

## **Council on Social Work Education Strategic Plan**

### **Vision 2020: Strengthening the Profession through Research, Education, and Career Advancement**

#### **Mission**

CSWE is a national association of social work education programs and individuals that ensures and enhances the quality of social work education for a professional practice that promotes individual, family, and community well-being, and social and economic justice. CSWE pursues this mission in higher education by setting and maintaining national accreditation standards for baccalaureate and master's degree programs in social work, by promoting faculty development, by engaging in international collaborations, and by advocating for social work education and research.

#### **Visioning the Future**

The strength of social work education is the strength of the profession. The complex interconnections of an increasingly global socio-political and economic context place social work at the center of daunting challenges and enormous opportunities. Both elements of context suggest a future of dramatic success or failure in fulfilling the promise of the profession. The creative minds and innovative actions of social work educators will help fulfill the promise of the social work profession and ensure the achievement of its future vision and aspirations.

The strategic vision for the Council on Social Work Education is to be the premier social work organization in defining and promoting quality in social work education which includes the elements of accreditation, scholarship, faculty development, research to guide policy decisions in the educational context, and government relations in advocacy for the entirety of social work education in the preparation of social work practitioners and scholars. Within a 10 year framework, CSWE will develop its capacity to accurately detect and respond in substantive ways to emerging societal needs requiring the knowledge, values, and the practice skills of professionally educated social workers.

#### **Strategic Goals**

CSWE is the sole agent for national quality assurance in social work education. In order to carry out this mission driven imperative, it has identified six strategic goals unique to its vision for the coming 10 years. These strategic goals speak to the diversity of the profession and its degree granting institutions, the historic challenges to the profession both within the academy and the social services sector, and the scientific discoveries with impact on individuals, the communities of which they are part, and the sustainability of the planet.

1. Strengthen the position of social work within higher education, the national political environment, and in the perceptions of the general public.
  - *Make available to constituent programs data that supports their positions as relevant and valued educational programs within their institutions of higher education.*
  - *Express social work education's value to society in terms of research and social policy.*
  - *Advocate for social work education, including social work research, at the national, state, and institutional levels.*

- *Raise public awareness of the value of the social work profession and the completion of BSW and MSW degrees from a CSWE accredited social work program as societal benefits of a professionally educated workforce.*
2. Strengthen social work through identification and dissemination of emerging technology and innovative models, pedagogies, and practices.
- *Address issues regarding the emerging for-profit education sector as well as new forms of instruction and learner preferences and access.*
  - *Examine the impact of the electronic technologies on social work education and students, as well as on service delivery in underserved areas.*
  - *Support ongoing faculty and leadership development in use of new technologies in the classroom as well as in the recruitment and retention of students.*
  - *Provide the forum for research and dissemination on new models of social work practice and field instruction.*
  - *Serve as a clearinghouse for information on social work education practice, practice methodologies, and outcomes.*
3. Ensure the quality and sustainability of social work education through accreditation of baccalaureate and master's degree programs, research, and responsive faculty development.
- *Promote social work research in the academy and develop the in-house organizational capacity to question, analyze, and otherwise challenge commonly held assumptions of what constitutes quality and best practices in social work education.*
  - *Examine emerging changes in faculty roles and responsibilities, including changing tenure expectations, the role of adjuncts, as well as changing demographics of the professoriate, including racial, ethnic and gender diversity and faculty aging and retirement patterns.*
  - *Encourage greater awareness of cultural diversity and the implications for knowledge building, teaching, and implications for CSWE practice competencies.*
  - *Institute a regular environmental scan of political/economic factors that influence social work education domestically and globally as well as assessing community context and trends.*
  - *Be increasingly proactive with respect to the sustainability of the profession, people, and the global environment.*
  - *Serve as a resource to programs as they seek to increase and diversify their revenue streams and address financial crises as they occur in higher education.*
  - *Develop mechanisms for understanding changes within practice contexts and consider how such changes should or might be reflected in educational curricula.*
  - *Promote advanced preparation in social work doctoral programs for teaching as well as research in an academic career and actively recruit promising students to pursue advanced education for a career in the academy.*
  - *Promote the educational continuum in social work education and work diligently with all prospective access points in order to retain and recruit social work students.*

4. Develop partnerships with organizations, agencies, corporations, and foundations both within social work and those external to social work to enhance collaboration on issues critical to social work education.
  - *Seek to minimize the fragmentation of social work by engaging with other social work organizations to decrease duplication of services and to leverage outcomes with shared resources.*
  - *Develop partnerships that include the corporate, foundation, and business sectors through strategies such as social entrepreneurship and outcome focused proposals.*
  - *Promote inter- and intra- organizational collaboration on cross-cutting issues such as disaster response, trauma, community and individual financial distress, poverty, environmental sustainability, and economic, social and educational disparities.*
  - *Create partnerships with other professions to achieve common goals and address the issues of professional uniqueness.*
5. Promote the preparation of social work graduates who can practice effectively in an increasingly diverse and global practice environment.
  - *Recognize the nature of globalization and the evolutionary intensity of a dynamic context for international social work initiatives.*
  - *Continue to take affirmative steps to expand the presence of historically oppressed and under-represented populations among graduates, tenured faculty, and staff in social work education programs at all educational levels.*
  - *Educate all students in social work programs at all educational levels on documented social and economic disparities that exist in a global and national context and develop an effective national role for social work education.*
6. Develop and maintain a healthy, viable organization by ensuring effective management, strong leadership, diversity of the staff, and open communication among the staff, Board of Directors, Commissions, Councils and other governance and programmatic entities.
  - *Develop avenues for leadership development through the structures of CSWE.*
  - *Identify and promote the benefits of collaboration among the governance entities of CSWE.*
  - *Broaden the revenue portfolio in support of the mission of CSWE.*
  - *Focus on improving public relations, work towards greater organizational visibility, and increase constituent outreach and ally building.*
  - *Communicate the value and importance of CSWE individual membership through an enhanced benefits package and identification with and support for the mission of social work education.*