



CASWE-ACFTS

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE POUR LA FORMATION EN TRAVAIL SOCIAL

October 9, 2019

Subject: Working group, non-accredited programs in institutions without membership to Universities Canada

Dear CASWE-ACFTS Members,

As was communicated to our membership in an email in August, the BOD approved allowing social work programs that are in institutions without membership to Universities Canada, to petition for accreditation to CASWE-ACFTS.

At this time, we are looking for members who are interested in joining a working group to address this issue.

The BOD recognized CASWE-ACFTS' commitment to ensuring high-quality education consistent with a university level. Board members acknowledged the serious concerns about non-Universities Canada programs' commitment to creating a university milieu; issues related to governance, faculty qualifications, scholarship, research, unit autonomy, instructor qualifications, class sizes, the institution's focus, and the need to ensure theoretical content reflecting a university level. In reaching its decision the BOD was extremely concerned that the existence of a separate group of social work programs that are non-accredited could undermine the need for, and existence of, the Commission on Accreditation (COA) and even the Association. If administrators and students see accreditation as unnecessary, or of having little benefit, then pressure to not seek accreditation would be likely. Board members also noted a concern that provincial governments might approve other institutions to grant BSW degrees and could then use Colleges to provide a less expensive BSW program, which would be to the detriment of our member-university programs.

The BOD emphasized that a recommendation to allow a process for accreditation of non-Universities Canada programs would not necessarily result in the accreditation of these

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programs. These programs would be required to undergo a rigorous assessment by the COA, which could result in either accreditation being granted or not granted. If at the end of the process the program does not meet our Standards of Accreditation, then it would be more difficult for governments to accept non-accredited programs, and likely more difficult for registration.

One result of the Board decision is the need to establish criteria to determine eligibility for application for accreditation with the COA as well as the accreditation criteria. The Board recognizes that issues such as resource needs, costs, workloads, and process must be carefully considered and addressed.

The BOD is creating a working group to develop these criteria. It is expected the group will meet once per month until March, 2020. Administrative support will be provided by the CASWE-ACFTS office. It is hoped that the Working Group's recommendations will be sent to the Board by March 2020 at the latest.

Please contact Alexandra Wright (awright@caswe-acfts.ca) by October 31, 2019 to indicate your interest to participate in this working group. The Board will finalize the working group's membership by November 19, 2019.

With best wishes,

Stéphane Grenier
President, CASWE-ACFTS