# GADE

GROUP FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF
DOCTORAL EDUCATION IN SOCIAL WORK

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# 2023
# QUALITY GUIDELINES

## FOR PhD PROGRAMS IN SOCIAL WORK

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# ABOUT GADE

The Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education in Social Work (GADE) is an organization of more than 100 social work doctoral program directors from member institutions. Founded in 1977, our mission is to promote excellence and equity in social work doctoral education through networking, capacity building, and stewardship of the profession. Toward that end, members share knowledge and resources that support innovation and excellence in doctoral education for developing and existing programs; promote the development of doctoral students in all their diversity and publicly recognize their achievements and contributions to the profession; and represent and promote the interests and concerns of social work and social welfare doctoral programs in the larger profession. Since 1992, GADE has strived to codify and unify these goals and principles in its Quality Guidelines for PhD Programs in Social Work.

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## QUALITY GUIDELINES FOR PHD PROGRAMS IN SOCIAL WORK

The purpose of the Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education in Social Work (GADE) Quality Guidelines for PhD Programs is to provide guidance for the development, review, and improvement of PhD programs in social work. Specific requirements and program structures will depend on policies and procedures of the host university and the chosen focus of the program. Thus, some variability in and diversity of programs across institutions is expected. The Guidelines are not meant to be prescriptive; rather, they intend to provide an aspirational framework that programs may use in their initial and ongoing development and to inform program assessment and improvement.

## PURPOSE OF SOCIAL WORK PHD EDUCATION

The PhD degree in social work is a research doctorate that aims to prepare students to be scientists, scholars, and stewards of the discipline. The Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate describes a steward of the discipline as one who generates and critically evaluates new knowledge, conserves the most important ideas and findings that are the legacy of the discipline, understands how knowledge is transforming the discipline and the larger world, and communicates their knowledge responsibly to others (Walker et al., 2008). Like other PhD degrees, the PhD in social work aspires to prepare graduates to develop substantive knowledge in an area of specialization, be able to conduct independent research, and have transferable skills and competencies for productive employability (Nerad & Evans, 2014). Domains of inquiry derive from social work's mission and purpose: "To enhance human well-being and help meet the needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty" (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2017, p. 1). Programs should have sufficient structure and resources to ensure that PhD graduates have in-depth knowledge about social work as a profession and discipline, research and scholarship skills, and professional education.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE GADE QUALITY GUIDELINES

Supported by a small grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, the first GADE Guidelines for Quality Doctoral Education were developed in 1992 in response to a "growing awareness of the need for guidelines that would aid schools in developing and sustaining quality doctoral education" (Harrington et al., 2014, p. 281). About every 10 years thereafter, a GADE-appointed task force has conducted a national survey to inform revisions that support continuous updates and improvements in PhD program administration (Harrington et al. 2014).

The task force for the 2023 Guidelines comprised co-chairs Cynthia Franklin (University of Texas at Austin) ,and Beverly Black (University of Texas at Arlington), Mo Yee Lee (The Ohio State University), and Lawrence Farmer (Fordham University), with assistance from Xiao Ding (PhD student, University of Texas at Austin). In 2020, they conducted a national survey of deans and directors, PhD program directors, doctoral faculty, and doctoral students in schools of social work. In addition to items from the 2013 survey, the instrument included new items on topics such as interdisciplinary research and social justice research and updated items on topics such as technology and teaching. The task force also considered the societal context of the survey, which was administered during the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement.

The Guidelines incorporate national trends that move universities toward policies and practices that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion and that honor principles of anti-racism and social justice. The GADE Board of Directors appointed experts from the GADE membership to review survey items from an anti-racism perspective, and GADE collected student focus group data to ensure an anti-racism perspective across domains. The task force modified survey items accordingly and consulted literature on social work PhD education to further guide the development of a framework and data analysis.

The GADE Board of Directors approved the survey instrument, and the University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board authorized the project. Results of the data analyses were discussed with the GADE Board of Directors and presented at the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting in 2021 and 2022 and at the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Annual Conference in 2022 and 2023. These sessions created opportunities for feedback and discussion on the analyses and results. The Appendix presents a detailed description of the methods used in developing the 2023 Guidelines.

## FRAMEWORK FOR REVISING THE GUIDELINES

The 2023 GADE Quality Guidelines for PhD Programs in Social Work build on previous editions of the Guidelines and provide relevant updates. As noted, the 2013 Guidelines drew on the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate intent to prepare students as stewards of the discipline (Walker et al., 2008) and incorporated emerging dialogue on the science of social work (Brekke, 2012). Those guidelines state: "PhD-trained social work scholars improve the art and science of social work by generating, disseminating, and conserving the knowledge that informs and transforms professional practice" (Harrington et al., 2014, p. 2). The 2023 taskforce and GADE Board of Directors affirmed and updated these goals for PhD education drawing on expert reviews, survey results, and extant literature.

## DOMAINS IN THE GUIDELINES

The 2013 taskforce deemed the following domains to be important to the quality of social work PhD education: (1) knowledge of social work as a profession and discipline, (2) research/scholarship, (3) teaching, and (4) resources/administration/structures. Data gathered by the 2023 taskforce supported the ongoing importance of these domains while indicating a need to include mentoring and advising, and to strengthen the emphases on antiracism and social justice. Factor analysis of the survey data suggested the eight core domains of quality guidelines for social work PhD education. See Appendix for a detailed description of data analysis.

## TABLE 1. QUALITY GUIDELINES DOMAINS

**DOMAIN 1: SOCIAL WORK AS A PROFESSION AND DISCIPLINE**

- Competency in critical analysis
- Stewardship of social work scholarship and the profession
- Commitment to anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion
- Commitment to social and economically marginalized individuals/groups

**DOMAIN 2: TEACHING**

- Inclusive, anti-oppressive pedagogy
- Pedagogical competency
- Critique context of pedagogy

## DOMAIN 3: MENTORSHIP AND ACADEMIC ADVISING

- Academic advising
- Mentorship program

## DOMAIN 4: RESEARCH/SCHOLARSHIP

- Conduct socially just, ethical, and inclusive research
- General research competencies
- Specialized research competencies

## DOMAIN 5: SERVICE

- Service to the school
- Service to the profession

## DOMAIN 6: RESOURCES

- Financial support
- Technology and learning resources
- Interdisciplinary training opportunities

## DOMAIN 7: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

- Social work background
- General requirements
- Curriculum and continuous program assessment
- Faculty incentives to work with doctoral students

## DOMAIN 8*: STUDENT LEVEL PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

- Number of publishable articles for peer review
- Number of submissions of research proposals for funding
- Number of first authored journal articles
- Number of articles as second, third, or subsequent author
- Number of peer-reviewed presentations
- Number of BSW and/or MSW courses taught

### PROGRAM LEVEL PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

- Percentage of students graduating
- Minimum coursework/credit hours
- Average years to graduation

*Descriptive information not included in factor analysis due to different question structure.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature on PhD education in social work and higher education more generally supports the eight domains of the 2023 GADE Quality Guidelines. In addition to continued emphasis on preparing students to conduct high-quality, impactful research and teaching and to effectively steward the profession, there is increased need for policies and resources that support program administration (McGovern & Zimmerman, 2018). Moreover, broader issues in higher education continue to shape PhD education. Areas relevant to social work education include international/global education, interdisciplinary knowledge, and an interprofessional approach to research that can better address applied social problems such as those identified by the Grand Challenges in Social Work (Cardoso et al., 2022; Gehlert et al., 2017; Holley, 2015).

Policies and resources to support the administration of PhD programs must be responsive to national trends such as the ongoing corporatization of universities and reduced resources for higher education. These trends indicate the need to attend to student financial resources and support (Cnaan & Ghose, 2018; Howard et al., 2018; McGovern & Zimmerman, 2018). Other trends in higher education include the increased use of technology in teaching and research; enhanced proficiencies in teaching and applied, interdisciplinary research skills that can lead to funding; focus on the public impact of research; and the need for research tools to manage the knowledge explosion (Howard & Garland, 2015; Maynard et al., 2017; Nurius & Kemp, 2014). Another major trend is the achievement of more diversity in PhD graduates (Chin et al., 2018).

Consistent with broader trends in PhD education, studies on social work PhD education indicate that graduates need to be skilled in pedagogies that enable them to be effective teachers of the next generation of practitioners (Maynard et al., 2017). Graduates who hold an MSW and have professional social work practice experience will continue to be in high demand (Berzoff & Drisko, 2015; Goodman, 2015). Applied skills that support and advance social work's mission, e.g., intervention and implementation research and grant writing, are also important curricular issues (Franklin et al., 2021). Finally, there is a need for increased attention to high-quality mentorship in PhD education to assure timely graduation and career success of all students, regardless of their chosen career path (Lee et al., 2022; Lightfoot et al., 2021).

## SOCIAL WORK AS A PROFESSION AND DISCIPLINE

Literature on social work PhD education supports the importance of educating and socializing students to become scholars and stewards of the profession. To be a steward means being able and willing to take charge and manage the profession into the future. To do so will require scholarship in the history of the profession, its mission and values, and practices and alignment of research with practices defined by NASW (2021). In a recent review of social work PhD curricula, Franklin et al. (2021) found that programs lacked sufficient coursework to be knowledgeable about social work as a profession and discipline.

## TEACHING

Pedagogical knowledge and skills are requisite to a well-rounded social work doctoral education. A primary purpose of the PhD is to prepare students for teaching in schools of social work; moreover, these skills are readily transferable to students who choose career paths outside academia. Students need opportunities to observe teaching in the profession's curricula and to gain mentored and independent teaching experience. Yet, programs vary considerably in their emphasis on teaching (Drisko et al., 2015). Students' experiences thus range from becoming a first-time adjunct instructor as a doctoral student to teaching fellowships that require immediate engagement in teaching, to mentored teaching practicums that precede independent teaching, to waiting until after graduation to begin their teaching practice (Katz et al., 2019).

## MENTORSHIP AND ACADEMIC ADVISING

Mentorship is widely recognized as an effective means for guiding graduate students to achieve academic success (Katz et al., 2019). Research on mentorship has identified numerous benefits to students and programs, e.g., improved retention, stronger research skills, and greater productivity (Pfund et al., 2014). Role modeling and mentorship can also help students develop effective teaching skills (Fong, 2012; Oktay et al., 2013) and navigate transitions into academia and other jobs (Adorno et al., 2015; Mor Barak & Brekke, 2014). A recent study on mentorship by Lee (2022) et al. found that students want mentoring support across academic and non-academic domains, including with issues related to diversity and inclusion and program climate. Most important to students was having mentors be available and responsive and to help them understand the culture and expectations of academia.

Academic advising is an important component of mentorship, although the roles can be separate. The importance of academic advising for student success is well documented in the education literature, and CSWE accreditation standards cite it as essential. Young et al. (2019) found advising to be an important factor for student success in PhD programs. In the study by Lee et al. (2022), social work doctoral students reported the highest level of satisfaction with their academic mentoring, and both students and faculty indicated that about two-thirds of the stress experienced during doctoral education is related to academic aspects of the program.

## RESEARCH/SCHOLARSHIP

Social work doctoral education has been strengthened by an increased focus on advanced quantitative and qualitative research methods, statistics, and scientific training (Franklin et al., 2021). PhD programs should prepare students as social work scientists (Fong, 2012; Gehlert et al., 2017), with curricula that equip them with skills for advanced data analysis (Cronley et al., 2019) and interdisciplinary team collaboration (Nurius & Kemp, 2014). Interdisciplinary training in social sciences, public health, and other related disciplines has been shown to prepare students for scholarly careers that lead to research funding and practical impact (Gehlert et al., 2017; Howard & Garland, 2015; Kurzman, 2015). Franklin et al. (2021) also noted a need to improve the alignment of research questions, methods, and dissemination strategies with social work practice concerns.

## SERVICE

Service expectations are an important workload responsibility for faculty members. While expectations vary by discipline and university (Guarino & Borden, 2017), service has long been and continues to be critical to the functioning of social work programs. In fact, Holosko et al. (2015) found that 57% of the top 50 social work programs use the word "service" in their mission statements. Service in academia is often conceptualized as internal and external. The former refers to service to the university and department while external service focuses on the local, national, or international community and service to the profession. Although service is a part of faculty workload and consumes much of their time, its importance in tenure decisions is often minimal (Green, 2008). Doctoral students need to become aware and learn to manage the service activities that will be expected of them if they pursue a faculty career. Opportunities for students to serve on program, school, and university committees will expose them to these activities.

## RESOURCES

Resources are increasingly scarce in the austere context of higher education, yet they are essential to ensuring high quality PhD programs. In a systematic review of doctoral education, Sverdlik and colleagues (2018) found that financial issues were a leading factor in students' program completion, whereas departmental funding had the greatest impact on their persistence in programs. Doctoral students also need adequate physical space, technology support, and access to education and training opportunities (McCray & Joseph-Richard, 2020).

## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Clearly stated and consistently, equitably applied policies and procedures are important features of a high-quality doctoral program. Clear admissions policies are needed to ensure that students know what to expect. Some programs require applicants to have an MSW and/or social work practice experience, and some value prior research experience as an indicator of successful completion (Cunningham-Williams et al., 2018). For applicants who are required to demonstrate English language proficiency, the International English Language Testing System Policies for admission needs to be transparent and accessible (Sneider et al., 2020).

Curriculum and program structure should be widely available to students, as such clarity will contribute to students' achievement and completion (Sverdlik et al., 2018). Likewise, clear, transparent policies that govern faculty advising, mentorship, and dissertation supervision are vital, as is support for faculty who provide intensive student mentorship (Siltanen et al., 2019). Programs may also need to adapt courses to hybrid or online platforms (Woo et al., 2021).

Systematic educational assessment is increasingly important in view of fiscal constraints, student and family concerns about returns on their investment in a PhD degree, and the need to maintain high-quality doctoral programs. Assessment of social work PhD programs generally relies on external reviews that examine factors such as student and faculty research productivity, graduation rates, and funding for students. Bentley (2013) offered a framework for internal program reviews that focused on the needs and resources of one particular program.

## STUDENT PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The 2023 Guidelines survey collected descriptive data on expectations for student success, i.e., graduation, publications, research preparation, and job market preparation. Prior studies have addressed what is needed for job market preparation and publications (Lightfoot, 2021; Lightfoot & Zheng, 2021). Lightfoot and Zheng (2021) reported that social work PhD students had published an average of four articles upon graduation. Benchmarks in the 2023 Guidelines are based on the national survey data, but individual programs should set their own due to changing education and employment indicators, and variability in programs and contexts.

## DOMAIN 1: KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIAL WORK AS A PROFESSION AND DISCIPLINE

Graduates of PhD programs in social work should have in-depth knowledge of social work as a profession and discipline. It is important that the knowledge PhD graduates develop and disseminate be contextualized in the distinguishing characteristics and most important ideas and findings that constitute the legacy of the profession. Students with an MSW bring a solid foundational knowledge of social work as a professional practice that is deepened and expanded in the PhD program relative to theory, research skills, and knowledge development. Students without an MSW need opportunities to develop foundational knowledge about the social work profession through independent learning and/or selected coursework.

### *Core Expertise and Skills*
Graduates will be able to:
- Collaborate effectively with colleagues from all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.
- Demonstrate a commitment to social justice, equity, and inclusion of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty.
- Demonstrate a commitment to anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices.
- Critically analyze theories, practices, policies, and research.
- Demonstrate awareness of issues and controversies in social work, especially those related to social, economic, and racial justice, oppression, and inclusion.
- Understand how knowledge in social work is relevant to public issues.
- Understand the relationships among social work education, research, and practice.
- Understand the role and importance of social work values and ethics in research and the development and application of knowledge.
- Demonstrate a deep expertise in at least one specialized area of knowledge.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the history of the social work profession.
- Locate one's work in the intellectual landscape of social work and relevant disciplines.
- Develop competencies for independent and team-based work.
- Demonstrate knowledge of state of the-art social work practice in all levels.

### *Additional Recommended Expertise and Skills*
Graduates will be able to:
- Demonstrate knowledge of the liberal arts.
- Practice self-reflection and awareness of one's positionality in research and teaching.
- Articulate an understanding of social work's contributions to society.
- Critically analyze practices for intervention development and research.

## DOMAIN 2: TEACHING

Most social work PhD graduates will assume positions that require research and teaching. Quality PhD programs recognize that preparation for teaching involves more than helping PhD students become content experts; it also involves developing competency in instructional skills and understanding the relationship between their research and their teaching. They also prepare students who demonstrate commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in teaching. A common approach to building students' teaching skills is to complete a course on theory and practice of social work education and have opportunities to practice. Competencies in the teaching area are:

### *Core Expertise and Skills*
Graduates will be able to:
- Create a classroom climate that promotes equity and inclusion of students with different learning styles, abilities, identities, and backgrounds.
- Demonstrate a commitment to anti-racism and other forms of oppression in teaching.
- Address ethical dilemmas that arise in teaching.
- Independently teach a course in a social work curriculum.
- Complete a required or elective course on social work education and teaching.
- Situate social work education within the larger context of higher education.
- Use a variety of effective instructional strategies when teaching.
- Design and/or teach an existing social work course.
- Demonstrate skills in the latest instructional technology and online strategies.

### *Additional Recommended Expertise and Skills*
Graduates will be able to:
- Demonstrate knowledge of CSWE accreditation standards, policies, and procedures.
- Create a teaching statement/portfolio
- Demonstrate knowledge of laws that impact teaching (e.g., Title IX, ADA).

## DOMAIN 3: MENTORSHIP/ADVISING

To achieve the knowledge and skills described above, students must have adequate financial support, appropriate mentoring, and clear, transparent expectations that facilitate timely achievement of milestones that lead to successful program completion. Students have a right to learn in a climate that is safe, secure, non-threatening, and inclusive.

### *Core Mentorship Recommendations*
- Develop a broad informal mentoring network incorporating teams of experts.
- Opportunities to learn about the role and responsibilities of mentor/mentee relationships.
- Faculty mentors will support students' development of research and teaching expertise.

### *Additional Mentorship Recommendations*
- Gender, racial, ethnic, cultural concordance with advisor or mentor's background, within or outside the home department.
- Sponsor a peer mentoring program.

### *Core Advising Recommendations*
- Assigned an official, formal academic advisor or mentor whose role is to help keep the student on track academically.
- Meet individually with academic advisor or mentor at least once per semester or quarter.

## DOMAIN 4: RESEARCH/SCHOLARSHIP

As social work PhD graduates are charged with developing knowledge, they must be able to conduct high quality research that is socially just and communicate their findings to diverse audiences. Research, broadly defined, involves the systematic collection and analysis of data that can contribute to the solution of social problems and positively impact society. Quality PhD programs should build research skills and expertise in the following areas:

### *Core Expertise and Skills*
Graduates will be able to:
- Formulate rigorous, meaningful research questions, including questions that incorporate race/ethnicity and social justice.
- Demonstrate a commitment to adhering to research ethics and an ability to address ethical issues in research (e.g., intellectual property, plagiarism, confidentiality).
- Demonstrate an understanding of how racism can serve as explanatory variables in social, economic, and mental health problems for people of color.
- Incorporate research by all scholars relevant to their research questions, including scholars of color and those with other underrepresented or marginalized identities.
- Demonstrate research proficiency in communities of color and in cross-cultural research.
- Identify and use appropriate methods, e.g., design, sampling, instrumentation, and analysis, for research questions.
- Engage in and contribute to an interdisciplinary research team.
- Identify funding sources for specific research ideas.
- Independently develop a proposal for a research grant or fellowship.
- Conduct high-quality literature reviews, e.g., narrative, scoping, and systematic reviews.
- Demonstrate competencies in community-engaged research.
- Demonstrate adequate knowledge and skills in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods and data analysis, and advanced skills in at least one of these approaches
- Write a publishable article for peer review.
- Publish one or more articles in peer-reviewed publication(s).
- Develop a written research plan or agenda.
- Effectively and appropriately use social and other media to communicate their research.
- Engage effectively in science communication/research translation/writing and presenting for diverse audiences.

### *Additional Expertise and Skills*
Graduates will be able to:
- Have opportunities to engage in international/global research.
- Submit abstracts for research conferences.

## DOMAIN 5: SERVICE

### *Core Service Recommendations*

- Have meaningful representation/participation on PhD program and school committee(s).
- Provide leadership opportunities.

### *Additional Service Recommendations*

- Faculty hiring (e.g., serve on a search committee, interview candidates, attend job talks).
- Serve on a program or school committee with faculty.
- Have a role in student admissions (e.g., host potential students during campus visits).
- Serve as reviewers for journal articles.
- Serve as reviewers for conference abstracts.
- Serve on a professional board.

## DOMAIN 6: RESOURCES

Quality PhD programs require resources to effectively administer the program and to develop its students. Students also require resources that facilitate timely completion of program benchmarks leading to successful program completion.

### *Core Resources Recommendations*

- Paid research assistantships (RA) opportunities.
- Paid teaching assistantships (TA) and other teaching opportunities.
- Full tuition coverage.
- Health insurance for self and dependents by the school or university.
- Professional development funds (e.g., travel, software, etc.).
- Opportunities to take courses with students from other disciplines.
- Opportunities for interdisciplinary research experiences.
- Access to state-of-the-art technology.
- Adequate workspace provided by the program, school, or university.
- Access to adequate library resources.

### *Additional Resource Recommendations*

- Opportunities for interdisciplinary teaching experiences.
- Access to family care, transportation, and food supports.
- Access to dissertation support and trainings.
- Receive a laptop and required software.

## DOMAIN 7: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Time, energy, expertise, and financial resources, are required to administer a PhD program. Students require program oversight and faculty and staff resources. Quality programs set clear policies and rigorous criteria for admission, collect data to inform periodic reviews of the entire program, and set goals for and monitor student progress toward degree completion.

### *Core Admission/Policy Recommendations*

- Minimum language requirements for students whose native language is not English.
- Clear written policies and expectations for students in a handbook.
- Situated in an accredited university that also houses an accredited MSW program.
- Provides opportunities for individualized electives.
- Ensures that courses are vertically and horizontally aligned.
- Considers chairing and committee membership in tenure and promotion decisions.
- Grants faculty workload credits for chairing and membership on dissertation committees.

### *Additional Admission/Policy Recommendations*

- Opportunities for interdisciplinary teaching experiences.
- Access to family care, transportation, and food support.
- Access to dissertation support and trainings.
- Receive a laptop and required software.

### *Core Evaluation Recommendations*

- Regularly reviews course content for quality and coherence.
- Regularly assesses preparation, performance, and support of doctoral faculty members.
- Engages in continuous monitoring of students' progress.
- Engages in periodic external review and assessment, typically every 5–7 years.
- Seeks to cultivate and routinely evaluates efforts to create and maintain an inclusive and equitable environment throughout the program.

## DOMAIN 8: RECOMMENDED PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS

PhD programs have a strong vested interest in all students completing the PhD program in a reasonable time, with a record of scholarship and teaching that enables them to compete for the employment opportunities of their choice. Toward that end, programs should establish goals regarding measurable outcomes for students, such as:

- At least 80% of enrolled students will complete the program in the timeframe established by the host institution.
- Average time to degree of students admitted with an MSW (or related master's degree) is 4–5 years of full-time study.
- Students successfully complete their dissertations in 1–2 years of proposal defense.

### *Prior to Graduation, Students Will Have*

- Presented at least 2–3 juried presentations at national or international conferences.
- Published at least one sole or first authored, peer-reviewed journal article.
- Published peer reviewed co-authored journal articles. Note: 57% of survey respondents reported 1–3 co-authored peer-reviewed journal articles and 32% reported 4–6 articles.
- Independently taught 1–2 BSW and/or MSW courses as the instructor of record.
- Substantively contributed to a research proposal for internal or external funding.
- Exposure and access to strong professional development and career placement services.

## CONCLUSION

The 2023 Quality Guidelines for PhD Programs in Social Work are aspirational and intended to help institutions develop and improve their programs. Quality PhD programs in social work set high standards and ensure adequate resources to meet these standards. They also graduate students who possess social and emotional learning skills, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making; are dedicated professionals committed to the mission of the social work profession; and demonstrate collegiality and teamwork. These Guidelines are intended to be a dynamic document that should be regularly updated to reflect the latest knowledge about quality doctoral education.

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# APPENDIX

## 2023 QUALITY GUIDELINES AND INDICATORS SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Sources of information that inform current quality recommendations include:

- GADE 2013 Quality Guidelines for PhD Programs in Social Work
- Literature review
- Trends in higher education
- Anti-racism townhalls
- 2022 Quality Indicators Stakeholder Survey
- Townhalls (BIPOC, allies, and faculty)
- SSWR 2022 Symposium: The Current State and Future Directions for PhD Education
- CSWE 2020 Statistics on Social Work Education in the United States

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION
## 2023 QUALITY GUIDELINES FOR PHD PROGRAMS IN SOCIAL WORK
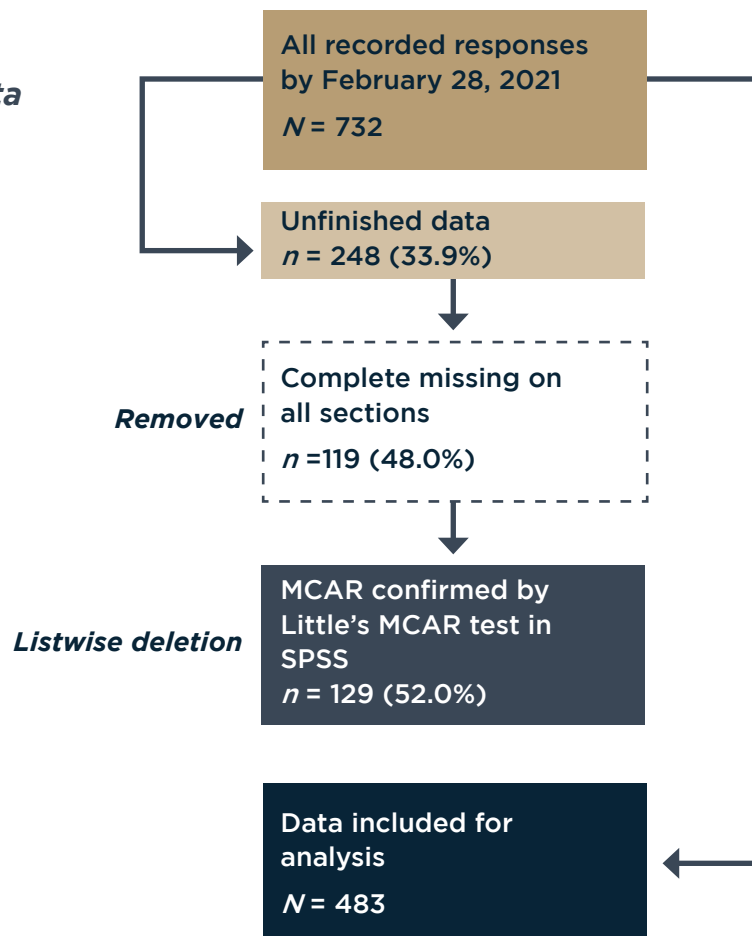
### *2023 Quality Indicators Survey*

To recruit appropriate participants, we used convenience and snowball sampling. With approval from the Institutional Review Board on November 5, 2020, we sent invitations to participate in the anonymous survey through the National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work (NADD), MSW and BSW programs, the GADE electronic listserv, and the Council on Social Work Education Violence Against Women listserv.

We sent two consecutive reminder emails four weeks and eight weeks after the initial launch. The online survey was open November 15, 2020 until February 28, 2021, on Qualtrics (Qualtrics, Provo, UT). The survey took about 20–30 minutes. The research team also asked deans of social work schools, PhD program directors, and other GADE members to distribute the invitation email to faculty and doctoral students. At the end of data collection, faculty and students could choose to enter a drawing. Sponsorship to attend a professional conference was offered as an incentive to two randomly selected student and two faculty participants. Doctoral program directors and deans and directors of schools of social work were not qualified for the drawing.

### *Survey Participants*

Figure 1 depicts the flowchart of participant inclusion in the analytical sample. A total of 732 participants consented, of whom one ultimately declined to complete the survey. At the close of data collection, 248 (33.9%) surveys were incomplete, of which 119 (48%) were removed due to completely missing data. For the 129 records (52.0%) that contain missing data, up to 72.1% of participants did not complete the first section; Little's (1988) MCAR test confirmed that the data were missing completely at random. Considering this and the large percentage of missing values, we used listwise deletion to deal with the missing data. Hence, the final sample consisted of 483 respondents who completed all survey questions.

## FIGURE 1

### *Flowchart for Missing Data*

```
                              ┌──────────────────────────┐
                              │ All recorded responses   │
                         ┌───▶│ by February 28, 2021     │───┐
                         │    │ N = 732                  │   │
                         │    └──────────────────────────┘   │
                         │                 │                 │
                         │                 ▼                 │
                         │    ┌──────────────────────────┐   │
                         └───▶│ Unfinished data          │   │
                              │ n = 248 (33.9%)          │   │
                              └──────────────────────────┘   │
                                           │                 │
                                           ▼                 │
                              ┌ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ┐    │
              Removed         │ Complete missing on          │
                              │ all sections             │    │
                              │ n =119 (48.0%)               │
                              └ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ┘    │
                                           │                 │
                                           ▼                 │
                              ┌──────────────────────────┐   │
                              │ MCAR confirmed by        │   │
          Listwise deletion   │ Little's MCAR test in    │   │
                              │ SPSS                     │   │
                              │ n = 129 (52.0%)          │   │
                              └──────────────────────────┘   │
                                                             │
                              ┌──────────────────────────┐   │
                              │ Data included for        │◀──┘
                              │ analysis                 │
                              │ N = 483                  │
                              └──────────────────────────┘
```

## MEASURES

### *Quality Indicators Survey*

The data collection instrument was based on the survey that informed the GADE 2013 Quality Guidelines (Harrington et al., 2014). Quality indicators were informed by the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate (Walker et al., 2008), a prior study of social work doctoral education involving students (Anastas, 2012), and a national initiative on the science of social work (Brekke, 2012; Fong 2012). The team revised the quality indicators and sought expert opinions of the GADE taskforce and Board and consulted literature on doctoral education (Chin et al., 2018; Franklin et al., 2021; Gehlert et al., 2017; Holosko et al., 2015; Katz et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2022; Lightfoot, 2021; Maynard et al., 2017; McCray & Joseph-Richard, 2020; Nerad & Evans, 2014; Jenkins & Wingate, 2015). Societal conditions such as the Black Lives Matter movement and a commitment to promoting anti-racism in doctoral education influenced revisions, which included indicators of preparing students to address diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) in their teaching and research (GADE, 2020).

***Sample Demographics.*** Participants were asked to provided demographics, such as education, gender, and race/ethnicity. They identified their institution as research-intensive, teaching-intensive, or an academic setting that placed equal emphasis on research and teaching, and noted whether their institution has a PhD or DSW program, or neither. Respondents also indicated their role in social work education as administrators (e.g., dean or director, PhD program director), faculty, or PhD students, with specific ranking and other titles.

## QUALITY INDICATORS

Perceptions of the quality indicators were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not at all important to 5 = extremely important). A total of 96 indicators were grouped into 8 domains, as follows:

### Social Work as a Profession and Discipline (18 items)

Students' development on knowledge, skills, and values associated with their development as a social work scholar and educator. Examples:

### Research/Scholarship Competencies (21 items)

Students' development of an independent researcher. Examples:

- Has a strong sense of research ethics and the ability to address ethical dilemmas that might arise in research (e.g., intellectual property, plagiarism, confidentiality).
- Has adequate skills with advanced quantitative data analysis techniques (e.g., SEM, HLMMLM) and their appropriate use.

### Teaching (13 items)

Student development of teaching competencies. Examples:

- Can create a classroom climate responsive to equity and inclusion of students and different learning styles, abilities, and racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- Has a written teaching philosophy.
- Can address ethical dilemmas in teaching (e.g., cheating, Title IX issues).

### Mentorship and Academic Advising (7 items)

Mentoring and advising supports. Examples:

- Has faculty mentors who support their development of research and teaching.
- Are assigned an official academic advisor or mentor to help keep them on track.

### Service (8 items)

Opportunities to participate on boards at the school or for professional organizations. Examples:

- Has a formal role in student admissions (e.g., host applicants on campus visits).
- Serves as reviewer for conference abstracts.

### Resources for PhD students (13 items)

Financial support, access to technology, and interdisciplinary training. Examples:

- Has paid RA opportunities.
- Has opportunities for interdisciplinary research experiences.

### Program Administration

#### Admissions (5 items)

Need for a social work background and other general requirements.

#### Policy (10 items)

Program's policies and procedures. Examples:

- Has clear written expectations for students in a handbook.
- Faculty receive workload credit for chairing / membership of dissertation committees.and other titles.

## EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT OUTCOMES

### Scholarly Activities (2 items)

- Number of first-authored publications.
- Number of peer-reviewed presentations
  Response categories: 0 (Not applicable); 1 = (0 first author peer-reviewed articles); 2 = (1–3); 3 = (4–6); 4 = (7–9); 5 = (10 or more).

### Teaching Experience (1 item)

- Number of social work courses taught.
  Response categories: 0 = (Not applicable); 1 = (1); 2 = (2); 3 = (3); 4 = (4); 5 = (10 or more).

### Program Performance Four items assessed perceptions of "high-quality" doctoral programs. "In a high-quality social work PhD program…"

- What percent of students who enroll should graduate with a PhD?"
  (less than 60%; 60–90%; 70–79%; 80–89%; and 90% and above)
- What should be the average time to graduation from time of enrollment?
  (3 years; 4 years; 5 years; 6 years; and 7 or more years.)
- What is the minimum number of coursework/credit hours (excluding exams or dissertation) that should be required for graduation? (31–35, 36–40, 41–44, 45–49, and 50 or more)
- How many research proposals should students be a part of and/or contributed to before graduation? (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 or more proposals)

## DATA ANALYSIS

### Descriptive Analysis

IBM SPSS 28.0 was used to conduct descriptive analyses of sample demographics and quality indicators. Frequencies and percentages are reported for categorical variables and means and standard deviations are given for ordinal/continuous variables.

### Inferential Analyses
### Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to identify dimensions that underlie each of the eight domains, which were then used to create composite scores for further analyses, to compare participants roles (e.g., administrators, faculty, students), and types of institution (e.g., research-intensive, not research-intensive; Hahs-Vaughn, 2016). Initial descriptive analysis indicated non-normal distributions of quality indicators, as the robust estimator. Weighted Least Squares Means and Variance (WLSMV) estimator was used for all EFA model (Barendse et al., 2015).

### Univariate and Multivariate Analyses of Variance

Univariate and multivariate analyses of variance (ANOVAs and MANOVAs) were used to examine the main effects of respondent role and setting, and the interaction of respondent role and setting on perceived importance ratings and expectations for student outcomes. Alpha level was adjusted at .05.

*Qualitative Data*

In August 2020, the GADE Board invited doctoral students facilitate a discussion series with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), white students, and faculty focused on envisioning the realities of developing, implementing, and sustaining anti-racist pedagogy in doctoral programs. Student facilitators were from Fordham University, Morgan State University, Rutgers University, and University of Chicago. Four sessions were held; the first three were only for doctoral students. Session one was for BIPOC PhD/DSW identified students. The second ally session was for White PhD/DSW students, and the third included all students. The final session included students, post-docs, faculty, and administrators. The facilitators provided a 28-page report to the GADE board, highlighting the need to attend to the following areas.

- *Investment in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA)*: Programs need financial resources to address diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. This involve hiring diverse faculty and investing financial resources in revising curriculum to address anti-racism and white supremacy. There is also a need for schools to address policies and practices that reflected explicit and implicit biases towards BIPOC populations.
- *Financial Investment:* Inadequate financial support Is a barrier to students' success, especially for BIPOC students.
- *Support for BIPOC Spaces:* Support for student affinity groups for BIPOC students is a critical program responsibility.

## CSWE 2020 AND SSWR 2022 CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Symposia were presented at the 2020 CSWE 2020 (Statistics on Social Work Education in the United States) and the 2022 SSWR (The Current State and Future Directions for PhD Education) conferences. Preliminary results from the survey were discussed along with findings from a statistical profile of social work education programs and doctoral student mentoring studies. Feedback and discussion with attendees provided qualitative information on the quality indicator recommendations. Attendees affirmed the need for quality indicators to attend to the experiences of BIPOC students and faculty. Consistent with current trends in higher education, attention to DEIA was at the forefront of comments and reactions to the survey results.