



CASWE-ACFTS

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE POUR LA FORMATION EN TRAVAIL SOCIAL

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES and ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR CANADIAN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION¹

¹ Approved by the CASWE-ACFTS Board of Directors on March 23, 2021

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Preamble

1. Context of Social Work Education in Canada

There are three sectors of social work within Canada: social work education, social work professional practice and social work regulation. The Canadian Association for Social Work Education-Association canadienne pour la formation en travail social (CASWE-ACFTS), through its Educational Policies and Standards for Accreditation, accredits Baccalaureate and Master level social work **programs** within Canada. CASWE-ACFTS recognizes, acknowledges, and respects that social work education occurs within the traditional and contemporary territories and nations of **Indigenous** Peoples.

Social work practice has been historically conducted to fall under provincial jurisdiction. The Canadian Association of Social Workers-Association canadienne des travailleuses sociales et des travailleurs sociaux (CASW-ACTS) is the national professional association.

Social work regulation also falls under provincial jurisdiction. The Canadian Council of Social Work Regulators-Conseil canadien des organismes de réglementation en travail social (CCSWR-CCORTS) represents provincial/territorial social work regulatory authorities in Canada.

2. CASWE-ACFTS: Vision and Mission

The Canadian Association for Social Work Education-Association canadienne pour la formation en travail social (CASWE-ACFTS) arose from the National Committee of Schools of Social Work in Canada (established in 1945). Prior to 1973, the National Committee relied upon the American Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) to accredit social work education programs in Canada. However, in recognition of the unique Canadian context, the National Committee assumed responsibility for the accreditation of Canadian programs. Since the first accreditation in 1973, CASWE-ACFTS (known as CASSW-ACCESS from 1971 to 2007) has grown and now accredits over 70 programs of social work education at the Bachelor and Master levels. The following Vision and Mission for CASWE-ACFTS were approved in 2015.

Vision: CASWE-ACFTS envisions an economically, socially, and environmentally just world based on humanitarian and democratic ideals that demonstrate respect for the worth, agency, and dignity of all beings. Achieving such a vision calls for critical analyses of power relations, the dismantling of inequitable social structures, and solidarity with populations that experience poverty, oppression, and exploitation.

Mission: CASWE-ACFTS is a bilingual, Canadian association with a social justice focus that promotes excellence in social work education, practice, and scholarly activities. It does this through the enrichment of social work education, the accreditation of social work educational programs in Canada, advocacy, research, publication, consultation, and collaboration at both Canadian and international levels.

The principles that guide the activities of the Association can be found at <https://caswe-acfts.ca/about-us/mission/>

3. Accreditation of Canadian Social Work Education

Accreditation serves three primary functions: (1) an evaluation function to promote the ongoing improvement of educational programs, (2) an advocacy function to support academic units in the delivery of quality social work education and, (3) maintaining rigour within social work education to ensure that graduates are able to provide high quality social work services. More specifically, the CASWE-ACFTS Educational Policies and Standards for Accreditation guide the accreditation of social work education programs to promote continuing quality improvement within four domains of social work education: (1) Purpose and Structure, (2) Resources, (3) Curricular Framework and Content, and (4) Program Evaluation.

Accreditation is a peer review process undertaken by Commissioners appointed to the Commission on Accreditation (COA) by the Board of Directors of CASWE-ACFTS. The COA has the authority to grant preaccreditation, to accredit, to impose conditional accreditation status, to deny accreditation or to withdraw accreditation of Baccalaureate (BSW) and Master (MSW) degree programs in social work based on educational policies, accreditation standards and procedures approved by the Board of Directors.

4. Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS)

An educational policy describes one or more goals of social work education.

An accreditation standard describes one or more mandated program components.

These Educational Policies and Standards for Accreditation:

- establish a starting point for consistency and equivalency within social work education;
- support both the specificity and diversity of social work education across Canada;
- recognize the contextual nature of social work education and support **academic units** in responding to their **partners** and communities;
- focus on outcome, allowing for variations in implementation;
- ensure that all program iterations and delivery formats (e.g. on-campus, decentralized, intensive, and on-line) address the same degree of academic and professional proficiency;
- are equally applicable to both Baccalaureate level (BSW) and Master level (MSW).

The remainder of this document presents the CASWE-ACFTS Educational Policies and Standards for Accreditation as they relate to the four domains of social work education.

Domain 1: Purpose and Structure

Domain 2: Resources

Domain 3: Curricular Framework and Content

Domain 4: Program Evaluation

Appendix: The appendix provides explanatory notes relevant to terms bolded within the document. The terms defined in the appendix are only bolded the first time they appear in the document.

Domain 1: Purpose and Structure

Educational Policy 1.1: Mission and Goals

The academic unit has a formal written mission statement that outlines the overarching purpose, goals, and principles of the unit and reflects the unique context in which the academic unit operates.

Accreditation Standards

- SB/M 1.1.1** The Mission statement is consistent with the **values of social work**, with CASWE-ACFTS' commitment to **equity** and **social justice**, and with the responsibilities articulated within the 2017 CASWE-ACFTS ***Statement of Complicity and Commitment to Change***.
- SB/M 1.1.2** The Mission statement identifies any uniqueness of the academic unit.
- SB/M 1.1.3** The goals describe specific features deriving from the mission of the academic unit.
- SB/M 1.1.4** The academic unit ensures all those working within the unit are informed of their role in supporting and advancing the unit's mission and goals.

Educational Policy 1.2: Governance

The academic unit takes a leadership position in respect to social work education. Within the academic unit, **faculty members** play a decisive role in decision-making. Except when an academic unit has mandated parity provisions faculty members should be a majority in all bodies that make recommendations or decisions on academic matters within the unit.

Accreditation Standards

- SB/M 1.2.1** The governance and structure of the academic unit facilitate collaborative relationships with partners while retaining program autonomy and a clear identity within the university. Autonomy implies that the social work academic unit has a decisive voice in determining its structure, in decision-making, in initiating, designing, delivering, administering, extending, or curtailing its own programs, and in determining budgetary priorities.
- SB/M 1.2.2** The **Director** of the academic unit holds a full-time position within the academic unit and demonstrates scholarly, professional and administrative experience and expertise in social work education.
- SB/M 1.2.3** The academic unit institutes specific mechanisms to encourage and support the active engagement of faculty members, **field education personnel**, **sessional instructors**, administrative and **professional staff**, and students in the development

of its mission, goals and objectives, and in the development and operation of the program.

- SB/M 1.2.4** The academic unit demonstrates specific mechanisms to encourage and support the active engagement of partners throughout the program.
- SB/M 1.2.5** The academic unit demonstrates how the values and principles of equity and social justice inform the unit's policies, practices and procedures.
- SB/M 1.2.6** The academic unit reciprocally engages with Indigenous communities on whose historical and contemporary territories it is located and institutes specific mechanisms to incorporate aspects of the cultural and linguistic characteristics of these communities throughout the program. This includes collaborative and relational work with diverse Indigenous nations who are not connected to traditional territories.
- SB/M 1.2.7** The degrees conferred are distinctive social work degrees generally awarded by a degree-granting institution recognized by **Universities Canada**.

Educational Policy 1.3: Policies

Within the policies and standards of its parent university, the academic unit has clear, transparent, and inclusive policies and procedures. These policies and procedures are relevant to all program activities, including field education practicums and practicum settings. If the policies of the parent university do not address the uniqueness of education for professional practice, the academic unit develops policies to augment those of the parent university.

Accreditation Standards

- SB/M 1.3.1** All policies must be consistent with relevant human rights legislation, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, relevant laws, the mission of CASWE-ACFTS, and the mission of the academic unit.
- SB/M 1.3.2** The academic unit describes how it informs students, faculty members, field education personnel, sessional instructors, and professional and administrative staff of existing academic unit and university policies and procedures including but not limited to **accessibility**; assessment; appeals; codes of conduct; confidentiality; data storage; **disability accommodation**; equity; harassment; liability coverage; **professional readiness and suitability**; and use of social media.
- SB/M 1.3.3** The academic unit ensures that students, faculty members, field education personnel, sessional instructors, and administrative and professional staff are supported in implementing all policies and procedures of the university and the academic unit.
- SB/M 1.3.4** The academic unit's policies and practices include specific mechanisms to advance the recruitment, admission, and retention of Indigenous students and those from **equity-seeking groups**.

- SB/M 1.3.5** The academic unit clearly states the academic and professional requirements for equivalency and admission policies for its programs, including any equity provisions consistent with its mission and with the vision, mission, and principles of CASWE-ACFTS.
- SB/M 1.3.6** The academic unit has clear and transparent policies about **transfer credits** between universities, college programs, schools of social work, nationally and internationally, within the context of general university regulations.
- SB/M 1.3.7** The academic unit provides academic advisement and support for all students regarding their program and progress, particularly where students have been recruited as a result of equity-based initiatives.
- SB/M 1.3.8** The academic unit provides for and encourages the participation of all students in school governance and in the evaluation of teaching and learning in classroom, field, and other educational settings. Students are informed that comments evaluating teaching and learning must be consistent with relevant codes of conduct and codes of ethics.
- SB/M 1.3.9** The academic unit has policies and procedures to ensure physical and educational accessibility throughout the program, including a variety of field education practicum options for students with disabilities.
- SB/M 1.3.10** The academic unit has a written policy on field education practicums within a student's workplace. This policy ensures that the student will be considered a learner during the practicum period and articulates a clear distinction between work duties and student learning responsibilities.
- SB/M 1.3.11** When the academic unit offers international field education practicums, it has a comprehensive policy to guide such practicums.

Domain 2: Resources

Educational Policy 2.1: Financial and Physical Resources

It is recognized that the way social work education is offered is constantly evolving and that there is no single delivery model. Regardless of the delivery strategy, the academic unit has financial, physical, technological, pedagogical, practicum settings, and community resources adequate for the achievement of its mission and delivery of its programs.

Accreditation Standards

- SB/M 2.1.1** The academic unit has access to physical space congruent with its mission, goals, and curricular content. This includes private office space for faculty members, Field Education Directors, and adequate office space for field education personnel, professional staff, administrative staff, sessional or part-time instructors. This also includes appropriate classroom space, and dedicated spaces for student interaction and community meetings.
- SB/M 2.1.2** Adequate financial, physical, and community resources are made available to the field education component of the program to ensure that the educational purpose is achieved, including resources to sustain current practicum settings and develop new practicum options.
- SB/M 2.1.3** Academic units where decolonization and indigenization are central to the program will have adequate financial, physical, pedagogical, and community resources for the achievement of the mission and delivery of its program.

Educational Policy 2.2: Human Resources: Faculty Members and Field Education Personnel

Faculty members and field education personnel represent a range of experience and perspectives and have the qualifications, experience, knowledge and skills to effectively fulfill their duties.

Accreditation Standards

- SB/M 2.2.1** The academic unit has sufficient numbers of qualified tenured/tenure track, permanent faculty members, teaching assistants and field education personnel, to plan, administer and deliver its programs.
- SB/M 2.2.2** The policies and procedures of the academic unit include specific mechanisms to support the recruitment, hiring, retention, and **equitable assessment** of Indigenous Peoples and members of equity-seeking groups.
- SB/M 2.2.3** Social work faculty members are normally expected to engage in teaching, research, and service to the university, the profession, and the community. Faculty workloads are constructed to permit time for each of these pursuits

- SB/M 2.2.4** The academic unit has resources to support the engagement of faculty members and field education personnel in continuing professional development, particularly related to emerging issues within community, regional, national, and global contexts.
- SB/M 2.2.5** The academic unit institutes mechanisms to recognize and account for the **increased workload expectations** experienced by faculty members and field education personnel who are Indigenous Peoples, members of equity-seeking groups, or **Francophones** in a minority context.
- SB/M 2.2.6** The academic unit promotes initiatives that advance quality and innovative teaching, research, and service to the university, the profession, and the community.
- SB/M 2.2.7** Faculty members/students ratios are adequate to plan, administer, and deliver all aspects of all programs offered by the academic unit.
- SB/M 2.2.8** Class sizes are set to allow the academic unit to provide a program of teaching excellence to students engaged in courses and field education practicums.
- SB/M 2.2.9** Sufficient numbers of tenure and tenure track faculty members are present to adequately meet the obligations to teaching, research, and service to the university, the profession, and the community, and to ensure program coherence and integrity.
- SB/M 2.2.10** The academic unit has at least one designated position, preferably filled by a faculty member, dedicated to fulfilling the responsibilities of a field education director. As there are significant variations in the organizational structure and nomenclature of field education, the titles of this position vary (e.g. field director, field coordinator, field manager).
- For accreditation purposes, these individuals are designated as having oversight for field education, both educationally and administratively, and will normally have an MSW degree as a minimum qualification. If the position is not filled by a faculty member, the field education director's role in unit governance is equivalent to that of a faculty member.
- SB/M 2.2.11** When determining the workload of field education directors, recognition is given to the **multiple responsibilities** arising from both the pedagogical and administrative functions inherent in the delivery of field education. .
- SB/M 2.2.12** The workload of field education directors ensures that field education practicums can be successfully established, supported, monitored, and assessed.
- SB/M 2.2.13** When determining faculty members' teaching assignments, workload credit is given when faculty assume the roles and responsibilities of **field liaison/advisor**.
- SB/M 2.2.14** Sufficient numbers of **field instructors/supervisors** are present to adequately meet the obligations of Field Education. Field instructors/supervisors at the BSW level or the Foundation level normally hold, at a minimum, a BSW degree from an accredited

program. Field instructors/supervisors in an MSW program normally hold, at a minimum, an MSW degree from an accredited social work program. When the field instructor/supervisor does not have a Social Work degree, it is expected that the academic unit plays a greater role in the monitoring and supervision of the practicum to ensure that a social work focus is sustained, and that the student has access to a qualified social worker. Alternatively, a faculty member may be designated as the field instructor/supervisor.

- SB/M 2.2.15** The academic unit provides formal **preparation and orientation** of new field instructors/supervisors and provides ongoing support and education to experienced field instructors/supervisors.

Domaine 3: Curricular Framework and Content

Educational Policy 3.1: Curriculum: BSW (Baccalaureate in Social Work)

BSW content is delivered within an intentionally designed curriculum that is congruent with the mission and goals of the academic unit and aligned with CASWE-ACFTS Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards. While methods of delivering content may vary, students are to be considered as learners preparing for professional practice.

Accreditation Standards

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| SB | 3.1.1 A BSW is a university degree with a curriculum that provides a balance of general education (at least 40 percent) and professional education (at least 50 percent), including at least 700 field education practicum hours. |
| SB | 3.1.2 The 40 percent general education requirement may be met through study undertaken prior to admission to a BSW program (for example, through a previous undergraduate degree, university transfer credits, college transfer credits, or CEGEP levels) with the professional requirements being addressed during BSW study. |
| SB | 3.1.3 When the BSW program is offered as a second baccalaureate degree, the program provides professional social work content equivalent to a BSW as defined in Accreditation Standard 3.1.1. |
| SB | 3.1.4 When academic credits are given for previous work and/or relevant experience in lieu of BSW field education practicum hours, the academic unit has a written policy that specifies clear criteria and procedures used to assess skills and knowledge normally obtained through the field education practicum. Academic credit for previous work and/or relevant experience may be provided for a maximum of one half of the required hours of field education practicum (i.e., 350 hours of 700 required hours). |

Educational Policy 3.2: Curriculum: MSW (Master of Social Work)

MSW content is delivered within an intentionally designed curriculum that is congruent with the mission and goals of the academic unit and aligned with CASWE-ACFTS Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards. While methods of delivering content may vary, students are to be considered as learners preparing for advanced professional practice.

Accreditation Standards

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| SM | 3.2.1 Students <u>with</u> a BSW degree from a CASWE-ACFTS or equivalent accredited program may be admitted to an MSW program. The MSW curriculum for students admitted <u>with</u> a BSW degree from a CASWE-ACFTS accredited program or equivalent accredited program includes a specialized or advanced component of at least 6 one- |
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semester courses, or equivalent, a field education practicum of at least 450 hours or a thesis or memoire, as defined by the program's university, such as to provide an opportunity for the integration and demonstration of advanced social work skills in practice, and/or policy analysis and/or research.

SM 3.2.2 Students with a university baccalaureate degree in another discipline or from a non-accredited social work program may be admitted to an MSW program or a premaster/qualifying program. The curriculum for students admitted without a BSW degree from a CASWE-ACFTS accredited program or equivalent accredited program includes :

1. A foundational component equivalent to the content of the BSW curriculum including at least 6 one semester courses or equivalent and a field education practicum of at least 450 hours; and
2. An advanced component in accordance with the MSW curriculum as outlined in AS 3.2.1.

The design of the foundational component varies in accordance with the regulations for graduate study of the parent university (e.g. a qualifying year, a premaster in social work, or a two-year MSW program).

SM 3.2.3 Master of social work (MSW) programs specify the areas of advanced study and/or specialization which characterize the program within the context of the academic unit's mission.

Educational Policy 3.3: Curriculum: Field Education

Field Education is a critical and distinctive aspect of social work education and takes place in the context of field education practicums. The purpose of field education is to integrate theory and practice, enabling students to further develop, refine, and enhance the values, knowledge, and skills reflective of the core learning objectives identified in Accreditation Standard 3.4.5.

Accreditation Standards

SB/M 3.3.1 Practicum hours are accrued through practicums that, as determined by field education personnel, promote the purpose of field education and assist students in meeting the objectives outlined in a practicum learning contract. All practicums must be supervised and evaluated. The number of hours required for field education practicums are indicated in Accreditation Standards 3.1.1, 3.1.4, 3.2.2, and 3.2.3.

SB/M 3.3.2 Field education practicum objectives, student learning objectives, practicum procedures, expectations, administrative structures, and evaluation processes are published in a Field Education Manual.

SB/M 3.3.3 The field education curriculum at the BSW level includes integrative seminars that offer opportunities for students to integrate the learning from field education practicums with learning from classroom-based courses. The mode of delivery for integrative seminars varies from Academic Unit to Academic Unit; some are offered

as additional practicum hours, others as a distinct credit course. Whatever mode of delivery is used, integrative seminars that meet the purpose of field education may constitute no more than 10% of the required field education practicum hours.

Educational Policy 3.4 Curricular Content

Curricular content clearly distinguishes between BSW and MSW levels of study. The curriculum at the Baccalaureate level (BSW) prepares students for generalized professional social work practice. The curriculum at the Master level (MSW) prepares students for advanced professional social work practice.

Accreditation Standards

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| SB/M | 3.4.1 | The academic unit implements teaching methodologies and curricular content that reflects the unit's mission and goals. |
| SB/M | 3.4.2 | The academic unit ensures that teaching materials and methods reflect diverse experiences, identities, and practice contexts. |
| SB/M | 3.4.3 | The academic unit collaborates with multiple partners to develop curricular content relevant to core learning objectives. The academic unit specifically collaborates with multiple Indigenous partners (including, but not limited to, scholars, professors, students, knowledge keepers, and community members) to develop curricular content relevant to core learning objectives # 4 & # 5 and pertinent to the territories in which the program operates. This includes relational work with diverse Indigenous nations who are not connected to traditional territories. |
| SB/M | 3.4.4 | The social work curriculum provides students with opportunities to develop the values, knowledge, attributes, and skills required to meet the thirteen core learning objectives. |

The core learning objectives are:

1. Professional Identity

Social work students have opportunities to...

- a) identify as a professional social worker and adopt a value perspective of the social work profession;
- b) critically reflect on the practice and regulation of social work in Canada;
- c) develop professional identities as practitioners whose goal is to advance social justice and facilitate the collective welfare and wellbeing of all people;
- d) acquire abilities of critical self-reflection as it relates to engaging in professional practice through a comprehensive understanding and consciousness of the complex nature of their own social locations, identities, and assumptions;
- e) foster effective professional attributes such as caring, humility, honesty, integrity, passion, and empathy;

- f) consider their potential contribution to social work education through future service, such as becoming field instructors/supervisors; and
- g) understand the role of social work in combating racism and advancing equitable and just policies, services, and practices.

2. Engagement with individuals, families, groups, and communities through professional practice

Social work students have opportunities to...

- a) develop the knowledge and skills to perform various interactive practices (e.g. intake, assessment, planning, action, evaluation) and relational practices (e.g. engagement, relationship-building, power-sharing, collaboration, accompanying, negotiation, mediation, advocacy and activism);
- b) analyze complex social situations and make professional judgements;
- c) acquire skills to practice at individual, family, group, organization, community and population levels;
- d) attain skills for interprofessional practice, community collaboration and team work;
- e) develop knowledge related to human development and human behavior in the social environment;
- f) gain knowledge and skills in advanced and/or specialized practice with individuals, families, groups, and/or communities; and
- g) reflect on their own social location and implications for their roles and responsibilities in engaging in anti-racism and anti-colonialism practice within their professional practice.

3. Development of a Professional Practice

Social work students have opportunities to...

- a) apply social work knowledge, as well as knowledge from other disciplines, to advance professional practice, policy development, research, and service provision;
- b) recognize the importance and legitimacy of multiple approaches to values (axiology), being (ontology), knowing (epistemology), and doing (praxeology) that are consistent with the paradigms of anti-racism and anti-colonialism, and principles of social justice and equity;
- c) know a variety of social work theories, perspectives, and methodologies and use this knowledge to critically analyze professional and institutional practices;
- d) articulate a practice framework to guide their professional work; and
- e) use their professional role to advance equitable and just policies, services, and practices.

4. Colonialism and social work

Social work students have opportunities to...

- a) recognize the multiple expressions and experiences of colonialism that exist within Canada and globally;
- b) understand that colonizing narratives, have been, and continue to be embedded in social work practice, policy, research, and education;

- c) recognize and challenge how social work practitioners and the profession have been complicit in historical and current expressions of colonial violence and injustice; and
- d) explore a plurality of worldviews and the implication of the dominance of a Euro-Western worldview.

5. Indigenous Peoples and Communities

Social work students have opportunities to...

- a) incorporate *The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*, the *Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, and the *Viens Report from the Commission of inquiry into Aboriginal Relations and certain public services in Quebec: listening, reconciliation and progress* in the development of their professional practice;
- b) demonstrate relational solidarity with the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples;
- c) affirm the distinct nature of Indigenous social work and Indigenous healing practices;
- d) understand the role and importance of Indigenous languages in decolonizing; and
- e) affirm the resilience, resistance, and resurgence of Indigenous Peoples, communities, and languages.

6. Francophone Peoples and Communities

Social work students have opportunities to...

- a) Identify and rectify the various forms of disrespect, marginalization and stereotyping towards Francophones, their communities and their cultures;
- b) recognize and advance the constitutional guarantees of status, rights, and privileges of Francophone peoples and communities;
- c) appreciate that the issues, challenges, and realities facing Francophone peoples and communities vary across geographical contexts;
- d) affirm the importance of language and cultural retention and expansion and the importance of **active offer** in the delivery of social services; and
- e) reflect on the implications for anti-racist and anti-colonialist social work practice in the context of diversity in francophone communities.

7. Equity and social justice

Social work students have opportunities to...

- a) identify and address structural sources of injustice and inequities;
- b) understand the role of social structures in limiting and/or advancing human and civil rights;
- c) embrace their professional role in advancing human rights, anti-racism and social justice in the context of the Canadian society and globally; and
- d) recognize that the experience of human beings is shaped by the complex intersection of their social locations and identities.

8. Anti-racism

Social work students have opportunities to...

- a) Learn about the historical context of racism and social work's involvement;
- b) Learn about different forms and sources of racism (i.e. systemic, structural, interpersonal, epistemic);
- c) Understand the intersection of anti-racism, anti-colonialism, equity and social justice;
- d) Understand that white privilege narratives have been, and continue to be, embedded in social work practice, policy, research, and education;
- e) Recognize how social work practitioners and the profession have been complicit in historical and current expressions of racial violence and injustice and challenge this involvement; and
- f) Develop the knowledge and skills required to recognize and resist all forms of racism, particularly anti-Indigenous, anti-Black and anti-Asian racism, with attention to issues of power and positionality.

9. Environmental Sustainability and Ecological Practice

Social work students shall have opportunities to...

- a) understand the need to create ecologically sustainable communities, economies and natural and built environments, in which all life forms and eco-systems can survive and thrive;
- b) identify and challenge environmental injustice and racism, i.e. the inequitable burdens borne by those who are socially and economically marginalised in relation to environmental degradation and hazards;
- c) advance environmental sustainability across individual, organizational and professional contexts; and
- d) embrace the role of social workers in advocacy for public policies and social practices that will ensure ecological health and environmental sustainability at local, regional, national and global levels.

10. Values and ethics in professional practice

Social work students have opportunities to...

- a) learn about the CASW and other **social work codes of ethics** and processes of ethical decision-making;
- b) understand the complexities of ethical practice across various professional roles and activities and within spiritual, cultural and institutional contexts;
- c) use a critically reflexive ethical stance to navigate potential contradictions between social work ethics, employment responsibilities, and institutional Codes of Conduct;
- d) understand the ethical responsibility to rectify the historical and current social injustice experienced by Indigenous Peoples and members of equity-seeking groups; and
- e) understand the ethical responsibility to respond to and address racism and colonialism.

11. Research

Social work students have opportunities to...

- a) acquire knowledge and skills to apply, participate in, and critique social work research;
- b) use research to advance professional practice, policy development and service provision;
- c) acquire advanced knowledge and skills in conducting social work research and competence in evaluating professional practices;
- d) Develop critical awareness of how research has differentially impacted racialized and other equity seeking groups and the responses that address this inequity; and
- e) Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of an anti-racist approach to research methodology, data analysis and the use of evidence, including race-based data to inform practice and address racial inequalities.

12. Policy analysis and development

Social work students have opportunities to...

- a) know how social policies and laws relate to the wellbeing of individuals, families, groups and communities in Canadian and global contexts;
- b) develop the knowledge and skills to identify positive/negative or equitable/inequitable policies and their implications and outcomes, especially for Indigenous Peoples and members of equity-seeking groups, and to participate in efforts to change these; and
- c) gain the knowledge and skills to contribute to the development and implementation of new and more equitable social policies.

13. Organizational and societal systems' change

Social work students have opportunities to...

- a) acquire knowledge of organizational and societal systems and acquire skills to identify social inequities, injustices, and barriers and work towards changing oppressive social conditions;
- b) recognize the role of the state in the structure of service planning and delivery and implications for community;
- c) foster the ability to critically assess the social, historical, economic, legal, political, institutional and cultural contexts of social work practice at local, regional, provincial, national, and global levels; and
- d) become prepared to take leadership ally roles in influencing organizational and societal systems.

Domain 4: Program Evaluation

Educational Policy 4.1: Program Evaluation

Academic units engage in regular summative and formative evaluative processes to ensure their programs are of high quality, relevant, and respond to changing needs and new knowledge.

Accreditation Standards

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| SB/M | 4.1.1 | Such evaluation includes a systematic review of the four program domains. |
| SB/M | 4.1.2 | Such evaluation includes demonstrating how the principles and processes of equity and social justice inform the program. |
| SB/M | 4.1.3 | Such evaluation considers how the implicit curriculum promotes and/or hinders student learning. |
| SB/M | 4.1.4 | Such evaluation includes regular data collection about the program context and partners' feedback on the relevance and quality of the program. |
| SB/M | 4.1.5 | The academic unit has mechanisms for evaluating and providing feedback to practicum settings and field instructors/supervisors. |
| SB/M | 4.1.6 | The academic unit demonstrates how the results of prior evaluations, including but not limited to CASWE-ACFTS and university reviews, have impacted their program. |

Appendix

When dealing with something as important as accreditation, ‘common knowledge’ or ‘traditional understandings’ are not enough. The document incorporates relevant scholarship and the work of other organizations to provide explanatory notes appropriate to the primary functions of accreditation. This will ensure consistency in social work education across contexts, languages, and cultures. **The number after the word indicates its first, but not sole, appearance in the EPAS document (P= page #; EP= Educational Policy #; AS= Accreditation Standard #).**

Academic Unit (Page 4): While social work education takes place within the context of university education, university structures differ. Social work education is located within stand-alone faculties, within independent schools, modules, or within distinct departments within other faculties. The EPAS therefore uses the term academic unit to encompass all these variations.

Accessibility (AS 1.3.2): Accessibility implies that all physical and educational spaces, policies, and services (whether face to face or virtual) ensure the engagement of people with various abilities.

Active offer (CLO 6 d): Active offer means to proactively offer services in the official language people are most comfortable speaking and understanding. This respects the principles of equity, safety, and cultural appropriateness.

Director (AS 1.2.2): The faculty member who is responsible for managing the affairs of the academic unit. Depending upon the structure of the unit this person may be a Dean, a Director, a Chair or Department Head.

Disability Accommodation (AS. 1.3.2): Accommodation policies offer persons with disabilities appropriate modifications and adjustments to ensure that all students are given equal opportunity to successfully complete a program of social work education. Such policies will be required until universal design, an educational framework that focuses on the structures, policies, and practices that limit inclusion rather than the unique needs of individual students, is fully implemented within university-based education.

Equitable assessment (AS 2.2.2): Both scholarship and lived experience indicate that Indigenous Peoples and members of equity-seeking groups are often subject to discriminatory comments in the context of student evaluation of their teaching. Such comments can be personally and professionally damaging.

Although faculty evaluations are frequently guided by processes outside of the academic unit, the term ‘equitable assessment’ in Accreditation standard 2.2.2 encourages academic units to develop mechanisms to mitigate this potential damage.

Equity (AS 1.1.1): Equity provides for “the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.”² Within post-secondary education inequity has

² <https://independentsector.org/resource/why-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-matter/>

(...) manifested itself in barriers to access, employment, governance, inclusion, respect, and acceptance. The result has been that particular forms of knowledge production, dissemination and pedagogy have been privileged over others, a practice that has limited the scope of academic freedom and scholarship (...)

The goal of equity is to achieve inclusiveness and social and economic justice through recognition, respect, numerical representation, accountability, responsibility and the development of balanced, healthy, and harmonious working environments (...)

The attainment of equity requires vigilant monitoring and action to address restrictions to the realization of full participation of all members of the academy.³

Equity-seeking groups (AS 1.3.4): People from many groups experience barriers to equity. While listing such groups risks denying the fluidity and intersectionality of identities, society and culture, not providing a list risks contributing to the invisibility of members of such groups. Members of equity-seeking groups are those who experience barriers based on, but not limited to, age, ethnicity, ability, economic status, language, family status, sex, gender, geography, nationality, race, sexual orientation, and gender identity and gender expression. While Indigenous Peoples are also ‘seeking equity’, the historical and current mechanisms of colonization call upon social workers to recognize the uniqueness of their lived experiences. Hence, the phrase ‘Indigenous Peoples and members of equity-seeking groups’ is used throughout this document.

Equivalent accredited program (AS 3.2.1): CASWE-ACFTS has Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in the USA and the National Indigenous Accreditation Board (NIAB) that agree to the mutual recognition and honouring of accredited degrees. These agreements articulate that degrees from a CSWE or NIAB accredited program will be accepted as substantially equivalent to a degree from a CASWE-ACFTS accredited program. For international social work education programs, academic units must develop their own policy as required by AS 1.3.5.

Faculty Member (EP 1.2): For the purposes of these educational policies and accreditation standards, a faculty member is understood to be one who is appointed to a full-time term position, tenure track position, or tenured position, excluding sessional instructors.

Field Education Personnel (AS 1.2.3): This term encompasses all personnel who have responsibilities for any aspects of Field Education, including but not limited to Field Education Directors/Coordinators/Managers and Field Liaisons or Advisors, and Field instructors/supervisors. These individuals are responsible for some aspects of developing, coordinating, administering, sustaining and monitoring practicums.

Field instructor/supervisor (AS 2.2.14): This title designates individuals who have primary responsibility for field instruction and evaluation of students in the practicum settings. Field instructors/supervisors understand the purpose of field education and work cooperatively with the academic unit to support students in reaching practicum goals. They create opportunities for students to enhance a range of practice skills consistent with the core learning objectives identified in this document.

Field Liaison/Advisor (AS 2.2.13): This title designates the individual(s) who maintain close, reciprocal, and ongoing relationships with field instructors/supervisors, monitor the student's educational experience, and

³ <https://www.caut.ca/about-us/caut-policy/lists/caut-policy-statements/policy-statement-on-equity>

consult and collaborate with the field instructor/supervisor and student regarding student progress. Field liaison/advisors have social work education, understand the purpose of field education and assist students in connecting the theoretical/conceptual contributions of the academic setting with practicum settings.

Francophones (AS 2.2.5): This document uses the term "Francophones" to include Acadian people, the people of Quebec, and all people in other Canadian Francophone communities. The educational policies and accreditation standards recognize the diversity and uniqueness of these communities across the country, some of which are located in cultural and linguistic minority situations, while others are not. The standards and policies also recognize the unique place of Francophone peoples within Canadian history and identity and call on social workers to recognize this uniqueness.

Implicit Curriculum (AS 4.1.3): The implicit curriculum, sometimes referred to as the 'hidden curriculum', refers to the learning environment in which the explicit curriculum (described in Educational Policy 3.4 and Accreditation Standards 3.4.1-3.4.5) is presented. Evaluating the implicit curriculum requires academic units to investigate how the values, norms, policies, and day to day human interactions evident within their program intentionally and/or unintentionally impact the lived experience of students. The implicit curriculum may have a deep and durable impact on student learning, particularly for Indigenous students, students who are members of equity-seeking groups, and Francophone students in a minority context.

Increased Workload Expectations (AS 2.2.5): Both scholarship and lived experience show that Francophones in Minority Contexts, Indigenous Peoples and members of equity-seeking groups are often expected to perform extra labour such as liaising with community groups, service within their academic unit or larger university, education of peers, directed research, translation, and interpretation. Frequently, "such work receives little official recognition and adds an unfair burden to the workload of members of equity-seeking groups, thus creating another equity problem" ⁴. Accreditation Standard 2.2.5 encourages academic units to develop mechanisms to ensure that such work is recognized as academic contributions.

Indigenous (Page 3): This document uses the term "Indigenous" to include First Nations, Métis, and Inuit collectively. Whenever possible, use more precise identifiers (community name, language/treaty/land claim/settlement group), then First Nations or Metis or Inuit. Do not use "Indigenous" when the matter does not affect all three groups. This same principle applies in a global context. In some situations it may be necessary to use terms like "Indian" when referring to the Indian Act or groups that self-identify with the term, with or "Aboriginal" in reference to section 35 of the Canadian Constitution.

Multiple responsibilities (AS 2.2.11): In addition to developing, coordinating, administering, sustaining, and monitoring field education practicums, Field Directors/Coordinators are often responsible for other functions such as professional development offerings for other field education personnel, representing the field 'voice' on various committees, and engaging with multiple stakeholders outside of the academic unit.

Partners (p. 4): Partners may include but are not limited to: social work students, social work educators, sessional instructors, alumni, employers, practitioners, professional associations, regulators, service users, community

⁴ <https://www.caut.ca/about-us/caut-policy/lists/caut-policy-statements/recognition-of-increased-workload-of-academic-staff-members-in-equity-seeking-groups-in-a-minority-context>

members, anti-racist scholars, Francophone peoples and communities, members of equity-seeking groups, and Indigenous Peoples and communities.

Preparation and orientation (AS 2.2.15): This may include instructional materials, field education manuals, course outlines, and other relevant materials.

Professional Readiness and Suitability (AS 1.3.2): Policies and procedures that assess students' professional readiness and suitability must:

- Describe the criteria used to assess students' academic and professional performance, including appeal and grievance processes.
- Adhere to social work codes of ethics.
- Adhere to provincial, territorial and federal human rights legislation.
- Uphold the rights of people with disabilities by not conflating ability with readiness/suitability; i.e. the presence of a disability alone cannot be considered grounds for professional unsuitability.

The Persons with Disabilities Caucus of CASWE-ACFTS recommends that the determination of professional unsuitability be based on conduct and or behaviours (not disability) that:

- Contravene national and or provincial Social Work Codes of Ethics.
- Limit an individual's ability to meet academic standards required for suitable social work education and training.
- Are detrimental to the physical, emotional, or mental well-being of the people we work with and/or co-workers.
- Affect an individual's capacity to function in a manner required to carry out professional and/or academic obligations.
- Affect intellectual capabilities so that judgment is impaired to the extent that the individual has significant difficulties in working with the people they work with, co-workers and others.
- Indicates present and/or past involvement in criminal activity that may jeopardize the safety and wellbeing of the people they work with, co-workers, students, instructors, etc.

Professional staff (AS 2.1.1): Include all non- faculty members working within an academic unit, regardless of employee designation or union/association affiliation.

Program (Page 3): Program is more than curriculum: it refers to all activities undertaken by the academic unit that fall within the four domains identified in the Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards.

Sessional instructors (AS 1.2.3): Instructors who are hired to teach one or more academic courses and who carry teaching responsibilities only for these courses.

Social Justice (AS 1.1.1): For the purposes of these Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards social justice is broadly understood as ideas, values, processes, policies, and practices that advance the vision of CASWE-ACFTS.

CASWE-ACFTS envisions an economically, socially, and environmentally just world based on humanitarian and democratic ideals that demonstrate respect for the worth, agency, and dignity of all

beings. Achieving such a vision calls for critical analyses of power relations, the dismantling of inequitable social structures and solidarity with populations that experience poverty, oppression, and exploitation.

Social Work Codes of Ethics (CLO 10 a): ‘Codes’ is pluralized to call attention to the fact that there are multiple codes of ethics, from various perspectives, which should inform social work education.

Statement of Complicity and Commitment to Change (AS 1.1.1): In May of 2017, members of the Board of Directors of CASWE-ACFTS accepted a statement embracing their shared responsibility for “transforming our colonial reality...”. This statement includes 12 commitments, details of which can be found on the Association’s website.

Teaching methodologies (AS 3.4.1): This refers to the pedagogical beliefs and strategies used by teachers to help learners reach specific learning objectives. Methodologies vary depending upon epistemological assumptions and educational theories adopted by the professor, the information or skill that is being taught, and the characteristics and knowledge of the learner. Teachers working within programs grounded in an Indigenous worldview may use teaching methodologies that differ from teachers grounded within a Euro-Western worldview (e.g. culture camps, ceremony). Any such methodologies that are consistent with the goals of the academic unit are to be considered as foundational to the curriculum.

Transfer credits (AS 1.3.6): Credit transfer is a mechanism of the recognition of degrees and accumulation of credits to accommodate for student and worker mobility across Canada and internationally. Social work academic units set up clear and transparent policies with regard to transfer credits between universities, schools of social work, and college programs, nationally and internationally, within the context of general university regulations.

Universities Canada (AS 1.2.7): Since 1999, CASWE-ACFTS had required programs’ institutions to be members of Universities Canada. Since 2019, CASWE-ACFTS has agreed [that programs in institutions that are not members of Universities Canada may apply for accreditation based on additional criteria.](#)

Values of Social Work (AS 1.1.1): According to the Canadian Association of Social Workers the values of social work are respect for the inherent dignity and worth of persons, pursuit of social justice, service to humanity, integrity in professional practice, confidentiality in professional practice and, competence in professional practice. The CASWE-ACFTS Statement of Vision, Mission, Principles identifies values, such as “an economically, socially, and environmentally just world”, “respect for the worth, agency and dignity of all beings”, and the promotion of equity and justice.