



COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

**Department of Social Work Accreditation**  
Report to the Board of Directors

**February 2022**

Since the submission of the October 2021 Board Report, the DOSWA team has continued to offer high-quality and engaging services to accredited, candidacy, and pre-candidacy social work programs as well as those in exploratory and application phases of launching new educational programs. Services include individual and group consultations; engaging in public education; and providing training on accreditation processes, policies, and standards. Beyond external-facing services, DOSWA also maintains records of accredited programs through the Directory of Accredited Programs, and develops policies and procedures to maintain the quality, consistency, and integrity of the peer-review accreditation process.

DOSWA has adapted services and operations to continue accommodating programs impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. DOSWA staff have continued to function at a high level, offering interactive and virtual collaborative services to approximately 900 accredited baccalaureate and master's programs, 70 pre-candidacy baccalaureate and master's programs, and four Post-Master's Social Work Fellowship programs.

The remainder of this report is structured to showcase the daily efforts, initiatives, strategic progress, and meaningful impact the DOSWA in their partnership with COA contributes to CSWE constituents and the public.

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

Activities to further this goal and strategies include:

- The 2022 EPAS Joint Committee (COA and COEP representatives; CSWE staff) released draft 2 of the 2022 EPAS October 25, 2021. Social work educators and the public were encouraged to complete a feedback survey by December 17, 2021.
  - At the writing of this report, draft 2 feedback is being analyzed and will be shared with the Commission on Accreditation at their February 2022 meeting. The Joint EPAS Committee will reconvene February 8, 2022 to review feedback and develop the final draft, to present a final draft at the June 2022 COA meeting.
  - A number of feedback sessions including an overview of draft 2 were conducted by Deana Morrow, COA Chair; Shirley Gatenio-Gable, Commission on Educational Policy Chair; Tanya Smith Brice, Vice President of Education at CSWE; and Megan Fujita, Executive Director of Accreditation at CSWE. Sessions included the following:
    - CSWE APM (two live sessions) – November 6th
    - Black Administrators, Researchers, and Scholars group – November 15th
    - National Association of Christian Social Workers - November 19<sup>th</sup>
    - Minority serving institutions group – December 3rd
    - APM On Demand– December 10<sup>th</sup> (session taped for additional availability and posted on CSWE platforms)
  - An additional overview of 2022 EPAS feedback can be found on the CSWE website here.
- The Post-Master’s Social Work Fellowship accreditation pilot continues. Four programs were selected to participate in the pilot which launched in October 2019. The second fellowship program was granted initial accreditation in October 2021, and the final two are scheduled to be reviewed by the Commission on Accreditation in February 2022.
  - The Post-Master’s Social Work Fellowship Accreditation Standards were approved and adopted by COA at the October 2021 meeting.
  - The fellowship accreditation website has been updated to reflect a directory of the 2 accredited program and the approved Fellowship Standards.
- The Professional Practice Doctoral Program (PPDP) Accreditation pilot launched in October 2021 with four programs selected to participate in the pilot.
  - In October 2021, pilot programs were notified and PPDP website was updated.
  - The COA PPDP Implementation Committee continues to meet and are reviewing Benchmark 2 and 3 materials to be used by the pilot programs, and updated the PPDP website.
  - Once two PPDP programs are granted initial accreditation, COA will be eligible to apply to expand their scope of accreditation with CHEA.
- DOSWA staff continued to update the Frequently Asked Questions section of the CSWE website to positively impact staff workloads and public / constituent transparency.

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

Activities to further this goal and strategies include:

- DOSWA staff provide individualized or group consultations throughout the year to social work program faculty and administrators via Zoom, email, and phone. In-person consultations at APM were limited this year due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, however DOSWA staff offered 10 virtual group consultations to 177 attendees.
- To ensure and promote educational quality across social work education programs, the DOSWA communicates regularly with all programs. Following all COA meetings, staff send communications summarizing COA actions and helpful information for accredited programs. Recent communications have included information related to clarifying interpretive information; updated policies (e.g., Conflict of Interest policy); and updates about the 2022 EPAS.
- DOSWA continues to support programs through the accreditation process in extenuating circumstances.
  - DOSWA staff continue to publish information/resources and respond to questions from programs, students, and the public regarding COVID-19 pandemic-related field and delivery method flexibilities.
- DOSWA staff continue to provide high-quality and informative trainings to programs year-round, all of which provide professional development opportunities to social work administrators and faculty.
  - Recent trainings include a reaffirmation workshop held December 3-4, 2021 by the DOSWA team; and pre-candidacy interactive workshops held monthly by Anna Holster, Associate Director of Accreditation Operations and Technology, including topics such as faculty and administrative structure and explicit curriculum.
  - DOSWA offered on-site sessions that supported accredited social work programs at 2021 APM in Orlando, FL, including virtual group consultations, and the following on-site sessions:
    - Demystifying the Accreditation Process
    - Frequently Cited Standards: 2015 EPAS
    - Candidacy Overview for Baccalaureate and Master’s Programs
    - 2015 EPAS Assessment Overview

**Goal 3: Support the career development of students, faculty members and administrators.**

Activities to further this goal and strategies include:

- Trainings mentioned in Goal 2 of this report support the career development of faculty and administrators. Through these trainings, individuals gain knowledge of the 2015 EPAS, accreditation procedures and policies, and helpful tips in navigating accreditation resources – which are highly desirable areas of expertise in social work faculty and administrators.
- The DOSWA team continues to serve as staff liaisons for multiple commissions and councils. In these roles, accreditation staff support onboarding and training new

members, upkeep of rosters and meeting materials, and provide consultation and guidance based on their expertise. The following groups have recently been supported by DOSWA staff:

- Commission on Accreditation, including eight standing or ad-hoc committees
- Council on Field Education
- Council on Practice Methods and Specialization
- 2022 EPAS Joint Committee
- The COA Development Committee, along with staff liaison Katie Benson, have developed a Commissioner Guide to COA was launched as a pilot during the August 2021 orientation for new commissioners. The COA decided to adopt the document in at the October 2021 meeting, and it will be used for future Commissioner onboarding.
  - This guide contains background information on the COA and CSWE, commonly used resources, and information about COA meetings and commissioner visits.
  - This guide will eventually be a companion piece to coordinate with the EPAS handbook and the Commissioner's policy manual, which are both in editing and development at this time.
- DOSWA staff continued to field inquiries from prospective and current students each year, providing information and referrals for inquiries around social work as a career, accredited programs, and licensure.

**Goal 4: Foster a diverse, interconnected, and inclusive community of social work educators.**

Activities to further this goal and strategies include:

- The DOSWA team offered an Accreditation Lunch & Learn Webinar on *Demystifying the Accreditation Process* on January 21, 2022. A copy of this presentation is available for review on the [CSWE website](#). DOSWA Lunch & Learn webinars provide an inclusive opportunity for social work educators to come together to learn about accreditation.
- Following each COA meeting, DOSWA sends a post-COA email to all primary contacts of accredited social work programs. The goal of this communication is to foster a supportive and interconnected community around the accreditation process. The December 2021 email included information regarding updated COVID-19 protocols, interpretive clarification around accreditation standards, 2022 EPAS information, and updates for programs in candidacy.
- At the October 2021 meeting, COA accredited the second post-master's social work fellowship program: VA Connecticut Health Care System Interprofessional Fellowship in Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Oriented Services
  - In November 2021, a post-COA fellowship update email went to existing fellowship programs. This is similar to the update email that goes out to baccalaureate and master's programs following each COA meeting and is a practice we will continue moving forward. In this fellowship update email, DOSWA announced the COA's approval of formal accreditation standards, accreditation of the second Fellowship program, and outlined next steps as the pilot concludes.

- In November 2021, an announcement regarding the formal launch of the professional practice degree accreditation pilot was sent to all existing professional practice doctoral programs.

**Goal 5: Ensure CSWE provides exceptional value to its members and member institutions.**

Activities to further this goal and strategies include:

- Since the submission of the fall 2021 Board Report, DOSWA implemented a new departmental structure. The new structure was effective October 25, 2021 and provides the accreditation team with additional staff resources and a more strategic workload distribution. These changes will ensure accredited CSWE programs receive quality consultation, training, and resources from CSWE staff. Key components of the restructuring which support Goal 5 include:
  - The Site Visit Coordinator position was restructured to a Volunteer Coordinator position which will continue scheduling site visits, but also take on responsibilities related to recruitment, training, development, and recognition of accreditation volunteers.
  - An additional position was added to DOSWA, the Associate Director of Accreditation Services. Kat Gibson-Ledl assumed this role October 25, 2021. The Associate Director of Accreditation Services will oversee policies and all accreditation specialists and ensure high-quality consultations and offerings for accredited programs.
  - The Senior Team Leader position was restructured into the Associate Director of Accreditation Operations and Technology, and Anna Holster assumed this role October 25, 2021. This position will supervise the Volunteer Coordinator position and will oversee volunteer process, technology, and training. They will develop an accreditation evaluation plan to ensure data-informed decision-making and training development.
- Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
  - Megan Fujita, DOSWA Executive Director, maintains communication with CHEA's Vice President for Recognition Services. Recent meetings include learning more about the *CHEA Standards and Procedures for Recognition (2021)* which were approved by the CHEA Board of Directors October 2021 and shared publicly December 2021. Such communications ensure the services DOSWA offers members are aligned with accreditation best practices.
  - Megan Fujita recently spoke at the 2022 CHEA Conference in Washington, DC in January. The topic of the talk is *Wellness in an Age of Constant Uncertainty*.
- Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA)
  - The DOSWA team remains connected to ASPA, attending training on accreditation best-practices, including sessions on strategic planning, information U.S. Department of Education and CHEA accreditation, and obtaining Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion resources from other ASPA members. The Executive

Director continued to share resources with the 2022 EPAS Joint Committee to inform the 2022 EPAS draft 2.

- Program Database Record Verification and Updates Form
  - The DOSWA Team implemented a database update form. All programs were asked to submit a comprehensive database audit form that updated all components of their program records. This form was completed by 99.7% of all programs.
  - This form continues to be utilized for all program database updates and is the means through which all database and directory updates occur.
- DOSWA staff are working to archive physical copies of accreditation decisions to create a more comprehensive digital archive of scanned materials.

Daily, DOSWA staff, in close partnership with COA, engage in interactions with programs, volunteers, educators, students, social workers, organizations, and members of the public to fulfill purposes of accreditation: quality assurance, academic improvement, professional preparation, and public accountability. Staff work diligently to clarify, codify, create, and streamline processes, policies, and resource to support programs in achieving their accreditation goals. The work of DOSWA would not be possible without ongoing collaboration with, and support from, the Commission on Accreditation and site visitor volunteers. We thank them for their service to social work education and continued partnership.

On behalf of the DOSWA, we express our gratitude for the CSWE Board's ongoing leadership in social work education and your support of our team's impactful work.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan M. Fujita". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Megan M. Fujita, Ph.D., MSW  
Executive Director, Department of Social Work Accreditation