

January 2, 2006

TO: Barbara White, Chair, CSWE Leadership Development Council  
Julia Watkins, CSWE Executive Director  
FROM: Bradford W. Sheafor, 2005 Senior Scholar  
SUBJECT: Leadership Development Initiative

**Background:** The impetus for the CSWE leadership initiative was Strategic Goal #4 and specifically objectives 4.2 and 4.4.

*Goal # 4: Identify and respond to faculty development needs and encourage and build leadership to advance the purposes of social work education.*

*4.2 Develop a multilevel faculty development system to address knowledge and faculty development needs across faculty levels.*

*4.3 Provide mentoring programs and leadership development opportunities to promote and expand new leadership involvement in CSWE.*

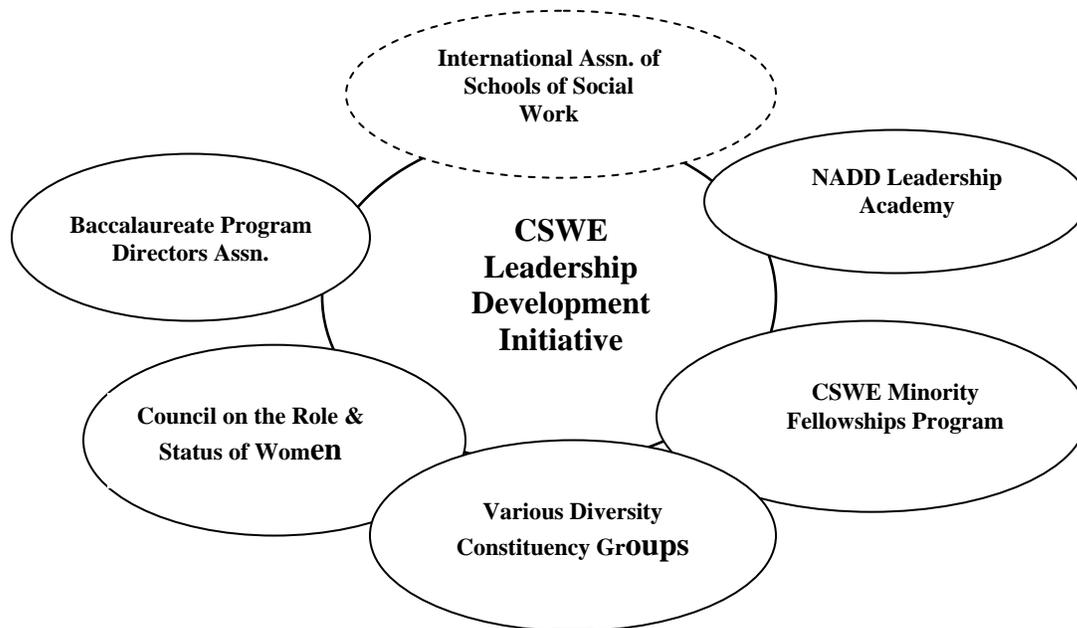
Revisions to CSWE's program structure addressed this goal by creating a Leadership Development Council. The initial charge to this Council was to develop new initiatives that would result in 1.) greater numbers of social work educators in leadership positions within their own institutions; 2.) social work educators better prepared to assume leadership positions in their specific programs; 3.) social work educators better prepared to assume leadership positions at the national and international level of social work organizations; and 4.) an expanded group of leadership aspirants and leadership participants representing the diversity of (CSWE's) educational programs and constituent groups.

To assist in formulating such a leadership development program for social work education, the 2005 Senior Scholar was charged to produce a "framework document for initiating a leadership institute." The process of developing this framework document involved more than twenty-five meetings with stakeholder groups that are best characterized as "opinion finding" sessions. The sessions, beginning at the 2005 APM and concluding in November 2005, were underpinned by open invitations for input via email. This summary is intended to reflect a synthesis of input from the face-to-face sessions and written comments and suggestions, as well as the Senior Scholar's recommendations for next steps for consideration by the Leadership Development Council.

### **Summary of Findings**

1. There was nearly universal agreement that social work education has not adequately planned for leadership development. The three most clearly recognized goals for leadership development were: 1.) to prepare and encourage social work faculty members to engage in campus leadership roles that affect campus policies and procedures in order to make campus environments more compatible with social work values and goals; 2.) to strengthen the administrative leadership of social work education programs; and 3.) to provide leadership development opportunities for future and emerging leaders in social work education
2. The absence of CSWE from leadership development has resulted in a variety of related groups providing leadership development activities targeted to their own constituencies. These groups are not interested in terminating their own leadership development activities, but are open to collaboration with CSWE to create a more comprehensive approach to leadership development for social work education. Any CSWE leadership initiative, then, should reflect an effort to collaborate with existing programs and create new programming in areas currently not addressed. Figure 1 represents a depiction of this collaborative model.

**Figure 1: A Conception of Organizational Relationships for Leadership Development**



3. The perception of where leadership development is needed in social work education spans from the education of doctoral students to higher administration roles (beyond social work education) in academia. The following leadership development goals and associated positions or roles have been identified.

Goal 1. Encourage social work educators to assume campus leadership roles in order to eliminate barriers to the influence of social work education in universities and to contribute to creating a more hospitable environment for social work education.

- Orientation to help social work faculty members engage effectively in campus faculty governance
- Prepare social work administrators to successfully compete for higher-level administrative positions in higher education

Goal 2. Strengthen administrative leadership in social work education programs.

- Develop national leadership orientation programs and create an arena for exchange of substantive content and administrative leadership approaches for middle-management administrative roles within social work education programs (e.g., field instruction coordinator/director, admissions director, development officer, director of research or service center)
- Offer comprehensive program for persons occupying or preparing to occupy as key administrative position in a social work education programs (e.g., baccalaureate program director, dean/director of a graduate schools, assistant or associate dean/director of a social work education program)

Goal 3. Long-term development of future leaders in social work education.

- Provide programming intended to interest and prepare doctoral students (i.e., future academicians) to assume leadership roles in the profession of social work and higher education
  - Identify and select new faculty members demonstrating leadership potential for grooming for future leadership roles in social work education—both locally and nationally.
4. The content of leadership programs must be selected and adapted to meet the needs of the group(s) selected for leadership development.
- It is recognized that social work education and practice typically prepare a person with many of the capacities expected of persons in leadership positions. Among these capacities is competence in teambuilding and conflict resolution, assessing personnel and maximizing productivity by recognizing system influences on individual and organizational functioning, building professional relationships, advocacy, and managing group processes. Leadership development, then, should initially involve assisting participants in assessing their own leadership capacities and ultimately evolving their personal leadership styles.
  - Additionally, content that should contribute to most participant groups acquiring needed competence for leadership might include understanding and mastering such factors as: a.) the processes of leadership within the culture of higher education; b.) future thinking regarding trends in higher education (e.g., promotion/tenure criteria, higher education as an entrepreneurial enterprise, developing grading philosophies); c.) strategies to successfully advocate for educational policy reflecting humanistic values (e.g., promoting responsiveness to cultural variation and attention to devalued groups of faculty and students); d.) providing leadership in the context of shared governance; e.) facilitating work within a multidisciplinary environment; and f.) utilizing technology to facilitate decision making and administrative efficiency.
  - For more specialized audiences engaged in the administration of social work education programs, additional content items might include: a.) processes for strategic planning; b.) understanding complex university budgets; c.) techniques and skills for program management; d.) recruiting and selecting personnel; e.) assessing faculty performance and constructing faculty development plans; f.) internationalizing social work education programs; g.) development of financial resources (e.g., fund/friend raising, grant writing); h.) marketing social work education; and i.) interfacing education with social work practice.
5. The programming for any of the above groups selected for leadership development must be responsive to the needs of that group. Through a survey of potential participants, input from a focus groups, the establishment of an advisory group, or other information collection techniques, the specific learning needs and the feasibility of various program delivery options could readily be identified and assessed. Additionally, it will be important to carefully select personnel from within social work education, and on some topics from experts in other areas of leadership development, who can effectively deliver the desired training.
6. Over time it will be important to develop substantial information to underpin the programs delivered as part of a CSWE leadership initiative. Through the Senior Scholar's activity in 2005, a list of books, articles, and working papers addressing many of the topics identified above was compiled as a starting point for persons who may later implement specific programs.

Those materials have been provided to the CSWE Executive Director. In the future, other senior scholars, faculty members wanting to choose a sabbatical research topic that would contribute to social work education, or doctoral students seeking dissertation topics might potentially develop a topic in depth that might become the substance of a future leadership development training program. A few initial topics that might be developed include a comparative study of the strengths and limitations of various leadership/administration models (e.g., transformative, collegial, authoritarian, the Aspen Model, the Brookings Model), ethical issues in leadership, strategies for managing-from-the-middle, creating a strong presence for social work in higher education, addressing the development of competing undergraduate human services/human development programs, and scanning for emerging higher education issues to help social work programs be proactive regarding these matters. As programming evolves, the evaluation of program offerings should be designed to flag additional areas where the development of conceptual materials to underpin leadership programs is needed.

7. The structure of programming, too, should be adapted to meet the leadership development needs of the different groups. The options include such varied formats as a.) sessions integrated into CSWE's Annual Program Meeting (APM); b.) intensive summer and/or weekend seminars; c.) two/three day sessions associated with regional or national meetings (APM, BPD annual meeting, NADD meetings; d.) on-line learning groups; e.) internships; f.) linkage to experienced mentors; or f.) some combination of the above. In addition, some areas of leadership development (for example, preparation for higher education leadership) it might be most efficient to promote and develop incentives for social work educators to enter existing higher education leadership development programs such as the ACE Fellows Program, the Bryn Mawr Women's Leadership Program, the Harvard Educational Leadership Program, or other similar programs.
8. Offering comprehensive leadership programs that are more extensive than sponsoring sessions at the CSWE APMs (which is already being done) will require an increased staff and additional resources to support this extension of CSWE's programming. Although start-up funding might be available through foundations and other grant sources, ultimately these programs must become self-funded through participant fees and/or funding from participants' employers, as well as some underwriting through CSWE's program budget.
9. Finally, although programming will need to build over time, it is imperative that some programs are offered soon. Both the inclusion of leadership development in CSWE's Strategic Plan and the visibility given to this need during the investigation underpinning this report has created an expectation that something will begin in the near future. Nevertheless, initial programming should be initiated carefully in order to assure that eventually CSWE leadership training will develop a reputation for including content that is both substantive and appropriate for each audience.

## **Recommendations**

To facilitate decision making by the Leadership Development Council, the following recommendations are offered.

1. It is proposed that the Leadership Council identify a part of its membership to focus on this initiative and work with a group of "consultants" interested in collaborating in this process to develop specific programming goals, select target audiences for initial program focus, and prioritize program implementation. The rationale for this recommendation is threefold. First, the charge to the Council is broader than this initiative and hopefully this work will not

overwhelm the Council to the detriment of its other leadership activities. Second, a process is needed to meaningfully involve representatives of related constituency groups in order to reinforce commitment to collaboration rather than competition in this process. Third, consultation from other individuals and/or organizations involved in leadership development would bring expertise beyond social work to this initiative.

2. It is proposed that through a consultant group (or other means) the Leadership Council initially select a small number of target audiences to address. To facilitate identification of potential targets and obtain a cursory indication of what programming for that target might entail, refer to Figure 2. Attention should be given to such factors as the Leadership Development Council's judgment of what is most needed to fulfill its charge, the relative ease of program implementation for that group, the availability of resources to carry out the program, and interest exhibited by potential participants.
3. To more fully determine the specific content needs and delivery format for the selected groups, it is proposed that data be collected (see Item #5 above) to engage potential participants in determining the nature of the leadership training.
4. With documented support for a specific program delivery structure for any targeted group for leadership development it would then be possible to develop a budget for the program, select personnel to deliver the program, seek funding to support its implementation, and develop the necessary program evaluation tools. Realistic estimates of the staff and resources required for program implementation must be made to assure that programs provided under CSWE auspices are of high quality.