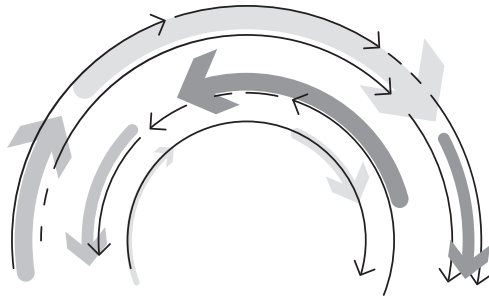


3rd edition

LEARNING TO TEACH, TEACHING TO LEARN

A Guide for Social Work
Field Education



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ALEXANDRIA, VA

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FOREWORD

Creator I'm reaching out to you
Tell them on the other side
That they are alive within my soul . . .
I hear Nigerian chains
They say are buried real deep
Tobacco fields, Trail of Tears
Stolen people on stolen land
Tell them, that I know . . .

(“GOING HOME,” BY PURA FE’/ULALI)

As the Ulali song lyrics above reflect, addressing societies’ grandest challenges and eradicating human suffering in the United States cannot be understood without authentically unearthing and uprooting the legacy and ongoing manifestation of settler colonialism in the United States. As a country, we are still dealing with the atrocities of U.S. settler colonialism and White supremacy—as they are manifest in contemporary structures, policies, and everyday interactions—from structural racism supporting the prison-industrial complex to the expressions of everyday microaggressions. Moreover, as a society we continue to police bodies and equivocate about gender and LGBTQ+TS rights and equity among many, many other inequities. As a profession we still struggle at times to move beyond practicing as unwitting social control agents as we desperately plug holes and craft assistance in systems designed to leave people wanting and struggling. At a time when hate crimes are on the rise, the press and the media are under attack, and autocracy has become emboldened, social work’s commitment to social justice is essential to creating liberatory practices and policies. However, the

use of the familiar social justice social work approaches set within neoliberal policies and structures are simply inadequate because these approaches typically circumvent the larger colonial-based structural factors in which everyday interactions, including our field education approaches, are embedded. Refreshingly and just in time, this third edition of *Learning to Teach, Teaching to Learn*, unabashedly tackles and centers the role of *justice* in social work field education. Building on the second edition's human rights focus, this new edition provides a prescient justice-oriented framework for field instructors, field education, and social work as a profession.

I saw the potential for healing and liberation in the words of this new edition. It was thirst-quenching to read in a profession that sometimes struggles with arid neoliberal platitudes associated with diversity, cultural competency, and justice. Each chapter wrestles with the complexities of addressing intersecting injustices intrapsychically, interpersonally, and interprofessionally. They invite the social work profession—educators, supervisors, and practitioners—to dive deep into the justice struggles of our times as they manifest in intersecting positionalities embedded in the microcosm of the field instructor–student relationship, in the student practitioner–client relationship, and in the settings that all too often produce and reproduce settler colonial inequities. Importantly, the authors provide specific examples from the field with corresponding guideposts for fieldwork action and education.

One factor seldom addressed in field education is the culture in which practice, supervision, and field instruction take place—that is, the culture of the setting. The authors note that the norms, worldviews, and social scripts embedded in social work settings must be examined for justice-based education and practice. Indeed, settings can be conduits of settler colonial practices if the norms, pedagogies, and structures of practice remain unexamined. Specifically, their justice-oriented framework opens the door to examining the transmission of settler colonial individualism and associated normative “Whiteness” in social work field instruction. The settler colonial worldview is so pervasive in institutional settings that associated values, pedagogies, and practices are frequently assumed to be neutral and are presumed to naturally benefit social work trainees and clients (Walters et al., 2016). The internalization of this worldview by faculty members, field instructors, and trainees (on the up and the down side of power and privileged statuses) is emblematic in statements that might at first appear liberatory, but in fact problematize difference or diversity. Manifestations of settler-colonial ideology can be found in statements such as the need to accommodate diversity or address the

diversity problem—thus problematizing diversity or the diverse individuals and not the system in which diverse individuals are working or training (Walters et al., 2019). As a result, social work trainees of color or clients of color, for example, are seen as objects to be managed or assimilated into the culture of the program or the agency. Opening the door to examining the culture in which social work training is embedded is a critical first step to a justice-based pedagogy and practice.

Additionally, the authors note the relevance and importance of examining reflexively the relationship between field instructor and trainee—creating the opportunity for a deeper dive into unpacking and addressing microaggressive encounters, attuning to settler colonial privileges (e.g., privilege checking), and building greater tolerance for ambiguity and comfort in examining racialized experiences. Importantly, their relational orientation sets the foundation to examine supervisor as well as trainee “settler moves to innocence” (Tuck & Wang, 2012, p. 10), the defensive maneuvers to restore power and equilibrium that tends to arise when confronted with intense emotions related race, sexuality, and gender, among other justice issues. In social work these can manifest sometimes as toxic applications of “calling out” others of one’s same status (e.g., White student “calling out” another White student) to distance oneself from one’s privileged status and reconcile settler anxiety. Settler moves to innocence can also manifest as minimization, anger, fear, guilt, tears, or outright flight from the situation (e.g., White fragility). Notably, the authors move toward calling us in—to examine unabashedly how power and privilege plays out in our relationships. Additionally, they provide cogent guidelines for engaging in challenging dialogues with openness and compassion and an eye toward building stronger justice-grounded practitioners, educators, and policy makers.

As a profession we need to look hard at our roles in supporting U.S. settler colonial structures and how we, as a profession, can more honestly move forward to justly serve the communities most affected by societal inequities and injustices. As professionals we need to examine our educational and field instruction systems to better train future generations of social workers to play an integral role in challenging and dismantling U.S. settler colonial structures. The final chapter concludes with a tantalizing note toward developing decolonizing practice strategies for the fourth edition of this book. Although a more in-depth look at decolonizing practices is warranted, this current edition provides ample opportunity to examine decolonizing and liberatory social work as a mandate of justice-based social work practice and field education. Like

decolonization, justice should never be a metaphor—it is righteous equity (Latin-*Jūstītia*), it is sacred formula (Proto Italic-*jowos*), it is sine qua non for a liberatory social work ethic and practice for a truly just and healthful society. For once, I saw myself and my People in the text. Yakoke.

Karina L. Walters, PhD
University of Washington

INTRODUCTION

This edition of *Learning to Teach, Teaching to Learn* builds on the successes of the preceding two editions and remains committed to supporting field instructors as they teach students in the current context of social work practice and education. Although primarily intended for new field instructors, the text will be useful to experienced field instructors and other field educators as they confront the challenges of teaching entry-level practice. Students will also benefit from the text as an introduction to field education supervision and competency-based social work education.

The first edition, published in 2005, compiled practice wisdom guiding field education and provided useful tools. Much has changed since this first edition, which predated competency-based education and field education's identification as social work's signature pedagogy. The second edition, published in 2013, incorporated the requirements for mastery of competencies outlined in the CSWE's (2008) EPAS and stressed field placement settings as important components of the implicit curriculum for student learning. The emphasis evident in the 2008 EPAS competencies regarding human rights and social and economic justice was integrated into the framework of the text. This was particularly relevant as the second edition was released during a worldwide recession that affected every aspect of service delivery locally and globally. Advances in learning theory were woven into the fabric of the second edition, and transformational learning perspectives provided an additional lens for viewing the field instructor's role as offering a vision of learning. A dual focus emerged: supporting competency-based social work education and introducing a human rights and social justice framework in field education.

The challenge laid out in the first two editions remains the same; that is, we train future social workers while we are rooted in the realities of present-day social work practice. Our focus needs to be on both—practice as it is now and practice that we can only visualize. Tackling this challenge, the third edition builds further on the foundation set down in the preceding

editions by elaborating and enriching our dual purposes. This edition more clearly addresses responsibilities for educating for competency, and it presents a more cogent case for integrating a justice-based framework in field education. To achieve these goals, the material has been significantly revised. Before outlining the specifics regarding the organization of the book, we present its purposes.

The purposes of this text evolve directly from our professional mission and the realities of practice and social work education. Our professional mission and the resulting demands placed on us are intricately interwoven and combine to shape what we need to teach students, which is outlined clearly in the CSWE (2015) EPAS and in the structure of this text. Working for justice requires engagement with the issues of diversity, an ongoing commitment to advancing civil and human rights including tribal and indigenous justice, and economic, social, and environmental justice in every aspect of practice and, therefore, in our teaching. The importance of research, policy, and evaluation emerge as vital ingredients alongside efforts to effect change across multiple units of attention in a foundation of generalist practice. Field instructors prepare students for this work, and this text equips them with teaching strategies to meet the challenges of a quickly shifting demographic of social work students who are learning to practice in increasingly diverse communities.

More than a decade of working in competency-based education provides a strong base of experience to assist field instructors in their use of the CSWE (2015a) competencies for teaching and evaluating students. We address what competency-based education comprises, how it serves our teaching, how it serves students, and how we can use the competencies in supervision with students to improve their learning and our teaching. Addressing the other half of our aims, we consolidate the links between our core professional values and the EPAS (CSWE, 2015a) by providing a justice-based perspective for field education. We define what we mean by a justice-based framework and we call for facilitating challenging dialogues with our students on issues of social location, power, privilege, oppression, equity, and liberation as a necessity for their preparation for entry-level social work practice. We propose that excellence in field education demands this.

Competency in a Justice-Based Framework for Field Education

A justice-based framework in field education is rooted in civil and human rights, tribal and indigenous justice, and antioppression perspectives (here we

mean to include antiracist theory, critical social theory, and critical race theory; empowerment models, ecological social theory, feminist and womanist perspectives, liberation theory, decolonization and strengths-based models of practice). The definition is not static and includes many forms of inclusive and equity-based forms of practice. This orientation directly addresses issues of justice as integral to our work and teaching. Practice that seeks to remedy social division and structural inequality so central to our professional goals and values also guides our teaching.

Advancing the fulfillment of basic human needs and achieving equity are deeply rooted key concepts of our professional mission. We find these precepts in the NASW (2018) Code of Ethics, the *Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR; United Nations, 1948), the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP, United Nations, 2007) and the EPAS (CSWE, 2015a). These documents provide us with a moral compass for our practice and underpin our efforts to challenge oppressive policies and to promote strengths-based, inclusive, and democratic ways of working. These aspirations guide our practice, but the work is challenging.

Reisch (2013, 2017) points to the obstacles for social work and social policy to work toward justice in a society that does not credit the importance of human rights with at least the equal protection of property rights. These splits and connections to social work are not new. Reynolds (1942) recognized the associated challenges: “The philosophy of social work cannot be separated from the prevailing philosophy of a nation, as to how it values people, and what importance it sets upon their welfare” (p. 174). Likewise, Weick (2000) warns that “without an eye to protecting and creating a caring context, we may function only to uphold the inadequate structures that continue to place individuals at risk” (p. 402). In this vein, Walters et al. (2011) clarify that the expression of power in the United States as a settler colonial society remains pervasive and dangerous. The historical trauma experienced directly by indigenous peoples has “pernicious effects that persist across generations through a myriad of mechanisms from biological to behavioral” (p. 179). The ramifications reverberate from past to present. Becoming awake to these realities requires opening our minds and hearts not only to how we exercise power but also to how we evade, deny, or seek “moves to innocence” that perpetuate and negatively affect our interactions with each other (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p.10). Our approach to teaching students for entry-level practice requires strategies to meet these challenges. Otherwise, the danger is that we become part of the problem by perpetuating and benefitting from the divides that exist or that we create. More is involved than just students and

ourselves. The increasing complex global context of practice and the forces impeding service delivery and social work education play their parts in the obstacles, challenges, and opportunities experienced in field education. A vibrant interchange is created that pushes and pulls for improvements and innovations in social work practice and education. In fact, understanding this is an important aspect of keeping our skills current and flexible to respond to emergent needs; however, the combination of these conditions places special strains on preparing students for practice. Past and present practice protocols and future trends exist simultaneously. Limitations of social policies become incorporated into practice and accepted as work factors; at the same time, a pulse is kept on the need for change, and we watch for research advances that indicate future trends and possible avenues for prevention. These varying pressures combine to strengthen our commitment to lifelong learning and to maintain our competence and improve opportunities for student education.

Recent examples point to the realities of pervasive societal violence and the effect of persistent microaggressions and violence on oppressed populations that need immediate attention in social work practice. For example, an increase in incidents involving police force in communities of color call for teaching students how to intervene in communities struck by persistent and recurrent racial trauma. Fears in communities regarding changing implementation of policies surrounding asylum seekers, refugees, immigration, and migrant worker employment require additional training on ways to advocate for and protect rights; access resources; form partnerships with invested stakeholders; and collaborate and mobilize with community and agency supports through ally and sanctuary networks. Increased othering in school bullying, gun violence, and sexual harassment call for special attention to emergent needs. Recurrent attacks on environmental protections, continuing gang violence and random shootings in our communities, including anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic hate crimes and murders of men and women with transgender experiences, perpetuate a climate of abuse, fear and turmoil. Persistent mistrust of reports of sexual misconduct, sexual assault, and sexual violence characterize societal responses, inhibit behavior change, and hinder healing. U.S. dominant values, expressed in privileged, cisgender, White male Protestant, straight normative worldviews and structures, are evident in policies, definitions of problems, and delivery of services. Social determinants of health outcomes continue to echo similar concerns. Dismantling and decolonizing these systems are mandatory for social work values. The power of voices advocating for change is emerging and being heard above calls to maintain the status quo, and it is our responsibility to keep pace with these changes and teach

students to question the dominant discourse and advocate with communities toward change for justice.

These burgeoning issues need attention before we may have a clear strategy for change. Resulting concerns and constraints emerge in varying contexts of practice. Although global and local community chaos awakens societal outrage, the turmoil may cloud our vision regarding opportunities for healing that exist in these crises. Our strategies for appropriate interventions are challenged but provide avenues for reconciliation and positive outcomes. These are the recurrent conditions and future trends our students will be facing as they start their careers.

We propose that these challenges create a clear path forward. If we are serious about responding to the diverse needs and interests of the communities we serve, then we must activate approaches in our teaching to ensure that our students are adequately prepared. By modeling how to create mutual and collaborative relationships in situations of differential power and privilege, we create a climate and sanctuary for dialogues with our students. Field education supervision becomes the place where students enhance their self-awareness, capacity for self-reflection, and tolerance for the potential discomfort triggered by engaging in these conversations first with us and then in their work. Likewise, assisting our students' abilities to conduct analyses of power, privilege, and oppression places discussions about the work in a broader context. Students are given an opportunity to consider their perceptions and biases of why people are disadvantaged and how their perspectives may affect the people and communities served by the field placement. Of course, this involves discussing our position of power and authority over students and their own power and authority with those they serve, in the community, in the organization, and with us.

We propose that change starts by being honest with ourselves about our biases and our need for supports to manage the obstacles that prevent us from engaging in conversations about how power, privilege, and subjugated and intersecting identities affect our connections with one another. We need to commit to furthering our expertise in facilitating these dialogues and to advocate for schools of social work to provide training and developmental experiences to support this work throughout beginning and advanced SIFIs. We offer this book as a beginning guide toward greater awareness and increased ability to engage in authentic and effective relationships across difference as we work together toward justice-based field education.

Organization of the Text

This edition differs significantly from the previous two editions. The chapters are reordered in three parts. This restructuring supports our purposes and pays attention to overarching themes while focusing separately on the many practical aspects involved. Every attempt is made to assist the reader in applying the CSWE (2015a) competencies to supervisory practice. Other major changes reflect a commitment to strengthen what was begun in the second edition, that is, to consolidate links among our professional mission, competency-based social work education, and a justice-based model of field education.

The third edition builds on the strengths of the previous two editions while adding useful content connected to the current realities of social work practice. Multiple examples are used throughout the text and in chapter appendixes to illustrate how the competencies bolster our teaching. In addition, the application of challenging dialogues in supervision is illustrated, and examples are added that consider off-site field instruction, use of technology, practice across units of attention, interdisciplinary collaboration, and research-informed practice. Student scenarios are shown in shaded boxes to highlight them in the text.

Finally, the third edition maintains respect for the history of field education and those who have contributed to its knowledge base while also placing the lessons of this legacy in today's context. Attention is given to important advances in the realm of technology, including the revisions in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW, 2017) Code of Ethics. Group supervision of students and the use of task supervisors are also addressed. In this vein, we are compelled to address the calls to rethink the models of field education that reflect current forces emerging from practice and academe.

Part One: Advancing A Framework for Field Education

The four chapters in Part One address the themes of this book—a justice-based framework for field education, competency-based social work education, and the essential role of the field instructor in facilitating challenging dialogues in social work supervision and in teaching within the structure of the competencies. Part One presents how the mission of our profession is made real through the student's work in field education, the field instructor's part in shaping the students' perceptions of their role and how a justice-based framework sustains and guides that work, the place of competency-based education in the

equation, and the theoretical perspectives that underpin our tasks as field educators. A clear emphasis emerges that envisions a justice-based perspective for field education bolstered by the competencies that guide our teaching to prepare social work students for the demands of entry-level practice.

Chapter 1. Justice-Based Field Education: The Bridge to Competence

The goals of this text are intricately woven together by introducing field education as a form of justice-based practice, addressing how to teach for the achievement of competence, and focusing this work through the multiple processes and details of field education within field education supervision. Chapter 1 begins by explaining what is meant by a justice-based framework for field education. We dare to define justice and how this vision sets our task for advancing competence in practice. We describe the context of competency-based education, what it involves, how it affects and supports our role as field instructors, and the implications for our roles as educators and partners in the academic enterprise.

The critical task of advancing our professional mission is addressed through consideration of the increasing diversity of students and the multiple dimensions we must address as we seek to achieve mutuality in the learning relationship. As we address the diverse learning needs and assets of our students through conversations in supervision, we are called on to assist them in managing conversations across difference, dominance, and oppression with those they serve. Engaged pedagogy is presented as the recommended approach to the task of inviting students to join us at the learning table.

Our aim is to provide a clear rationale for field education practices rooted in our professional mission and educating for practice that pursues justice and advances human and civil rights. The conclusion we reach supports an inclusive human rights and antioppressive perspective that we have coined as a justice-based framework. We emphasize the field instructor as an antioppressive educator and the field instruction relationship as the place where authenticity is reinforced around issues of social identity, social location, and inclusion. Additional implications include involving students as partners in the learning endeavor and similarly treating the people we serve as partners, collaborators, and political allies rather than as objects of rescue. The Chapter 1 Appendix includes two scenarios that examine establishing a reflective stance in supervision with an individual student and in a group supervisory session. Questions on these scenarios are provided for the reader's consideration.