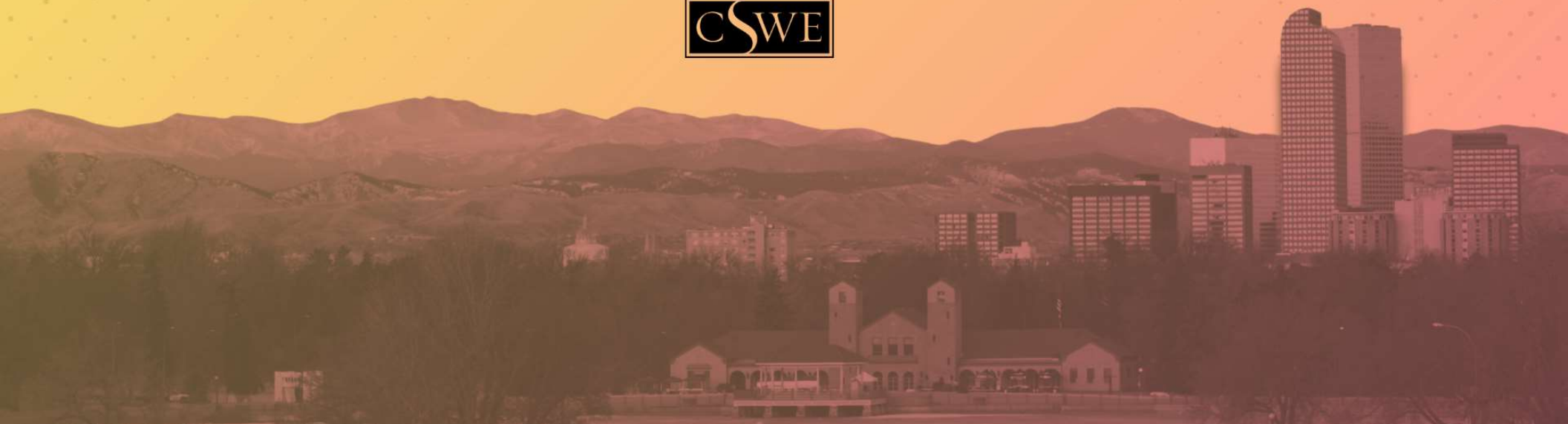


It's time to act.



*Championing Disability Justice
and Disability Joy in Social Work*

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Successful Benchmark 1 (BM1) Strategies for New BSW & MSW Programs



Michael E. Leff, JD, MSW
CSWE Accreditation Services Manager



#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Goals & Objectives

- Brief background about starting a new program and the candidacy process
- Review process
- Retroactive accreditation status
- Submission deadlines
- Program options
- Strategies for BM1 standards
- Resources
- Questions



#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Phases of Starting a New Program

New Applicant

- Exploring Accreditation of New Program.
- Includes:
 - Candidacy Eligibility Fee and Application.
 - Submitting Benchmark 1 (BM1) for staff approval.

Pre-Candidacy

- Pre-Candidacy Status attained.
- Staff Approval of BM1 has been granted.
- Program is placed on a BOA agenda.
- Program is assigned to CSWE Accreditation Specialist to work with.

Candidacy

- Candidacy Status granted by the Board of Accreditation (BOA).
- Candidacy typically takes 2-3 years.

Initial Accreditation

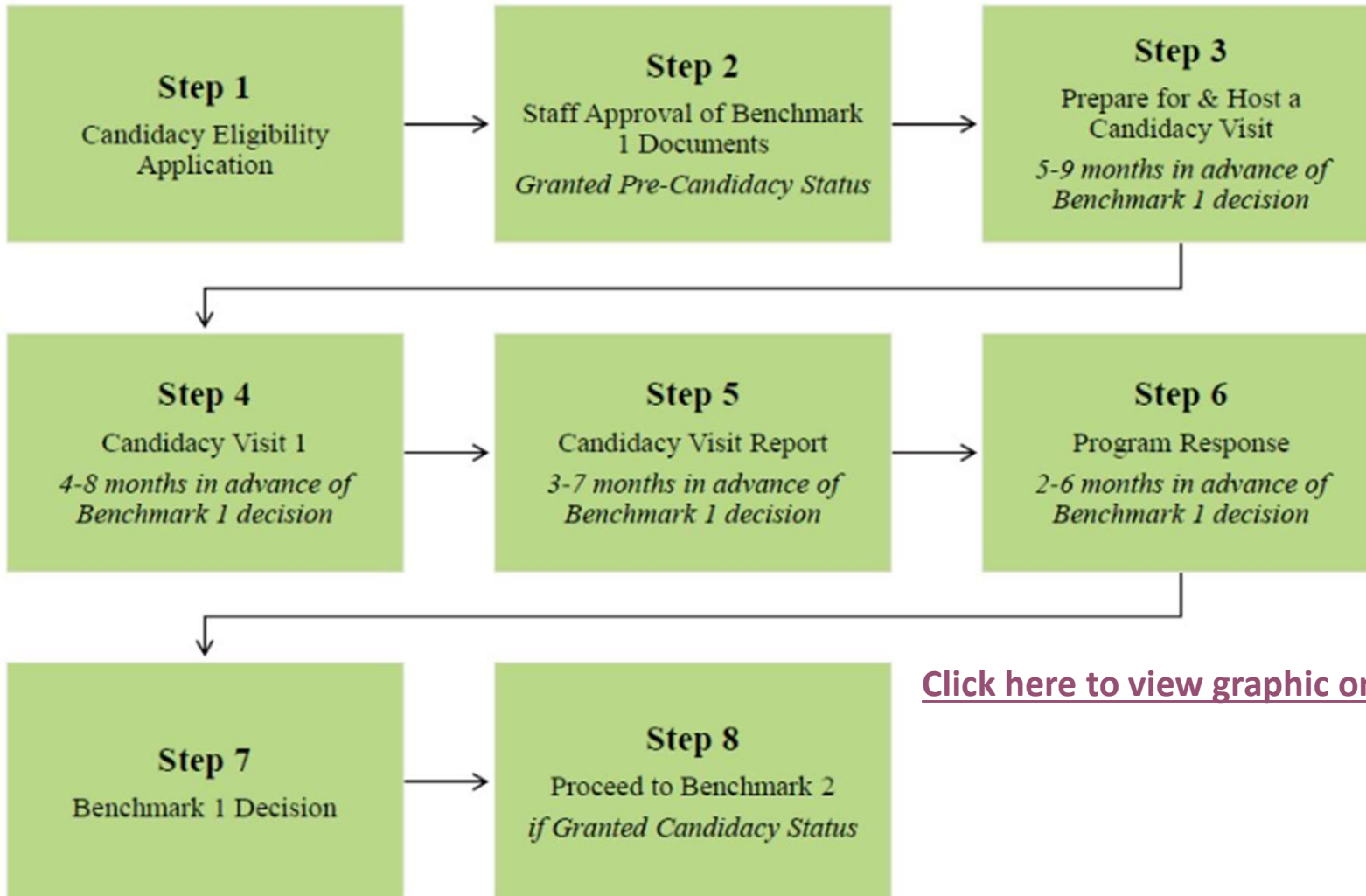
- Initial Accreditation granted by BOA.
- Accreditation is an ongoing process for alignment and compliance with EPAS.
- BOA reviews program for reaffirmation every 8 years.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Candidacy | Benchmark 1 - Process Overview



[Click here to view graphic online](#)

Staff Approval of Benchmark 1 (BM1)

- Submission of **fully completed** document reflecting compliance plans for *approval* and *developmental* standards.
- Staff approval is granted when...
 - [Candidacy Eligibility Application](#) is approved and [Candidacy Eligibility Fee](#) paid before BM1 submission.
 - BM1 evidences that approval standards are fully thought out and attempts at developmental standards have been made.
 - What are approval standards and developmental standards? Review [Benchmark Grid](#).

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Staff Approval of Benchmark 1 (BM1)

- Submit BM1 (volumes 1-3) to [Accreditation Services Manager](#)
- Iterative feedback provided using comment feature in MS Word
- Programs return documents with **staff comments intact** and **new material highlighted**
- As many rounds of feedback as necessary ensure document is BOA-ready
- Consultations and [drop-in sessions](#) provided

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



What Does Staff Approval Mean For My Program?

- Program issued Pre-candidacy Status and placed on a BOA agenda for review for Candidacy Status:
 - Candidacy visit will be scheduled;
 - Candidacy visitor reviews BM1 ahead of visit;
 - Candidacy visitor reports their findings;
 - Program responds to the visitors findings; and
 - BOA members review BM1, candidacy visit report, and program response before BOA agenda review for candidacy status.
- Once Candidacy Status is granted, retroactive accreditation status applies.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Retroactive Accreditation Status

Per policy 5.2 Retroactive Accredited Status in the Accreditation Policy Handbook:

*Only students admitted to the social work program **during or after** the academic year in which the program is granted candidacy will be recognized as graduates from a CSWE-BOA accredited program, once the program achieves initial accreditation as granted by the Board of Accreditation (BOA). **Students admitted prior to the academic year in which the program was granted candidacy will not be recognized as graduates from a CSWE-BOA accredited social work education program**, regardless of the program's accredited status when they graduate.*

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Example of Retroactive Accreditation Status

- **Your goal:** To admit students into your new social work program beginning in **Fall 2026**, due dates for the following timetables **must be met**:
 - October 2026 BOA Meeting Agenda (2026-2028),
 - February 2027 BOA Meeting Agenda (2027-2029), or
 - June 2027 BOA Meeting Agenda (2027-2029)

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Submission Deadline Highlights

Eligibility Application & Fee Due	Submission of BM1 for Staff Approval	BM1 Staff Approval Deadline	BOA Meeting Agenda for Candidacy Status Decision	Retroactive Accreditation Status
October 1, 2025	December 1, 2025	June 1, 2026	February 2027	2026-2027 AY
January 1, 2026	March 1, 2026	September 1, 2026	June 2027	2026-2027 AY
April 1, 2026	June 1, 2026	December 1, 2026	October 2027	2027-2028 AY
October 1, 2026	December 1, 2026	June 1, 2027	February 2028	2027-2028 AY
January 1, 2027	March 1, 2027	September 1, 2027	June 2028	2027-2028 AY
April 1, 2027	June 1, 2027	December 1, 2027	October 2028	2028-2029 AY
October 1, 2027	December 1, 2027	June 1, 2028	February 2029	2028-2029 AY
January 1, 2028	March 1, 2028	September 1, 2028	June 2029	2028-2029 AY
April 1, 2028	June 1, 2028	December 1, 2028	October 2029	2029-2030 AY

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Estimated Timeline*

*Additional actions and due dates are integrated in the [detailed timetables](#).

Submission of Candidacy Eligibility Fee	Submission of Candidacy Eligibility Application	Staff Review of Submission of Candidacy Eligibility	Deadline to submit BM1 to staff for approval	BM1 Staff Approval Deadline	Submission of BM1 for BOA	Candidacy Visit Period	BOA Meeting Agenda for Candidacy Status Decision
Prior to application	10/1/2025	30-60 days for each review	No later than 12/1/2025	6/1/2026	8/1/2026	9/1/2026 through 11/15/2026	February 2027
Prior to application	1/1/2026	30-60 days for each review	No later than 3/1/2026	9/1/2026	11/1/2026	12/1/2026 through 2/28/2027	June 2027
Prior to application	4/1/2026	30-60 days for each review	No later than 6/1/2026	12/1/2026	2/1/2027	3/1/2027 through 5/15/2027	October 2027

Program Options

- All program options to be covered under initial accreditation must be declared within the BM1 for staff approval document.
- Standards require responses inclusive of all program options.
- To add a program option, the substantive change process is required. ([policy 4.9 Program Changes](#))

Program Options | Scope

- Consider the “scope” of your program option(s):
 - Is it local, regional, national, and/or global?
 - Does the program have the infrastructure to manage the scope of the program option?
 - Does the program have resources to control the quality of the program option?

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Benchmark 1 Strategies

Tips & Trends



#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 1.0.1

Program Mission

Accreditation Standard 1.0.1: *The program has a program-level mission statement that is consistent with the profession's purpose and values. Institutions with accredited baccalaureate and master's programs have a separate mission statement for each program.*

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 1.0.1

Program Mission

- Program-level mission statement
 - Not department, school, or institution
- When explaining the consistency between the program's mission statement, the profession's purpose, and the profession's values, you must show **HOW** these areas are consistent

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 1.0.2

Program Context

Accreditation Standard 1.0.2: The program's mission statement is consistent with the program's context.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 1.0.2

Program Context

- Discuss the program's context (defined in EP 1)
- Examples of contextual factors:
 - Institution's orientation (e.g., HBCU, tribal college or university, minority-serving institution, HSI, faith-based institution)
 - Geographical setting (e.g., urban, rural)
 - Populations represented in the program (e.g., commuters, non-traditional students, first-generation students)
 - Populations served by the program's faculty, students, and graduates
 - Other elements unique to the program (e.g., "global" framework)
- Explain **HOW** elements of the program's mission are consistent with its context

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 3.1.1

Generalist Practice

Accreditation Standard 3.1.1: The program's generalist practice curriculum integrates the classroom and field and is informed by the professional practice community.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 3.1.1

Generalist Practice

- Describe the generalist practice curriculum design
 - Programs often focus on theories taught in the curriculum rather than those informing the formal curriculum design, structure, or blueprint
 - Programs miss the discussion on *when* courses are offered, *how* they build off one another, and *how* students progress through curriculum
- Explain the coherent integration between class and field curricula
 - Programs do not speak to the reciprocal relationship between theory and practice within and intentional curriculum design
- Explain how generalist practice curriculum is informed by professional practice community
 - Programs often speak aspirationally with future-oriented language, and not about ongoing engagement that has already occurred. Must be playful as you cannot recreate this later.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS M3.2.1

Specialized Practice

Accreditation Standard M3.2.1: The program has at least one area of specialized practice. For each area of specialized practice, the program extends and enhances the nine social work competencies (and any additional competencies added by the program)

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS M3.2.1

Specialized Practice

- Programs often do not extend and enhance their competencies thoroughly, they are too similar to generalist competencies
- Structure of a competency:
 - Competency title
 - Titles for competencies 1-5 must remain identical to the 9 generalist competences while titles for competencies 6-9 may change to reflect the specialized/relevant system levels (e.g., individuals, families, groups, organizations, and/or communities)
 - Descriptive paragraph(s) – Must contain the 4 dimensions (Knowledge, Values, Skills, & Cognitive and Affective Processes)
 - Behavior(s)
- Programs may elect to add one (1) or more competencies unique to the program's mission and/or context

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS M3.2.1

Specialized Practice

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Advanced Generalist Practitioners apply ethical decision-making based upon relevant ethical frameworks such as the NASW Code of Ethics, models for ethical decision-making, and legal statutes (**values**). They critically reflect on their biases, successes, and shortcomings as a practitioner with use of supervision and self-assessment to ensure that clients are receiving the highest level of care and consideration (**cognitive and affective processes**). Their understanding of trauma informed care and systems theory (**knowledge**) help them apply person-in- environment perspectives (**skills**) to client situations.

Advanced Generalist Practitioners:

- a. Utilize technology in an ethical manner to ensure client confidentiality
- b. Reflect on biases and seek supervisor input to ensure professional judgement and client safety
- c. Apply ethical decision-making practices through utilization of National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics within the profession as appropriate to the context.

AS M3.2.2

Specialized Practice

Accreditation Standard M3.2.2: The program's area(s) of specialized practice builds on elements of generalist practice.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS M3.2.2

Specialized Practice

- One of the most commonly missed standards on BM1 master's reviews
- Programs miss the intent and requirements of the standard
 - Select elements of the **generalist practice definition (EP 3.1)** that best influence each area of specialized practice
 - No need to discuss all elements, just the most salient
 - Then explain **HOW** each area of specialized practice builds upon each selected element

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS M3.2.2

Specialized Practice

Generalist Practice Definition (pg. 17 of 2022 EPAS):

Educational Policy 3.1: Generalist Practice

The baccalaureate and master's programs in social work prepare students for professional practice at a generalist level. The descriptions of the nine social work competencies presented in the EPAS identify the knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes that are subsequently demonstrated in students' observable behaviors indicative of competence at a generalist level of practice.

Generalist practice is grounded in the liberal arts and the person-in-environment framework. To promote human and social well-being, generalist practitioners use a range of prevention and intervention methods in their practice with diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, based on scientific inquiry and best practices. The generalist practitioner identifies with the social work profession and applies ethical principles and critical thinking in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Generalist practitioners engage diversity in their practice and advocate for human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. They recognize, support, and build on the strengths and resiliency of all human beings. They engage in research-informed practice and are proactive in responding to the impact of context on professional practice.



AS M3.2.2

Specialized Practice

Elements of the Generalist Practice Definition

Range of prevention and intervention methods

Based on scientific inquiry and best practices

How it is Extended and Enhanced

At the generalist level, students receive instruction about basic rapport building and introductory intervention methods. At the advanced generalist level, students receive more comprehensive instruction regarding advanced intervention methods such as CBT and DBT and utilize more advanced techniques and advocacy to aid in prevention.

At the advanced generalist level, students are learning how to apply best practices, theories, and research learned in the classroom to real-life situations within their field settings.

AS M3.2.3

Specialized Practice

Accreditation Standard M3.2.3: The program's specialized practice curriculum integrates classroom and field and is informed by the professional practice community.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS M3.2.3

Specialized Practice

- Similar to requirements for generalist level (AS 3.1.1)
 - Describe the specialized practice curriculum design
 - Explain the coherent integration between class and field curricula
 - How specialized practice curriculum is informed by professional practice community
- Where programs often misstep: Little distinction between generalist education/training and specialized education/training
- Omitting theories/concepts/models that influenced design of curriculum
 - Know the “why” behind the “what” of the formal design
- Difficulty showing the integration between class and field
- Lack of ongoing ways in which program engaged with the professional practice community

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.1.1

Admission Policies

Accreditation Standard 4.1.1: The program's admissions policies are equitable and inclusive, with particular attention to underrepresented as well as historically and currently oppressed groups.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.1.1

Admission Policies

- Underrepresented and historically and currently oppressed groups are unique to each program's context.
- Describe **HOW** admission processes make the program both equitable and inclusive.
- Describe **HOW** it is so for underrepresented and historically and currently oppressed groups.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS B4.1.2/AS M4.1.2

Admissions

Accreditation Standard B4.1.2: *The program has criteria for admission, a process for application evaluation, and a process to notify students of admission decisions.*

Accreditation Standard M4.1.2: *The program has criteria for admission, a process for application evaluation, and a process to notify students of admission decisions. The criteria for admission to the master's program must include an earned baccalaureate degree from a college or university accredited by a recognized regional accrediting organization.*

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS B4.1.2/AS M4.1.2

Admissions

- Include all admissions types
- All admission criteria (standard, transfer, advanced standing)
- Process for evaluating admission applications
- Process for notification (for all decision types)
- How stakeholders are informed of admission criteria, evals, and notifications
- *International students*: Programs may admit international students as long as the program follows their institution's, state-based higher education authority's, and/or regional accreditor's policies and procedures for admitting international students
- *For AS M4.1.2*: Explicitly state master's admission includes an earned baccalaureate degree from a college or university accredited by a recognized regional accrediting organization

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS M4.1.3

Advanced Standing

Accreditation Standard M4.1.3: *The program offers advanced standing to graduates holding degrees from baccalaureate social work programs accredited by CSWE. The program has a policy to ensure that students from CSWE-accredited baccalaureate social work programs do not repeat generalist content at the master's level that has been achieved at the baccalaureate level.*

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS M4.1.3

Advanced Standing

- All master's programs must offer advanced standing.
- Advanced standing-only programs are not permitted
- Include process/mechanism for ensuring baccalaureate social work graduates do not repeat generalist content achievements
 - Process/mechanism can be advanced standing
 - Must have secondary mechanism in cases when students do not qualify for advanced standing
- *Pre-candidate and candidate programs*: Must have advanced standing policies at Benchmark 1 and can offer advanced standing admission anytime during the candidacy process; however, advanced standing must be offered at Benchmark 3

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.1.4

Transfer Policies

Accreditation Standard 4.1.4: The program has policies for the transfer of social work course credit.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.1.4

Transfer Policies

- Include written policy for transfer of credits (cite location)
- Procedures for reviewing transcripts and/or other materials to determine course equivalency
- Does program adopt institutional policy or have program-level policy? Or both?
- Programs may only accept field education and practice course transfer credits from other CSWE-accredited or candidacy social work programs, unless the program is able to explain how the program assesses course equivalency to comply with all AS 3.2 (field education) standards and AS 4.2.2 (practice course instructor qualifications). Transfer credit policies and procedures do not need to explicitly state this; yet documentation cannot oppose/violate this interpretation.
- Explain how stakeholders are informed
- Cite written articulation of all related transfer credit policies/procedures

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.1.5

Course Credit for Work/Life Experience

Accreditation Standard 4.1.5: The program does not grant social work course credit for life experience or previous work experience.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.1.5

Course Credit for Work/Life Experience

- Copy/paste the written policy explicitly stating that the social work program does not grant social work course credit for:
 - Life experience
 - Previous work experience
- Cite location of written articulation
- Explain how stakeholders are informed

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS B4.2.1 & AS M4.2.1

Faculty Summary Form

Accreditation Standard B4.2.1: *The baccalaureate social work program identifies no fewer than two full-time faculty, with a full-time appointment in social work, whose principal assignment is to the baccalaureate program. Inclusive of all program options, the majority of the full-time social work program faculty whose principal assignment is to the baccalaureate program have a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program.*

Accreditation Standard M4.2.1: *The master's social work program identifies no fewer than four full-time faculty with a full-time appointment in social work, whose principal assignment is to the master's program. Inclusive of all program options, the majority of the full-time social work program faculty whose principal assignment is to the master's program and a doctoral degree, preferably in social work program have both a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited work.*

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS B4.2.1 & AS M4.2.1

Faculty Summary Form

- At BM1, must have 2 full-time faculty
- Must provide corresponding *Faculty Summary Form*
- Make sure years of post-degree practice matches *Faculty Data Forms*
- Principal assignment must be indicated
- All faculty teaching in that program level identified

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.3.4(a) *Program Director*

Accreditation Standard 4.3.4(a): The program has a program director who administers all program options. The program director has a full-time appointment to social work, with a principal assignment to the program they administer. Institutions with accredited baccalaureate and master's social work programs have a separate director appointed for each program

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.3.4(a)

Program Director

- Identify 1 program director for the program level under review
- The program director must have administrative oversight over the program in its entirety, inclusive of all program options
- Proper documentation = memo on letterhead, contract or hiring letter
 - Explicitly state the program director has a fulltime appointment to the social work program they administer, or social work overall.
 - Explicitly state that the program director has at least 51% or more of their appointment solely dedicated to the program they administer.
 - Explicitly state that the program director administers all program options.
 - Must be signed a supervisor or administrator (i.e., dean, director, chair, provost, president, or human resources).

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.3.4(a)

Program Director

- *For staff to approve BM1 and enter Pre-candidacy:* Must have a program director formally hired, with a start date no later than 30-days before the first possible date in your visit window (i.e., when the Benchmark document is sent to the visitor and program's accreditation specialist).
 - Must be able to identify and speak about the program director in BM1.
- *For Benchmark 1:* Programs must have a program director actively working within the program 30-days before the first possible date in your visit window (i.e., when the Benchmark document is sent to the visitor and program's accreditation specialist) even if students are not enrolled or the program is not fully operational.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS B4.3.4(b) & AS M4.3.4(b)

Program Director | Qualifications

Accreditation Standard B4.3.4(b): *The baccalaureate program director has a master's degree in social work from a CSWE accredited program. The program director has the ability to provide leadership through teaching, scholarship, curriculum development, administrative experience, and/or other academic and professional activities in social work.*

Accreditation Standard M4.3.4(b): *The master's program director has a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program. In addition, it is preferred that the master's program director have a doctoral degree, preferably in social work. The program director has the ability to provide leadership through teaching, scholarship, curriculum development, administrative experience, and/or other academic and professional activities in social work.*

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS B4.3.4(b) & AS M4.3.4(b)

Program Director / Qualifications

- Must have required degree type (CSWE-accredited degree, CASWE-accredited degree, or internationally earned ISWDES-evaluated degree).
- Prompts for describing the program director's leadership ability:
 - Teaching
 - Scholarship
 - Curriculum development
 - Administrative experience
 - Relevant academic experience
 - Relevant professional social work activities

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS B4.3.4(c) & AS M4.3.4(c)

Program Director | Assigned Time

Accreditation Standard B4.3.4(c): *The baccalaureate program director has sufficient assigned time for administrative oversight of the social work program, inclusive of all program options. It is customary for the program director to have, at minimum, 25% assigned time to administer the social work program.*

Accreditation Standard M4.3.4(c): *The master's program director has sufficient assigned time for administrative oversight of the social work program, inclusive of all program options. It is customary for the program director to have, at minimum, 50% assigned time to administer the social work program.*

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS B4.3.5(c) & AS M4.3.5(c) *Program Director / Assigned Time*

- Provide the procedures for calculating the program director's assigned time to administer the program
- Discuss workload policy and all workload roles
- Show the mathematical calculation for admin assigned time
- If assigned time varies from the customary, provide a strong description of sufficiency/statement (50% master's & 25% baccalaureate)
- Must be current/present sufficiency

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.3.5(a) *Field Director*

Accreditation Standard 4.3.5(a): *The program has a field education director who administers all program options. The field education director has a full-time appointment to social work. Institutions with accredited baccalaureate and master's social work programs may have the same field education director appointed to both programs.*

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.3.5(a)

Field Director

- Identify 1 field director for the program level under review.
 - Program director can serve as field director with sufficient assigned time
- *For co-located programs:* Field director can be the same for both program levels, with sufficient assigned time
- The field director must have administrative oversight over the field education program in its entirety, inclusive of all program options
- Proper documentation = memo on letterhead, contract or hiring letter
 - Explicitly state the field director has a fulltime appointment to the social work program they administer, or social work overall.
 - Explicitly state that the field director administers all program options.
 - Must be signed a supervisor or administrator (i.e., dean, director, chair, provost, president, or human resources).

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.3.5(a)

Field Director

- *For staff to approve BM1 and enter Pre-candidacy:* Must have a field education director formally hired, with a start date no later than 30-days before the first possible date in your visit window (i.e., when the Benchmark document is sent to the visitor and program's accreditation specialist)
 - Must be able to identify and speak about the field director in BM1.
- *For Benchmark 1:* Programs must have a field education director actively working within the program 30-days before the first possible date in your visit window (i.e., when the Benchmark document is sent to the visitor and program's accreditation specialist) even if students are not enrolled or the program is not fully operational

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS B4.3.5(b) & AS M4.3.5(b)

Field Director | Qualifications

Accreditation Standard B4.3.5(b): *The baccalaureate field education director has a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and at least two years of post-baccalaureate social work degree or post-master's social work degree practice experience in social work. The field education director has the ability to provide leadership to the field education program through practice experience, field instruction experience, and administrative and/or other relevant academic and professional activities in social work.*

Accreditation Standard M4.3.5(b): *The master's field education director has a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and at least two years of post-master's social work degree practice experience in social work. The field education director has the ability to provide leadership to the field education program through practice experience, field instruction experience, and/or administrative or other relevant academic and professional activities in social work.*

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS B4.3.5(b) & AS M4.3.5(b)

Field Director | Qualifications

- *For baccalaureate programs:* Field director must have a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and at least two (2) years of **post-baccalaureate or post-master's** social work degree practice experience in social work.
- *For master's programs:* Field director must have a master's degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program and at least two (2) years of **post-master's** social work degree practice experience in social work.
- Must have required degree type (CSWE-accredited degree, CASWE-accredited degree, or internationally earned ISWDES-evaluated degree).
- Prompts for describing the field director's leadership ability:
 - Practice experience
 - Field instruction experience
 - Administrative experience
 - Relevant academic experience
 - Relevant professional social work activities

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS B4.3.5(c) & AS M4.3.5(c)

Field Director | Assigned Time

Accreditation Standard B4.3.5(c): *The baccalaureate field education director has sufficient assigned time for administrative oversight of the field education program, inclusive of all program options. It is customary for the field education director to have, at minimum, 25% assigned time to administer the field education program.*

Accreditation Standard M4.3.5(c): *The master's field director has sufficient assigned time for administrative oversight of the field education program, inclusive of all program options. It is customary for the field education director to have, at minimum, 50% assigned time to administer the field education program.*

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS B4.3.5(c) & AS M4.3.5(c) *Field Director / Assigned Time*

- Provide the procedures for calculating the field director's admin assigned time
- Discuss workload policy and all workload roles
- Show the mathematical calculation to determine the field director's admin time
- If assigned time varies from customary, provide strong description of sufficiency/statement (50% master's & 25% baccalaureate)
- Must be current/present sufficiency

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.4.1

Resources | Budget Form

Accreditation Standard 4.4.1: *The program uses its budget development and administration process to achieve its mission and continuously improve the program. The program has sufficient financial resources to achieve its mission*

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.4.1

Resources / Budget Form

- Process for developing budget *and* administering it (speak to both)
- **HOW** these processes achieve program's mission *and* ensure continuous improvement (speak to both)
- Discuss financial sufficiency over the three-year span covered by the *Form AS 4.4.1: Budget Form*.
- Do not include line items beyond the program's budget.
- Provide two (2) or more examples of how the program's financial resources are sufficient for each of the following:
 - Achieve the program's mission
 - Continuously improve the program
- Discuss current sufficiency of resources (must make an explicit statement).

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.4.4

Resources

Accreditation Standard 4.4.4: The program has sufficient technological access, technology support, and if applicable, office and classroom space to achieve its mission.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.4.4

Resources

- Description must be specific to the program-level (baccalaureate or master's) rather than the school/department-level or institutional-level.
- Describe the program's technological access.
 - Programs often misunderstand what constitutes technological access
- Describe the program's technology support
 - Programs often misunderstand what constitutes technology support
- Describe the program's office and classroom space (in-person)
- Describe sufficiency of all three
- Make explicit statement of current sufficiency of each

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.4.4

Resources

- *Technological Access*: How program students, faculty, and staff use technology to access and complete the educational program, usually virtually or remotely. This includes technology, software, or platforms that facilitate learning and human communication through computers. Examples include: Devices, platforms, technology, learning management systems, shared networks, collaborative tools, online repositories/resources, etc.
- *Technology Support*: Technical assistance offered to students, faculty, and staff. Examples include: Troubleshooting, information technology (IT) professional support, oversight of hardware and software, and maintenance and repair of technology.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.4.5

Resources

Accreditation Standard 4.4.5: *The program has sufficient resources and supports, including supportive technology, student services, and if applicable, physical space, that reduce barriers while optimizing accessibility and equity for all its students.*

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



AS 4.4.5

Resources / Reducing Barriers

- Key to this standard is sufficient resources and supports for all students, including those with diverse abilities
- Describe program-level access to supportive technology
- Describe program-level access to student services (make sure you touch on various services such accommodations, counseling, financial aid, health, etc.)
- Describe program-level access to accessible physical spaces
- At least two (2) or more examples or each of the above areas
- Describe sufficiency of each
- Make explicit statement of current sufficiency of each to reduce barriers while optimizing accessibility and equity

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Training & Resources



#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Accreditation Scope and Services

www.cswe.org/accreditation/scopeandservices

This page includes:

- Overview
- Training
- Substantive Change Process
- International Social Work Degree Review



#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



2022 EPAS Toolkit

www.cswe.org/2022EPAS

The toolkit includes:

- 2022 EPAS for Baccalaureate and Master's Social Work Programs
- 2022 EPAS Interpretation Guide
- Required Forms & Samples
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Information
- Program Outcomes Information
- Accreditation Policy Handbook

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Forms, Tools, & Templates

- [2022 EPAS Benchmark Grid](#)
- [2022 EPAS Accreditation Team Approach Grid](#)
- [Faculty Hiring Grid](#)
- [Candidacy Eligibility Application](#)
- [Candidacy Fees and Related Expenses](#)
- [Required Benchmark 1 Template](#)
- [Budget Form](#)



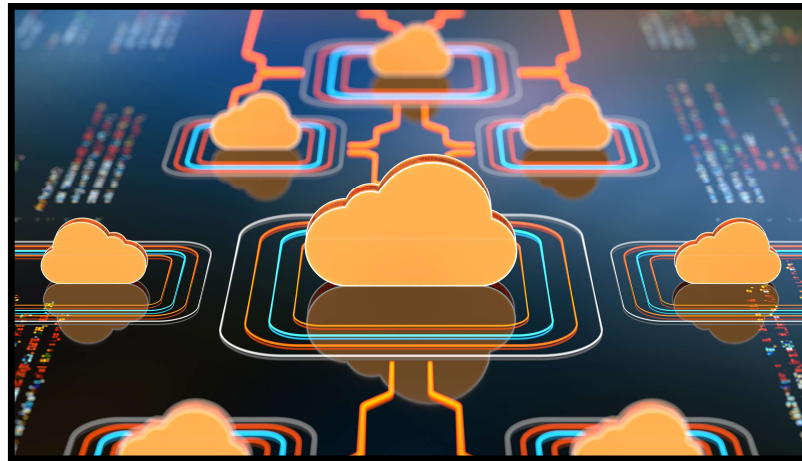
#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



New Program Applicant Webpage

cswe.org/newapplicants



#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO

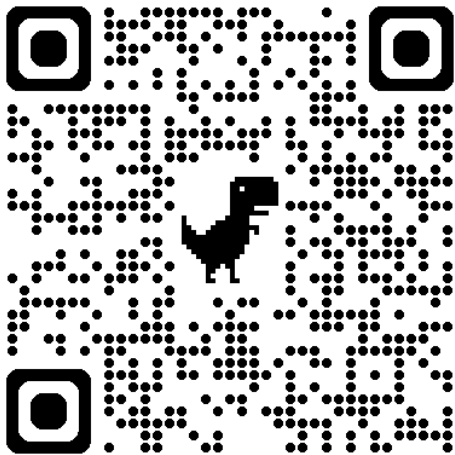




Accreditation Updates Webinar

Wed., November 5, 2025

1:00-2:00pm (EST)



- “Office hours” with accreditation leadership
- Timely updates on interpretations, policies, resources, training, services, volunteer perks, and *so much more!*
- Q&A
- Questions welcome via the [registration form](#)

Join us!

Webinar will not be recorded due to interactive nature.

#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



Questions?



#CSWE25

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO



It's time to act.



*Championing Disability Justice
and Disability Joy in Social Work*

CSWE 71ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, CO

