their educational needs and career goals.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 11 Student Rights

The program shall have policies and practices that specify students' rights and responsibilities.

- 11.1 The program shall provide opportunities for students to organize in their interests as students and shall encourage such organization.
- 11.2 Consistent with the policies of the institution, the program shall enable students to participate in the formulation and modification of policy affecting academic and affairs.
- 11.2 The program shall make explicit the criteria for evaluating students' academic and field performance.
- 11.4 The program's policies and practices shall include procedures for the termination of a student's enrollment in the social work program.
- 11.5 Information about grievance and appeal procedures shall be made available to all students to ensure that they are fully informed.

EVALUATION STANDARD 12 Nondiscrimination

Every aspect of the program's organization and implementation shall be conducted without discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, handicap, or political or sexual orientation.

EVALUATION STANDARD 13 Cultural Diversity

The program shall make specific, continuous efforts to assure the enrichment of the educational experience it offers by reflecting racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity throughout the curriculum and in all categories of persons related to the program. (See Curriculum Policy Statement, 7.3-7.5.)

- 13.1 The program shall make specific, continuous efforts—in its recruitment, retention, promotion, tenure, assignment, and remuneration of program personnel, including class,

field, research, and other faculty; administration; and support staff—to assure equity (see Glossary) to all program personnel from racial and ethnic minority groups.

- 13.2 The program shall make specific, continuous efforts, through recruitment, student admissions, field placements, and financial aid, to assure equity to students from racial and ethnic minority groups.
- 13.3 Courses throughout the curriculum, including the field practicum, shall have clearly articulated objectives, outlines, and content incorporating diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural perspectives.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 14 Women

The program shall make specific, continuous efforts to assure the enrichment of the educational experience it offers by including women in all categories of persons related to the program, and by incorporating content on women's issues into the curriculum. (See Curriculum Policy Statement, 7.3-7.5.)

- 14.1 The program shall make specific, continuous efforts to assure equity to women in the recruitment, retention, promotion, tenure, assignment, and remuneration of faculty and staff.
- 14.2 The program shall make specific, continuous efforts to assure equity to women in its admissions policies, field placements, and financial aid.
- 14.3 Courses throughout the curriculum, including the field practicum, shall incorporate clearly articulated objectives, outlines, and content on the role and status of women.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 15 Resources

The program's budgetary resource allocation from the educational institution shall be sufficient to carry out the specified program objectives. (Cross-reference with Master's Evaluative Standards 7, 13 and 14.)

- 15.1 The allocation shall be stable enough to permit program planning and implementation by faculty and administration.
- 15.2 The administration of the institution and the program shall provide the physical facilities and equipment necessary for the attainment of the program's objectives.
- 15.3 The administration of the institution and the program shall provide the library holdings necessary for the attainment of the program's objectives.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 16 Experimental or Innovative Programs

Experimental or innovative programs are time-limited projects that introduce significant planned change into the course of study, the resource configuration, or some other program component in an effort to test, expand, or improve the program's educational provisions. Experimental or innovative programs are encouraged to the extent that they are conceived and implemented in a way that ensures their quality and integrity. *Significant planned change* means that the projected experiment or innovation does not comply with one or more of the accrediting standards.

- 16.1 Plans for any experimental or innovative program shall be submitted to the Commission on Accreditation for approval prior to their implementation.
- 16.2 Such plans shall include a design for evaluating the effectiveness of the experiment or innovation.

EVALUATIVE STANDARD 17 Alternative Programs

Alternative programs introduce change into one or more components of a program already accredited by the commission. If such alterations do not constitute substantive changes, the program shall, as part of the self-study process at the time of submitting materials for accreditation, include information about the alternative program and its evaluation results.

- 17.1 If, however, an alternative program involves substantive change, the program shall submit the planning documents and evaluation design for the commission's approval prior to implementing the changes. (For a definition of *substantive change*, see Glossary.)
- 17.2 An alternative program that involves a collaborative arrangement or that offers the equivalent of one or more academic years of the social work degree program, whether the class or field curriculum or both, in an off-campus location shall submit a proposal to the Commission on Accreditation for approval prior to the implementation of the program. Such proposals shall include an evaluation component.
- 17.3 Programs that grant advanced standing to students who have completed an accredited baccalaureate program in social work are not considered alternative programs.

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records for all transactions.

It is essential to ensure that all data is entered correctly and that the system is regularly updated.

The second part of the document covers the various methods used to collect and analyze data.

These methods include surveys, interviews, and focus groups, each with its own strengths and weaknesses.

Understanding the limitations of each method is crucial for selecting the most appropriate one for your study.

The third part of the document discusses the ethical considerations that must be taken into account.

Researchers must ensure that their participants are fully informed and that their data is protected.

Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the key points and a call to action for researchers.

**CURRICULUM POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE
MASTER'S DEGREE AND BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAMS
IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION**

1.0 SCOPE AND INTENT OF THE POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 This document sets forth the official curriculum policy for the accreditation of programs of social work education by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). It succeeds the 1969 statement of curriculum policy for master's (MSW) programs in social work and provides the first statement of curriculum policy for social work baccalaureate (BSW) programs.
- 1.2 The policy statement specifies certain content areas to be covered and requires that they be logically related to each other, to the purposes and values of social work as set forth in this document, and to the stated purposes, mission, resources, and educational context of each professional program. The statement does not prescribe any particular curriculum design.
- 1.3 The content areas on which all programs of social work education are required to build their curricula are intended to provide social work students with a professional foundation -- the basic values, knowledge, and skills required for entry into the profession.

Program Diversity and Minimum Standards

- 1.4 In keeping with the tradition of academic freedom, the philosophy, objectives, and organization of the social work curriculum are left to the discretion of the individual program. However, each program is to formulate an explicit, detailed, and coherent curriculum that is consistent both with the program's philosophy, objectives, and resources and with the minimum requirements set forth in this document.

Dissemination of the Policy Statement

- 1.5 Each program is responsible for establishing a mechanism whereby every faculty member, student, and administrator and each social work professional otherwise associated with the program is made aware of the content of the Curriculum Policy Statement.

2.0 RELATIONSHIP TO ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

- 2.1 The Commission on Accreditation of CSWE develops standards by which social work education programs are evaluated for accreditation. These standards establish principles for the organization and administration of programs of social work education and include the educational requirements set forth in this Curriculum Policy Statement.

3.0 PREMISES OF THE STATEMENT

- 3.1 Education for a professional career in social work is a complex process involving a multiplicity of skills and a continually expanding and changing body of knowledge.

PREMISES OF THE STATEMENT (continued)**Historical Continuity and Future Orientation**

- 3.2 Sound curriculum designs give the educational program the integrated focus inherent in the profession's enduring philosophical base. This ensures historical continuity and provides a stable framework from which to assess and incorporate practice innovations, emerging knowledge, and interdisciplinary exchanges. This combination of curricular stability and flexibility is essential if the program is to respond effectively to changing social forces and provide leadership in the profession's ongoing quest for progressive social change.
- 3.3 The design of the curriculum should also reflect the responsibility of professional education to contribute significantly to expanding social work knowledge and thus to establishing a future orientation for practice.

Institutional Self-Renewal

- 3.4 The timeliness of an educational program can be best achieved within the context of continuous educational self-renewal. Self-renewal requires the elimination of outdated or ineffective program elements and responsiveness to new information and scientific advances, to emerging economic and political forces, and to changing conditions in the lives of individuals, families, households, groups, communities, and organizations.
- 3.5 Although the precise mechanisms for responding to social, political, and intellectual change may vary, each program should make provisions for remaining open to new ideas.
- 3.6 The minimum educational requirements established by this policy statement are based on the foregoing premises and on the following assumptions about the purposes and values of professional social work.

4.0 SOCIAL WORK PURPOSES**Interrelated Purposes**

- 4.1 The fundamental objects of social work concern are the relationships between individuals and between individuals and social institutions. Historically, social work has contributed to the development of these relationships in such a way as to promote social and economic justice and protect the opportunities for people to live with dignity and freedom.
- 4.2 Professional practice thus focuses on the transactions between people and their environments that affect their ability to accomplish life tasks, alleviate distress, and realize individual and collective aspirations. Within this general scope of concern, social work, as it is practiced in a wide range of settings, has four related purposes:
- 4.2.1 The promotion, restoration, maintenance, or enhancement of the functioning of individuals, families, households, social groups, organizations, and communities by helping them to prevent distress and utilize resources. These resources may be found in people's intrapersonal or interpersonal capacities or abilities and in social services, institutions, and other opportunities available in the environment.

SOCIAL WORK PURPOSES (continued)

- 4.2.2 The planning, development, and implementation of the social policies, services, and programs required to meet basic needs and support the development of capacities and abilities.
- 4.2.3 The pursuit of such policies, services, and programs through legislative advocacy, lobbying, and other forms of social and political action, including providing expert testimony, participation in local and national coalitions, and gaining public office.
- 4.2.4 The development and testing of professional knowledge and skills related to these purposes.

Professional Context

- 4.3 Social work is a self-regulating profession with sanction from public and voluntary auspices. Through all its roles and functions and multiple settings, social work is based on knowledge and guided by professional values and ethics. With its central focus on the transactions between people and their environments, social work uses research and theory from social, behavioral, and biological sciences as well as from social work practice itself, developing a unique perspective on the human condition.
- 4.4 Social work as an organized profession is practiced in a wide variety of settings and in the major institutions of society, including the family. It is the primary discipline in social services provision and is one of the essential disciplines in income maintenance, health, education, and justice organizations. It is utilized as well in business, industry and government. Social work is necessary in meeting the social needs of diverse population groups with a wide range of problems and aspirations.

Implications for Education

- 4.5 It is therefore essential that all professional social workers have, in common, knowledge, values, and skills that are generally transferable from one setting, population group, geographic area, or problem to another. It is also essential that advanced professional social work practitioners have the special knowledge and skills appropriate to a specific role, field of practice, population group, or problem area.

5.0 SOCIAL WORK VALUES

- 5.1 Social workers hold that people should have equal access to resources, services, and opportunities for the accomplishment of life tasks, the alleviation of distress, and the realization of their aspirations and values in relation to themselves, the rights of others, the general welfare, and social justice.
- 5.2 Among the values and principles that guide professional social workers in their practice and that should be manifest throughout every social work curriculum are the following:

SOCIAL WORK VALUES (continued)

- 5.2.1 Social workers' professional relationships are built on their regard for individual worth and human dignity and are furthered by mutual participation, acceptance, confidentiality, honesty, and handling conflict responsibly.
- 5.2.2 Social workers respect people's right to choose, to contract for services, and to participate in the helping process.
- 5.2.3 Social workers contribute to making social institutions more humane and responsive to human needs.
- 5.2.4 Social workers demonstrate respect for and acceptance of the unique characteristics of diverse populations.
- 5.2.5 Social workers are responsible for their own ethical conduct, for the quality of their practice, and for maintaining continuous growth in the knowledge and skills of their profession.

6.0 STRUCTURE OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION**Unified Goals**

- 6.1 The goal of social work education at every level is for students to integrate the values, knowledge, and skills of the profession into competent practice. The achievement of this goal demands institutional clarity about what students should learn, flexibility in programming and teaching to adapt to the varied learning patterns and backgrounds of diverse students, and commitments of time and resources to the educational enterprise.
- 6.2 Social work education takes place in four-year undergraduate and two-year graduate programs and leads to professional degrees at the baccalaureate and master's levels, respectively. These levels of education differ from each other in the level of knowledge and skill they expect students to synthesize in practice competence. These distinctions and the discretion provided by the tradition of academic freedom contribute to the desired uniqueness of each program.
- 6.3 All professional programs, including those for part-time and off-campus students, are expected to achieve the following broad objectives:
- 6.3.1 Provide equal quality of social work education in identified areas of content.
- 6.3.2 Prepare graduates to practice in a range of geographic areas and with diverse populations.
- 6.3.3 Establish the foundation for practitioners' professional futures, exposing them to the best of current knowledge and developing in them the ability to continue questioning and learning, as well as an awareness of their responsibility to continue this professional development.

STRUCTURE OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION (continued)**The Liberal Arts Perspective**

- 6.4 The liberal arts perspective in professional education enriches the understanding of the person-environment context of social work. The broad understandings fostered by education programs with this perspective are essential to the mastery of social work content. As the student assimilates the social work content, much of the knowledge from the liberal arts perspective will become even more useful and relevant.
- 6.5 Education with the liberal arts perspective is most commonly provided at the undergraduate level, but is a prerequisite for both undergraduate and graduate professional programs in social work.
- 6.6 The previous educational experience of students entering social work programs should have emphasized acquisition of the knowledge, attitudes, ways of thinking, and means of communication that are characteristic of an educated person capable of thinking about society, about people and their problems, and about such expressions of culture as art, literature, science, history, and philosophy. While the exact nature of a liberal arts perspective is not specified, it is not to be construed as meaning a narrow technical background or one that is otherwise restricted.
- 6.7 These liberal arts objectives are variously met in higher education. Therefore, apart from the stipulation that each student's background include instruction in the behavioral and biological sciences (including human biology) the determination of whether prospective students have attained the liberal arts perspective is left to the discretion of each program's social work faculty. Each program must clearly explicate the requirements it considers to constitute the liberal arts perspective.

Baccalaureate Programs

- 6.8 The baccalaureate is the first level of professional education for entry into the profession. The curriculum shall include the knowledge, values, processes, and skills that have proved to be essential for the practice of social work, which is hereafter referred to as the **professional foundation**. The baccalaureate social worker should attain a beginning professional level of proficiency in the self-critical and accountable use of this social work knowledge and integrate this knowledge with the liberal arts perspective.
- 6.9 Students who receive a baccalaureate degree from an accredited social work program should possess the professional judgment and proficiency to apply differentially, with supervision, the common professional foundation to service systems of various sizes and types. There should be special emphasis on direct services to clients which includes organization and provision of resources on clients' behalf. Each program shall explicate the ways in which students are being prepared for generalist practice.

STRUCTURE OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION (continued)

6.10 The purpose of undergraduate social work education is to prepare students for a beginning professional level of practice. Although some BSW graduates will subsequently pursue additional social work education at the graduate level, this consideration is independent of the primary objectives of the undergraduate curriculum.

Master's Programs

6.11 Social work education at the master's level is built on the liberal arts perspective and must include the professional foundation and one or more concentrations. In the master's program, the content relating to the professional foundation is directed toward preparing the student for concentration. Students who graduate from MSW programs are to have advanced analytic and practice skills sufficient for self-critical, accountable, and ultimately autonomous practice.

6.12 Concentrations at the master's level may be organized in various ways, such as by fields of service, population groups, problem areas, professional roles, interventive modes, and advanced generalist practice. Each graduate program shall clearly identify which framework it is using to organize the advanced concentrations and describe the relationship of this framework to its educational philosophy.

6.13 All MSW programs must require or provide an educational background with a liberal arts perspective. They also must provide all non-BSW students with the professional foundation content on which every concentration is built.

6.14 BSW graduates need not be automatically accepted into MSW programs. However, BSW graduates entering MSW programs are not to repeat what has been mastered in their BSW work. In order to promote the social work education linkage, MSW programs are to develop policies and procedures to identify coverage and mastery and to prevent unproductive repetition. MSW programs are to establish explicit admissions procedures and policies relevant to course waivers, substitutions, exemptions, and advanced standing for BSW graduates. All such arrangements should be explicit and unambiguous.

7.0 CURRICULUM CONTENT (*Baccalaureate and Master's Programs*)

Integration of Professional Values

7.1 The BSW and MSW programs hold in common their integral relationship to social work purposes and to the fundamental values, knowledge, and skills of social work. Admissions and student self-selection processes combine to bring to programs of social work education people who are committed to the basic values and ethics that shape social work practice. Nevertheless, the complexities of the procedures and judgments necessary for the discriminating application of those values and ethics require that students consider these issues in a systematic way.

CURRICULUM CONTENT (*Baccalaureate and Master's Programs*) -- continued

7.2 Identifiable consideration of social work values and ethics should therefore infuse the curriculum, including the field practicum. Students should acquire specific knowledge of social work values and their ethical implications, integrate these values into their professional behavior, and test their application in their professional practice. One aim of this learning process is for students to develop an awareness of their personal values and thus to prepare to undertake work on conflicting values and ethical dilemmas.

Special Populations

7.3 The social work profession, by virtue of its system of ethics, its traditional value commitments, and its long history of work in the whole range of human services, is committed to preparing students to understand and appreciate cultural and social diversity. The profession has also been concerned about the consequences of oppression.

7.4 Programs of social work education must provide content related to oppression and to the experiences, needs, and responses of people who have been subjected to institutionalized forms of oppression. Both the professional foundation and the advanced concentration curricula must give explicit attention to the patterns and consequences of discrimination and oppression, providing both theoretical and practice content about groups that continue to be subjected to oppression and those that are emerging into new social roles with greater freedom and visibility.

7.5 The curriculum must provide content on ethnic minorities of color and women. It should include content on other special population groups relevant to the program's mission or location and, in particular, groups that have been consistently affected by social, economic and legal bias or oppression. Such groups include, but are not limited to, those distinguished by age, religion, disablement, sexual orientation, and culture.

Professional Foundation Areas

7.6 The accumulated experience of professional education and new developments in knowledge and practice determine the content areas required for professional foundation. Social workers at both the undergraduate and graduate levels must demonstrate, according to their respective levels of entry, proficiency and competence in five professional foundation areas: Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Social Welfare Policy and Services, Social Work Practice, Research, and the Field Practicum.

7.7 The professional foundation content areas need not be taught in discrete courses. There should be a demonstrable integration of content among the various areas as well as explicit linkage to the relevant liberal arts areas in each of the foundation content areas. Mastery of the professional foundation content areas occurs through academic experiences and the field practicum. The five curriculum areas, when combined with professional purposes and values, form the basis of the fundamental skills at each degree level.

CURRICULUM CONTENT (*Baccalaureate and Master's Programs*) -- continued**Human Behavior and the Social Environment**

- 7.8 In keeping with social work's person-in-environment focus, students need knowledge of individuals as they develop over the life span and have membership in families, groups, organizations, and communities; students need knowledge of the relationships among human biological, social, psychological, and cultural systems as they affect and are affected by human behavior.
- 7.9 The curriculum design by each program should identify a coherent approach to selecting research and theories that constitute the systems of knowledge in the social, behavioral and biological sciences to be offered to students. It should specify how this knowledge will be presented in a way that illuminates divergencies and interrelationships. Both the selection and the manner of presentation should be relevant to the objectives, philosophy, and mission of the individual program and should facilitate the student's understanding of how the knowledge relates to social work practice.

Social Welfare Policy and Services

- 7.10 The major aims of study in this area are to prepare professionals to function as informed and competent practitioners in providing services and as knowledgeable and committed participants in efforts to achieve change in social policies and programs. Students are expected to develop skills in the use and application of scientific knowledge to the analysis and development of social welfare policy and services. They should know the structure of service programs and the history of the organized profession and other social welfare institutions. Social work students should also gain an understanding of political process and the means to further the achievement of social work goals and purposes.

Social Work Practice

- 7.11 Social work practice embraces multiple methods and models, including generalist practice and a variety of concentrations defined according to the size of the client populations and other means of classification. Social work practice occurs with individuals, families, small groups, organizations, and communities. This variety and range represent the current state of the art in social work practice.
- 7.12 The curriculum content relating to practice must include the knowledge base, i.e., theory, research, and practice wisdom. It must also include the practice skills, i.e., exploration and data-gathering, differential assessment and differential planning, intervention, and evaluation relevant to social work practice. The plan for teaching practice should explicitly demonstrate how content on practice relates to the knowledge base and skills that are included in the curriculum content of research.
- 7.13 The practice skills taught for use in any practice context and with any size system must reflect an integration of professional purposes, knowledge, and values. Each program of social work education must define its concept of practice; demonstrate the presence of supporting

CURRICULUM CONTENT (*Baccalaureate and Master's Programs*) -- continued

knowledge and educational resources, including opportunities for the field practicum; and explicate the coherent association of these program elements with the program's overall philosophy, objectives, and mission.

Research

7.14 Informed criticism and a spirit of inquiry are the basis of scientific thinking and of systematic approaches to the acquisition of knowledge and the application of it to practice. Every part of the professional foundation curriculum should therefore help to bring students to an understanding and appreciation of the necessity of a scientific, analytic approach to knowledge building and practice. The ethical use of scientific inquiry should be emphasized throughout.

7.15 The content on research should impart scientific methods of building knowledge for practice and of evaluating service delivery in all areas of practice. It should include quantitative and qualitative research methodologies; designs for the systematic evaluation of the student's own practice; and the critical appreciation and use of research and of program evaluation. The plan for teaching research should be explicit in showing how content on research relates to the knowledge base and practice skills that are included in the curriculum content of social work practice.

7.16 The professional foundation content in research should thus provide skills that will take students beyond the role of consumers of research and prepare them to evaluate their own practice systematically.

Field Practicum

7.17 The field practicum is an integral part of the curriculum in social work education. It engages the student in supervised direct service activities, providing practical experience in the application of the theory and skills acquired in all the foundation areas. The objective of the practicum is to produce a professionally reflective, self-evaluating, knowledgeable, and developing social worker.

7.18 Influenced by their respective universities and social work communities and by the nature and objectives of their programs, individual programs may organize their field practicums in different ways. It is expected, however, that there will be educationally directed, coordinated, and monitored field practicum experiences for all students.

7.19 Each educational program must establish standards for field practicum settings, defining the character of the service provision, the professional practices, the personnel assigned as field instructors, and the student learning assignments. The instructional focus of the field practicum must be consistent with the purposes of the professional foundation curriculum or, in the case of MSW programs, the advanced social work curriculum.

7.20 To accomplish the educational purposes of the practicum, undergraduate programs should provide each student with a minimum of four hundred hours of practicum experience, and graduate programs a minimum of nine hundred hours.

The Advanced Social Work Curriculum -- *Master's Program*

- 7.21 The advanced curriculum at the master's level is to be built on the liberal arts perspective and the professional foundation content, and it is to require a concentration of specialized knowledge and practice skills in one or more areas relevant to social work. It must also include advanced preparation in research methods to prepare students for active roles in practice and for practice and program evaluation as well as in the generation of knowledge for practice, program development, and policy formulation. The field practicum for the advanced social work curriculum must include instruction in the areas of the student's concentration.
- 7.22 The concentrations offered should be organized within a comprehensive framework that is logically consistent with the content and principles of the foundation material and that extends the scope and depth of this content into the concentrations. A concentration should involve the student in the application of the professional foundation content to the specialized focus of the concentration.
- 7.23 Each graduate program will determine the concentrations it will offer and the framework used to organize them. Possible frameworks include:
- 7.23.1 Fields of Practice: Services to families, children, and youth; services to the elderly; health; mental health; developmental disabilities; education; business and industry; neighborhood and community development; the justice system; and income assistance and employment.
 - 7.23.2 Population Groups: Children, youth, adults, middle-aged adults, the aged, women, men, families, ethnic populations, groups defined by income levels, migrants.
 - 7.23.3 Problem Areas: Crime and delinquency, substance abuse, developmental disabilities, illness, family violence, neighborhood deterioration, poverty, racism, sexism.
 - 7.23.4 Practice Roles and Interventive Modes: Practice with individuals, families and groups, consultation, training, community organization, social planning, program planning and development, administration, policy formulation, implementation and analysis, and research.
- 7.24 Included in each concentration should be relevant content in social policy and legislation, existing and potential service strategies from prevention to treatment, and relevant practice theories, methodologies, and research. Other frameworks for organizing concentrations are also possible, as is a concentration of knowledge and skill leading to advanced generalist practice.
- 7.25 Advanced students should be proficient in applying the foundation content to the area of concentration. In addition, they should develop the ability to assess critically the practice theories associated with their concentrations, to evaluate their own practice, and to identify

CURRICULUM CONTENT (*Master's Program*) -- continued

those areas of knowledge and skill that should be the focus of continuing personal and collective professional development beyond graduation.

7.26 Combining concentrations is possible, particularly a practice role with a concentration from one of the other frameworks. It is essential, however, that the advanced student demonstrate a level of specialized knowledge and practice expertise consistent with the focus intended for advanced concentrations.

8.0 AVENUES OF RENEWAL (*Baccalaureate and Master's Programs*)

8.1 Programs of social work education must remain vital and progressive by actively pursuing ongoing exchanges with the practice community and by developing and assessing new knowledge and programs including technology that is emerging in the computer field.

Ties to Practice

8.2 Educational programs need to maintain close, reciprocal, and ongoing relationships with social work practitioners. Practitioners, students, field instructors and administrators of social agencies, and those agencies where social work education takes place can contribute to the continual reevaluation of the total curriculum. This exchange also helps to maintain educators' awareness of the complexity of the tasks facing those involved in direct practice; how social, political, and economic changes affect service delivery; and other new developments emerging in or influencing practice.

8.3 Responsibility for initiating communications with practitioners rests with the educational program. Each program will develop its own ways of establishing and maintaining such an exchange.

Responsibility for Knowledge Development

8.4 The effectiveness of any profession's services depends on its implementation of systematic and high-quality research to assess its practice and develop new knowledge. Such knowledge-building and service-development enterprises are also natural and essential complements to the primary function of educational programs -- the training of new practitioners. Because social work, like many professions, often relies on recently trained practitioners to bring service innovations and new knowledge to the field, the knowledge and techniques of service taught to students should include current research findings. Further, the university context in which social work education most often takes place provides a lively environment for intellectual inquiry and interdisciplinary exchanges. Educational programs that contribute steadily to the profession's fund of knowledge simultaneously maintain their own vitality and progressive character.

PART IV

APPENDICES AND SUPPLEMENT

Commission on Accreditation

**Handbook of Accreditation
Standards and Procedures**

Fourth Edition

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Baccalaureate Evaluative Standards and Interpretive Guidelines

To obtain accreditation, a program must meet the following evaluative standards. The Commission on Accreditation (hereafter "Commission") reserves the right to initiate a review of an accredited program whenever circumstances indicate questionable compliance with the Evaluative Standards or the Curriculum Policy Statement.

[NOTE: Interpretive Guidelines, in *italics*, follow those standards to which they apply. Interpretive Guidelines explain more fully a standard or its intent. They do not present additional requirements beyond the standards.]

Evaluative Standard 1. Program Rationale and Assessment

- 1.0 The educational program must provide a statement of rationale, including a program mission statement and program goals, consistent with social work's purposes, values, and ethics. The mission and goals are to include quality educational preparation for entry into beginning social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. The program's goals must reflect the intent of Curriculum Policy Statement B5.1 to 5.4.5.

Interpretive Guideline 1.0 *The program rationale defines and justifies its purposes and focus, giving meaning to all other aspects of the program. Mission and goal statements are global and general in nature, describing desired states or results. Program mission and goals are not limited to the content of the Curriculum Policy Statement, and should dynamically reflect regional and institutional needs, priorities, and interests to have the greatest possible meaning to all program participants.*

Goals are more specific than an overriding mission statement in defining program purposes.

- 1.1 Once the mission and goals have been stated, the program must present its objectives, derived from its statement of mission and goals. The program's objectives must reflect the intent of Curriculum Policy Statement B5.7 to 5.7.12.

Interpretive Guideline 1.1 *Objectives are defined as specific, measurable statements of desired achievements. A program could have objectives reflecting design and implementation of the program and reflecting desired program and student achievements. Objectives specify what should happen to students or other target populations or groups as a result of educational and other program actions. They reflect changes in behavior, skills, attitudes, values, beliefs, knowledge, or status.*

Achievement of educational objectives requires careful attention to curriculum development to ensure that each objective can be

attained as students proceed through the educational process. Student educational outcomes should relate to areas of knowledge or skill that can be measured through instruction-related means. Course and field syllabi should reflect educational objectives. Work-related or educational activities after graduation are examples of subsequent activities of graduates.

Program objectives are not limited to the substance of the Curriculum Policy Statement and should dynamically reflect regional and institutional needs, priorities and interests to have the greatest possible meaning to all program participants. The program may identify other objectives it considers useful, including but not limited to other student learning or activity objectives, program impacts within the institution and community, and faculty impacts on agencies and practice.

- 1.2 The program's rationale, comprised of its statements of mission, goals, and objectives, must be reflected in program implementation.

Interpretive Guideline 1.2 *The program's goals can be implemented by such means as the objectives of curriculum areas, including the field practicum; the objectives of individual courses; faculty assignments and workload; other program initiatives, events, or projects; and the focus and substance of program evaluation activities.*

- 1.3 The program must make all faculty members, students, administrators, and each social work professional associated with the program aware of program goals, and objectives. Program documents must reflect these goals and objectives.

Interpretive Guideline 1.3 *Programs may use a variety of means to communicate their goals to all persons associated with the program. These include, but are not limited to, institutional catalogs and program documents such as student handbooks and field manuals, orientation sessions and training sessions.*

- 1.4 The program must specify the outcome measures and measurement procedures that are to be used systematically in evaluating the program, and that will enable it to determine its success in achieving its desired objectives.

Interpretive Guideline 1.4 *The relationships among the key ideas inherent in this standard can be illustrated in the following schema:*

Social Work Education Program

The program defines its mission. Subsequently, specific program goals are laid out. Statements of objectives derived from the mission and goals are specified. The measures that will be used to substantiate the degree of achievement of each objective, along with measurement methods (instruments, respondents, data-gathering procedures, statistical procedures, etc.) are stated. The program then is implemented, or operates, until a predetermined point of time (e.g., during a course, at the end of a course, at the end of a year's work, at the end of all course work, at different stages of field practicum, at stated intervals after graduation) at which actual outcomes are evaluated. Findings are used to assess the extent to which objectives have been achieved. The findings are fed back (dotted lines in schema, above) into curriculum or other program revisions, and possibly into revision of goals and objectives.

In assessing attainment of objectives, a variety of sources of information may be used (e.g. students, faculty, employers of graduates, field instructors, clients, consumers, student work products, and other reports or materials).

Programs may use a variety of means to gather data, as suggested by the nature of the objectives themselves. Qualitative and/or quantitative procedures are likely to be of value. Examples may include the following: exit examinations; pre-/post-tests of knowledge and/or skill; employer evaluations; alumni self-reports; student self-reports; faculty achievements; program reputational studies; results of licensing and certification examinations; and student evaluations of courses and instructors' performance.

- 1.5 The program must show evidence that it engages in ongoing, systematic self study and evaluation of its total program, and show evidence that the results of evaluation affect program planning and curriculum design.

Interpretive Guideline 1.5 *The program should create and maintain formal means (e.g., committees, procedures, faculty training, reports) to assess all aspects of its operation. Evaluation exists: (1) to determine whether goals are achieved as indicated by actual program outcomes; and (2) to allow corrective action and improvements in program design and activities. Programs should be able to document how the results of program evaluations are used to improve program planning and implementation. Program methods designed to ensure such incorporation, and specific examples of the incorporation of results into program revisions and activities, are useful information.*

Evaluative Standard 2. Organization, Governance, and Resources

- 2.0 The program or institution must have policies and practices that assign faculty the rights and responsibilities necessary to achieve high-quality professional education.
- 2.1 The administrative unit of the social work program must have sufficient autonomy to realize the program's goals.

The autonomy of the social work program will be evaluated by the following criteria:

- 2.1.1 The social work program must have an established governance and administrative structure ensuring its authority and responsibility for decision making with respect to goal setting, program planning, and achieving specified goals.
- 2.1.2 The social work program must have its own budget, as well as responsibility for budget development and administration.

Interpretive Guideline 2.1.2 *The chief administrator of the social work program should play a central role in developing a proposed budget and presenting it to appropriate authorities, as well as clear responsibility for managing and reporting on that budget during the program's annual operation.*

The budget should include faculty resources, travel, supplies, office equipment, and faculty development support.

- 2.1.3 The social work program faculty must have authority to determine program curriculum within the structure of the institution's policies.
- 2.1.4 The faculty and administration of the social work program must participate in formulating policies related to hiring, retention, promotion, and tenure of program personnel; and have the authority to recruit, retain or terminate; and to tenure, promote, assign, develop and evaluate social work faculty.
- 2.1.5 The social work program must be assigned an administrative support staff that is demonstrably adequate to ensure achievement of program goals.

Interpretive Guideline 2.1.5 *Heavy demands are placed on professional support staff in a social work education program — continuing communication with students, faculty, program administration, field practicum agencies, and the social work community. Professional staff support of at least one full-time professional support staff member is recommended.*

Programs should document that the combination of professional support staff and other human and machine resources is adequate to meet demands in all areas of program functioning, effectively supporting achievement of program goals.

- 2.1.6 The social work program must have sufficient jurisdiction over physical space to realize program goals. This includes classroom space, private faculty offices

and office space for administrative and clerical workers, and space for student and faculty meetings and for student socialization.

- 2.2 The program's chief administrator must give educational and administrative direction to the program, and have demonstrated leadership ability through academic and other experience in the field of social work. The educational credentials of individuals in this role must include a master's degree from an accredited program in social work. A program chief administrator who holds a baccalaureate degree in social work but not a master's degree in this field must also hold a doctoral degree in social work. The chief administrator must have no less than 25% release time over the full academic year for carrying out these administrative duties. The program must give evidence of continuity in compensated coverage of these duties over the summer.

Interpretive Guideline 2.2 *The program chief administrator's credentials, experience and expertise in teaching and in educational program administration at the undergraduate level should be an important consideration in hiring. Experience has shown that continuity of leadership is important for professional programs, and at least 25% of the program chief administrator's workload over the calendar year — and often much more than that depending on the size and complexity of the program — is needed to effectively administer an accredited program.*

- 2.3 The program's budgetary allocation from the educational institution must be sufficient to carry out the program's specified goals.
- 2.3.1 The allocation must be stable enough to permit program planning and implementation by faculty and administration.
- 2.3.2 The administration of the institution and the program must provide the necessary equipment for attaining the program's goals.
- 2.3.3 The administration of the institution and the program must provide the library holdings and other educational resources necessary for attaining the program's goals.

Evaluative Standard 3. Nondiscrimination

- 3.0 The program must be conducted without discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, political orientation or sexual orientation.

Interpretive Guideline 3.0 *The nondiscrimination evaluative standard refers to the social work program. The educational institution's nondiscrimination policies are discussed under Eligibility Standard 7.*

- 3.1 The program must make specific, continuous efforts to ensure equity to faculty and staff in the recruitment, retention, promotion, tenure, assignment, and remuneration of program personnel, including class, field, research, and other faculty, administrative personnel and support staff; and to students through

student recruitment, admission, retention, and financial aid policies and procedures.

Interpretive Guideline 3.1 Programs are expected to make specific and continuous efforts to comply with the standard. Programs should document both the efforts and their results regarding the standard, and regarding all personnel associated with the program. All program personnel class, field and research faculty, administrative personnel, support staff as are students included under this standard.

- 3.2 The program must indicate how the institution's nondiscrimination policy, as well as the program's policy, are carried out in relation to all groups included in federal and state policies (on the basis of race, color, gender, age, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, political orientation, or sexual orientation) as well as others designated by the institution or program. This discussion includes faculty as well as administrative and support personnel and students. Faculty, administrative personnel, and students must be fully informed of all institutional and program policies, procedures, and mechanisms regarding, but not limited to, grievance and appeal procedures, nondiscrimination, and sexual harassment.

Interpretive Guideline 3.2 Such policies, procedures, and mechanisms often appear in faculty handbooks, student handbooks, union agreements, and catalogs. The program should be responsible for ensuring that all faculty, administrative personnel, and students receive these materials.

Evaluative Standard 4. Faculty

- 4.0 The program must have full-time faculty adequate in number, qualifications, competence, and range of expertise to achieve its specified goals.

Interpretive Guideline 4.0 Range of expertise is based on educational background, teaching and educational administrative experience, and experience in professional practice. Faculty size and composition should be commensurate with the number and type of curricular offerings in class and field, the number of students served, and the faculty's educational responsibilities and services.

It is recommended that the program maintain a ratio of no less than one full-time equivalent faculty per 25 full-time equivalent students.

Faculty experience and expertise in teaching and in undergraduate program administration should be an important consideration in hiring. Faculty members' experience in professional social work practice should be consonant with the special emphasis of baccalaureate programs on preparing students for generalist practice. For faculty teaching social work practice, qualifications should include expertise in the particular area of teaching responsibility. (See Curriculum Policy Statement B6.9-6.10.)

Faculty responsibilities include classroom instruction and field liaison; professional advising; planning, implementing, and evaluating the program; and continuing professional development as a teacher-scholar. Faculty members are expected to participate in other professional activities and to undertake community responsibilities essential to the attainment of the program's goals.

- 4.1 The baccalaureate social work education program must have a minimum of two faculty members with master's degrees in social work. They are to have full-time appointments in the institution and be assigned full time to the social work program.

Interpretive Guideline 4.1 *The full-time assignment to the social work program is evaluated by reviewing teaching assignments and participation in curriculum development, student advisement, administrative assignments, and field liaison related to the baccalaureate program.*

Programs which inadvertently fall below this minimum of two full-time faculty — through illness, resignation, etc. — should immediately contact the director of the Council's Division of Standards and Accreditation to confer on how to maintain candidacy or accredited status.

In combined programs, the baccalaureate program should have a minimum of two full-time faculty members, one designated as the full-time director (see Eligibility Standard 6), plus another full-time assigned faculty member or an additional full-time equivalent faculty member, as a minimum. The program should have sufficient, continuous and stable faculty resources which enable it to achieve its specified goals

For combined programs, the baccalaureate program may have a minimum of one full time faculty member designated as the director (see Eligibility Standard 6), and a minimum of an additional full time equivalent faculty member. The program should have sufficient, continuous, stable faculty resources to achieve its specified goals.

- 4.2 Responsibility for providing educational experiences must be vested in a full-time, experienced, knowledgeable faculty who identify with the profession of social work. There must be sufficient continuity in the assignment of a core of full-time faculty who hold master's degrees in social work to ensure the stability of the program's essential functions. Part-time and adjunct faculty may provide flexibility and breadth to the program as a supplement to full-time faculty.
- 4.3 Faculty who teach required courses on social work practice or coordinate field instruction must hold a master's degree in social work from an accredited program with the equivalent of two years or more of full-time post-master's-degree experience in professional social work practice.

Interpretive Guideline 4.3 *Any faculty member teaching a required practice course in the social work foundation, or serving as fieldwork coordinator or director, must meet these requirements.*

Programs should designate which courses are practice courses required of all majors for graduation.

Programs that have attained candidacy status or become accredited may apply for exceptions to this standard for their full-time or part-time faculty. For procedures to apply for an exception to this standard, see the "Interpretation and Guidelines for Faculty Teaching Practice or Coordinating Field Practicum" on pages 206-209 of the Handbook.

- 4.4 The responsibilities of the core of full-time faculty must include ongoing oversight of the curriculum, including the design, modification, approval, implementation, and evaluation of the program's curriculum and educational policies; systematic and continuous evaluation of program outcomes in the light of the program's specified goals; teaching of practice and other social work courses; coordination of field instruction; and maintenance of program integrity.
- 4.5 In determining faculty assignments, workload credit must be given for the time needed to advise students, to select and evaluate field instruction settings, to provide liaison between field settings and students, to evaluate student performance, to perform administrative tasks, to conduct scholarship, to discharge community obligations related to the purposes of the program, to participate in activities of professional organizations, and to engage in professional development activities. The program is to provide the time necessary to engage in research, publication, and other scholarly production.

The coordinator of field instruction must have a full-time appointment with no less than 25% release time over the full academic year for that position. The program must give evidence of continuity in compensated coverage of these duties over the summer.

Interpretive Guideline 4.5 *Workloads should provide time to meet the expectations the standard describes. Social work faculty are held accountable for being productive scholars. Scholarship is defined broadly to allow faculty to engage in: (1) the discovery of knowledge in chosen fields of expertise through original research; (2) the integration of knowledge in chosen fields of expertise (through replications, integrative analyses, interdisciplinary linking, and similar activities); (3) the application of knowledge to human problems (through service projects demonstrably linked to teaching and research, technical assistance or consultations to human service organizations and other entities, policy analyses, program and practice evaluations); or (4) the documented application of scholarly endeavor to teaching (by wide reading and constant updating of knowledge of the field, as well as by examining and revising pedagogical methods and materials).*

A program should designate a field instruction coordinator with clear authority and responsibility for ongoing field administration. Beyond the minimum of 25% release time for field administration duties for field instruction coordination, programs should assign proportionally more time for serving larger numbers of students.

Evaluative Standard 5. Student Development

- 5.0 The program must clearly articulate and implement criteria and processes of student admission.

Interpretive Guideline 5.0 *Criteria and processes of admission should be designed and implemented to accept from the group of applicants those who, in accordance with the program's educational goals, are best qualified to become professional social workers at a beginning level of practice.*

Responsibility for student selection should be assigned to persons designated by the program, and admissions standards and processes should reflect an appreciation for the requirements of the profession and of professional social work education. Such standards and processes should be made known publicly, to applicants and others.

- 5.1 The program must have written policies and procedures concerning the transfer of credit and the use of proficiency examinations. Such policies and procedures are to avoid redundancy, promote program integrity, and contribute to relevant undergraduate education for students. Field practicum courses may not be transferred from an unaccredited to an accredited program.

Interpretive Guideline 5.1 *In considering academic credit for students transferring from other accredited social work programs, the program should prevent duplication of academic content by recognizing prior educational achievement, but also ensure student outcomes consonant with program goals.*

Social work programs that are not accredited cannot provide a reliable, third-party assurance that they meet or exceed minimum standards. Thus, students transferring from such programs present a special problem in gaining acceptance to the program and transferring academic credits. If such students are admitted to an accredited program, the program should take responsibility for ensuring that the courses being transferred are compatible with relevant evaluative standards and the Curriculum Policy Statement.

The program is also responsible for validating academic credits previously earned. It should define the means whereby students qualify for academic credit for transferred courses. It should have a formalized mechanism to determine whether the content and objectives of courses taken in the unaccredited program are substantially equivalent to the academic content offered in its own curriculum. Faculty should evaluate the course syllabi including course objectives, content outline, learning activities, theoretical frames of reference, and bibliographies of courses considered for transfer. If comprehensive syllabi are not available or if the program prefers, proficiency examinations may be used. If the program adopts some plan of evaluation on a student-by-student, course-by-course basis, the self-study should explain the evaluation criteria and methods used.

- 5.2 Academic credit for life experience and previous work experience must not be given, in whole or in part, in lieu of the field practicum or of courses in the professional foundation areas specified in the Curriculum Policy Statement. (See Curriculum Policy Statement B6.3 to 6.13). Statements of this policy are to appear in formal program documents.
- 5.3 The program's advisement policies and procedures must be clearly specified and made known to both program faculty and students.
- 5.4 Professional social work advisement must be carried out by full-time or permanent faculty whose educational credentials include either a master's degree in social work or a baccalaureate degree in social work plus a social work doctorate. Advisors must be fully knowledgeable about the baccalaureate program.

Interpretive Guideline 5.4 Programs should ensure that faculty are accessible on a continuing basis for student advising, and that advisers are fully knowledgeable about the program and institution. Full-time faculty and part-time faculty with continuous appointments to the program could meet these criteria.

- 5.5 Professional social work advisement must orient students and assist them in assessing their aptitude and motivation for a social work career, allow for early and periodic evaluation of each student's performance, guide students in selecting areas of coursework, and assess with students the field settings that best meet their educational needs and career goals.
- 5.6 The program must have policies and practices that specify students' rights and responsibilities. Consistent with the policies of the institution, the program must enable students to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs.

Interpretive Guideline 5.6 Students should have copies of program and institutional policies available to them in a designated place.

- 5.7 The program must provide opportunities for students to organize in their interests as students and encourage such organization.
- 5.8 The program must make explicit the criteria for evaluating students' academic and field performance. The program's policies and practices must include procedures for terminating a student's enrollment in the social work program for reasons of academic and nonacademic performance.

Interpretive Guideline 5.8 In developing a student termination policy, the program should consider both academic performance and nonacademic performance or behaviors of students that provide relevant information regarding their likely performance as social work practitioners. The program's responsibilities to its students and to potential clients/consumers and the field of practice should be balanced in its student termination policy and procedures. These program policies and procedures should reflect the special circumstances of social work but also be consistent with institutional policies and procedures.

Evaluative Standard 6. Curriculum

- 6.0 The program's goals, objectives and curriculum must be consistent with the Curriculum Policy Statement for baccalaureate social work education.
- 6.1 The baccalaureate curriculum must be developed and organized as a coherent and integrated whole. All program components, including part-time and off-campus, are to provide an equal quality of education.

Interpretive Guideline 6.1 Every aspect of the curriculum should reflect the program's goals and objectives. The goals and objectives provide the overarching framework from which the entire curriculum derives. Curriculum coherence should be developed both horizontally and vertically, e.g., across an entire year's curriculum; between courses in curriculum areas; between different sections of the same course; within any given course. Individual courses should demonstrate coherence among course objectives, course outlines, texts, required and supplemental readings, assignments, and bibliography.

Continuing faculty attention should be given to curriculum development. The curriculum should be reviewed regularly in the light of actual student outcomes, new knowledge, and the demands of the profession and practice. Modifications should be made as needed on the basis of such reviews. The means used by the program to implement ongoing curriculum development should be formalized.

- 6.2 The baccalaureate curriculum prepares students for generalist social work practice; it is based upon a liberal arts perspective and must include the professional foundation.

Interpretive Guideline 6.2 The program should define its conceptions of generalist social work practice and of the liberal arts perspective its students are to attain, and explain the relationship of generalist practice to the liberal arts perspective. Liberal arts content areas are considered essential knowledge components for social work professional foundation course work. The educational plan developed for the student should reflect the required components specified in the Curriculum Policy Statement and ensure acquisition of the liberal arts perspective.

The specific liberal arts content that is needed to underpin the social work professional foundation is left to the discretion of the program, within the guidelines of baccalaureate Curriculum Policy Statement B5.8 and B5.9, but should be defined by the program. Definition involves identifying specific content of liberal arts courses that is prerequisite for specific content in the social work foundation, documenting the appropriateness of the liberal arts content it selects for the program, and then identifying the liberal arts courses that present the required content. Programs should develop mechanisms to ensure that the required liberal arts content has

been attained. Examples of useful mechanisms are the enforced sequencing of course work through the use of prerequisites and the incorporation of specified liberal arts course work in admissions or screening procedures.

Curriculum Policy Statement B6.5-B6.16 discusses the baccalaureate degree curriculum content, and require that programs clearly explicate how content on values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field practicum constitute the professional foundation.

- 6.3 The methods of instruction must reflect the cognitive, affective, and experiential components of learning appropriate to the attainment of the program's specified goals. Instructional methods are to involve students in their learning.

Interpretive Guideline 6.3 *The Commission on Accreditation does not prescribe specific educational methods, but is concerned that methods support the cognitive, affective and experiential components of learning appropriate to the specific course, to the program's goals, and to adequate evaluation of educational objectives. The program should demonstrate that its teaching methods permit appropriate synthesis, application, and demonstration of attainment of content in all its curriculum offerings, including those for part-time, weekend, and off-campus students. Equal quality of the educational methods used in all program components for given areas of content should be demonstrated.*

- 6.4 The program is responsible for providing a clearly designed field practicum for all students including standards for selecting agencies, selecting field instructors with an accredited baccalaureate or master's degree in social work, and evaluating student learning in the practicum.

Interpretive Guideline 6.4 *The program should exercise responsibility for the administration of the field practicum, ensuring planned cooperation and coordination between a program and the agencies it selects for the field placement of students. A program should designate a field coordinator with clear authority and responsibility for ongoing field administration.*

The program's administrative responsibility should include preparation of a field manual stating field policy and procedures, the objectives of this area of curriculum, and description of the responsibilities of program and agency representatives and students.

The program should articulate the standards it requires to qualify agencies for student field placements. The student's field practicum agency should be evaluated in terms of its consonance with the program's mission, goals, and objectives; its appropriateness for specific learning experiences; its ability to provide educationally directed field instruction; and its clear articulation of student learning in tasks assigned.

If the student is also employed in the agency where the field practicum takes place, the availability of release time for course and field instruction should be ensured. Student assignments and fieldwork supervision should differ from those associated with the student's employment. It should also be demonstrated that there is no diminution of the program's established requirements in class and field practicum and that field instruction is educationally focused rather than solely centered on agency services. As one means of ensuring equal educational opportunity for all students, the field practicum should be administered in accordance with the pattern the program establishes for all students. Agencies involved in this type of field placement should meet the same criteria as other field agencies.

The program should identify the credentials it requires to qualify field instructors, and the credentials should be compatible with program goals. Assessment of a field instructor's qualifications should take into account the individual's professional education, commitment to the values of the social work profession, competence in practice, and interest in supporting student education. A basic requirement for assuming field instruction responsibilities is the agency's adjustment of the individual staff member's work assignments to permit adequate time to develop and implement the student's field practicum. The field practicum plan should give the student regular access to the field instructor.

In those exceptional cases where the field instructor does not hold a social work degree, the social work program faculty should assume responsibility for identifying the specific areas that will require additional faculty involvement to ensure that a social work focus and identification are sustained, and for providing whatever involvement is judged necessary to achieve this objective. The program should be accountable for carrying out this responsibility. Faculty involvement includes frequent and sustained liaison visits to the agency to coordinate and monitor field learning assignments.

The program should articulate detailed criteria for assessing student progress, and for developing and maintaining structured means for evaluating student learning and performance in the field practicum. Field instructors and students should be fully informed of the criteria and means for assessing student progress; these may be disseminated in a field manual, program handbook, or other documents.

- 6.5 Programs must establish and maintain close reciprocal and ongoing relationships with the social work practice community as part of the process of continuous evaluation of curriculum.

Interpretive Guideline 6.5 *The program should initiate and maintain regular planned exchanges among the program, representatives of field practicum agencies, and other social work practitioners regarding the program's educational goals and objectives, curriculum, student performance, and developments in*

the field setting that affect student learning. The program should also systematically provide for the participation of field instructors and other social work practitioners in curriculum assessment leading to curriculum revision and development.

- 6.6 Only those students who are candidates for the baccalaureate degree in social work may be admitted to the field practicum.

Interpretive Guideline 6.6 *This standard refers only to required field practicum courses that meet the requirement for a minimum of 400 clock hours in student field placement. It does not include observational or volunteer opportunities incorporated into other courses in the program.*

- 6.7 Enrollment in social work practice courses beyond the pre-practice or introductory level must generally be restricted to social work majors. Non-majors must have completed the defined prerequisites before entering social work practice courses beyond the prepractice or introductory level.

Interpretive Guideline 6.7 *In the event that non-social work majors are enrolled in practice courses beyond the introductory level, the program should provide evidence that: the integrity of the planned relationship between field and practice content is not impeded; the inclusion of non-majors does not interfere with social work majors' achievement of educational outcomes; and the inclusion of non-majors does not place a burden on program faculty and other resources. The program should report the number and percentage of non-social work majors in practice classes.*

Evaluative Standard 7. Alternative Programs

- 7.0 Alternative programs introduce change into one or more components of a program already accredited by the Commission. If such alterations do not constitute substantive changes, the program must, as part of the self-study process when submitting materials for accreditation, include information about the alternative program and its evaluation results.

If an alternative program involves substantive change, the program is to submit a proposal for the Commission's approval before implementing the alternative program.

Interpretive Guideline 7.0 *Although the traditional full-time, on-campus program remains the basic structure for baccalaureate degree programs in social work, programs may also offer a multiplicity of educational alternatives, including off-campus arrangements, second baccalaureate degree programs, and collaborative arrangements among more than one educational institution. Differences in design or delivery components include those relating to geographic location, time factors, curriculum structure and content, instructional methods, governance, and resources. Although the overall mission and goals may be the same, the student population for whom they are developed, the curriculum emphasis, or the educational approach often vary to the*

extent that they constitute substantive changes. Substantive changes are consistent with curriculum policy and accreditation standards, but do not coincide with the design of the accredited program in one or more ways.

Relating these programs and their component parts to the accreditation standards involves interpretation, elaboration, and reporting beyond procedures required for more traditional arrangements.

In reviewing materials concerning an alternative program, the Commission may request additional information, especially if the alternative program involves substantive change or seems to fall outside curriculum policies or accrediting standards and thus constitutes an experimental program. Questions about whether a program or portion of a program falls outside curriculum policies or accrediting standards should be referred to the director of the Division of Standards and Accreditation.

- 7.1 An alternative program that offers the equivalent of one or more academic years of the social work degree program, whether the class or field curriculum or both, in an off-campus location must submit a proposal to the Commission on Accreditation for approval before implementing the program.

Interpretive Guideline 7.1 *Even when an alternative program is exactly modeled on the main-campus program, if it offers the equivalent in credits of one year or more of course work in an off-campus location it should submit a proposal for approval from the Commission prior to implementation.*

- 7.2 An alternative program that involves collaborative arrangements between two or more educational institutions must submit a proposal to the Commission on Accreditation for approval before implementing the collaborative program.

Interpretive Guideline 7.2 *Although collaborative arrangements are not accredited as such, the same standards that apply to individual programs apply to the evaluation of collaborative arrangements. This permits the Commission to evaluate the structure through which participating programs pool their resources. If a participant in a collaborative is able to meet a specific standard only by virtue of the resources of the collaborative, the combined resources of the collaborative should equal or exceed those that the accreditation standards would normally require of the participating programs evaluated individually. At the same time, a collaborative cannot be evaluated simply by adding up the resources of its parts; rather, it is imperative to monitor the ways in which the total resources are effectively interrelated and used by the individual programs.*

Because of great differences in organizational structure and institutional auspices among programs participating in collaborative arrangements, each collaborating educational institution should submit a separate application for the Council accreditation.

However, all the participants in a collaborative arrangement should submit their applications simultaneously.

- 7.3 The alternative program proposal must include a detailed plan that presents the rationale and goals of the program and elaborates on the curriculum content and objectives. The program must document the equal quality of its alternative programs relative to its standard program. (See Evaluative Standard 6.1.) A design for evaluating the outcomes of the program must be included. (See Evaluative Standards 1.4-1.5.).

Interpretive Guideline 7.3 *The program should have an evaluation design for assessing the outcomes of the alternative program, and for contrasting these outcomes with those of the standard program. The plan for evaluation should follow accepted protocols of evaluation research. The evaluation plan should be presented in sufficient detail to enable the Commission to determine the validity of the evaluation design in relation to the identified goals and objectives. (See the Baccalaureate Self-Study Guide pp. 105-114 of this Handbook for further details on developing an alternative program proposal).*

Evaluative Standard 8. Experimental Programs

- 8.0 Proposals for experimental programs must be submitted to the Commission on Accreditation for approval prior to implementation.

Interpretive Guideline 8.0 *The Commission has responsibility for formulating educational standards and applying them, for encouraging change in a manner that ensures program stability, and for facilitating the testing of new ideas offering reasonable promise of contributing to social work education. The Commission therefore requires accredited programs to submit for approval, in advance of implementation, those plans for curriculum experimentation that fall outside curriculum policies and accrediting standards.*

Programs use curriculum experimentation to advance professional social work education. The Commission encourages accredited programs to undertake projects involving significant planned change in educational programs. "Significant planned change" implies that the experiment does not comply with one or more of the accreditation standards. Therefore, the program should defend the means by which program quality is ensured, presenting a clear rationale for implementing the experimental program.

Experimental programs may be characterized by major curriculum modifications; alterations in resource configurations; alternative program structures; or some other notable experiment that is undertaken to test, expand, or improve social work education.

The project should present a detailed plan that addresses the educational promise of the experiment, including its rationale, goals, and objectives, and the means by which the experiment will be

implemented. The plan should also include the measurement methods that will help determine the extent to which the experiment meets its objectives.

The program should agree to provide ongoing information regarding the experiment, including the experiment's continuous and final assessments, to social work education forums. These forums may include presentations at the Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education, the Commission on Accreditation, or the Commission on Educational Policy, published reports and monographs, or presentations to other professional or learned societies.

Future revisions in the Curriculum Policy Statement and in Evaluative Standards may be influenced by the results of successful educational experiments.

- 8.1 The proposal must include a design for evaluating the outcomes of the experiment. The proposal is to indicate the proposed schedule of periodic evaluation of the program, including a final evaluation.

Interpretive Guideline 8.1 *The project should have an evaluation design for assessing the findings of the project, especially those outcomes that may have general interest or applicability. The plan for evaluation of the proposed experiment should follow accepted protocols of evaluation research. Every effort should be made to review the existing literature related to the experiment to be evaluated. The evaluation plan should be presented in sufficient detail to enable the Commission to determine the validity of the evaluation design in relation to the identified issues and objectives. (See Evaluative Standards 1.0-1.2, 1.4-1.5). (See Baccalaureate Self-Study Guide, p. 105 of this Handbook.)*

The time limit should be appropriate to the design of the evaluation research. Although the final results must await the conclusion of the project, preliminary and partial evaluation after one year, or at most two, should be possible. Interim reports on the project may also be requested by the Commission.

Curriculum Policy Statement for Baccalaureate Degree Programs in Social Work Education

B1.0 Scope and Intent of the Curriculum Policy Statement

- B1.1 This document sets forth the official curriculum policy for the accreditation of baccalaureate (BSW) programs of social work education by the Council on

Social Work Education. It supersedes all prior statements of curriculum policy for the baccalaureate program level.

- B1.2 The Curriculum Policy Statement establishes mandates for minimum requirements for the curricula of baccalaureate programs to be accredited by the Council. The policy statement specifies certain content areas and requires that they be logically related to each other, to the purposes and values of social work set forth in this document, and to the purposes, mission, resources, and educational context of each professional program. The statement does not prescribe any particular curriculum design.
- B1.3 Each program is responsible for making every faculty member, student, field instructor, and administrator associated with the program aware of the content of the Curriculum Policy Statement.

B2.0 Relationship to Accreditation Standards

- B2.1 The Commission on Accreditation of the Council develops standards by which social work education programs are evaluated for accreditation. These standards pertain to the organization, administration, and curriculum implementation of programs of social work education. Curriculum standards are derived from and must conform with this Curriculum Policy Statement.

B3.0 Premises Underlying Social Work Education

- B3.1 The purpose of social work education is to prepare competent, effective social work professionals who are committed to practice that includes services to the poor and oppressed, and who work to alleviate poverty, oppression, and discrimination.
- B3.2 Social work education is based upon a specific body of knowledge, values, and professional skills. It is grounded in the profession's history and philosophy. Education for the profession promotes the development and advancement of knowledge, practice skills, and services that further the well-being of people and promote social and economic justice. Social work education is responsible for the production and application of research and scholarship aimed at advancing social work practice.
- B3.3 Programs of social work education are offered at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels. Doctoral programs are not accredited by the Council.
- B3.4 Programs of social work education maintain close, reciprocal, and ongoing relationships with social work practitioners and with groups and organizations that promote, provide, or seek to influence social policies and social work services. Responsibility for initiating these relationships rests with social work education programs. Effective programs develop and maintain systematic communication with these individuals and groups.
- B3.5 The effectiveness of any profession depends on the active engagement of its members in continuous learning. Programs of social work education strive to promote continuing professional development of students and faculty. Programs seek to teach students how to become lifelong learners who are

motivated to continue developing new knowledge and skills throughout their careers.

- B3.6 Effective social work education programs recognize the interdependence of nations and the need for worldwide professional cooperation.
- B3.7 Social work education programs assume a leadership role within the profession by offering curricula that are at the forefront of the new and changing knowledge base of social work and its supporting disciplines.

B4.0 Purpose of Social Work

- B4.1 The profession of social work is committed to the enhancement of human well-being and to the alleviation of poverty and oppression. The social work profession receives its sanction from public and private auspices and is the primary profession in the provision of social services. Within its general scope of concern, professional social work is practiced in a wide variety of settings. It has four related purposes:
 - B4.1.1 The promotion, restoration, maintenance, and enhancement of the functioning of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities by helping them to accomplish tasks, prevent and alleviate distress, and use resources.
 - B4.1.2 The planning, formulation, and implementation of social policies, services, resources, and programs needed to meet basic human needs and support the development of human capacities.
 - B4.1.3 The pursuit of policies, services, resources, and programs through organizational or administrative advocacy and social or political action, to empower groups at risk and to promote social and economic justice.
 - B4.1.4 The development and testing of professional knowledge and skills related to these purposes.

B5.0 Purpose and Structure of Baccalaureate Social Work Education

- B5.1 The purpose of professional social work education is to enable students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession into competent practice. The achievement of this purpose requires clarity about learning objectives and expected student outcomes, flexibility in programming and teaching to accommodate a diverse student population, and commitment of sufficient time and resources to their education.
- B5.2 Two levels of social work education are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education: the baccalaureate and the master's. The baccalaureate level prepares students for generalist social work practice, and the master's level prepares students for advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. These levels of education differ from each other in the depth, breadth, and specificity of knowledge and skill that students are expected to synthesize and apply in practice.

Both levels of social work education must provide a professional foundation curriculum that contains the common body of the profession's knowledge, values, and skills. This common base is transferable among settings, population groups, and problem areas. The baccalaureate level of social work education must include a liberal arts perspective and the professional foundation content, which prepares students for direct services with client systems of various sizes and types.

- B5.3 Professional social work education at the baccalaureate level takes place in accredited baccalaureate degree-granting colleges and universities.
- B5.4 All baccalaureate social work programs must:
 - B5.4.1 Provide content about social work practice with client systems of various sizes and types.
 - B5.4.2 Prepare graduates to practice with diverse populations.
 - B5.4.3 Provide content about the social contexts of social work practice, the changing nature of those contexts, the behavior of organizations, and the dynamics of change.
 - B5.4.4 Infuse throughout the curriculum the values and ethics that guide professional social workers in their practice.
 - B5.4.5 Prepare graduates who are aware of their responsibility to continue their professional growth and development.
- B5.5 The baccalaureate curriculum must be based upon a liberal arts perspective and must include the professional foundation.
- B5.6 The baccalaureate curriculum must be developed and organized as a coherent and integrated whole.
- B5.7 Graduates of a baccalaureate social work program will be able to:
 - B5.7.1 Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
 - B5.7.2 Practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession and with an understanding of and respect for the positive value of diversity.
 - B5.7.3 Demonstrate the professional use of self.
 - B5.7.4 Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and the strategies of change that advance social and economic justice.
 - B5.7.5 Understand the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues.
 - B5.7.6 Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work to practice with systems of all sizes.
 - B5.7.7 Apply knowledge of bio-psycho-social variables that affect individual development and behavior, and use theoretical frameworks to understand the interactions among individuals and between individuals and social systems (i.e., families, groups, organizations, and communities).

- B5.7.8 Analyze the impact of social policies on client systems, workers, and agencies.
- B5.7.9 Evaluate research studies and apply findings to practice, and, under supervision, to evaluate their own practice interventions and those of other relevant systems.
- B5.7.10 Use communication skills differentially with a variety of client populations, colleagues, and members of the community.
- B5.7.11 Use supervision appropriate to generalist practice.
- B5.7.12 Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems, and under supervision, seek necessary organizational change.

Liberal Arts Perspective

- B5.8 A liberal arts perspective enriches understanding of the person-environment context of professional social work practice and is integrally related to the mastery of social work content. The baccalaureate professional program in social work is built upon a liberal arts perspective.
- B5.9 A liberal arts perspective provides an understanding of one's cultural heritage in the context of other cultures; the methods and limitations of various systems of inquiry; and the knowledge, attitudes, ways of thinking, and means of communication that are characteristic of a broadly educated person. Students must be capable of thinking critically about society, about people and their problems, and about such expressions of culture as art, literature, science, history, and philosophy. Students must have direct knowledge of social, psychological, and biological determinants of human behavior and of diverse cultures, social conditions, and social problems.
- B5.10 Determination of whether students have acquired a liberal arts perspective is left to the judgment of each social work program's faculty. Each program must clearly explicate the requirements for training in a liberal arts perspective and the rationale for those requirements.

B6.0 Baccalaureate Curriculum Content

- B6.1 The baccalaureate curriculum must include a liberal arts perspective and the professional foundation. The professional foundation includes content on social work values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field practicum. Baccalaureate programs must achieve integration among these professional content areas. Curriculum areas do not need to be taught in discrete courses, but mastery of the professional curriculum must occur through classroom experiences and field practice. The baccalaureate social work curriculum must cover, but is not necessarily limited to, the professional foundation.
- B6.2 The curriculum design of each program must identify a coherent approach for the selection of research and theories offered. Every part of the baccalaureate curriculum must strengthen the student's understanding and appreciation of a scientific, analytic approach to building knowledge for the delivery and

evaluation of practice. Content provided in each curricular area must be relevant to the objectives, philosophy, and mission of the individual program and must facilitate the student's understanding of how the knowledge relates to social work practice.

Social Work Values and Ethics

- B6.3 Programs of social work education must provide specific knowledge about social work values and their ethical implications and must provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their application in professional practice. Students must be assisted to develop an awareness of their personal values and to clarify conflicting values and ethical dilemmas. Among the values and principles that must be infused throughout every social work curriculum are the following:
- B6.3.1 Social workers' professional relationships are built on regard for individual worth and dignity, and advance by mutual participation, acceptance, confidentiality, honesty, and responsible handling of conflict.
 - B6.3.2 Social workers respect individuals' right to make independent decisions and to participate actively in the helping process.
 - B6.3.3 Social workers are committed to assisting client systems to obtain needed resources.
 - B6.3.4 Social workers strive to make social institutions more humane and responsive to human needs.
 - B6.3.5 Social workers demonstrate respect for and acceptance of the unique characteristics of diverse populations.
 - B6.3.6 Social workers are responsible for their own ethical conduct, the quality of their practice, and for seeking continuous growth in the knowledge and skills of their profession.

Diversity

- B6.4 Professional social work education is committed to preparing students to understand and appreciate human diversity. Programs must provide curriculum content about differences and similarities in the experiences, needs, and beliefs of people. The curriculum must include content about differential assessment and intervention skills that will enable practitioners to serve diverse populations.

Each program is required to include content about population groups that are particularly relevant to the program's mission. These include, but are not limited to, groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin.

Promotion of Social and Economic Justice

- B6.5 Programs of social work education must provide an understanding of the dynamics and consequences of social and economic injustice, including all forms of human oppression and discrimination. They must provide students with the skills to promote social change and to implement a wide range of

interventions that advance the achievement of individual and collective social and economic justice. Theoretical and practice content must be provided about strategies of intervention for achieving social and economic justice and for combating the causes and effects of institutionalized forms of oppression.

Populations-at-Risk

- B6.6 Programs of social work education must present theoretical and practice content about patterns, dynamics, and consequences of discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression. The curriculum must provide content about people of color, women, and gay and lesbian persons. Such content must emphasize the impact of discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression upon these groups.

Each program must include content about populations-at-risk that are particularly relevant to its mission. In addition to those mandated above, such groups include, but are not limited to, those distinguished by age, ethnicity, culture, class, religion, and physical or mental ability.

Human Behavior and the Social Environment

- B6.7 Programs of social work education must provide content about theories and knowledge of human bio-psycho-social development, including theories and knowledge about the range of social systems in which individuals live (families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities). The human behavior and the social environment curriculum must provide an understanding of the interactions between and among human biological, social, psychological, and cultural systems as they affect and are affected by human behavior. The impact of social and economic forces on individuals and social systems must be presented. Content must be provided about the ways in which systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving optimal health and well-being. Content about values and ethical issues related to bio-psycho-social theories must be included. Students must be taught to evaluate theory and apply theory to client situations.

Social Welfare Policy and Services

- B6.8 Social welfare policy and services content must include the history, mission, and philosophy of the social work profession. Content must be presented about the history and current patterns of provision of social welfare services, the role of social policy in helping or deterring people in maintaining or achieving optimal health and well-being, and the effect of policy on social work practice. Students must be taught to analyze current social policy within the context of historical and contemporary factors that shape policy. Content must be presented about the political and organizational processes used to influence policy, the process of policy formulation, and the frameworks for analyzing social policies in light of the principles of social and economic justice.

Social Work Practice

- B6.9 At the baccalaureate level, professional social work education prepares students for generalist practice with systems of all sizes. Practice content emphasizes professional relationships that are characterized by mutuality, collaboration, and respect for the client. Content on practice assessment focuses on the examination of client strengths and problems in the interactions among individuals and between people and their environments.

Social work practice content must include knowledge, values, and skills to enhance the well-being of people and to help ameliorate the environmental conditions that affect people adversely. Practice content must include the following skills: defining issues; collecting and assessing data; planning and contracting; identifying alternative interventions; selecting and implementing appropriate courses of action; using appropriate research to monitor and evaluate outcomes; applying appropriate research-based knowledge and technological advances; and termination. Practice content also includes approaches to and skills for practice with clients from differing social, cultural, racial, religious, spiritual, and class backgrounds, and with systems of all sizes.

- B6.10 Each program must explicate the ways in which students are prepared for generalist practice.

Research

- B6.11 The research curriculum must provide an understanding and appreciation of a scientific, analytic approach to building knowledge for practice and to evaluating service delivery in all areas of practice. Ethical standards of scientific inquiry must be included in the research content.

The research content must include quantitative and qualitative research methodologies; analysis of data, including statistical procedures; systematic evaluation of practice; analysis and evaluation of theoretical bases, research questions, methodologies, statistical procedures, and conclusions of research reports; and relevant technological advances.

- B6.12 Each program must identify how the research curriculum contributes to the student's use of scientific knowledge for practice.

Field Practicum

- B6.13 The field practicum is an integral component of the curriculum in social work education. It engages the student in supervised social work practice and provides opportunities to apply classroom learning in the field setting.
- B6.14 Field education at the baccalaureate level requires a minimum of 400 hours in field practicum.
- B6.15 Each educational program must establish standards for field practicum settings that define their social work services and practices, field instructor assignments and activities, and student learning expectations and responsibilities. Individual programs may organize their practice in different ways but must ensure educationally directed, coordinated, and monitored practicum experiences for all students. All programs must provide:

- a. A placement that is based upon the objectives of the educational program and the learning needs of each student.
- b. Structured learning opportunities that enable students to compare their practice experiences, integrate knowledge acquired in the classroom, and expand knowledge beyond the scope of the practicum setting.
- c. Support for field practicum instructors by:
 - 1. Sharing pertinent information about practicum students.
 - 2. Providing information about the organization and content of the educational curriculum, emphasizing the interrelationships among human behavior, social policy, research, and practice content.
 - 3. Providing information about the sequencing of course content.
 - 4. Articulating clear practice and evaluation goals for the field practicum and for each student.
 - 5. Offering orientation and training programs.

B6.16 The baccalaureate practicum must provide the student with opportunities for:

- a. The development of an awareness of self in the process of intervention.
- b. Supervised practice experience in the application of knowledge, values and ethics, and practice skills to enhance the well-being of people and to work toward the amelioration of environmental conditions that affect people adversely.
- c. Use of oral and written professional communications that are consistent with the language of the practicum setting and of the profession.
- d. Use of professional supervision to enhance learning.
- e. Critical assessment, implementation, and evaluation of agency policy within ethical guidelines.

B7.0 Avenues of Renewal

- B7.1 Programs of social work education must remain vital and progressive by actively pursuing ongoing exchanges with the practice community and other essential groups, and by developing and assessing new knowledge and technology.
 - B7.1.1 Programs must establish and maintain close, reciprocal, and ongoing relationships with social work practitioners, and use those relationships continuously to evaluate the total curriculum.
 - B7.1.2 Programs must establish and maintain relationships with groups that develop, implement, and benefit from social policies and services.
 - B7.1.3 Programs must establish and maintain involvement with professional associations and with academic disciplines and departments.
 - B7.1.4 Programs must assume responsibility for systematic, high-quality scholarship that assesses social work practice and develops new knowledge.

HANDBOOK OF ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

FIFTH EDITION

**COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION
COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION**

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2. Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards

Preamble

Social work practice promotes human well-being by strengthening opportunities, resources, and capacities of people in their environments and by creating policies and services to correct conditions that limit human rights and the quality of life. The social work profession works to eliminate poverty, discrimination, and oppression. Guided by a person-in-environment perspective and respect for human diversity, the profession works to effect social and economic justice worldwide.

Social work education combines scientific inquiry with the teaching of professional skills to provide effective and ethical social work services. Social work educators reflect their identification with the profession through their teaching, scholarship, and service. Social work education, from baccalaureate to doctoral levels, employs educational, practice, scholarly, interprofessional, and service delivery models to orient and shape the profession's future in the context of expanding knowledge, changing technologies, and complex human and social concerns.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) promotes academic excellence in baccalaureate and master's social work education. The EPAS specifies the curricular content and educational context to prepare students for professional social work practice. The EPAS sets forth basic requirements for these purposes. Beyond these basic requirements of EPAS, individual programs focus on areas relevant to their institutional and program mission, goals, and objectives.

The EPAS permits programs to use time-tested and new models of program design, implementation, and evaluation. It does so by balancing requirements that promote comparability across programs with a level of flexibility that encourages programs to respond to changing human, professional, and institutional needs.

The EPAS focuses on assessing the results of a program's development and its continuous improvement. While accreditation is ultimately evaluative, in social work education it is based on a consultative and collaborative process that determines whether a program meets the requirements of the EPAS.

Functions of Educational Policy and Accreditation

1. Educational Policy

The Educational Policy promotes excellence, creativity, and innovation in social work education and practice. It sets forth required content areas that relate to each other and to the purposes, knowledge, and values of the profession. Programs of social work education are offered at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels. Baccalaureate and master's programs are accredited by CSWE. This document supersedes all prior statements of curriculum policy for baccalaureate and master's program levels.

2. Accreditation

Accreditation ensures that the quality of professional programs merits public confidence. The Accreditation Standards establish basic requirements for baccalaureate and master's levels. Accreditation Standards pertain to the following program elements:

- Mission, goals, and objectives
- Curriculum
- Governance, structure, and resources
- Faculty
- Student professional development
- Nondiscrimination and human diversity
- Program renewal
- Program assessment and continuous improvement

3. Relationship of Educational Policy to Accreditation

CSWE uses the EPAS for the accreditation of social work programs. The Educational Policy and the Accreditation Standards are conceptually integrated. Programs use Educational Policy, Section 1 as one important basis for developing program mission, goals, and objectives. Programs use Educational Policy, Section 3 to develop program objectives and Educational Policy, Sections 4 and 5 to develop content for demonstrating attainment of the objectives. The accreditation process reviews the program's self-study document, site team report, and program response to determine compliance with the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. Accredited programs meet all standards.

Educational Policy

1. Purposes

1.0 Purposes of the Social Work Profession

The social work profession receives its sanction from public and private auspices and is the primary profession in the development, provision, and evaluation of social services. Professional social workers are leaders in a variety of organizational settings and service delivery systems within a global context.

The profession of social work is based on the values of service, social and economic justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, and integrity and competence in practice. With these values as defining principles, the purposes of social work are:

- To enhance human well-being and alleviate poverty, oppression, and other forms of social injustice.
- To enhance the social functioning and interactions of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities by involving them in accomplishing goals, developing resources, and preventing and alleviating distress.
- To formulate and implement social policies, services, and programs that meet basic human needs and support the development of human capacities.
- To pursue policies, services, and resources through advocacy and social or political actions that promote social and economic justice.
- To develop and use research, knowledge, and skills that advance social work practice.
- To develop and apply practice in the context of diverse cultures.

1.1 Purposes of Social Work Education

The purposes of social work education are to prepare competent and effective professionals, to develop social work knowledge, and to provide leadership in the development of service delivery systems. Social work education is grounded in the profession's history, purposes, and philosophy and is based on a body of knowledge, values, and skills. Social work education enables students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession for competent practice.

1.2 Achievement of Purposes

Among its programs, which vary in design, structure, and objectives, social work education achieves these purposes through such means as:

- Providing curricula and teaching practices at the forefront of the new and changing knowledge base of social work and related disciplines.

- Providing curricula that build on a liberal arts perspective to promote breadth of knowledge, critical thinking, and communication skills.
- Developing knowledge.
- Developing and applying instructional and practice-relevant technology.
- Maintaining reciprocal relationships with social work practitioners, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Promoting continual professional development of students, faculty, and practitioners.
- Promoting interprofessional and interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Preparing social workers to engage in prevention activities that promote well-being.
- Preparing social workers to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.
- Preparing social workers to evaluate the processes and effectiveness of practice.
- Preparing social workers to practice without discrimination, with respect, and with knowledge and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
- Preparing social workers to alleviate poverty, oppression, and other forms of social injustice.
- Preparing social workers to recognize the global context of social work practice.
- Preparing social workers to formulate and influence social policies and social work services in diverse political contexts.

2. Structure of Social Work Education

2.0 Structure

Baccalaureate and graduate social work education programs operate under the auspices of accredited colleges and universities. These educational institutions vary by auspices, emphasis, and size. With diverse strengths, missions, and resources, social work education programs share a common commitment to educate competent, ethical social workers.

The baccalaureate and master's levels of social work education are anchored in the purposes of the social work profession and promote the knowledge, values, and skills of the profession. Baccalaureate social work education programs prepare graduates for generalist professional practice. Master's social work education programs prepare graduates for advanced professional practice in an area of concentration. The baccalaureate and master's levels of educational preparation are differentiated according to (a) conceptualization and design, (b) content, (c) program objectives, and (d) depth, breadth, and specificity of knowledge and skills. Frameworks and perspectives for

concentration include fields of practice, problem areas, intervention methods, and practice contexts and perspectives.

Programs develop their mission and goals within the purposes of the profession, the purposes of social work education, and their institutional context. Programs also recognize academic content and professional experiences that students bring to the educational program. A conceptual framework, built upon relevant theories and knowledge, shapes the breadth and depth of knowledge and practice skills to be acquired.

2.1 Program Renewal

Social work education remains vital, relevant, and progressive by pursuing exchanges with the practice community and program stakeholders and by developing and assessing new knowledge and technology.

3. Program Objectives

Social work education is grounded in the liberal arts and contains a coherent, integrated professional foundation in social work. The graduate advanced curriculum is built from the professional foundation. Graduates of baccalaureate and master's social work programs demonstrate the capacity to meet the foundation objectives and objectives unique to the program. Graduates of master's social work programs also demonstrate the capacity to meet advanced program objectives.

3.0 Foundation Program Objectives

The professional foundation, which is essential to the practice of any social worker, includes, but is not limited to, the following program objectives. Graduates demonstrate the ability to:

1. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.
2. Understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards and principles, and practice accordingly.
3. Practice without discrimination and with respect, knowledge, and skills related to clients' age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.
4. Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply strategies of advocacy and social change that advance social and economic justice.
5. Understand and interpret the history of the social work profession and its contemporary structures and issues.
- B6. Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work practice with systems of all sizes.¹

- M6. Apply the knowledge and skills of a generalist social work perspective to practice with systems of all sizes.
7. Use theoretical frameworks supported by empirical evidence to understand individual development and behavior across the life span and the interactions among individuals and between individuals and families, groups, organizations, and communities.
 8. Analyze, formulate, and influence social policies.
 9. Evaluate research studies, apply research findings to practice, and evaluate their own practice interventions.
 10. Use communication skills differentially across client populations, colleagues, and communities.
 11. Use supervision and consultation appropriate to social work practice.
 12. Function within the structure of organizations and service delivery systems and seek necessary organizational change.

3.1 Concentration Objectives

Graduates of a master's social work program are advanced practitioners who apply the knowledge and skills of advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. They analyze, intervene, and evaluate in ways that are highly differentiated, discriminating, and self-critical. Graduates synthesize and apply a broad range of knowledge and skills with a high degree of autonomy and proficiency. They refine and advance the quality of their practice and that of the larger social work profession.

3.2 Additional Program Objectives

A program may develop additional objectives to cover the required content in relation to its particular mission, goals, and educational level.

4. Foundation Curriculum Content

All social work programs provide foundation content in the areas specified below. Content areas may be combined and delivered with a variety of instructional technologies. Content is relevant to the mission, goals, and objectives of the program and to the purposes, values, and ethics of the social work profession.

4.0 Values and Ethics

Social work education programs integrate content about values and principles of ethical decision making as presented in the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics. The educational experience provides students with the opportunity to be aware of personal values; develop, demonstrate, and promote the values of the profession; and

analyze ethical dilemmas and the ways in which these affect practice, services, and clients.

4.1 Diversity

Social work programs integrate content that promotes understanding, affirmation, and respect for people from diverse backgrounds. The content emphasizes the interlocking and complex nature of culture and personal identity. It ensures that social services meet the needs of groups served and are culturally relevant. Programs educate students to recognize diversity within and between groups that may influence assessment, planning, intervention, and research. Students learn how to define, design, and implement strategies for effective practice with persons from diverse backgrounds.

4.2 Populations-at-Risk and Social and Economic Justice

Social work education programs integrate content on populations-at-risk, examining the factors that contribute to and constitute being at risk. Programs educate students to identify how group membership influences access to resources, and present content on the dynamics of such risk factors and responsive and productive strategies to redress them.

Programs integrate social and economic justice content grounded in an understanding of distributive justice, human and civil rights, and the global interconnections of oppression. Programs provide content related to implementing strategies to combat discrimination, oppression, and economic deprivation and to promote social and economic justice. Programs prepare students to advocate for nondiscriminatory social and economic systems.

4.3 Human Behavior and the Social Environment

Social work education programs provide content on the reciprocal relationships between human behavior and social environments. Content includes empirically based theories and knowledge that focus on the interactions between and among individuals, groups, societies, and economic systems. It includes theories and knowledge of biological, sociological, cultural, psychological, and spiritual development across the life span; the range of social systems in which people live (individual, family, group, organizational, and community); and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being.

4.4 Social Welfare Policy and Services

Programs provide content about the history of social work, the history and current structures of social welfare services, and the role of policy in service delivery, social work practice, and attainment of individual and social well-being. Course content provides students with knowledge and skills to understand major policies that form the foundation of social welfare; analyze organizational, local, state, national, and

international issues in social welfare policy and social service delivery; analyze and apply the results of policy research relevant to social service delivery; understand and demonstrate policy practice skills in regard to economic, political, and organizational systems, and use them to influence, formulate, and advocate for policy consistent with social work values; and identify financial, organizational, administrative, and planning processes required to deliver social services.

4.5 Social Work Practice

Social work practice content is anchored in the purposes of the social work profession and focuses on strengths, capacities, and resources of client systems in relation to their broader environments. Students learn practice content that encompasses knowledge and skills to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. This content includes engaging clients in an appropriate working relationship, identifying issues, problems, needs, resources, and assets; collecting and assessing information; and planning for service delivery. It includes using communication skills, supervision, and consultation. Practice content also includes identifying, analyzing, and implementing empirically based interventions designed to achieve client goals; applying empirical knowledge and technological advances; evaluating program outcomes and practice effectiveness; developing, analyzing, advocating, and providing leadership for policies and services; and promoting social and economic justice.

4.6 Research

Qualitative and quantitative research content provides understanding of a scientific, analytic, and ethical approach to building knowledge for practice. The content prepares students to develop, use, and effectively communicate empirically based knowledge, including evidence-based interventions. Research knowledge is used by students to provide high-quality services; to initiate change; to improve practice, policy, and social service delivery; and to evaluate their own practice.

4.7 Field Education

Field education is an integral component of social work education anchored in the mission, goals, and educational level of the program. It occurs in settings that reinforce students' identification with the purposes, values, and ethics of the profession; fosters the integration of empirical and practice-based knowledge; and promotes the development of professional competence. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated on the basis of criteria by which students demonstrate the achievement of program objectives.

5. Advanced Curriculum Content

The master's curriculum prepares graduates for advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. Using a conceptual framework to identify advanced knowledge and skills, programs build an advanced curriculum from the foundation content. In the advanced curriculum, the foundation content areas (Section 4, 4.0–4.7) are addressed in greater depth, breadth, and specificity and support the program's conception of advanced practice.

Accreditation Standards

1. Program Mission, Goals, and Objectives

- 1.0 The social work program has a mission appropriate to professional social work education as defined in Educational Policy, Section 1.1. The program's mission is appropriate to the level or levels for which it is preparing students for practice and is consistent with the institution's mission.
- 1.1 The program has goals derived from its mission. These goals reflect the purposes of the Educational Policy, Section 1.1. Program goals are not limited to these purposes.
- 1.2 The program has objectives that are derived from the program goals. These objectives are consistent with Educational Policy, Section 3. Program objectives are reflected in program implementation and continuous assessment (see Accreditation Standard 8).
- 1.3 The program makes its constituencies aware of its mission, goals, and objectives.

2. Curriculum

- 2.0 The curriculum is developed and organized as a coherent and integrated whole consistent with program goals and objectives. Social work education is grounded in the liberal arts and contains a coherent, integrated professional foundation in social work practice from which an advanced practice curriculum is built at the graduate level.
 - B2.0.1 The program defines its conception of generalist social work practice, describes its coverage of the professional foundation curriculum identified in Educational Policy, Section 4, and demonstrates how its conception of generalist practice is implemented in all components of the professional curriculum.
 - M2.0.1 The program describes its coverage of the foundation and advanced curriculum content, identified in Educational Policy, Sections 4 and 5. The program defines its conception of advanced practice and explains how the

advanced curriculum is built from the professional foundation. The master's program has a concentration curriculum that includes (a) concentration objectives, (b) a conceptual framework built on relevant theories, (c) curriculum design and content, and (d) field education that supports the advanced curriculum. The program demonstrates how the depth, breadth, and specificity of the advanced curriculum are addressed in relation to the professional foundation.

2.1 The social work program administers field education (Educational Policy, Section 4.7 and Section 5) consistent with program goals and objectives that:

2.1.1 Provides for a minimum of 400 hours of field education for baccalaureate programs and 900 hours for master's programs.

2.1.2 Admits only those students who have met the program's specified criteria for field education.

2.1.3 Specifies policies, criteria, and procedures for selecting agencies and field instructors; placing and monitoring students; maintaining field liaison contacts with agencies; and evaluating student learning and agency effectiveness in providing field instruction.

2.1.4 Specifies that field instructors for baccalaureate students hold a CSWE-accredited baccalaureate or master's social work degree.² Field instructors for master's students hold a CSWE-accredited master's social work degree. In programs where a field instructor does not hold a CSWE-accredited baccalaureate or master's social work degree, the program assumes responsibility for reinforcing a social work perspective.

2.1.5 Provides orientation, field instruction training, and continuing dialog with agencies and field instructors.

2.1.6 Develops policies regarding field placements in an agency in which the student is also employed. Student assignments and field education supervision differ from those associated with the student's employment.

3. Program Governance, Administrative Structure, and Resources

3.0 The social work program has the necessary autonomy and administrative structure to achieve its goals and objectives.

3.0.1 The social work faculty defines program curriculum consistent with the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards and the institution's policies.

- 3.0.2 The administration and faculty of the social work program participate in formulating and implementing policies related to the recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion, and tenure of program personnel.
 - 3.0.3 The chief administrator of the social work program has either a CSWE-accredited master's social work degree, with a doctoral degree preferred, or a professional degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and a doctoral degree. The chief administrator also has demonstrated leadership ability through teaching, scholarship, curriculum development, administrative experience, and other academic and professional activities in the field of social work.
 - 3.0.4 The chief administrator of the social work program has a full-time appointment to the program and sufficient assigned time (at least 25% for baccalaureate programs and 50% for master's programs) to provide educational and administrative leadership. Combined programs designate a social work faculty member and assign this person sufficient time to administer the baccalaureate social work program.
 - 3.0.5 The field education director has a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and at least two years post-baccalaureate or post-master's social work degree practice experience.
 - 3.0.6 The field education director has a full-time appointment to the program and sufficient assigned time (at least 25% for baccalaureate programs and 50% for master's programs) to provide educational and administrative leadership for field education.
- 3.1 The social work program has sufficient resources to achieve program goals and objectives.
- 3.1.1 The program has sufficient support staff, other personnel, and technological resources to support program functioning.
 - 3.1.2 The program has sufficient and stable financial supports that permit program planning and achievement of program goals and objectives. These include a budgetary allocation and procedures for budget development and administration.
 - 3.1.3 The program has comprehensive library holdings and electronic access, as well as other informational and educational resources necessary for achieving the program's goals and objectives.
 - 3.1.4 The program has sufficient office and classroom space, computer-mediated access, or both to achieve the program's goals and objectives.

- 3.1.5 The program has access to assistive technology, including materials in alternative formats (such as Braille, large print, books on tape, assistive learning systems).

4. Faculty

- 4.0 The program has full-time faculty, which may be augmented by part-time faculty, with the qualifications, competence, and range of expertise in social work education and practice to achieve its goals and objectives. The program has a sufficient full-time equivalent faculty-to-student ratio (usually 1:25 for baccalaureate programs and 1:12 for master's programs) to carry out ongoing functions of the program.
- 4.1 The program demonstrates how the use of part-time faculty assists in the achievement of the program's goals and objectives.
- 4.2 Faculty size is commensurate with the number and type of curricular offerings in class and field; class size; number of students; and the faculty's teaching, scholarly, and service responsibilities.
- B4.2.1 The baccalaureate social work program has a minimum of two full-time faculty with master's social work degrees from a CSWE-accredited program, with full-time appointment in social work, and whose principal assignment is to the baccalaureate program. It is preferred that faculty have a doctoral degree.
- M4.2.1 The master's social work program has a minimum of six full-time faculty with master's social work degrees from a CSWE-accredited program and whose principal assignment is to the master's program. The majority of the full-time master's social work program faculty have a master's degree in social work and a doctoral degree.
- 4.3 Faculty who teach required practice courses have a master's social work degree from a CSWE-accredited program and at least two years post-baccalaureate or post-master's social work degree practice experience.
- 4.4 The program has a faculty workload policy that supports the achievement of institutional priorities and the program's goals and objectives.

5. Student Professional Development

- 5.0 The program has admissions criteria and procedures that reflect the program's goals and objectives.
- M5.1 Only candidates who have earned a bachelor's degree are admitted to the master's social work degree program.

- 5.2 The program has a written policy indicating that it does not grant social work course credit for life experience or previous work experience.
- 5.3 In those foundation curriculum areas where students demonstrate required knowledge and skills, the program describes how it ensures that students do not repeat that content.
 - 5.3.1 The program has written policies and procedures concerning the transfer of credits.
 - M5.3.2 Advanced standing status is only awarded to graduates of baccalaureate social work programs accredited by CSWE.
- 5.4 The program has academic and professional advising policies and procedures that are consistent with the program's goals and objectives. Professional advising is provided by social work program faculty, staff, or both.
- 5.5 The program has policies and procedures specifying students' rights and responsibilities to participate in formulating and modifying policies affecting academic and student affairs. It provides opportunities and encourages students to organize in their interests.
- 5.6 The program informs students of its criteria for evaluating their academic and professional performance.
- 5.7 The program has policies and procedures for terminating a student's enrollment in the social work program for reasons of academic and professional performance.

6. Nondiscrimination and Human Diversity

- 6.0 The program makes specific and continuous efforts to provide a learning context in which respect for all persons and understanding of diversity (including age, class, color, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation) are practiced. Social work education builds upon professional purposes and values; therefore, the program provides a learning context that is nondiscriminatory and reflects the profession's fundamental tenets. The program describes how its learning context and educational program (including faculty, staff, and student composition; selection of agencies and their clientele as field education settings; composition of program advisory or field committees; resource allocation; program leadership; speakers series, seminars, and special programs; research and other initiatives) and its curriculum model understanding of and respect for diversity.

7. Program Renewal

**Revisions in Accreditation Standards 3.0.3 and 3.0.4
(October 2004)**

- OLD** **3.0.3** The chief administrator of the social work program has either a CSWE-accredited master's social work degree, with a doctoral degree preferred, or a professional degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and a doctoral degree. The chief administrator also has demonstrated leadership ability through teaching, scholarship, curriculum development, administrative experience, and other academic and professional activities in the field of social work.
- NEW** **3.0.3** The chief administrator has demonstrated leadership ability through teaching, scholarship, curriculum development, administrative experience, and other academic and professional activities in the field of social work.
- B 3.0.3** At the baccalaureate level, the social work program director who is the chief administrator, or his or her designee, has a master's of social work degree from a CSWE-accredited program with a doctoral degree preferred or a baccalaureate degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and a doctoral degree.
- M 3.0.3** At the master's level, the social work program director who is the chief administrator, or his or her designee, has a master's of social work degree from a CSWE-accredited program. In addition, it is preferred that the MSW program director have a doctoral degree.
- OLD** **3.0.4** The chief administrator of the social work program has a full-time appointment to the program and sufficient assigned time (at least 25% for baccalaureate programs and 50% for master's programs) to provide educational and administrative leadership. Combined programs designate a social work faculty member and assign this person sufficient time to administer the baccalaureate social work program.
- NEW** **3.0.4** Social work program directors have a full-time appointment to the social work program and sufficient assigned time (at least 50% at the master's level and at least 25% at the baccalaureate level) to provide educational and administrative leadership. Combined programs designate a full-time social work faculty member to administer the baccalaureate social work program.

*Board Approval
10/22/04*

