Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) 
and the 
CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards and Procedures

Nick J. Mulé  
Cameron McKenzie & Maryam Khan

Queer Caucus  
Canadian Association for Social Work Education/  
Association Canadienne Pour La Formation En Travail Social  
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Disclaimer: The views outlined in this report are not those of CASWE-ACFTS, but rather those of the authors of this report who undertook this research on behalf of the CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus.
Executive Summary

Purpose:
The purpose of preparing this report is to review current CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards and Procedures to ensure that sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE) issues are adequately addressed in undergraduate and graduate social work curriculum in Canada. The findings in this report, along with further consultation with members of the CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus, will be shared with the CASWE-ACFTS Education Policy Committee as part of its review of the Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards 2019 (EPAS2019). This report is considered a beginning tool in the CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus’ ongoing consultation with the Education Policy Committee’s work on EPAS2019.

Method:
Following a recommendation at the 2016 CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus Annual Meeting, which took place at the CASWE-ACFTS Conference during the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Calgary. It was decided that a review of accreditation standards and procedures would be employed to address related SOGIE issues raised at the Meeting. A content analysis was undertaken of the CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards (CASWE-ACFTS, 2014) and CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Procedures (CASWE-ACFTS, 2016) by three members of the CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus over the winter of 2017.

Findings:
In general, the findings show that SOGIE is rarely mentioned, resorting instead to the broader category of ‘diversity.’ When SOGIE is addressed the terminology requires updating to better reflect nuanced sensitivities that have developed within the LGBTQ communities.

Accreditation Standards
The findings reveal that the CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards (CASWE-ACFTS, 2014) tend to take a generalized approach to social locations and positions under the guise of ‘diversity.’ This can have the inadvertent effect of camouflaging specified diversities within, as well as intersections of varying social locations and positionalities. What can easily be lost in such a generalized approach are SOGIE issues, not to mention numerous other socially located groups such as women, the (dis)abled, racialized and ethnicized populations, among others.

Accreditation Procedures
Regarding the CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Procedures (CASWE-ACFTS, 2016), our findings indicate an understandable heavy emphasis on process for obvious reasons, but no less, room for the injection of SOGIE content to ensure some attention is placed on these matters during a procedural accreditation review. We offer a number of ways reviewers can assume a SOGIE lens in the process of their work.

Implications:
Ensuring that SOGIE issues are reflected in all aspects of social work undergraduate and graduate education at all Faculties and Schools of Social Work across Canada is of great importance to the CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus. From mission statements, to welcoming environmental settings, from SOGIE-reflected faculty and staff to inclusion of SOGIE content in curricula to SOGIE-based field practicum opportunities. Programs that lack or fall
short on SOGIE issues risk not preparing their students for the field. Also undermining our discipline in the process, and not to mention risking harm to the public. The release of this report is timely as it provides beginning guidance to the CASWE-ACFTS Education Policy Committee on SOGIE issues. Furthermore this provides a review of the Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards 2019 (EPAS2019).

**Major Recommendations:**
This report provides 13 recommendations for the Education Policy Committee to consider in its review process. A running theme through both the Accreditation Standards and Procedures recommendations is a more explicit recognition of SOGIE within Faculties and Schools of Social Work at all levels, and in the process of carrying out an accreditation review.

**Conclusion:**
Just as the members of the CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus expressed concerns regarding more explicit and consistent recognition of SOGIE in the CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards and Procedures at its Annual Meeting in June 2016. Thus, the authors of this report were able to corroborate these concerns. The findings of the content analysis conducted indicate a need for Faculties and Schools of Social Work to be inclusive of SOGIE issues and for the CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards and Procedures to make a concerted effort to review for such inclusion.

**Next Steps:**
Dialogue will continue on this issue within the CASWE-ACFTS’ Queer Caucus and in turn consultations between the CASWE-ACFTS’ Queer Caucus and the Education Policy Committee (EPC), the latter of which will proceed as part of its review of the Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards 2019 (EPAS2019). Hence, this report will be made available to the EPC and publicly on the CASWE-ACFTS’ website via the Queer Caucus webpage.
Introduction

The Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) in CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards and Procedures Project was first proposed at the 2016 CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus Meeting during the CASWE-ACFTS Conference at the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences in Calgary, Alberta. Questions arose as to the extent to which SOGIE issues were recognized and included in CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards and Procedures. A discussion ensued and it was agreed by those present that a study be initiated in the coming year to do an initial content analysis of the CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards and Procedures regarding SOGIE representation.

The timing was appropriate as the CASWE-ACFTS Education Policy Committee had begun a review of the Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards 2019 (EPAS2019). The findings in this report represent a beginning response and intended ongoing dialogue in that process. Interested individuals signed a list with their contact information and the CASWE-ACFTS’ Queer Caucus chair committed to and contacted all on the list during the coming year to initiate the study. Three (3) individuals responded with one (1) indicating their on-going interest, but inability to participate at the time the study was being conducted. Ultimately three (3) individuals, including the chair, undertook this study.

Schools and faculties of social work across Canada are accredited based on a set of standards and operationalized through a procedural process conducted by the CASWE. There has been an increased recognition of LGBTQs (SOGIE) as a segment of the population for which social work is charged with providing services. This in turn raises questions regarding the extent to which SOGIE issues are taken up in the social work curricula at both the undergraduate and graduate levels across Canada. To this end this study set out, via content analysis to answer the following research questions:

1. How are gender and sexually diverse populations and communities represented within the CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards?
2. Beyond representation, what level of recognition currently exists?
3. Does such representation and recognition provide a nuanced approach that captures the intersectionalities and assemblages of other social locations?
4. Do the procedures to evaluate accreditation standards emphasize the importance of the inclusion of gender and sexual diversity content in the curriculum?

For the purposes of this report, we have opted to use the terminology SOGIE to broadly capture the concept of sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. In particular we are referring to those whose sexual orientation is non-heterosexual and those whose gender identity and expression is non-cisgendered. SOGIE as terminology broadly captures those who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Two-Spirit, Intersex, Queer and Questioning. Yet, this is not a conclusive list, for SOGIE is a term commonly used in UN arenas to also recognize cultural differences, intersectionalities and fluidities therein.

We acknowledge that there is a desire to move away from ‘intersectionality’ and ‘intersectionalities’ since these terms have been co-opted by institutions like the academe to manage tokenistic diversity (Puar, 2007; 2012). From its inception, creators and proponents of intersectionality theory have always argued against the use of ‘intersections’ as tokenistic objects for market consumption (King, 2015). The intersections of SOGIE alongside race, ethnicity, (dis)ability, and class, among others, arrive with their specific historical and social
processes that cannot be easily and neatly separated from their use in contemporary society.
As King (2015) argues in the case of intersectionality theory: “[i]ntersectionality rendered as a commodity becomes a fetishized object that the academic market of ideas alienates from the multiple ongoing debates and struggles that Black scholars are continually waging that change the shape and nature of intersectional discourse” (p. 123). Parallels can be drawn here to encompass the body of knowledge which is developed through SOGIE and its relevance in contemporary society as it remains the core ways for organizing society and advocating for rights.

This report provides a contextual backdrop to the issue of ensuring SOGIE content in social work curricula in a meaningful way. Findings of the content analysis of the current CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards and Procedures are provided along with a critical analysis, discussion regarding implications, and recommendations for better inclusion of SOGIE populations. What needs to be emphasized is that this report provides initial findings regarding a project that is ‘in process.’ Our hope is that it will initiate further discussion within the CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus regarding further input and the potential for using this as a tool to advocate for better representation and inclusion of SOGIE within CASWE-ACFTS bodies.

**Background**

Scholars advocating for the integration of SOGIE in social work education, specifically in curriculum, have grounded their arguments under the diversity, anti-oppressive practice and cultural competence umbrellas to the regulating and accrediting bodies of social work education (Craig, Dentato, Messinger & McInroy, 2016; Dentato, Craig, Lloyd, Kelly, Wright, & Austin, 2016; Gezinski, 2009). “Although schools of social work may offer courses with a focus on LGBTQ issues, the infusion of LGBTQ material into all social work coursework is necessary” (Gezinski, 2009, p. 104). Research conducted with social work students makes clear that LGBTQ-identified social work students experience homophobia, transphobia, and heterosexism (Craig, Dentato, Messinger & McInroy, 2016; Swank & Raiz, 2010; Dentato et al., 2014). Arguments have been made to include proper SOGIE content in social work by drawing on the works of intersectional feminists to highlight that “LGBTQ oppression cannot be viewed separate from other oppressions (e.g., race/ethnicity, sex, physical ability, class, etc.) due to the intersectionality of individuals” (Gezinski, 2009, p. 104). For instance, in relation to their white counterparts, racialized queer Muslim women contend with Islamophobia, racism, and heterosexism (Khan, 2016).

Across the border, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and National Association of Social Workers (NASWE) both have issued robust avowals to address cultural competency and diversity with varying intersectionalities in social work practice and education (Dentato et al., 2016; Gezinski, 2009). Inconsistencies between and within ethics codes and accreditation standards regarding SOGIE has been documented for the past decade (Mulé, 2006) and is still reported as problematic within the Canadian social work education system today (Hillock, 2016). Even though the CASWE-ACFTS has also issued statements against LGBTQ discrimination, a clearer link to SOGIE has not yet been made in the Accreditation and Procedural Regulations.
It is important to consider the social determinants of health (SDH) and their implications for the larger LGBTQ communities. The SDH framework illuminates the pervasive structural barriers to health and challenges the notions of individualized, biomedical reasons for health outcomes (Mc Gibbon, 2012; Raphael, 2009). Furthermore, sources of good health extend beyond social services and health care since “social exclusion is an expression of unequal relations of power among groups in society responsible for determining access to...resources” (Galabuzi, 2012, p. 100). Social exclusion originates in a wide range of social experiences from expression of spirituality (Khan, 2016); the education system (McKenzie, 2015); and difficulty accessing health care, which can lead to various health needs. The LGBTQ communities have health needs distinct from the general population, and it is important for students, researchers, and practitioners to be sensitive to these health needs. These include, but are not limited to, higher rates of homelessness (Abramovich, 2012), suicidality (Mustanski & Liu, 2013), depression (Kulick, Wernick, Woodford & Renn, 2017), and substance abuse (Shawn, Richardson & Virginia, 2017). These concerns and more have been documented in arguing for health policies in Canada to recognize the importance of SOGIE (Mulé et al., 2009).

Due to societal exclusion and prejudice among other factors, LGBTQ persons are more likely to seek out counselling than their heterosexual counterparts (Rutter, Estrada, Ferguson & Diggs, 2008). It is essential to have social work students that are culturally competent when working with the SOGIE community and clients (Gezinski, 2009). As argued by Wheeler and Dodd (2011) “[s]ocial workers… have an ethical imperative to increase their capacity to provide culturally competent service to clients of all sexual orientations and gender identities, [alongside] shedding assumptions of heterosexuality and creating more inclusive practice” (p. 307). It is also documented that social work students are not receiving the appropriate education and training in meeting the needs of intersectional LGBTQ clientele in practice in relation to spirituality (Khan, 2016) and social exclusion (McKenzie, 2015), nor are they necessarily informed about the policy implications as it relates to practice (Hillock & Mulé, 2016; Swan & McConnell, 2015). In response, there is a growing body of literature in North America on the importance of LGBTQ-related content in social work education (Craig et al., 2016; Gezinski, 2009; Hillock & Mulé, 2016; O’Neil, Swan & Mulé, 2015).

This report undertakes a Critical, Structural and a Queer Liberationist approach in analysing the CASWE-ACFTS Standards and Procedures for Accreditation. A critical approach takes into consideration how oppression and marginalization operate on intersecting multifaceted levels (micro, mezzo and macro) in individuals’ daily lives (Mulé, 2008). This approach favours critiquing structures of power that maintain the status quo and argues for an emancipatory perspective (Mullaly, 1997). Structural social work theory has its foundations in critical and analytical thought. Structural social work is rooted in the notion that social problems are not inherently individual, but that of macro social structures. These macro forces can range from economics to political influences (Carniol, 1992). Structural social work is grounded in radical social works notion for social change (Mullaly, 1997; Heinonen & Spearman, 2001).

More specific to the SOGIE population of focus in this study, we premised our work on queer liberation theory that generally calls for a liberating of all regarding their sexual and gender diversity. Given that, notions of sexuality tend to be heavily based in heteronormative and cisgender notions; queer liberation theory urges equitable representation and recognition for all those who identify outside these normative notions (Mulé, 2015). Further to this, it
also applies such perspectives to all regardless of SOGIE, as a means of freeing us up from rigid sexual and gender role expectations (Mulé, 2016). Social work has not had a strong history of linking theory with sex, gender and sexuality (Hicks & Jehasingham 2016; Mulé, 2016), yet we believe queer liberation theory provides a meaningful foundation for a more pronounced inclusion of SOGIE within the CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards and Procedures.

**Review of CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards**

In this section we critically review and analyse all the (content) sections of the CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards from critical, structural and queer liberation theory perspectives.

**Section 1: Principles, Preambles and Standards of the Accreditation Document**

“However, these policies and standards are not aimed at uniformity of social work education; instead, they are intended to promote the uniqueness and diversity of social work programs across Canada and enable them to better respond to their respective contexts and partners” (CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards, 2014, p. 2).

- We want to highlight Principles 1-4 listed on pages 2-3 of the Standards document. In addition these statements are in accordance with how social work education honours diversity and the uniqueness of the student body in delivering social work education across schools. We acknowledge and appreciate that every school is different. The key question for us is, how do we better recruit and serve all members of the diverse student body while keeping in mind the ‘uniqueness’ factor for each school? The “uniqueness and diversity” can perhaps be expanded to specifically include facets of individual identity or positionality of social work students.

**Section 2: Principles Guiding Accreditation of Social Work Education Programs**

“The purpose of Standards for Accreditation is to ensure excellence in social work education and continuing quality improvement in social work curriculum and pedagogy across Canada” (CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards, 2014, p. 2).

- The fourteen principles are grounded in strong language of social justice and human rights. This language use denotes a critical approach to social work and social issues. Principle 9 refers to “gender and sexual identity”, but how is this translated into curriculum for students? How are students ‘taught’ to work with this population? What needs does this population require? Specifics regarding any of these questions are not provided. Additionally, the fluidity of language may call for such terminology to be revisited. Identity alone may fall short on both the sexuality and gender fronts. Expression may also need to be introduced particularly with regard to gender.

**Domain 1.1: Mission Statement and Goals**

“Social work academic units have a formal written statement that outlines the overarching purpose and goals of their program and the principles that guide and shape the program structure and content. Congruent with the values of social work
and social work education, the mission statement reflects the unique context in which
the program operates” (CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards, 2014, p. 5).

SB/M 1.1.2 “The social work academic unit demonstrates an ongoing process of
reviewing its mission through consultation with partners” (CASWE Accreditation

- In relation to the preamble, it would be helpful to see specifics around SOGIE clearly
stated to ensure that issues related to sexuality and gender are clearly acknowledged.

- Section 1.1.2 highlights that schools of social work consult with partners. “Partners”
is undefined and leaving us questioning the degree of diversity captured and
represented in the consultation process and whether SOGIE is included.

Domain II Program Governance, Structure and Resources

SB/M 2.3.2 “In faculty and professional staff recruitment, the academic unit seeks to
reflect diversity” (CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards, 2014, p.6).

- Having faculty and professional staff reflecting the broader student body is needed to
ensure a social work education mandate of social justice and human rights. To this
end, are there employment equity and/or affirmative action procedures in place to
assist in facilitating ‘diversity’ on faculty and in professional staff? Given that SOGIE
is not a recognized designated group in Federal Employment Equity legislation
(Government of Canada, Employment Equity Act, 1995), are social work programs
prepared to be pro-active in including them as a category of equity?

SB/M 2.3.4 “Faculty and professional staff engage in continuing professional
development particularly in new areas of importance in the community, regional,

- Having a diverse faculty and staff is essential in carrying out social work education.
Therefore, it is important to know how faculty members are engaging in professional
development and how diversity plays a role. How can we ensure faculty and staff of
departments are challenging their own bias through their own training and education?

- Student recruitment efforts seek to reflect a diverse population with a particular
consideration for students of various ethnic, cultural, racial and other diverse
populations that may be under-represented and under-served (CASWE-ACFTS
Accreditation Standards, 2014, p.8)

- Having intersectional diversity celebrated as an integral part of the curriculum can
enhance the student practice, skill set, and challenges biases.

- We are interested in exploring how each school of social work provides evidence and
participates with an emphases on diversity. For example, is there a student sub-
committee on SOGIE issues? If so, does it have faculty representation?
Domain III: Program Content: Curriculum and Field Education

3.i) “Social work students have knowledge of the role social structures can play in limiting human and civil rights and employ professional practices to ensure the fulfillment of human and civil rights and advance social justice for individuals, families, groups and communities” (CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards, 2014, p. 10).

4.i) “Social work students recognize diversity and difference as a crucial and valuable part of living in a society” (CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards, 2014, p. 10).

- The entire section discusses the CASWE-ACFTS’ s commitment to ‘diversity’ and paying attention to the larger macro structures that are imbricated in the lives of individuals. We are interested in finding out how CASWE-ACFTS enforces this since it is not clearly stated. Making the goals more specific in their identification of SOGIE would be a clear achievement of procuring human rights and social justice for all.

‘Standards BSW Curriculum’ Section 3.1.5 states that “social work academic units set up clear and transparent policies with regard to transfer credit between schools, college programs, schools of social work, nationally and internationally, within the context of general university regulations” (CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards, 2014, p. 13).

- Based on the lived experiences of the authors, the academic units are not clearly consistent on transfer credits for college students with Social Service Worker diploma. For example, the discussion is case by case and is left up to each academic unit. In British Colombia and Alberta, college programs get more transfer credits than in Ontario (British Columbia Council on Omissions & Transfer, 2012; BC Transfer Guide, 2015; Carter, Coyle & Leslie, 2009; Gilmore, 2013; Lupick, 2013).

Domain IV: Program Evaluation/Assessment

“Such evaluation includes a systematic review of the academic unit’s mission, curriculum, learning objectives for students, admission policies and processes, and adequacy of available resources” (CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards, 2014, p. 18)

- It is encouraging to see that CASWE-ACFTS conducts orderly reviews of the programs and curriculum. Nevertheless, this generic approach raises a concern about the obscuring of intersectional facets of positionality, such as SOGIE. CASWE-ACFTS could include a SOGIE evaluation component when they review schools. This could also be expansive to include race, ethnicity, SOGIE and so forth.
Commentary on CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Procedures

Our review of the CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Procedures reveals that the very nature of such procedural processes, do not necessarily lend themselves to taking up socially located positionalities such as SOGIE very easily. More concerned about types of accreditation, rolling schedules, report due dates, other deadlines, and responsibilities of the CASWE-ACFTS Commission on Accreditation (COA), the procedures are far more process oriented than content oriented (CASWE-ACFTS, 2016). We also recognize the fine line COA review teams must walk to go about conducting such a review for national CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards and the procedures, while respecting cultural differences based on geographical location of the school or faculty and principles of academic freedom in all of these settings.

Acknowledging the above and taking our findings into consideration, we feel it is important that COA review teams be cognizant of the following when conducting their reviews:

• Having a broad understanding of diversity to be inclusive of SOGIE issues and perspectives.

• Looking to see if a school or faculty of social work is a SOGIE-positive cultural setting in which SOGIE-identified faculty, staff and students would feel welcomed and supported.

• Recognizing that SOGIE is, for the most part, formally taken up in human rights legislation and ethics codes, hence school or faculty faith-based perspectives are not to override such recognition.

• Observing the extent to which SOGIE is formally taken up in curriculum and field practice.

• Understanding that SOGIE issues and social location/position exists at all schools and faculties across the country, given the mobility of students, faculty and staff.

• Expecting SOGIE to be included in social work curricula, regardless of geographical location of the school or faculty. As all future social workers need such training, regardless of what geographical location they practice in.

• Applying the SOGIE inclusion expectations to an expedited timeline to ensure students benefit from related teachings and field experience.

Therefore, beyond the practical means of carrying out CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Procedures and based on our findings, we are urging that COA review teams incorporate the above points when conducting their reviews, in order to infuse a level of accountability regarding SOGIE issues.
Discussion

Accreditation Standards

Application of Principles through Curricula

Social work students need to have a critical understanding of intersectional diversity and be well versed in SOGIE concepts and viewpoints across the country. This is especially important as all of us are working and learning in a neo-liberalist system that tends to isolate the individual from the social, historical, and political processes that shape and form positionalities and subject positions (Vassallo, 2013). It is critical that SOGIE components be included properly and expected in all social work curricula regardless of the location of school. Since, when students enter the field, they will need training in SOGIE regardless of their geographic location of practice. This becomes essential in their practice of being confident and competent employed workers engaging with many intersecting client populations. To ensure students have sufficient knowledge, challenge their own bias, and become champions of social justice and equity issues, students need to have a strong working knowledge of SOGIE, both in class and field placement settings.

Nuancing School Uniqueness and Diversity

Faculties and schools of social work should examine whether the university and faculty create a positive SOGIE culture, beyond the ‘positive space campaigns’ and the display of pride flags. Based on our understanding Faculties and Schools of Social Work are constantly striving to ensure equitable, critical, accepting and supportive atmospheres. In order to ensure a welcoming and supportive environment, a human rights and anti-oppressive mandate is favourable when it honours SOGIE and its requirement in the Code of Ethics (CASW, 2005) to ensure that certain normative faith-based perspectives do not supersede SOGIE issues (noting that this ethics code only captures sexual orientation and not gender identity or expression). Schools and faculties of social work need to track and observe how SOGIE can and is being implemented in curriculum and field placements, since interaction and work with LGBTQ persons/communities is a reality of our practice. Lastly, it is important to recognise the various intersectionalities and social positions that exist in the larger macro, mezzo and micro systems of our faculties and schools across Canada.

A Social Work School’s Foundation

- Domain 1.1

Acting as a guide to social work academic units in building capacity and offering courses on SOGIE, CASWE-ACFTS can require schools to connect with community partners that have expertise on matters related to SOGIE in the former’s community engagement commitment. In this way, each academic unit can operate and build SOGIE capacity according to its unique program and community-based goals. A clearer articulation of these goals in collaboration with community partners according to their geographical locations will be useful. There is a plethora of SOGIE resources (e.g. The 519, SOY, etc.) in urban settings like Toronto, where social work academic units can be connected for guidance on these matters. Although there may not exist SOGIE resources that can function in consultative capacities in rural settings partly due to small SOGIE populations that may be under resourced, this does not mean that SOGIE cannot be integrated. For example, tapping into online resources on matters related to SOGIE can be a helpful strategy in ameliorating these gaps (Yorke, Byrch, Ham, Craggs, Shute, 2016).
Program Structure
• Domain II
In order to meet the needs of the diverse student and research streams, having a mandate that seeks to hire faculty and staff across varying positionalities enriches the learning experience. Having such faculty and staff are essential for comprehensive education and can be helpful in student recruitment campaigns. The CASWE-ACFTS can create guidelines (which support an equity and diversity approach) that outline how social work education can meet the overarching mandates of social justice and human rights. Efforts can be made along the lines of working groups and surveys, among other processes in place to ensure that faculty and staff with SOGIE expertise are targeted for recruitment and hired. CASWE-ACFTS can be a leader in formally recognizing SOGIE as an equity group in their documents.

Evaluation & Assessment
• Domain IV
It is important to have ongoing review and evaluation processes in place to ensure that social work academic units are meeting standards. Notably, our interest lies in advocating for criteria that clearly explicate how the academic units are addressing SOGIE in their mission statements, learning objectives for students, and admittance processes and policies, to name a few measureable outcomes.

Accreditation Procedures
Process, Content & Accountability
Empowering and supporting the COA review teams through clear policies and protocols to take up SOGIE in their reviews of academic units would help standardize how SOGIE gets addressed. Such standards would be basic and minimum when taking into consideration variations among schools. This standardization will remove the burden of each unit in determining how adequately they are addressing SOGIE. For example, the ‘self-study section’ can benefit from the standardization, since it will help ameliorate the assumption that all academic units value SOGIE similarly. Also, in appeal cases, reconsideration and appeal clauses are provided in the procedures. Thus, having basic and minimum SOGIE standards in place will assist, particularly if questions arise regarding the interpretation of Standards and/or Procedures or if processes are used to appeal the instatement of SOGIE recommendations (Sections 4.2 p. 28-29).
Conclusion

The issue of SOGIE is important to all involved in social work education, be they students, faculty or staff. The broader implications of producing future social workers with knowledge and understanding on how to sensitively and equitably meet the needs of these populations underscores the importance of comprehensive social work education even further. This report features an initial content analysis of the CASWE-ACFTS Accreditation Standards (CASWE-ACFTS, 2014) and Procedures (CASWE-ACFTS, 2016), arguing for more explicit recognition of SOGIE in both.

Areas for increased SOGIE recognition in the Accreditation Standards include Principles Preambles and Standards of the Accreditation Document; Principles Guiding Accreditation of Social Work Education Programs; Mission Statement and Goals; Program Governance, Structure and Resources; Program Content: Curriculum and Field Education; Program Evaluation/Assessment. Also, a number of issues are addressed in which accreditation reviewers can undertake Accreditation Procedures inclusive of a SOGIE lens. The CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus urges that the CASWE-ACFTS Education Policy Committee make use of these findings including giving the recommendations outlined in this report serious consideration to better address SOGIE issues in its review of the Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards 2019 (EPAS2019). The Queer Caucus remains committed to contributing to the consultation process of EPAS2019 as it proceeds.
Recommendations

Accreditation Standards:

1. Foundations of SOGIE must be incorporated in social work education in order to prepare students to work with diverse clients and communities.
2. Faculties and Schools of Social Work mission statements must capture SOGIE to set the basis for an equitable and supportive environment for staff, students and faculty.
3. Faculties and Schools of Social Work must observe and track how SOGIE can be included and implemented in curriculum and field placements.
4. SOGIE education should be fostered and implemented in Faculties and Schools of Social Work by working with SOGIE partners and community-based organizations either online or in person.
5. CASWE-ACFTS in collaboration with its Queer Caucus should create guidelines to assist hiring committees to target for recruitment new staff and faculty with SOGIE expertise.
6. CASWE-ACFTS can be a leader by formally, explicitly and comprehensively recognizing SOGIE as an equity group in their documents.
7. There need to be strong criteria from CASWE-ACFTS to ensure schools are staying accountable to SOGIE through standard evaluations and assessments.
8. To ensure that equity and diversity are represented in social work curricula, it is vital that COA review teams incorporate SOGIE into the CASWE-ACFTS accreditation standards and procedures.

Accreditation Procedures:

9. Accreditation reviewers need to have a broad understanding of diversity that includes SOGIE issues and perspectives.
10. That COA develop an assessment tool in collaboration with the CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus, that would determine if a school or faculty of social work is a SOGIE-positive cultural setting in which SOGIE-identified faculty, staff and students feel welcomed and supported.
11. That principles of human rights be respected as a means of upholding the values of SOGIE in all Faculties and Schools of Social Work mission statements.
12. That SOGIE is included as part of the curriculum and fieldwork of all Faculties and Schools of Social Work.
13. That SOGIE be acknowledged in all Faculties and Schools of Social Work across the country, understood through local and macro positioning and social location, given the mobility of staff, students and faculty.
References


Hillock, S. (2016). Social work, the academy and queer communities: Heteronormativity and


Appendix A

Queer Caucus, April 27, 2016: EPAS2019 Data Base Survey Questions

Queer Caucus submitted the following questions for inclusion in the Education Policy Committee database survey as part of their review of the Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards 2019 (EPAS2019). These questions can assist Faculties and Schools of Social Work and accreditation reviewers of social work programs in their respective accreditation procedures.

CASWE-ACFTS Data Base Survey Questions

1. Does your School or Faculty of Social Work’s mission statement include (check all that apply):
   a) Sexual orientation
   b) Gender identity
   c) Gender expression

2. Does your School or Faculty of Social Work have an anti-discrimination policy that is inclusive of (check all that apply):
   a) Sexual orientation
   b) Gender identity
   c) Gender expression

3. Do you have faculty who actively conduct research regarding LGBTQ issues, populations and/or communities:
   a) Yes
   b) No

4. Does your School or Faculty of Social Work provide LGBTQ-based content in the curricula (check all that apply):
   a) LGBTQ readings
   b) Specified LGBTQ undergraduate course
   c) Specified LGBTQ graduate course
   d) Integrated approach within various courses

5. Does your School or Faculty of Social Work provide LGBTQ-based field placement settings:
   a) Yes
   b) No
About CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus

The CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus is made up of and open to queer (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, two-spirit, intersex, queer and questioning) identified social work faculty and students and their allies in Canada. The Queer Caucus provides an opportunity for queer members of CASWE-ACFTS to have a voice regarding queer issues, needs and concerns in the work of the CASWE-ACFTS. Further to this, the Queer Caucus creates space for information sharing, ongoing dialogue and networking among social work students and faculty across Canada. The chair of the Queer caucus is Dr. Nick Mulé.

Contact CASWE-ACFTS Queer Caucus at:
Website: https://caswe-acfts.ca/queer-caucus/
Listserv: queercaucus@caswe-acfts.ca
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/casweqcaucus/
Twitter: @CASWEQ Caucus

Author Bios

Nick J. Mulé, PhD, is an associate professor in the School of Social Work, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies at York University where he teaches core and elective courses that span theory, policy and practice at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Dr. Nick Mulé’s research interests are in the areas of advocacy, social inclusion/exclusion of LGBTQ populations in social policy and service provision and the degree of their recognition in cultural, systemic and structural contexts. Additionally, he engages in critical analysis of the LGBTQ movement and the development of queer liberation theory. He is also a psychotherapist serving LGBTQ people in private practice.

Maryam Khan, PhDc, is a doctoral student in the School of Social Work at York University in Toronto, Canada. She has over ten years of clinical experience in mental health, and addictions working with children, queer youth and adults in various interdisciplinary settings. As a qualitative and mixed methods researcher, she is passionate about social policy and analyses, race and racialization, Islam and sexual diversity, intersectional identities, and decolonization to name a few topics. Maryam also teaches part-time at Centennial College.

Cameron McKenzie (MSW) is a PhD candidate in Health Policy & Equity at York University in Toronto, Canada. His research has focused on northern issues, disability, and the queer and trans community. His current doctoral research examines how LGBTQ community health organizations perceive and experience their role in policymaking. His past training in social work provides unique insight into the administration of health policy and meeting client needs, which he hopes to bring to bear on his research. Cameron also has a private practice and teaches in the School of Social and Community Services at Humber College.

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1 Listed in alphabetical order. Shared authorship.