



COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

**Commission on Research**  
Report to the Board of Directors

**March 2021**

**Charge from the CSWE Board of Directors**

The Commission on Research's mission is to advance rigor, relevance, and high ethical standards in the teaching and conduct of research related to social work education. Toward that end, the Commission on Research shall provide leadership in establishing key research priorities for improving social work education, in promoting the scholarship of teaching and learning within social work education, as well as in specifically promoting quality in research curricula across methods and paradigms in BSW, MSW, and doctoral education. The Commission is concerned with advocating for research supported policies, practices, and programs within CSWE, helping to build relevant data bases that promote innovation in social work education, and with strengthening the connections between social work education-related research and social justice. It will complete its mission in partnership and collaboration with sibling Commissions, Councils, and task forces within CSWE as well as other social work professional organizations committed to excellence in the science of social work.

**Report:** This report to the Board of Directors is written and submitted with full acknowledgment that in engaging with its mission in the past year in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the concurrent states of injustice and unrest, the Commission on Research (COR) has navigated with the kind of flexibility, responsiveness, and grace warranted by this context and the unprecedented challenges of the time, as well as with recognition of the variable ways in which peoples' lives have been and continue to be affected. Expectations for products, outcomes, and initiatives shifted to meet the context of the world where it is. COR was unable to meet during the summer of 2020 as scheduling conflicts made it impossible to find a time that worked for all. Work on existing initiatives continued and/or was put on hold in anticipation of the Fall 2020 meeting of the commission, and in acknowledgment of challenges and circumstances.

The members of COR remain deeply committed to the commission's mission and also to the experiential and relational aspects of group membership. Most members of COR were able to participate in the October, 2020, four-hour synchronous Zoom meeting, and did so with enthusiasm and with an authentic and admirable spirit of collegiality, care, and support. This report's emphasis on the commission's group process, rather than as much on products and outcomes, is reflective of the times, and in and of itself then, invites and offers opportunities to reconsider familiar normative practices, to recalibrate, and leverage considerations for new ways to think in the face of the vastly shifting context. At the commission's meeting in October, 2020, COR members discussed with each other shared aspects of experiences related to social work education and research in the current context, and what this means for how people have

approached work, and how peoples' ways of thinking about what they do and how they do it have shifted. Though best efforts were made to schedule a meeting in January 2021 to follow-up the Fall meeting, due to discontinuity in people's availability and the nature of people's varying sets of responsibilities, the commission was unable to find a time to meet. The commission's critically evaluative and generative discussion at the October 2020 meeting will however continue over time, and will also inform the framework within which COR's work will be organized at the upcoming Spring Governance meeting in March 2021.

**Goal 1: Provide leadership for the future of social work education.**

Strategies

- a. Serve as an authoritative source of information on the preparation of social workers.
- b. Collaborate with strategic partners to advance social work education and social justice domestically and globally, including Indigenous peoples.
- c. Provide thought leadership on critical issues facing social work education and research.
- d. Advocate for social work education and research both within the profession and beyond.
- e. Support data informed decision-making on the future social work workforce.

Activities to further this goal and strategies include:

- Article submitted to JSWE related to findings of the national survey of social work faculty
  - o Discussions continue around if/how to build on this survey
  - o Considerations for how the findings of this study can be explored further via qualitative inquiry
  - o Considerations for ways in which some aspects of this survey could be taken up by the Department of Education Initiatives and Research at CSWE
- COR continues to provide feedback and engage in discussions with Ryan re: CSWE's Annual Survey design and also findings
- The COR/SAGE Innovation in Research Instruction Award was put on hold temporarily as SAGE withdrew its funding for the year
  - o COR members discussed if/how to continue and/or maintain the award if SAGE support is eliminated indefinitely
- Discussed the CSWE pulse survey and considerations for future research
- Continued discussions to clarify COR's role and operational place in liaising with other Commissions/Councils in order to maximize efforts to build research collaboration/coalition and capacity where possible, minimizing siloed and repetitive efforts

**Goal 2: Promote quality teaching, learning, and scholarship to prepare graduates for the future of social work practice.**

Strategies:

- a. Provide professional and faculty development opportunities to support social work educators in their roles.
- b. Provide curricular resources that exemplify quality and innovation in social work education.
- c. Support member institutions in developing and maintaining an accredited program.
- d. Promote and ensure educational quality and continuous improvement in accredited social work programs that facilitates the preparation of competent social workers.
- e. Promote research and scholarship that informs practice and builds the science and knowledge base for social work students and educators.

Activities to further this goal and strategies include:

- Discussions re: possible new initiatives including emphasis on technology in teaching and research related to social work education; information literacy; considerations for a curricular guide related to teaching research; anti-racist emphasis in teaching research and in social work education research

Thank you for receiving this report.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shari E. Miller, COR Chair