B1.0 SCOPE AND INTENT OF THE CURRICULUM POLICY STATEMENT

B1.1 This document sets forth the official curriculum policy for the accreditation of baccalaureate (BSW) programs of social work education by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). It supersedes all prior statements of curriculum policy for the baccalaureate program level.

B1.2 The curriculum policy statement establishes mandates for minimum requirements for the curricula of baccalaureate programs to be accredited by CSWE. The policy statement specifies certain content areas and requires that they be logically related to each other, to the purposes and values of social work as set forth in this document, and to the purposes, mission, resources, and educational context of each professional program. The statement does not prescribe any particular curriculum design.

B1.3 Each program is responsible for making every faculty member, student, field instructor, and administrator associated with the program aware of the content of the Curriculum Policy Statement.

B2.0 RELATIONSHIP TO ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

B2.1 The Commission on Accreditation of CSWE develops standards by which social work education programs are evaluated for accreditation. These standards pertain to the organization, administration, and curriculum implementation of programs and social work education. Curriculum standards are derived from and must conform with this Curriculum Policy Statement.

B3.0 PREMISES UNDERLYING SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

B3.1 The purpose of social work education is to prepare competent and effective social work professionals who are committed to practice that includes services to the poor and oppressed, and who work to alleviate poverty, oppression, and discrimination.

B3.2 Social work education is based upon a specific body of knowledge, values, and professional skills. It is grounded in the profession's history and philosophy. Education for the profession promotes the development and advancement of knowledge, practice skills, and services that further the well being of people and promote social and economic justice. Social work education is responsible for the production and application of research and scholarship aimed at advancing social work practice.

B3.3 Programs of social work education are offered at baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels. Doctoral programs are not accredited by CSWE.
B3.4 Programs of social work education maintain close, reciprocal, and ongoing relationships with social work practitioners and with groups and organizations that promote, provide, or seek to influence social policies and social work services. Responsibility for initiating these relationships rests with social work education programs. Effective programs develop and maintain a systematic process of communication with these individuals and groups.

B3.5 The effectiveness of any profession depends on the active engagement of its members in continuous learning. Programs of social work education strive to promote continuing professional development of students and faculty. Programs seek to teach students how to become lifelong learners who are motivated to continue the development of knowledge and skills throughout their careers.

B3.6 Effective social work education programs recognize the interdependence of nations and the need for worldwide professional cooperation.

B3.7 Social work education programs must assume a leadership role within the profession by offering curricula that are at the forefront of the new and changing knowledge base of social work and its supporting disciplines.

B4.0 PURPOSE OF SOCIAL WORK

B4.1 The profession of social work is committed to the enhancement of human well-being and to the alleviation of poverty and oppression. The social work profession receives its sanction from public and private auspices and is the primary profession in the provision of social services. Within its general scope of concern, professional social work is practiced in a wide variety of settings and has four related purposes:

B4.1.1 The promotion, restoration, maintenance, and enhancement of the social functioning of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities by helping them to accomplish tasks, prevent and alleviate distress, and use resources.

B4.1.2 The planning, formulation, and implementation of social policies, services, resources, and programs needed to meet basic human needs and support the development of human capacities.

B4.1.3 The pursuit of policies, services, resources and programs through organizational or administrative advocacy and social or political action, so as to empower groups at risk and promote social and economic justice.

B4.1.4 The development and testing of professional knowledge and skills related to these purposes.

B5.0 PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF BACCALAUREATE SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION
B5.1 The purpose of professional social work is to enable students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession into competent practice. The achievement of this purpose requires clarity about learning objectives and expected student outcomes, flexibility in programming and teaching to accommodate a diverse student population, and commitment of sufficient time and resources to the educational process.

B5.2 Two levels of social work education are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education: the baccalaureate and the master’s. The baccalaureate level prepares students for generalist social work practice, and the master’s level prepares students for advanced social work practice in an area of concentration. These levels of education differ from each other in the depth, breadth, and specificity of knowledge and skill that students are expected to synthesize and apply in practice.

Both levels of social work education must provide the professional foundation curriculum which contains the common body of knowledge, values, and skills of the profession. This common base is transferable among settings, populations groups, and problem areas. The baccalaureate level of social work education must include a liberal arts perspective and the professional foundation content, which prepares students for direct services with client systems of various sizes and types.

B5.3 Professional social work education at the baccalaureate level takes place in accredited baccalaureate degree granting colleges and universities.

B5.4 All baccalaureate social work programs must:

B5.4.1 Provide content about social work practice with client systems of various sizes and types.

B5.4.2 Prepare graduates to practice with diverse populations.

B5.4.3 Provide content about the social contexts of social work practice, the changing nature of those contexts, the behavior of organizations, and the dynamics of change.

B5.4.4 Infuse throughout the curriculum the values and ethics that guide professional social workers in their practice.

B5.4.5 Prepare graduates who are aware of their responsibility to continue their professional growth and development.

B5.5 The baccalaureate curriculum must be based upon a liberal arts perspective and must include the professional foundation.

B5.6 The baccalaureate curriculum must be developed and organized as a coherent and integrated whole.
B5.7 Graduates of a baccalaureate social work program will be able to:

B5.7.1 Apply critical thinking skills within the context of professional social work practice.

B5.7.2 Practice within the values and ethics of the social work profession and with an understanding of and respect for the positive value of diversity.

B5.7.3 Demonstrate the professional use of self.

B5.7.4 Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and apply the strategies and skills of change that advance social and economic justice.

B5.7.5 Understand the history of the social work profession and its current structures and issues.

B5.7.6 Apply the knowledge and skills of generalist social work to practice with systems of all sizes.

B5.7.7 Apply knowledge of bio-psycho-social variables that affect individual development and behavior, and use theoretical frameworks to understand the interactions among individuals and between individuals and social systems (i.e., families, groups, organizations, and communities).

B5.7.8 Analyze the impact of social policies on client systems, workers, and agencies.

B5.7.9 Evaluate research studies and apply findings to practice, and, under supervision, evaluate their own practice interventions and those of other relevant systems.

B5.7.10 Use communication skills differentially with a variety of client populations, colleagues, and members of the community.

B5.7.11 Use supervision appropriate to generalist practice.

Liberal Arts Perspective

B5.8 A liberal arts perspective enriches understanding of the person-environment context of professional social work practice and is integrally related to the mastery of social work content. The baccalaureate professional program in social work is built upon a liberal arts perspective.

B5.9 A liberal arts perspective provides an understanding of one's cultural heritage in the context of other cultures; the methods and limitations of various systems of inquiry; and the knowledge, attitudes, ways of thinking, and means of communication that are characteristic of a
broadly educated person. Students must be capable of thinking critically about society, about people and their problems, and about expressions of culture such as art, literature, science, history, and philosophy. Students must have knowledge about social, psychological, and biological determinants of human behavior and of diverse cultures, social conditions, and social problems.

B5.10 Determination of whether students have acquired a liberal arts perspective is left to the judgment of the faculty of each social work program. Each program must clearly explicate the requirements for attaining a liberal arts perspective and the rationale for those requirements.

**B6.0 BACCALAUREATE CURRICULUM CONTENT**

B6.1 The baccalaureate curriculum must include a liberal arts perspective and the professional foundation. The professional foundation includes content on social work values and ethics, diversity, social and economic justice, populations-at-risk, human behavior and the social environment, social welfare policy and services, social work practice, research, and field practicum. Baccalaureate programs must achieve integration among these professional content areas. Curriculum areas do not need to be taught in discrete courses, but mastery of the professional curriculum must occur through classroom experiences and field practice. The baccalaureate social work curriculum must cover but is not necessarily limited to the professional foundation.

B6.2 The curriculum design of each program must identify a coherent approach for the selection of research and theories offered. Every part of the baccalaureate curriculum must strengthen the student's understanding and appreciation of a scientific, analytic approach to building knowledge for the delivery and evaluation of practice. Content provided in each curricular area must be relevant to the objectives, philosophy, and mission of the individual program and must facilitate the student's understanding of how the knowledge relates to social work practice.

B6.3 Programs of social work education must provide specific knowledge about social work values and their ethical implications and must provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their application in professional practice. Students must be assisted to develop an awareness of their personal values and to clarify conflicting values and ethical dilemmas. Among the values and principles that must be infused throughout every social work curriculum are the following:

   **B6.3.1** Social workers' professional relationships are built on regard for individual worth and dignity and are furthered by mutual participation, acceptance, confidentiality, honesty, and responsible handling of conflict.

   **B6.3.2** Social workers respect people's right to make independent decisions and to participate actively in the helping process.

   **B6.3.3** Social workers are committed to assisting client systems to obtain needed resources.
B6.3.4 Social workers strive to make social institutions more humane and responsive to human needs.

B6.3.5 Social workers demonstrate respect for and acceptance of the unique characteristics of diverse populations.

B6.3.6 Social workers are responsible for their own ethical conduct, the quality of their practice, and seeking continuous growth in the knowledge and skills of their profession.

Diversity

B6.4 Professional social work education is committed to preparing students to understand and appreciate human diversity. Programs must provide curriculum content about differences and similarities in the experiences, needs, and beliefs of people. The curriculum must include content about differential assessment and intervention skills that will enable practitioners to serve diverse populations.

Each program is required to include content about population groups that are particularly relevant to the program's mission. These include, but are not limited to groups distinguished by race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin.

Promotion of Social and Economic Justice

B6.5 Programs of social work education must provide an understanding of the dynamics and consequences of social and economic injustice, including all forms of human oppression and discrimination. They must provide students with the skills to promote social change and to implement a wide range of interventions that further the achievement of individual and collective social and economic justice. Theoretical and practice content must be provided about strategies of intervention for achieving social and economic justice and for combating the causes and effects of institutionalized forms of oppression.

Populations-At-Risk

B6.6 Programs of social work education must present theoretical and practice content about patterns, dynamics, and consequences of discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression. The curriculum must provide content about people of color, women, and gay and lesbian persons. Such content must emphasize the impact of discrimination, economic deprivation, and oppression upon these groups.

Each program must include content about populations-at-risk that are particularly relevant to its mission. In addition to those mandated above, such groups include, but are not limited to, those distinguished by age, ethnicity, culture, class, religion, and physical or mental ability.
**Human Behavior and the Social Environment**

B6.7 Programs of social work education must provide content about theories and knowledge of human bio-psycho-social development, including theories and knowledge about the range of social systems in which individuals live (families, groups, organizations, institutions, and communities). The human behavior and the social environment curriculum must provide an understanding of the interactions between and among human biological, social, psychological, and cultural systems as they affect and are affected by human behavior. The impact of social and economic forces on individuals and social systems must be presented. Content must be provided about the ways in which systems promote or deter people in the maintenance or attainment of optimal health and well-being. Content about values and ethical issues related to bio-psycho-social theories must be included. Students must be taught to evaluate theory and apply theory to client situations.

**Social Welfare Policy and Services**

B6.8 Social welfare policy and services content must include the history, mission, and philosophy of the social work profession. Content must be presented about the history and current patterns of provision of social welfare services, the role of social policy in helping or deterring people in the maintenance or attainment of optimal health and well-being, and the effect of policy on social work practice. Students must be taught to analyze current social policy within the context of historical and contemporary factors that shape policy. Content must be presented about the political and organizational processes used to influence policy, the process of policy formulation, and the frameworks for analyzing social policies in light of the principles of social and economic justice.

**Social Work Practice**

B6.9 At the baccalaureate level, professional social work education prepares students for generalist practice with systems of all sizes. Practice content emphasizes professional relationships that are characterized by mutuality, collaboration, and respect for the client system. Content on practice assessment focuses on the examination of client strengths and problems in the interactions among individuals and between people and their environments.

Social work practice content must include knowledge, values, and skills to enhance the well-being of people and to help ameliorate the environmental conditions that affect people adversely. Practice content must include the following skills: defining issues; collecting and assessing data; planning and contracting; identifying alternative interventions; selecting and implementing appropriate courses of action; using appropriate research to monitor and evaluate outcomes; applying appropriate research-based knowledge and technological advances; and termination. Practice content also includes approaches and skills for practice with clients from differing social, cultural, racial, religious, spiritual, and class backgrounds and with systems of all sizes.

B6.10 Each program must explicate the ways in which students are prepared for generalist practice.
Research

B6.11 The research curriculum must provide an understanding and appreciation of a scientific, analytic approach to building knowledge for practice and for evaluating service delivery in all areas of practice. Ethical standards of scientific inquiry must be included in the research content.

The research content must include qualitative and quantitative research methodologies; analysis of data, including statistical procedures; systematic evaluation of practice; analysis and evaluation of theoretical bases, research questions, methodologies, statistical procedures, and conclusions of research reports; and relevant technological advances.

B6.12 Each program must identify how the research curriculum contributes to the student's use of scientific knowledge for practice.

Field Practicum

B6.13 The field practicum is an integral component of the curriculum in social work education. It engages the student in supervised social work practice and provides opportunities to apply classroom learning in the field setting.

B6.14 Field education at the baccalaureate level requires a minimum of 400 hours in field practicum.

B6.15 Each educational program must establish standards for field practicum settings that define their social work services and practices, field instructor assignments and activities, and student learning expectations and responsibilities. Individual programs may organize their practice in different ways but must insure educationally directed, coordinated, and monitored practicum experiences for all students. All programs must provide:

a. A placement that is based upon the objectives of the educational program and the learning needs of each student.

b. Structured learning opportunities that enable students to compare their practice experiences, integrate knowledge acquired in the classroom, and expand knowledge beyond the scope of the practicum setting.

c. Support for field practicum instructors by:

1. Sharing pertinent information about practicum students.

2. Providing information about the organization and content of the educational curriculum, emphasizing the interrelationships among human behavior, social policy, research, and practice content.
3. Providing information about the sequencing of course content.

4. Articulating clear practice and evaluation goals for the field practicum and for each student.

5. Offering orientation and training programs.

B6.16 The purpose of the baccalaureate practicum is for the student to apply foundation knowledge, skills, values and ethics to practice.

B6.17 The baccalaureate practicum must provide the student with opportunities for:

a. The development of an awareness of self in the process of intervention.

b. Supervised practice experience in the application of knowledge, values and ethics, and practice skills to enhance the well-being of people and to work toward the amelioration of environmental conditions that affect people adversely.

c. Use of oral and written professional communications which are consistent with the language of the practicum setting and of the profession.

d. Use of professional supervision to enhance learning.

e. Critical assessment, implementation, and evaluation of agency policy within ethical guidelines.

B7.0 AVENUES OF RENEWAL

B7.1 Programs of social work education must remain vital and progressive by actively pursuing ongoing exchanges with the practice community and other essential groups, and by developing and assessing new knowledge and technology.

B7.1.1 Programs must establish and maintain close, reciprocal and ongoing relationships with social work practitioners, and use those relationships to continuously evaluate the total curriculum.

B7.1.2 Programs must establish and maintain relationships with groups that develop, implement, and benefit from social policies and services.

B7.1.3 Programs must establish and maintain involvement with the professional associations and with disciplines and departments in the academic community.
B7.1.4 Programs must assume responsibility for systematic and high quality scholarship that assesses social work practice and develops new knowledge.