

Lessons Learned From the CSWE Task Force to Advance Anti-Racism in the Social Work Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards: Praxis in a Racially Volatile Society

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***Abstract:** On May 25, 2020, Mr. George Floyd, a Black man, was brutally murdered by Derek Chauvin, a White police officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The COVID-19 pandemic which immobilized the world ended up hitting Asian, Black, Latino, and Indigenous Peoples the hardest. In response to such events, the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) established the CSWE Task Force to Advance Anti-Racism. The work of the group centers on advancing anti-racist social work education by identifying anti-racism pedagogies and anti-racist learning environments. The Task Force members met to develop, discuss, and refine recommendations for CSWE on Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). As a small subset of the Task Force, we engaged in a thematic analysis of the EPAS document to provide a systemic response and framing for intellectual engagement and curriculum development. This proved useful for a beginning discussion into how future EPAS documents should be formulated. The authors identified major themes that emanated from the work of the Task Force, including how racism and White supremacy underscores social work as an applied social science that maintains racist information structures, paradigms, theories, and practices. The praxis recommendations of the Task Force include adapting theoretical frameworks for anti-racist social work education; incorporating anti-racism and theories such as Critical Race Theory; updating social work competencies; promoting equitable approaches to hiring and retaining faculty of all racialized groups in different positions; and creating a new anti-racism commission to prioritize and continue anti-racism work.*

***Keywords:** George Floyd; anti-racism; White supremacy; Critical Race Theory; CSWE*

The groundswell of Black Lives Matter protests following George Floyd Jr.'s murder merged with those for Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and other African Americans slain by the police which drove forth an unprecedented demand for racial justice by a "diverse range of protesters" from "different races and ethnicities" (Sy, 2020). Richmond, Virginia, one of the three Capitals of the Confederacy from 1861 to 1865, became a flashpoint for public rage against White supremacy and systemic racism. Thousands of people flooded the historic Monument District to topple, dismantle, and reframe Confederate monuments with protest slogans. Demands for an end to racialized killings like Mr. Floyd's and others

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galvanized the spirit of the protests. In response, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE, 2020a) leadership released a statement expressing its sympathies and condolences to Floyd's family and community. The CSWE statement does not demand an end to police brutality, police budget reductions, policing, and other governmental structures and policies that are racist. The lack of a robust and critical response by social work calls into question social justice accountability within social work education, practice, and policy. This article examines how well social work education prepares students to confront, analyze, and challenge racism and White supremacy and engage in anti-racism work.

Anti-racism must be more than being against racism. Anti-racism must fiercely oppose racist, damaging ideologies and actions with liberating and just policies and practices that are promoted and defended. "As social work leadership evolves, the reality of discrimination in the structures of services to persons needing assistance continues to impede the well-being of many citizens and requires examination" (O'Neal, 2019, p. 109). Thus, this examination responds to how social work students are socialized about racism and racist practices in social work.

By summer 2020, the CSWE leadership launched a Taskforce to Advance Anti-Racism with four Work Groups—a) Curriculum Development, b) Faculty and Student Racial/Ethnic Equity, c) Educational Policy and Accreditation, and d) Conferences and Faculty Development (CSWE, 2021b). Each of the Work Groups were led by co-chairs and assigned sections to explore, discuss, analyze, and develop recommendations. The charge for all four work groups was to develop an action plan to make social work education stronger by adopting anti-racism pedagogies and establishing anti-racist learning environments (CSWE, 2021b).

The application of Critical Race Theory (CRT) allows us to go beyond an individualistic and non-racism stance, which does not challenge racism and Whiteness, in order to explore how racism has impacted social welfare services and the social service industry (housing, mental health, residential, outreach, etc.). In fact, "social work has its own traditions of critical scholarship that challenge some of the historical practices of the profession and the larger society that serve to perpetuate institutionalized oppression, including racism" (Abrams & Moio, 2009, p. 252). An example may be found with the articulation of a racism-centered perspective offered by Jerome Schiele. Schiele maintains that it is humanistic to employ a racism-centered perspective that is grounded in the historical and cultural reality of the Black experience, and recognizes that while not all Whites are equally protected, they maintain a reality of group-difference perpetuated by the way America has treated people who are not White and who live with unique racial experiences that White people have not had (Schiele, 2020).

For the purposes of the Anti-Racism work groups, including the unique and specific lived experiences of racial groups is significant in the curricula, as group experiences are marred differently by ideology and social policy. The "racial groups" identified in the United States are comprised of Indigenous Peoples, African people brought to the Western hemisphere by force, Mexican, Latino, Hispanic, Asians, and racialized immigrants. The absence of curricula content of specific and unique racial group experiences in America that interrogates the racist social institutional construct of America have rendered social

work a discipline that maintains oppression. Social work, in general, does not adequately address situations of trauma and survival (O’Neal, 2019, p. 71) for specific racial groups in America.

For this examination, the Task Force Work Group used a thematic analysis to examine the 2015 and 2022 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) from a CRT lens. Content analysis was employed to specifically examine the presence of racism or anti-racism concepts which trigger what is broadly taught in the curricula. CRT posits that racism is an embedded social construct within systems and policies. Specifically, CRT exposes the appearance of racism and “Whiteness” in educational policies and practices through critical analysis. CRT is relevant in social work education, given the profession’s study of social institutions and social inequities. The theory can explicate the privatization of social service care and the role that capitalism plays in help-seeking and the service industry’s provision of care. As a framework in the field of law, CRT explains that “When the law recognizes, either implicitly or explicitly, the settled expectations of Whites built on the privileges and benefits produced by White supremacy, it acknowledges and reinforces a property interest in Whiteness and produces Black subordination” (Crenshaw et al., 1995, p. 281). CRT asserts that the organization of American society is in Whiteness and race dominance, which has implications for how social work responds or ignores racism and Whiteness in its methods and applications of social justice. “Whiteness as property (ownership, power, citizenship, freedom)...is a ghost that has haunted political and legal decisions in which claims for justice have been inadequately addressed for far too long” (Crenshaw et al., 1995, p. 290). From the CRT lens, differential racialization maintains that racialized groups experience oppression differently. Examples include immigration and social welfare policies, exclusions from healthcare policies, or employment benefits, exacerbating marginality through inequity in ownership, citizenship, and freedom.

Investigating Social Work’s Racist, Settler Colonial History

More work is needed for social work to be prepared to respond proactively with an anti-racist framework that guides, and puts in place, the claimed values and ethics of social work as a profession. The murder of George Floyd “sparked a global reckoning” (Hassan & Noack, 2021, p. 1), for racial justice which we believe supports our call for greater social justice accountability within social work education, practice, and policy. With all that has happened, will the profession of social work address its own complicity in maintaining racism? Social work has at its roots the violent state brutality heaped upon Indigenous and African people as America evolved as a settler colony—a country settled by others on previously established settled territory. Critical and analytical thinking are essential to the profession moving beyond the moment to join the movement. This discussion has real human implications “in every aspect of Black life and reflected in the fact that Black folks lead the states in poverty rates, incarceration rates and childbirth mortality rates for example” (Farria, 2020, p. 22).

How social work students are taught history is critical to their ability to create change for all citizens. For example, “enslavement, colonialization, segregation, and urbanization

corrupted information and beliefs, to where cultural-specific beliefs and practices are absent or are rendered inadmissible in this age of evidence-based practice” (Fairfax, 2017, p. 7). If students do not learn cultural histories and cultural empathy, their capacity to be impactful is truncated and diminished. The social work profession must be ready to examine the profession’s historical racist and settler colonial history, because “a curious hiatus exists in our thinking and knowledge about Africa based on Eurocentric racism so pervasive that it has blanked out at least seven millennia of history....yet Black Africans have made significant contributions to the advancement of humanity” (Day & Schiele, 2013, p. 60; see also Adamo, 2001; Bangura, 2011; Carney & Rosomoff, 2011; Lovejoy, 2014; Sluyter, 2012; Weiner, 2018). This is an important point, because in the current American context, African Americans (American-born Black people), are typically viewed as descendants of enslaved people, versus world citizens who have contributed for time immemorial. Yet exclusion of knowledge about the participation of people of Indigenous and African descent in the development of world civilization reflects the setup of social construction that negates significant contributions by those other than Europeans and White Christians (O’Neal, 2019, p. 71). Hegemonic historical perspectives on race and racism have dominated the social sciences. However, these perspectives have often not included discussions on the oppressive policies and practices employed to colonize and repress ethnic and cultural diversity in this country.

Multiple historical “truths” exist that socialize and inform people about racialized individuals and groups, especially in the social work profession. Add to this analysis the political mistreatment of Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Muslim groups who face racism in forms of hostile immigration and public welfare laws, educational opportunities, healthcare, and access to social services. Social work must become much more actively engaged in how students are educated about anti-racist principles and practices. Some examples, albeit not exhaustive, are listed below to illustrate how Whiteness within the profession has historically been maintained without consideration for the deleterious impact upon communities of color. For example, the profession has minimized “Race work,” which is the practice of community and institutional development, coupled with the constant struggle for social and economic justice and racial equality as fostered by early African American social reformers after the Civil War (Martin & Martin, 2002). Emerging out of the 19th century, race work offset the deleterious consequences of racial oppression (Schiele & Jackson, 2021). There is paltry inclusion of post-Civil War African American social reform and community development strategies in historical content. Early social work was driven by religious clergy, organizations, and religious social service organizations. Adams’ Hull House did not allow Blacks in until the house could not be filled by Whites. Resistance and Praxis strategies were employed by social reformers such as Ida B. Wells, a prominent journalist and advocate (Duster, 2020). While social reformers did much to advance the conditions of European immigrants and expressed support for people of color, they also reinforced racial codes during the Jim Crow era and were timid about speaking out against lynching and other atrocities against Black people.

The application of racism in early social work is evidenced in the work of Charles Loring Brace (1872), a minister who believed non-Whites were dangerous and their children should be separated from their families to be raised as good Christians. In

succeeding years, the Children's Home Society and its social workers engaged in the removal of children from multiple countries to the benefit of primarily White Christian families in adoptions work (Brace, 1872). Social work practices have historically supported government and religious organizations in their efforts to "kill the Indian in him and save the man" (Pratt, 1892, as cited in Adams, 1995, p. 52). This practice involved removing Indigenous children from their homes of origin and placing them in private and reservation boarding schools across the country. The goal was cultural genocide through civilizing, Christianizing, and farming (Moore, 2002). Social workers were complicit with the Federal Government in removing Indigenous children from their families and communities to be adopted by White families (Thiebeault & Spencer, 2019). The Child Welfare League of America's Indian Adoption Project was supported by the Bureau of Indian Affairs with the goal to place Indian children into the homes of non-Indian families to promote assimilation. Furthermore, President Roosevelt's Indian Reorganization Act (1934) was championed by John Collier, a social worker, who envisioned social reform but did not consider the unique political needs or issues of individual tribal groups.

Social work's pervasive hegemony over racialized groups continued well into the 20th century through active support of government policies, including the repatriation of Mexican Americans, many of whom were U.S. citizens. The Hoover Administration specifically targeted Mexican Americans for deportation. In 1925 welfare officials from Detroit to Los Angeles colluded with Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) and with the newly established US Border Patrol to repatriate Mexicans regardless of whether they were U.S. citizens or not. Congress established the Border Patrol in May 1924 as part of the Immigration Bureau in the Department of Labor through the Labor Appropriation Act of 1924 (Balderrama & Rodriguez, 2006). Under county auspices, social workers collaborated in the repatriation of immigrants following armed "street sweeps" despite being ill-equipped to make assessments due to lack of cultural competence, language interpretation, or family considerations (Balderrama & Rodriguez, 2006; Davis, 2017; Humphrey, 1941). The forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII was accomplished through Executive Order 9066. Social workers explicitly endorsed anti-Asian political opinions during this time through registering, counseling, staffing, and "resettling" persons of Japanese ancestry into concentration camps that housed approximately 120,000 people between 1942 and 1945 (Park, 2008, 2020). To end the abduction of Indigenous children by social workers and state authorities and keep Indigenous children in their own communities, the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 was passed. Based upon this historical context upholding Whiteness, the next section is a call for the accrediting body of the profession to establish standards that incorporate CRT perspectives within social work education.

EPAS Response to White Supremacy and Lack of Anti-Racism Practices in Academic Programs

To advance anti-racist social work education, the profession must examine the White supremacy and ethnocentrism that underscores social work as an applied social science that maintains information structures, paradigms, theories, and practices ensconced in academia. The Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards have historically focused

on a content perspective of cultural competence and multiculturalism. Content areas encouraged students to recognize differences and diversity of clients and client systems. Cultural competence focuses on acquiring knowledge and understanding of multiple cultures (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2021, preamble). However, cultural competence comes with much critique of the ways it appears finite and focused on learning about other cultures. Critiques of cultural competence illuminate its lack of interrogating personal biases, institutional discrimination, and historical inequalities (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015). A sense of accountability has been explored through an alternative approach to cultural competence through cultural humility which is about one's "ability to recognize their own limitations in order to avoid making assumptions about other cultures" (Sulaiman, 2022, para. 4) For example, though

integration of CRT across various facets of the social work curriculum has the potential to move social work students toward critical thinking, informed practice, and action around racism, privilege, and oppression, we also recognize its limitations. The major limitation is making space or time in an already crowded curriculum to include CRT readings and application. (Abrams & Moio, 2009, p. 256)

In 2008, the Council on Social Work Education modified the Education Policy and Accreditation Standards to include competency-based practice behaviors to increase students' preparedness for social work practice. The competencies that cover diversity and social justice continue to explore diversity and difference in a broad scope. This leaves an alarming gap in providing specific standards within a framework for increasing students' competence to challenge White supremacy, explore diversity in multiple levels, and center marginalized voices. Social workers have the potential to experience an intense ethical crisis when remaining complicit and functioning as a part of systems that historically and presently perpetuate institutional discrimination (Phillipo & Stone, 2011). Recognition and understanding of racism and social injustice are not sufficient for teaching application or action mechanisms to bring social justice and/or redress racism. Practice competence has been the profession's response to social justice issues, proffering a stance that the worker should implement on the micro level, but not a social justice mandate to implement change. "If awareness of and critical perspectives on racism are not applied to the fieldwork experience, students may lose sight of CRT's ties to social work problems, theories, and interventions" (Abrams & Moio, 2009, p. 256).

An anti-racist perspective offers the notion that racism operates through individual, structural, and institutional levels (Thompson, 2002). Lynch et al. (2017) recommend approaches focused on illuminating systemic and structural racism, show ways that White privilege is complicit in maintaining systematic and structural racism, and provide strategies for transformation and dismantling racism. There are many advantages with the systems in place continuing with the status quo while the disadvantages continue to increase and gravely impact racialized groups Tatum (2018) argues, "the dismantling of racism is in the best interests of everyone" (p. 77). Given the discussion on structural racism, it is the premise of this article that anti-racism work begins with assessing those organizational systems that perpetuate discrimination and marginalization of racialized groups. Specifically, CSWE's EPAS (2015) are complicit in how social work students are

trained to reify racist structures. A CRT framework provides an opportunity: to better understand the role of Whiteness in the development of policies and practices within the social work profession; to envision an equity-based CSWE EPAS that explicitly addresses racism and oppression; and to establish policies and practices that reflect realities that African Americans have historically experienced with contemporary life repercussions. Given the badge of enslavement, Black people have been cruelly subjected to violent, inhumane social policies that social work as a profession has often supported. Further application of a CRT framework unveils racist and oppressive practices toward Native Americans, Latinx peoples, and immigrants.

Description of the Process

The thematic analysis included an application of content analysis of the EPAS document by a subset of the CSWE Anti-racist Task Force. The team created evaluative questions to uncover the presence of terms ‘racism and anti-racism’ during our analysis to provisionally code concepts to evolve into a codebook for this initial and future analysis. This qualitative descriptive approach included a participatory design [which is the subset of the Task Force] that sought to “arrive at an understanding of a particular phenomenon from the perspective of those experiencing it” (Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 398), with an embedded descriptive methodology. This design collaboratively involved all members working toward the same vision of reviewing and analyzing EPAS content and ensuring co-constructed research results (Spinuzzi, 2005).

During the first meeting of stakeholders, each participant agreed to compile and review current and historical social work literature that explained racism, White supremacy, xenophobia and other agreed upon terms as shown in Table 1. Next, with common definitions and terms based on current and historical literature, each stakeholder was asked to take sections of the EPAS document for content analysis. Specifically, each stakeholder was asked to review the directives included within the EPAS document to address racism, White supremacy, and xenophobia. A form of content-analysis leading to a deeper examination of the meaning of concepts and themes, the relationship and inferred context, and impact upon the learner (Vaismoradi et al, 2013). This type of qualitative analysis allows the examiner to uncover codes, emerging themes, and patterns generated from data sources including committee documents, dialogue, social work literature, and other related sources to ensure triangulation. Applying a thematic analysis allows the researchers to use the same definitions of concepts in the coding process. Researchers quantified and analyzed these items to assess messages and the context of specific texts, which is the EPAS document. Given the current racial and political landscape that is framing virtually every aspect of life, content analysis provides a methodological way to examine educational content that underscores training and professional development of students (Nair, 2014, p. 523).

The team included a wide variety of social work academic stakeholders from the national community. The larger Anti-Racism Task Force included over 80 CSWE members engaged in an analysis of what anti-racism might look like in social work education. The EPAS Task Force committee had 20 members with eleven (11) contributing members

volunteering to participate in this analysis. Members represented all racial groups who were faculty, clinical and tenure track levels, students, and community members. The co-leads and members of the respective workgroups were selected by the Co-Chairs of the CSWE Task Force to Advance Anti-Racism. Co-leads added members who actively incorporated CRT and anti-racist pedagogy approaches to social work education and social work practice. The aim of this analysis was to construct new meaning for anti-racism knowledge; develop strategies and outcomes; and to recommend new curricula to be articulated in the EPAS policy. The application of a participatory framework was at the exploratory level of the inquiry process. This is the first time CSWE created an Anti-Racism Task Force to evaluate the presence of anti-racism data in the EPAS document. This phase of inquiry is important because there is no existing research or literature available about CSWE's intentional implementation of anti-racist and CRT curricula in the EPAS document.

The preparatory phase of our examination involved developing a template of concepts that communicate what is important in the profession. All concepts were clearly defined and identified. Prior to any declarations about whether racism is a power structure that social work wishes to dismantle in its posture and documents, concepts were collected for a quantitative count. The identification of categories was next in the process of content analysis (Neuendorf, 2019). The final phase of examination of the content was exploring the 2015 EPAS document for the following racial justice concepts:

Racism: An ideology of racial domination in which the presumed biological or cultural superiority of one or more racial groups is used to justify or prescribe the inferior treatment or social position(s) of other racial groups (Clair & Denis, 2015, p. 857); to include racial violence and racial hatred.

White supremacy and Whiteness: Created to not only facilitate colonial administration, but to render racialization and subordination (or others) more or less permanent (Saito, 2020, p. 44).

Xenophobia: Fear or hatred of foreigners or cultural others (Day & Schiele, 2013, pp. 24-25).

Racial and cultural trauma: Generations experiencing the same violent experiences in psychological and economic ways, though the forms of violence may be different (Comas-Díaz et al., 2004, p. 1).

These concepts are not present or explained in the introduction, purpose, competencies, explicit curriculum, implicit curriculum, or glossary of the EPAS document. The data in Table 1 shows the frequency of these important concepts in policy documents of 2015 and 2022.

As we coded, we indicated the number of times that each concept appeared. Where there is a negative line -, the section did not exist. The EPAS documents reveal that the discipline has focused more on individualized micro racist behavior, without acknowledging the full systemic assault of racism and White supremacy upon racialized groups. "Social scientists have focused on single concepts related to racism, such as bias, prejudice, and stereotypes, but not on systemic racism" (O'Neal, 2019, p. 128). It is

important to acknowledge the EPAS are constructed and revised within the context of the socio-cultural-political environment. This too is CRT; “there is no perch outside the social dynamics of racial power from which to merely observe and analyze” (Crenshaw et al., 1995, p. xiii). We observed that the prior EPAS documents neglected racial justice terminology that could reverse the profession’s century-old complicity, endorsement, and support of the country’s racial structure and inequities.

Table. 1. *Frequencies of Concepts In 2015 and 2022 Versions of EPAS Content*

Content	Race/Racism/Racial		Anti-Racism	White Supremacy		Enslavement		Xenophobia	
	2015	2022	2022	2015	2022	2015	2022	2015	2022
Table of Contents	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Introduction	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Purpose	0	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Education Statement	-	0	0	-	0	-	0	-	0
Competency 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Competency 2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Competency 3	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Competency 4	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Competency 5	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Competency 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Competency 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Competency 8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Competency 9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Program Mission	-	1	1	-	0	-	0	-	0
ADEI Statement	-	2	4	-	0	-	0	-	0
Explicit Curriculum	0	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Implicit Curriculum	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assessment	-	0	1	-	0	-	0	-	0
Glossary	0	-	-	0	-	0	-	0	-

All Task Force recommendations were presented to CSWE leadership prior to the annual program meeting in 2021. The Collective drafted the findings from each sub-group (i.e., Program Mission/Site Visit Protocol, Explicit Curriculum, Implicit Curriculum, and Assessment).

Conclusion

The evidence points to the social work profession’s negligence to include racial content in every phase of the educational process, in policy statements, and professional organizational values. An anti-racism posture cannot be taught or infused if indeed the guiding educational document omits terms that would present applied social scientific data differently. This evidence underscores the profession’s complicity in not educating students about racism and White supremacy. The consensus of the work group was to incorporate content on anti-racism, CRT, and other relevant critical theories into the EPAS. Racial justice terminology must be included in a newly developed EPAS document.

Tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty concentrating on teaching, service, and scholarship related to anti-racism provided insights to develop recommendations vital for schools of social work to create anti-racism environments and curricula. Social workers should be trained to disrupt White supremacist and racist institutions, policies, and practices. The overall vision of the Task Force was to incorporate anti-racism, CRT, and other critical theories in EPAS as follows:

1. EPAS to enhance faculty and students' ability to recognize and critique racist structures, institutions, policies, and practices and to demonstrate self-reflexivity (goes beyond self-awareness) and skills to make changes so that power is redistributed and shared equally.
2. EPAS to enhance faculty and students' ability to build solidarity across social identity groups, organizations, and social movement organizations to address racism and other forms of oppression.
3. EPAS to create inclusive and supportive policies and practices that could nurture the potential of colleagues who are of African-descent, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and members of immigrant groups.

Incorporating critical theories into social work centers the experiences and voices that are often marginalized in conversations. For example, by applying CRT, social work practice can uncover its White supremacy and ensure the multiple realities of people of color/minoritized groups are centered. Another implication of expanding the use of critical theories is the opportunity to reconceptualize how social work education should be taught. The centering of critical theories offers opportunities for new paradigms that ask students to think differently about the individuals and communities they serve. "The use of theories to explain the discriminatory context is associated with efforts of the social work profession to respond to needs for well-being by all people and to those who have been excluded" (O'Neal, 2019, p. 133). Applying CRT means deconstructing and transforming relationships of racism and power, which, in the context of this analysis, means purposefully infusing educational content that explores and teaches racism, Whiteness/White supremacy, racial violence, xenophobia, and racial/cultural trauma. By not doing so, social work education maintains the status quo and accepts that current individually applied practice concepts of cultural competence and cultural humiliation are sufficient.

CSWE must begin a concerted move away from the 2015 and 2022 draft EPAS pedagogical methods and practices that center cultural competence and instead address accountability measures. The 2022 EPAS acknowledges Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (CSWE, 2022). The use of CRT offers faculty and students alike the opportunity to think critically about race in ways to promote practices that dismantle racist systems of oppression. When thinking about the application of CRT in social work curriculum, it is imperative that faculty and administrators incorporate such theories across several courses. Too often social work programs relegate discussions of equity and anti-racism to a specific course and fail to recognize that discussions of anti-racism must be foundational to every area of social work education. As such, the inclusion of critical theories must be seen as necessary throughout the curriculum. Efforts to ensure that critical

theories are incorporated across social work curricula must start with a willingness by CSWE to incorporate EPAS standards and goals that require social work programs to think about how faculty are engaging with issues of equity and anti-racism. As the body charged with accrediting social work programs, CSWE has a responsibility to take the lead in furthering conversations related to equity and anti-racism.

The preamble to the NASW (2021) *Code of Ethics* promotes cultural and social diversity paralleling CSWE's efforts to ensure and enhance "the quality of social work education for a professional practice" (CSWE, 2021a, para. 1). Each CSWE program has a unique context that may or may not provide equitable resources with a goal of equal outcomes for all stakeholder groups. The truth is that systemic oppression, institutional racism, and Whiteness has driven CSWE's Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) for decades. The "rules" were made by non-racialized groups, either overtly or covertly over time, resulting in Whiteness defining implicit and explicit curriculum and accreditation standards. Power dynamics have historically defined CSWE, its programs, and who is hired to teach in those programs. As future EPAS documents are developed, faculty from racialized groups must be included in the process.

Faculty of color are underrepresented as full-time faculty in social work programs given the changing demographics of this country (CSWE, 2020b). The Council on Social Work Education 2018 statistics on social work education in the United States did not report the racial and ethnic profile of social work faculty (CSWE, 2019), thus it is difficult to determine the numbers of racialized faculty. Likewise, the authors did not find the racial and ethnic breakdown of the representation within the leadership positions at CSWE in the 2019 Statistics on Social Work Education in the United States report (CSWE, 2020b). The survey does not pose quantitative or qualitative questions about the faculty tenure and promotion process or departmental or institutional climate. Furthermore, the percentage of racialized faculty does not align with the percentages of social work students enrolled across BSW, MSW or DSW/PhD programs (CSWE, 2020b).

For faculty of color, biases often associate expertise with Whiteness (Rosette et al., 2008), where faculty of color experience racial-bias and are viewed as less capable and proficiently knowledgeable (McGee & Kazembe, 2016). Using the lens of CRT, the Task Force members call for aggregated and cluster data on recruitment, attrition, and retention of racialized and minoritized faculty and staff. CSWE can include survey questions to collect such data and share the results with social work programs. Programs need to be accountable to have plans to maintain or advance diversity, equity, and inclusion within their administrative and governance structure. Besides reflecting on the numbers, considerations are needed within the social work programs and CSWE about the decision-making power of racialized and minoritized members. Diversity across ranks should be beyond fulfilling a quota, aiming to foster a supportive environment for the growth of racialized and minoritized faculty and staff.

The Task Force identified intersecting issues regarding the lack of equity within the EPAS language. The content analysis revealed the absence of racial justice concepts in the EPAS document, uncovering the enduring presence of Whiteness in undergraduate and graduate social work curricula and the profession. The authors make note of the social work

identity as that of Whiteness, structuring and socializing students to maintain Whiteness in their professional practice. Task Force members offered their lived experience of the following examples of honoring Whiteness and socializing students to Whiteness within social work programs: the lack of attention given to the experiences of racialized students in mostly White spaces and the absence of the contributions of racialized groups to the history of social work and racialized voices in the syllabi, practicing ethnocentrism in relation to beliefs, language and behavior, and the inconsistency of hiring and successful promotion of racialized faculty and administrators. The team discussion also revealed the absence of instruction on how to apply racial justice concepts.

Our examination also revealed differential racialization among Task Force members, demonstrating that racialized groups are impacted in different ways. Multiple historical “truths” exist that socialize and inform people about racialized individuals and groups, especially in the social work profession. Add to this analysis the political mistreatment of Latinx, Asian, Arab and Muslim groups. For example, CRT’s lens of differential racialization highlights the concerns raised by some Task Force members regarding a lack of an alternative to a master’s degree from a CSWE-accredited program for immigrant faculty. According to EPAS, faculty teaching social work practice courses need to have a master’s degree from a CSWE-accredited program. Immigrant faculties with a baccalaureate or master’s degree from countries other than the U.S. might be able to get their degrees evaluated through CSWE’s International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service (ISWDRES), a complex process with many limitations for those from conflict-impacted or sanctioned countries. Only recently has CSWE issued this recommendation, and it is partly the result of recommendations shared with CSWE as part of the Task Force to Advance Anti-Racism. Consequently, many universities do not hire or are hesitant to hire faculty who are immigrants. CSWE needs to consider an alternative evaluation system for international students and faculty. The Task Force made several recommendations to address these discrepancies which maintains White supremacy and fosters racist institutional behavior.

Limitations

With regards to limitations of this exploratory analysis, there were time constraints to meet the deadlines of the CSWE Task Force. There were limitations of available data regarding racial make-up of tenured faculty members in academia, as those statistics are unreported. Only after the groundswell of Black Lives Matter protests in the police murder of Mr. George Floyd did the profession address anti-racism, including a 2021 special volume offered in *Advances in Social Work*. Otherwise, the absence of anti-racism concepts in social work literature was apparent and limited the conceptual frameworks that the Task Force were able to coalesce around and utilize, prior to the COVID 2020 Health Pandemic.

Implications for Social Work Education

Social work education must teach that anti-racism is more than being against racism. The national climate of racism, race hatred, police brutality, voting suppression, housing shortages, and other systemic forms of violence where racialized people suffer disparately are emblematic of the human rights crisis we are facing today. Anti-racism

education must fiercely confront damaging racist ideologies, policies, and actions. The 2015 EPAS document did not reflect social work's perpetuation of racism and White supremacy. Based on task force recommendations, some changes were made to incorporate explicit language about racism and White supremacy in the 2022 EPAS document. Students must be taught to identify systemic racist behavior. In order to meet the challenge of this moment, social work education's guiding document must incorporate anti-racism policies, standards, and practices, or otherwise, the profession will not meet its mission of social and racial justice. While the murder of Mr. George Floyd was the impetus for the Task Force, it is an inflection moment for social work education to examine its complicity with White supremacy and White supremacy's enduring legacy in America.

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