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Defining Quality in Undergraduate Social Work Education

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DEFINING QUALITY IN

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ABSTRACT

"Quality" is a value-laden term that depends upon variables associated with culture, language and political context. Concluding there is no absolute, single definition of this term Harvey and Green (1993) postulated the meaning of quality as reflective of the differing perspectives of individuals and society as a whole; this includes the interrelated concepts: excellence; perfection; fitness for purpose, value for money; and transformation. This exploratory study attempts to define and operationalize the relevant characteristics that describe quality in undergraduate social work education by applying the five concepts of Harvey and Green (1993). Interviews were conducted with undergraduate social work program directors and faculty in the State of Wisconsin to elicit from the participants their understanding of the nature and relevance of each of the five dimensions of quality. From the analysis of the resulting data a synthesized and cohesive definition of each concept of quality is developed. The analysis also notes differences in perceptions between the program directors and faculty. Finally, implications for accreditation, undergraduate social work education and program funding will be discussed.

Keywords: quality, higher education, undergraduate social work

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

"Quality" is a value-laden term that is dependent upon variables associated with culture, language, and political contexts. Based on an epistemological perspective of social constructivism, it encompasses a wide range of conceptualizations, most frequently related to processes or outcomes (Watty, 2006; Harvey & Green, 1993; Astin 1985). Subjectively, the term is associated with "that which is good and worthwhile" (Van Kenemade, Pupius, & Hardjono, 2008, p 177). Borrowed from the domains of industry and business, where the concept of quality often centers on customer-based definitions, the ideology of higher education is often in conflict with this perspective. A vast array of stakeholders, each of whom have differing ideals of what quality should represent, create an exceedingly complex and philosophical conundrum, of which no single definition of quality exists (Harvey & Green, 1993; Harvey & Knight, 1996).

Quality in Higher Education

Often referred to as a relative concept, a considerable degree of literature has been dedicated to the topic of quality in higher education. Taking in a vast array of how quality is defined by a variety of individuals or organizations, all conceptualize the term *quality* differently (Van Kemenade et al., 2008; Watty, 2006; Delany, 1997). Concluding there is no absolute, single definition of this term Harvey and Green (1993) postulate that that

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meaning is reflective of the differing perspectives of individuals and society as a whole. Describing interrelated concepts that are associated with defining quality in higher education, the authors identify excellence; perfection; fitness for purpose; value for money; and transformation as related categories that interpret the word.

Elements used to define quality can be seen as conflicting, or in some sense, counterproductive (Astin, 1985; Watty, 2006). The different components of these definitions have included inputs, fiscal ability, educational experiences, process results and outputs (Watty, 2006; Hubbell, 2007). While the definition and meaning of *quality* can be perceived as being socially constructed, operationally, the focus appears to be on how to measure and quantify the word. A diverse assortment of variables related to the measurement of quality within higher education have included assessment, policy, funding, ranking, assurance audits, competencies, and publications (Watty, 2006; Van Kemenade et al., 2008).

Concepts of Quality as Related to Social Work Education

The concepts of quality within social work education have continued to evolve since the profession was established at the beginning of the 20th century. What determines quality and how it should be measured, continues to be debated among academic professionals, clinicians, service providers, and even students (Paquin, 2006; Phillips, 1997).

In the context of social work education, curriculum is developed to include the knowledge, skills, and values with the applications of interpersonal relatedness and critical thinking associated with the Educational Policy and Standards (EPAS) of the

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) (CSWE, 2010). Established in 1952, CSWE

is the sole accreditation organization for social work education in the United States and

comprises education and professional institutions, social welfare agencies, and private

citizens (CSWE, 2010).

Guided by the principles that include respect for knowledge based on scientific

inquiry and the construct of person-in-environment, social work education was

established to promote human and community well-being through the elimination of

poverty, respect for human diversity, and the overall improvement in the quality of life.

Specific educational objectives are incorporated into the teaching curriculum with

students integrating what is learned in the classroom and demonstrating a level of

competency in field and practice (Tam & Coleman, 2009; CSWE, 2010; Holden,

Meenaghan, Anastas, & Metry, 2002). The quality of social work programming in

academia has historically been based on EPAS standards, which have been redefined and

shaped throughout the history of this organization (Kendall, 2002). The standards have

been altered to indicate CSWE's focus from achieving objectives to personal competence

and excellence (CSWE, 2010; Rodenhiser, Buchan, Hull, Smith, Pike, & Rogers, 2007).

However, the traditional objectives of these instruments are reflective with meeting

accreditation standards and do not account for faculty feedback (CSWE, 2010; Buchan,

Rogers, Rodenhiser, Pike, Hull, Ray, & Smith, 2004).

Accreditation standard listed as Assessment 4.0.1 through 4.0.5 under the 2008

EPAS addresses assessment planning, measurement, and evaluation for attaining program

competencies. These outcome data serve as a benchmark to affirm or the need to

implement modifications within the explicit and implicit curriculum. This form of measurement is used as a method of determining quality in the form of continuous improvement of social work programs (CSWE, 2010). Areas affected may include curriculum, department policies and procedures, and service delivery (Rodenhiser et al., 2007; Whittlesey-Jerome & Speed, 2004). While CSWE dictates that an assessment system must be implemented to measure competencies of social work programs, the methodology by which this standard must be completed is left entirely up to the individual schools. Therefore, there is no standard but rather considerable variance in determining how well social work programs are attaining accreditation standards, thus leaving the concept of *quality* to be determined on an individual basis (CSWE, 2010; C.H. Zastrow, personal communication August 18, 2009). It could be argued that the epistemology of social work education is based on a form of social constructivism, which views that reality cannot be understood independent from the meanings and language associated with this process (Pacquin, 2006, Phillips, 1997).

Nature of the Problem

Often referred to as a relative concept, a considerable degree of literature has been devoted to the topic of quality in higher education, with no actual consistent or agreed upon definition (Van Kemenade et al., 2008, Watty, 2006).

Traditional Methods of Measuring Quality.

In educational institutions, *quality* is discerned as a desirable outcome and objective that has been sought by such means of efficiency and accountability to advance the position and/or reputation in the educational market (Buss, Parker, & Rivenburg,

2004). In this respect, the term quality is defined in various ways and almost exclusively

on the graduate level. Social work education programs are evaluated on an assortment of

categories associated with leadership, vision, distribution and diversity of faculty,

admission rates, graduation of students from programs, and employment of graduates- all

associated with the term *quality* (Feldman, 2006). Measurement of various categories can

determine ranking and therefore the status position of the school within the United States

(*U.S. News & World Report*, 2004; Kirk, Kil, & Corcoran, 2009; Gambrill, 2001, Morse,

Flanigan & Yerkie, 2006). Results from annual publications such as *U.S. News & World

Report* (*USNWR)* seem to influence the education decisions of prospective graduate

students, work related positions and location of faculty members, along with the financial

choices of programs by universities themselves, funding agencies, and outside donors

(*USNWR*, 2004; Green, Baskind, Fassler, & Jordan, 2006; Buss et al., 2004). Criticism of

USNWR's rankings include being too narrow in scope, subjective in nature, and based

primarily on the reputation of the program as judged by a sample of deans and directors

in a nonrandom method. The information published in these rankings of social work

schools is often obtained from a single data set acquired several years previously

(Feldman, 2006, Kirk et al., 2009). Kuh & Pascarella (2004) in replicating an earlier

study found the rankings of America's best colleges directly correlates with the average

SAT/ACT score of their students, demonstrating little additional influence by other

indicators associated with quality. Thus, the exposure of students to the best and most

effective educational practices during their college career as a concept of quality is

completely void of any form of measurement. Student-faculty interaction, active and

collaborative learning, and levels of academic challenges while assessed by the National

Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), *USNWR* does not include these indicators with

their published college and university rankings (Dill & Soo, 2005, Erhenberg, 2003,

Banta, 2001). Although other studies and the National Association of Social Workers

(NASW) have ranked schools of social work, the methodological limitations for these

findings have been debated along with the validity and relevance of such studies

(Corcoran & Kirk, 1990; Feldman, 2006). McLeod (2014) found a positive association

with the *USNWR* system between the size of the institution, research resources and

structure, and the rise in a social work program's ranking. The bias in favor of larger

institutions leads to ethical considerations with how ranking structures impact student

recruitment, perceptions of quality, and assignment of value.

Reputation, Resources and Outcomes.

Redefined from the social constructivist perspective, Sharman (2007) argues that

reputation and status are relational concepts with emergent inter-subjective qualities and

based on associations, feelings, and social cues. According to Astin (1985), this

psychological phenomenon has been a tradition from which a characteristic view of

excellence and hierarchy has been formed, with rankings between graduate and

undergraduate programs being virtually identical between institutions. Resource

measurement, another fashionable indicator of institutional excellence, correlates heavily

with institutional reputation. Faculty members with doctorates, exceptional publishing

records, and large research grant awards are primarily located at more prestigious

research universities. Resources of the physical facilities along with the per-student

expenditure demonstrate a positive correlation with the admission selectivity of students.

Fiscal resources that include endowment, faculty salaries, faculty-student ratios, and

student services, and average class size appear to be mutually reinforced with

institutional reputation (Astin, 1985; Ehrenberg, 2003).

Outcome measures, one of the most frequent means of quality assessment in

elementary and secondary schools have transitioned to undergraduate higher educational

institutions (Astin, 1985). Encompassing student attrition rates, achievement, lifetime

earnings of alumni, and admission into graduate or professional programs are associated

with the impact of the university. In fact, it is argued that differences in student

characteristics are more closely correlated with outcome measurements than the

institutional environment (Astin, 1985).

Measuring Quality within Social Work.

Karger & Stoesz (2003) argue that quality of social work programs and thus, the

overall future of the field has been impacted by the rapid growth in the actual number of

programs, the academic caliber of students being admitted, the standard of the

educational instruction, student preparedness to enter the job market, and the salaries

earned by the graduates and practitioners. Arguing for a focus on competence as a

measure of excellence, these authors conclude that CSWE should be centered on "the

development of quality social work programs" (p. 293).

<center>**The Impact of Stakeholders**</center>

Ranking systems or league tables, which have become a pervasive method in the

quest of measuring the idea of quality, are not universal; they are frequently biased, based

on varying perceptions. Dill & Soo (2005) completed an international comparison and analysis of university ranking systems, finding government policy the single most important contributor to effectiveness of university rankings. Countries that implemented public policies, which required government designed measurement, fared better in terms of objectivity than those that relied more heavily on peer assessment methods. Specifically, the United States and Canada rely primarily on peer assessments, which are thought to be more subjective and biased, therefore creating controversy with rankings of universities. Variations in the scale, size, and purpose of higher education institutions make global comparisons exceedingly difficult with the exception of those universities classified as comprehensive, research-intensive models. Despite issues with validity, league tables and ranking systems have become an immensely popular method of judging institutional quality (Marginson & van der Wende, 2007).

Watty (2002) identified four primary stakeholder groups in higher education: government, quality agencies, universities, and individual academics. These did not include students, parents, employers or society as a whole, as the focus was centered on the aforementioned specific groups. Within the identified stakeholder classifications, substantial differences existed as to the meaning attached to the concept of quality. Potential for conflict concerning the impact of quality initiatives demonstrates a disparity of views between administrators and academic staff (Campbell & Slaughter, 1999; Watty, 2002; Harvey & Newton, 2004). From an academic perspective, Newton (2002; 2007) revealed that academics appear to view developing concepts of quality as intrusive

or conformist in nature. Often, this perspective leads to a lack of engagement by academic faculty in quality assurance initiatives by higher educational institutions.

As stakeholders, colleges and universities in their attempt to define quality in some concrete, logical manner have used the rankings for internal benchmarking. The emphasis of rankings is on comparisons with other institutions with which a given institution competes for research monies, prestige, and students. Rankings implicitly correlate with the concept of quality and are often used to set administrative goals in an effort to demonstrate the university's accomplishments to the institution's board of trustees. Board members, who are frequently affiliated with the larger business community, often define success in tangible, quantifiable terms. For these board members, the rankings offer a form of assessment with which they have a level of comfort (Dill & Soo, 2005). While these ratings can serve as a measure for public accountability and promotion of competition between institutions, rankings often rely on subjective perceptions of quality that offer only an *illusion* to objectivity (Harvey, 2006; Jucevičienè, 2009)

External agencies have identified *quality* in terms of the student population with retention rates, graduation rates, graduate employment, employability attributes and student satisfaction as benchmarks that require periodic review. The impact of this stakeholder view of quality has extended to adjustment of curriculum, new strategies in teaching, and pedagogy (Harvey & Newton, 2004; Harvey & Williams, 2010b; Jucevičienè, 2009).

Research Questions

This study examined how the five concepts of quality as constructed by Harvey and Green (1993) are defined by program directors and faculty in baccalaureate social work programs within the State of Wisconsin. The initial part of the study involved interviews with BSW program directors and faculty within the State of Wisconsin. The information was then analyzed. The research questions for this study are:

1. What are the relevant characteristics that describe quality according to BSW program directors and BSW faculty in the State of Wisconsin?

2. How do the two populations understand these indicators and to what degree is consistency found?

3. Can a cohesive definition of each concept: excellence, perfection, fitness for purpose, value for money, and transformation be developed?

4. Are there other concepts that define quality that do not fit into one of the five categories identified by Harvey and Green (1993)?

Definition of the Variables

This study examined how BSW program directors and faculty describe the five concepts of quality. In particular, this study attempted to identify similarities between the two groups in an effort to produce a cohesive definition of each construct. It is argued that for the five concepts of quality, there are shared characteristics of the definition of terms between BSW program directors and their faculty. The implication is an integrated conceptualization of the terms between these two groups giving rise to an essential element when attempting to quantify the measurement of the word *quality*. A lack of

consistency between program directors and faculty would present difficulties in
determining the primary definition of quality in undergraduate social work education.

For this study, quality is defined as the five interrelated concepts described by Harvey and Green (1993) in their article *"Defining quality"*: 1) excellence; 2) perfection; 3) fitness for purpose; 4) value for money and 5) transformation. Higher education is defined as a four-year institution that offers an undergraduate social work program that has been accredited by CSWE and confers a minimum of a baccalaureate degree.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Higher education is a valuable asset in American society. Unlike its European

counterpart, the American university subscribes to collegiate education as an essential

preparatory element for professions such as medicine, law, education, business,

pharmacy, engineering and other fields of specialized study (Brown & Mayhew, 1965).

This contrasts with the European philosophy for which many vocations and professions

identify with apprenticeships, technical skills training and education. The European

university, especially the British model, focuses on theoretical, complex, and abstract

studies in the areas of the arts and sciences. The goal is to produce leaders and scholars

while de-emphasizing the importance of technical education and skills (Brown &

Mayhew, 1965; Berquist & Pawlik, 2008).

The present study was based on the five concepts of quality in higher education as

described by Harvey and Green in the article "Defining Quality" published in *Assessment

& Evaluation in Higher Education* (1993). The five concepts are 1) excellence or

exceptional 2) perfection, zero defects, or consistency, 3) fitness for purpose, 4) value for

money and 5) transformation. Excellence or exceptional and transformation have roots in

the theory of social constructivism, which is taken from the discipline of sociology. The

concepts of fitness for purpose and value for money are associated with human capital

theory, which emerged from the discipline of economics. Perfection, zero defects, and consistency are applicable to both human capital theory and constructivism depending on the context in which they are used. The theories of human capital and constructivism will be discussed in depth in Chapter Three.

The literature review covers a broad range of topics for this study. How culture in higher education has evolved throughout the history of the United States and grounded in the social, economic, and political values and beliefs at the time, directly influencing how quality has been defined in the academy is explored. This discussion is followed by a brief history of the Educational Standards and Policies (EPAS) of CSWE, which is pertinent in understanding the historical relevance of accreditation in the social work profession.

A key component of the literature review focuses on the definitions of the five concepts and their existing application to quality in higher education. How these five concepts have been applied to the field of social work is examined with a particular emphasis at the baccalaureate level. Finally, the impact of globalization on the quality of higher education is considered.

Culture in Higher Education

Perceptions of quality are influenced by cultural beliefs that, in addition to experiences, include historical and traditional constructs, which are internalized throughout the life span. Much of the discussion of quality in higher education has ignored the cultural considerations, unconsciously incorporating biases that influence

judgments. Hence, universally agreed upon standards of quality may be difficult or virtually impossible to identify.

As in the case of quality, culture is a complex concept associated with multiple definitions. The meaning of culture is dependent upon the discipline or context with which it is linked (R. Williams, 1983; Välimaa, 1998; Kekäle, 1999; Harvey & Stensaker, 2008). It encompasses psychological processes, ideals, assumptions, beliefs, values, and knowledge; it is a learned phenomenon. Baligh (1994) described culture "in terms of a set of components and a set of parts" (p. 14). Culture is relativistic, guiding behaviors and creating symbolic meanings that are shared by groups of individuals or a larger society (Kekäle, 1999; Bodley, 1994). All cultures are built on what is believed to be true. Such perceived truth is judged as possessing both *absoluteness* and *exclusivity*. Fundamental beliefs are such truths (Baligh, 1994 pp. 16-17). Playing a significant function in shaping individuals, defining patterns, and identifying reactions, culture influences how structures are created and are differentiated. (Berquist & Pawlik, 2008; Baligh, 1994).

From a historical context, Tylor (1874) sought to define culture, while Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) identified 126 anthropological definitions of this term. Bodley, in 1994 categorized these definitions into eight groups (Harvey & Stenstaker, 2008). From an anthropological perspective, cultural relativism connects societal standards across the cultures in which they occur. In this construct, one culture cannot be judged as either inferior or superior to another culture (Harvey & Stenstaker, 2008).

Culture heavily influences perceptions, thoughts, and feelings relative to the nature and scope of higher education, focusing upon the facets of organizations as a

whole in addition to specific disciplines (Maassen, 1996; Kekäle, 1999, Berquist & Pawlik, 2008; Austin, 1990). Within the academic realm, culture establishes meaning to students, faculty, and administrators, providing a sense of purpose and connection to the narrative and intentions of the institution (Berquist & Pawlik, 2008). Culture in the academy encompasses subcultures, all of which are unique and interpret the values and beliefs associated with academia (Austin, 1990). Higher education has traditionally been composed of certain key values; among these are the discovery and dissemination of knowledge, which align with teaching, research, and scholarship. Autonomy, academic freedom, peer review, and tenure, though increasingly controversial, serve as foundations of institutional culture (Lucas, 2006, Austin, 1990, Ginsberg, 2011, Tierney, 1988). Commitment to impartiality, honesty, collegiality, and service symbolizes the traditions of higher education (Austin, 1990; 2007; Tierney, 1988). In the last century, academic culture has become progressively more diversified with evolving academic disciplines and professions. Additionally, national recognition for institutions that excel in research and publication creates a disharmony of balance with teaching and service (Austin, 1990, Schrecker, 2010).

Academic culture comprises various disciplines and departments. Often these are categorized as tribes, reflecting their diverse social and cognitive characteristics and ethos (Becher, 1989, Kekäle, 2002). As higher education institutions expanded, university presidents and chancellors gave progressively more responsibility to faculty for hiring and other evaluative tasks. This increased authority of faculty was due to decentralization and compartmentalizing of disciplines into departments (Geiger, 2015). Individual fields

and professional disciplines create their own culture, which is transmitted to students during their graduate studies. Intellectual traditions, style, language, and dialogue are unique to particular disciplines. They create the narrative that shapes the values and norms associated with the discipline. Faculty members' identities are formed and internalized through their interactions within academic communities of their disciplines. Publications, professional missions, conferences, and seminars all reinforce and maintain the principles and distinct character of the discipline (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Austin, 1990; Becher, 1989; 1990; Becker & Parry, 2005; Välimaa; 1998). Analyzing differences across academic disciplines, Becher (1989) classifies them as hard pure, hard applied, soft pure, and soft applied knowledge. The disciplines of hard pure align with the basic sciences while hard applied knowledge can be attributed to the fields of engineering and technology. Humanities and social sciences typify the soft pure disciplines with soft applied knowledge as characterizing the areas of education, business and social work. The cultural context of the discipline influences the definition of quality and performance standards (Becher, 1989; 1990; Austin, 1990).

Environment, mission, socialization process, information, strategy, and leadership all influence the organizational culture of higher education (Tierney, 1988). While cultures within a discipline reflect particular values and norms, individuals within the discipline share similar career paths. The disciplinary culture is influenced to a degree by the institution's culture; however, the strongest disciplinary impact on faculty seems to transpire at the most prestigious institutions (Austin, 1990). Within disciplines, leadership styles vary, often reflecting the cultural values of the discipline through the patterns of

interaction and work. While the soft applied disciplines place an emphasis on

relationships, the hard pure science values scientific and deductive reasoning; therefore,

the leadership style in the latter may be more hierarchical and structured (Välimaa, 1998).

Historically, higher education institutions have had a distinct social culture

consistent with the traditions of collegiality and intellectual influence taken from the

British academic institutions and an emphasis on research and peer review from the

German model of higher education (Berquist & Pawlik, 2008, Austin, 1990). In addition,

institutional commitment to faculty autonomy and collegiality is central to the values of

the academic community. This collegial philosophy has frequently collided with

bureaucratic administrative structures. In the past two decades, this discord has escalated

due to increasing demands of federal and state accountability, economic constraints,

market demands, and a push for increased centralization of processes (Austin, 1990;

Giroux, 2002b; Toma, Dubrow, & Hartley, 2005). Increased faculty workload, shrinking

or stalled salaries, ongoing assessment strategies, demands for quantifiable outcome

measurements, and a decrease in faculty governance have led to fewer intrinsic rewards

and institutional commitment for faculty. This cultural shift is associated with the

neoliberal business model that encourages competition and individual pursuit of success

compared to the traditional collegiality of academia. (Tierney, 1988; Giroux, 2002b;

Schrecker, 2010).

The type of institution is a key contributor to faculty culture. While each

institution possesses a unique ethos, organizations with comparable classification

structures often share similar characteristics of values and norms (Välimaa, 1998; Austin,

1990). Traditional liberal arts colleges promote excellence in teaching as the primary

faculty responsibility, decreasing specialization and influencing the focus of research and

scholarship. The leadership style of campus administrators, the degree of faculty

governance, the size and location of the institution, and academic standards play a role in

the creation of a distinctive culture and identity for each higher education academy.

Institutions with extensive graduate programs have a greater focus on research than

colleges where teaching is the emphasis. As faculty spends more time with teaching their

ability to produce new knowledge is constrained and the association with the research

community becomes more of a challenge (Austin, 1990; Toma et al., 2005; Schein, 2010,

Tierney, 1988).

Leadership style of administration combines with faculty behavior and attitudes.

Vertical organizations with heavy bureaucratic structuring have formal rules and

standards with expectations of salary, teaching load, office schedules, etc. Generally,

faculty in these settings are more removed from the broader decision-making processes.

Academy cultures that favor a more collegial and horizontal approach encourage faculty

autonomy, have fewer rules, and exhibit greater shared governance. The institutional

culture, with its norms and values becomes a form of identity for faculty as a community.

Conflict occurs when the culture of the disciplines clashes with the institution's culture,

diminishing trust and affecting morale within the academic community (Austin, 1990;

Toma et al., 2005; Kekäle, 1999).

Institutional culture represents the foundation of a college or university's identity

or *brand* equity (Toma et al., 2005, p. 4). Brand equity symbolizes the value placed on an

institution's reputation as interpreted by external sources, differentiating it from

competitors on a state or national level. It reflects the culture and signifies tangible gains

through creation of an image of status and distinction (Välimaa, 1998, Toma et al., 2005).

External ranking systems drive institutional reputations, creating bias, and producing

anchoring effects of public perceptions (Bowman & Bastedo, 2011). Reputational

rankings further favor research institutions, especially those that produce research in the

hard science fields, creating a hierarchical social structure of institutional disciplines

(Altbach, 2012). The neoliberal policies that attempt to shift the educational focus from

one of state and federal investment to a private responsibility create vested interests in

rewarding research that benefits corporate enterprise (Lynch, 2006). They are a driving

force within many institutional cultures that lead to a growing emphasis on capitalistic

values of performance, efficiency, and market competition. The result is "an assault on

the values of equality and community at the heart of collegial governance" (Henkel, 1997

p. 142). This move has effectively shifted culture capital to market capital (Lynch, 2006).

Religious versus Secular.

Historically, the American university evolved from the European university

system. Originally founded by the Roman Catholic Church in the 12th and 13th centuries,

universities provided a benefit to organized religion (Ridder-Symoens, 2006). Primarily

institutions for educating the culturally elite, universities focused on the disciplines of

liberal arts, theology and law (Denley, 1994; Ridder-Symoens, 1996; 2006).

During the Reformation era of the 16th century, Martin Luther challenged the

power of the church through his Ninety-Five Theses. He advocated for the need to have

people read the Bible instead of relying on the authority of priest. Luther's influence

began the Protestant era of higher education with the creation of additional universities.

This heavily impacted the values and ideas associated with acquired knowledge and later

influenced the earliest colleges of the United States (Adrian, 2005; Ridder-Symoesn,

1996).

Placing an emphasis on liberal arts education and character development, the

colonial United States established colleges and universities that were fashioned after their

English counterparts of Oxford and Cambridge (Hofstadter & Smith, 1961; Berquist &

Pawlik, 2008; Brown & Mayhew, 1965). The American founders adopted the

characteristics of the historic English universities that included residential student living,

curriculum, extracurricular activities and discipline, virtually controlling all aspects of the

collegial culture (Berquist & Pawlik, 2008). With the exception of Columbia and

Pennsylvania, colonial colleges were founded in association with religious denominations

as a means to educate clergy. In New England, the Congregational Church sought to

create higher learning institutions such as Harvard and Yale while in the South, the

Anglican Church established William and Mary (Tewksbury, 1965). Religious culture

was enforced by ordained faculty who maintained strict control over institutions of higher

learning. Curriculum focused on the educational process, ancient languages, and

philosophy of life that prepared graduates for politics or positions of civic leadership

(Brown & Mayhew, 1965; Tewksbury, 1965; Hofstadter & Smith, 1961; Owens, 2011).

The Revolutionary period in the United States saw secular political interests

emerge that challenged the rigid religious culture of many denominational colleges.

Applying the guiding principle of separation of church and state led to a loss of

monopolistic positions for a few religious colleges, allowing for greater diversity of

private institutions and creating competition while supporting the American ideal of

religious freedom (Tewksbury, 1965). The French Revolution's establishment of secular

higher education institutions further influenced the revolutionary and post-revolutionary

eras in America. The Supreme Court in their 1819 decision, *Trustees of Dartmouth

College v. Woodward*, prevented the New Hampshire legislature from altering the

college's original charter and forcing the institution to become public, supporting

secularization of colleges and universities. (Hofstadter & Smith, 1961; Tewksbury,

1965). This court decision was monumental not only for shielding the control of private

colleges from state interference; it clarified distinctions between public and private

institutions of higher education. Chief Justice John Marshall's poignant prose in the case

also ushered the way for defining the corporation in American society (Rudolph, 1990).

A drawback of the Dartmouth College decision was the alienation of public support in

funding higher education, thus inhibiting the development of state universities for another

fifty years (Tewksbury, 1965; Rudolph, 1990).

The establishment of a national university was proposed, first during, and again

after the Revolutionary War. The curriculum would have been uniform with high

standards (Rudolph, 1990). Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin reasoned that

colleges should include medicine, chemistry, anatomy, the laws of nature, and other

elective curriculum. This European concept came from the Enlightenment period

(Owens, 2011; Geiger, 2015; Thelin, 2011). This proposed advancement of studies and

learning was in response to the beginning of the industrialization of the country. This was

in contrast to the classical curriculum, which consisted of Hebrew, Greek, Latin, logic,

oral and mental philosophy that was championed by the Yale Report in 1828. At Yale,

Harvard, and Princeton, faculty held fast to the dogma that college provided a foundation

of knowledge. They viewed the mind as having potential for learning culture via

discipline and "adherence to the ancient subjects": this was the "most worthy way to

furnish a balanced mind." (Rudolph, 1990, p. 132). The Yale Report received support

from the conservative religious coalitions who felt college was to prepare men for the

afterlife rather than for the challenges facing them in this life. The influence of the Yale

professors essentially left curriculum frozen and unaffected until the Civil War. The Yale

Report reaffirmed the earlier religious tradition of higher education. (Rudolph, 1990;

Brown & Meyhew, 1963)

Auguste Comte, the originator of modern sociology in the 19th century,

hypothesized three stages of educational philosophy; he acknowledged the religious stage

and added the metaphysical, and positivist stages that developed later. He viewed

positivism, which was based on science and empirical evidence, as the only objective

form of truth in higher education. Comte's principles on truth as opposed to dogma,

expanded the intellectual freedom and culture of the universities, influencing not only

European but also American institutions (Culbertson, 1981; Marsden, 1994; Adrian,

2005).

Further influencing American higher education, the 19th century German

university model espoused academic freedom to be the trademark of Germany's

innovative educational system, unlike the American system of the time that denied academic autonomy. The German archetype meant sovereignty over ideas, teaching and research, with autonomy from forms of administrative oppression (Adrian, 2005, Hofstadter & Smith, 1961). Comte's espousal of positivism stimulated research, which the German university system embraced (Adrian, 2005, Marsden, 1994). American educators having completed their doctoral studies in Germany in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, imported the German model into leading higher education institutions in America, including Johns Hopkins, Yale, and Harvard (Thelin, 2011).

The Land-Grant Colleges.

Signed by President Abraham Lincoln on July 2, 1862, the Morrill Act sought to encourage the formation of higher education institutions that created programs specific to agriculture and engineering alongside science and liberal arts education. Lincoln's decision to support the Morrill Act was based on personal and political reasoning. Raised in a rural area of Indiana and Illinois, Lincoln possessed very little formal education and felt strongly that accessibility to higher learning was imperative in order to educate the working classes and meet the demands of a growing and increasingly complex society (Brown & Meyhew, 1965; Lucas, 2006). The Morrill Act provided federal funding to encourage states to establish land grant institutions (Lee & Keys, 2013; Lucas, 2006).

President Benjamin Harrison amended the Morrill Act in 1890, calling for separate but equal colleges for whites and black. The amended Morrill Act expressly prohibited funds to states or territories that discriminated based on race or color with admissions to their land-grant universities. From a historical perspective, this allowed for

the creation of historically black and Native American colleges, thus giving African-Americans the first real opportunity for higher education. Politically, Congress was viewed by some as using the amended policy primarily as a method of imposing punishment on the southern states that had seceded from the Union during the Civil War and not as a concern for the Black and Native American populations to improve their economic status (Brown & Meyhew, 1965; Lucas, 2006)

Standards of quality came into question when admission requirements were often compromised or practically abandoned for the sake of increasing enrollment and producing degree holders (Brown & Meyhew, 1965; Lucas, 2006). Although not initially readily embraced by the farming community, the demonstration of how scientific application could enhance the field of agriculture in a practical sense led to crucial political support for land-grant colleges. Federal and state financial contributions solidified the concept of vocational and technical as having legitimate status within higher education in the United States (Rudolph, 1990, Brown & Meyhem, 1965). Initially, the funding of land-grant colleges was driven by federal and state appropriations, with federal dollars matching state monies. Within more recent decades however, contributions by the states have decreased, while student tuition and fees have increased, serving as a primary source of financial revenues with many colleges (Lee & Keys, 2013; Brown & Meyhew, 1965)

Industrial Revolution and Beyond.

A philosophical shift occurred early in the twentieth century from student centered learning that emulated the British model, to research and scholarship, which was

distinctively the German model of higher education (Berquist & Pawlik, 2008). Some major universities founded academic journals to serve as channels for scholarship in specific disciplines, (e.g. Johns Hopkins initiated several scholarly journals) establishing the culture of university research (Geiger, 2015).

The industrial revolution continued into the 20th century as the population transitioned from rural to urban. Industry demanded more skilled workers, especially in the area of chemistry and physics, but also in manufacturing (Goldin & Katz, 1999). Institutional growth, organizational change, and increased competition for financial resources and faculty, led to research institutions becoming leaders in the emerging higher education structure (Geiger, 2015). Undergraduate higher education enrollment increased during the Great Depression as a result of federal work relief programs that created campus construction projects. Institutional chancellors and presidents were impatient with professors who dared to question their authority. Creation of a department chair position was the primary gain of faculty influence within academic institutions during this period (Thelin, 2011).

The Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 and post WW II interest in developing the science field spurred the growth of state university systems to recruit more students into pursuing higher education. Enrollment in undergraduate higher education grew steadily during this period. The addition of federal funding for science research through the formation of the National Science Foundation in 1950 and the National Defense Education Act in 1957 increased spending in a variety of projects, especially in the area of science and medicine (Thelin, 2011). Publication of research

brings institutional prestige and additional private funding, dividing research universities into those with and without financial resources (Geiger, 2015; Lucas, 2006; Thelin, 2011). The largest gains by faculty in shared governance, income, promotion and tenure occurred between 1945 and 1970.

Student protest over the Viet Nam war led to retaliation by politicians and the withdrawal of significant federal research funding. Following this, seeking to control costs in an inflationary era, politicians adopted an accountability culture emulating a corporate business model. Whereas, there had been a shortage of qualified faculty in the rapid growth post WW II years, slower enrollment growth in the 1980s led to a glut in the academic labor market. This gave rise to fewer tenured positions and an increased reliance on adjuncts as a means to control financial costs (Thelin, 2011; Lucas, 2006). The shift eroded traditional rank and tenure, and diminished academic freedom, governance, and collegiality (Thelin, 2011; Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Lucas, 2006).

Public Policy Influence.

Public accountability in higher education institutions extends to issues of diversity. Reforming admission and hiring began in earnest in the 1970s, primarily due to federal regulatory requirements of Affirmative Action. President Johnson issued an executive order that extended to government employers the requirement of nondiscriminatory hiring practices associated with Affirmative Action in 1965, with gender added in 1967 (American Association for Access, Equity, and Diversity, n.d.). Although the number of faculty of color has risen steadily, this group still only represents 17% of the faculty at higher education institutions and holds an even smaller share of

tenure and tenure track positions (Ryu, 2010; Turner, González & Wood, 2008). Compared with a less diverse group of full professors, faculty of color, women faculty, and those who described themselves as liberal were more likely to hold positive views of diversity. In addition, Maruyama, Moreno, Gudeman, & Marin (2000) found a positive association between increased diversity of faculty and institutional support for diversity. A twenty-year review of the literature found that tenure, promotion, retention, isolation, and scholarship were still salient barriers and challenges by faculty of color (Turner et al., 2008). Mentoring of new faculty, especially women and faculty of color has offered opportunities for building collegial partnerships and scholarship productivity, although the mentoring models that best support diversity remain controversial (Sorcinelli & Yun, 2007).

Ideological debates on the liberal arts curriculum have led to multidisciplinary approaches, but also have been highly politicized as policymakers focused on market pressures for skill training in the 1980s and 1990s. The for-profit college sector responded to meet this market niche. Its emphasis is on producing graduates for employment in cost-effective and efficient environments, utilizing virtual classrooms and on-line learning (Lucas, 2006). Embracing the value-added approach to student learning has rendered faculty as little more than for hire workers who participate in narrowly based, vocational training (Morley, 2003; Mosshammer & Weeden, 2014)

Entering the new millennium, public policy demands for greater institutional accountability has led to an even further decline in academic autonomy (Morley, 2003). Increasing demands for multiple assessments, performance measurements and

evaluations have devolved higher education and its faculty into a series of budgetary line items. Public trust is based on assessment and accreditation standards (Leveille, 2005). Increasing market competition for students combined with decreasing federal and state funding has shifted higher education institutions' focus towards survival and away from the ethos of advancing the public good (Olssen & Peters, 2005). The value-added metaphor views students as consumers, degrees as products, and higher education as a sequence of commercial commodity transactions for a free market economy (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005).

The Culture of Social Work Education.

The evolution of the social work profession has changed the culture of social work programs. Rivalry between undergraduate social work education and graduate social work programs was prominent in the 1930s when the American Association of Schools of Social Work (AASSW) designated membership only to graduate programs in 1939. In response, land grant and state institutions formed the National Association of Schools of Social Administration (NASSA) in 1942, which focused on both undergraduate and graduate social work education programs. Both agencies were recognized accrediting bodies until 1947 when all sanctioned accreditation was suspended due to confusion over who possessed ultimate accrediting authority. AASSW viewed the purpose of graduate social work as developing practitioners for private casework, combining theory and practice with fieldwork, a hallmark of a profession based on Flexner's definition. NASSA conversely, underscored the need for a diverse social science base with practice oriented training in various areas of public service. The

NASSA curriculum could be completed at the undergraduate stage and extended at the

graduate level without requiring a specialization. The philosophy of NASSA aligned with

the land grant and state institutions, focused on vocational training aspects that sought to

have students be employment-ready by graduation (Kendall, 2002.).

Social work serves as a link between higher education institutions and the broader

local community. With the emphasis on the value-added component in the current

neoliberal political climate, social work programs serve as the perfect marketing tool for

institutions to be perceived as innovative and inclusive (Todd, et al., 2015; Connell,

2013). It is ironic that while using social work programs to market a progressive and

comprehensive image of an institution, the financial support to these programs are

simultaneously being cut. The marketing image of an institution can affect how they are

ranked. This ranking influences multiple stakeholders and represents perceived quality,

though assessment of institutional characteristics is often murky (Marginson, 2011). The

conundrum lies in the university's commitment to the culture of social work, which

embraces social justice through diversity and inclusiveness, contrasting with policies that

embrace economic efficiency and value over social justice (Todd et al., 2015).

Within academia, men outnumber women in professorial positions, while women

exceed men in non-professorial rankings (*Digest of education statistics, year 2013,*

2015). Overall, women remain challenged by systemic, structural, and personal barriers

in the academy (Holosko, Barner, & Allen, 2016). Men hold more than 75% of the full

professorships. Women often spend more time on mentoring and service; however, these

activities are not valued as highly in the academy as scholarship, leading to disparity in rank and promotion (Misra, Lunquist, Holmes, & Agiomavritis, 2011).

The profession of social work has been traditionally female dominated and this is also reflected in the gender ratio of social work faculty with 69.4% of the full-time faculty female compared to 30.6% of male full-time faculty. Males were twice as likely as females to be in senior administrative positions, when field directors were excluded from a Canadian study using 2006 data results (Sakamoto, Anastas, McPhail, & Colarossi, 2008). Pay disparity continues to be an issue in social work education with female faculty salaries averaging $9,000 less than their male counterparts. A greater percentage of female faculty were employed in BSW only programs while male faculty had a greater number of positions in programs that offered undergraduate and graduate social work degrees (Sakamoto et al., 2008; Lane & Flowers, 2015). Personal considerations related to institutional and departmental research support, the cultural climate, and salary are influencing factors in recruitment and retention of doctoral degreed social work faculty (Holley & Young, 2005).

Historically, the philosophy of social work has encountered contradictions and conflict over two opposing ideologies. Casework, once the hallmark of social service by the COS movement, focused on the individual, with an emphasis on pathology and the solution as one of personal change; the other, also a trademark of the profession and ignited by the settlement movement, stressed that problems were created by society and that social reform was needed to elicit change (Erenreich, 1985; Kendall, 2002).

Accreditation of social work programs provides legitimacy for the profession, but the classic culture of social work has been fluid, the context of which is based upon continual accrual of knowledge applicable to a wide variety of individuals and social contexts (Reid & Edwards, 2006). Just as higher education as a whole has been heavily influenced by the neoliberal economic ideology, this has crossed over into the professional culture and practice of individual disciplines, including social work (Welbourne, 2011; Morley & Dunstan, 2013; Garrett, 2010). Privatization of social services, managed care, state and federal budget cuts for social welfare programs, and the evolving medical model of the profession has changed social work education and the rapidly changing realities of social work practice (Tam & Kwok, 2007; Reid & Edwards, 2006). Emphasis is now placed on preparing students for employment, faculty research and grants, and clinical training, sometimes undermining the purpose of social work's commitment to social justice issues. (Reid & Edwards, 2006; Welbourne, 2011) Competency based education in the form of EPAS now defines how the knowledge, skills, and values of the profession are applied in practice. The move to CBE represents a shift by social work and other professions in an effort to quantify learning and justify the cost of a college education (Morley & Dunstan, 2013; Garrett, 2010).

As noted in the 2008 EPAS, "the culture of human interchange" identifies professional conduct as a key component of social work field practice" (p. 10). Bogo and Wayne (2013) argue that professional behaviors that are in the explicit curriculum need to be modeled and reinforced as an educational practice by faculty in multiple venues, reflecting the principles of the social work profession. For social work educators,

maintaining professional social interactions as a collective group embodies and reinforces the shared values, beliefs, and attitudes associated with the culture of interaction; this culture assigns meaning and symbolism as part of the social identity of the profession as a whole (Eliasoph & Lichterman, 2003).

The culture of the academy has evolved since its conception when Harvard was founded in 1636 (Lucas, 2006). Educating individuals for civic duty or clergy has been replaced with professional degrees. The establishment of land grant colleges by President Lincoln in 1862 created an avenue for the common man to seek out college, which prior to this time had been almost exclusively reserved for the elite. The industrial revolution sparked the need for more skilled workers and the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 provided an opportunity for returning WWII veterans to pursue higher education with financial support (Thelin, 2011). Massification of academia produced a cultural shift that advocated for everyone to attend college in the quest for a degree, leading to competition for students and changes in the philosophy with a paradigm shift from knowledge acquisition to knowledge management. Teaching, learning, and assessment are based on skills, outcomes, and competencies, whereby the purpose of higher education is subsumed to be one of utilitarian need for the economic market versus the transformative potential of an individual that benefits the greater society (Morley, 2003). The culture of social work too, has been altered to reflect these changes. Once focused on the issues of social justice, with the purpose of enhancing the welfare of vulnerable and oppressed populations; it has shifted to reflect the culture of individualism with a broad range of populations (Reid & Edwards, 2006).

Education Policy and Standards (EPAS)

Established in 1952, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) was a

merger between two earlier organizations, the American Association of Schools of Social

Work (AASSW) and the National Association of Schools of Social Administration

(NASSA). While the AASSW initially allowed undergraduate social work programs

membership, this organization opted to only permit graduate programs from 1939 on. The

AASSW, in 1932, began a systematic certification process of graduate social work

schools. It served as the only accrediting association until the NASSA, formed in 1936,

was sanctioned to cover undergraduate plus the initial graduate year for state and land

grant institutions. Due to competition and a lack of cooperation between the two entities,

all accrediting of social work education was placed on suspension in 1947 (Kendall,

2002; Witte, 1971; Beless, 1995). Although both undergraduate and graduate social work

education were initiated at the end of the 19th century, much of the contention centered on

the historical differences in the focus of practice and public service. The AASSW was

viewed as being too narrow, while the NASSA was committed to incorporating an

extensive social science background with an emphasis on public services (Sheafor &

Shank, 1986). A threat of abolishing any form of accreditation unless the two

organizations found a way to cooperate was issued by the Joint Committee on

Accrediting in 1947. A framework for the current Council on Social Work Education was

established in 1952 with graduate social work studies representing the professional

preparation and undergraduate programs centered on the objectives of teaching concepts

associated with a more vocational orientation. Accreditation was limited to graduate

programs with a focus on developing and raising standards (Kendall, 2002; Wright, 1952).

A generic curriculum policy for the graduate program was adopted in 1952 based on the Hollis-Taylor Report from 1951. The underlying curriculum content focused on the knowledge and skills of the social services, human behavior, and the process of social work practice including casework, administration, group work, community work, and research (Kendall, 2002; Levy, 1981; Boehm, 1959). Historically, curriculum was significantly influenced by the varying fields of practice and practitioner associations, resulting in the mélange approach rather than an integrative framework. The 1952 curriculum policy statement assisted with the conjoining of core curriculum standards in promoting quality social work education, although it did not list specific courses to be included (Levy, 1981; Kendall, 2002; Frumkin & Lloyd, 1995). A revision of the curriculum policy in 1962 designated not only what coursework should be taught, but also listed content and student learning objectives. Explicitly indicated was curriculum building, continuity with sequencing, and integration. In addition, community organization as a function of *macro* practice was acknowledged, whereas *micro* or direct practice had previously been the only option recognized (Kendall, 2002, p. 162). A 1970 revision clearly fostered the idea of encouraging schools to be innovative with the experimenting of different approaches to social work education. This idea allowed sufficient freedom with coursework organization and field work, encouraging distinctive areas of emphasis (Katz, 1971).

Inclusion of baccalaureate programs for "approval" was initiated in 1971 with the formal

accreditation process officially sanctioned by the Office of Education and the Council on

Postsecondary Accreditation in 1974 (Frumkin & Lloyd, 1995, p. 2242; Bernard, 1977).

CSWE started issuing standards related to the organization of programs, content of social

work curriculum, and staffing with undergraduate programs in 1973. New considerations,

including a shortage of trained social workers that were qualified to meet the increasing

needs of various populations, and social welfare initiatives under the Johnson

Administration in the 1960s certainly influenced the change. Revisions in the curriculum

policy statement specific to undergraduate programming were issued in 1984, with the

baccalaureate degree identified as the entry level for professional social work, employing

the generalist perspective model (Sheafor & Landon, 1987). Prior to allowing

accreditation at the baccalaureate level, CSWE provided consultation to assist the

development of quality programs at the undergraduate level; these programs incorporated

content that included policy, practice, field, and a strong liberal arts core. However, the

prevailing wisdom recognized the master's degree as the professional educational

standard of social work (Kendall, 2002; Personal Interview, Mary Ann Suppes,

December 18, 2014).

The formation of accredited undergraduate social work programs led to greater

recognition of some duplication of content. CSWE Annual Program Meetings (APM) and

the Baccalaureate Program Director's (BPD) Annual Conferences became a forum for

intense discussions and presentations because the curriculum content covered in the

foundation year of the master's program was increasingly found to duplicate content

required by accrediting standards and taught within baccalaureate programs. Studies

conducted by the BPD Social Work Education Committee provided both qualitative and

statistical data from studies of BSW graduates' report of duplicative content in their

graduate social work education experiences. While this redundancy became one

motivating factor in the development of advanced standing, economics was also a

primary force in the growth of advanced standing policies. MSW programs began to

realize that by offering the option of some form of advanced standing, graduates of

accredited undergraduate social work programs could receive partial or full credit for the

foundation year of the master's program. Advanced standing was sanctioned by CSWE

as universities nationwide began expanding both undergraduate and graduate programs.

Sometimes used as a recruiting tool by universities, advanced standing became appealing

to students seeking to further their education with an advanced degree while eliminating

the cost of a year of graduate school. (Personal interview with Mary Ann Suppes,

December 18, 2014).

CSWE remains the sole accrediting body for social work education in the United

States. Responsible for the accrediting standards by which social work programs are

measured, CSWE's mission statement includes the following:

> …ensures and enhances the quality of social work education for a professional
> practice that promotes individual, family, and community well-being, and social
> and economic justice. CSWE pursues this mission in higher education by setting
> and maintaining national accreditation standards for baccalaureate and master's
> degree programs in social work, by promoting faculty development, by engaging
> in international collaborations, and by advocating for social work education and
> research. (CSWE website, 2015)

An institution that is either seeking initial accreditation or reaffirmation through

CSWE will undertake a multistep process involving a program self-study and an on-site

visit. The initial accreditation is for four years with the current reaffirmation process for programs occurring every eight years. Social work programs are assessed based on the criteria of EPAS. Originally known as Curriculum Policy Statement (CPS), CSWE has required ongoing accreditation with periodic reaffirmation. Anticipated changes in social work education led to the Millennium Project and the Commission on Accreditation Quality Assurance Research Project that reviewed the 1992 Curriculum Policy Statement and Accreditation Standards. The result of this review was the implementation of the current document known as EPAS, first initiated in July 2002 (Mizahti & Baskind, 2003). Not all states offer licensing or certification at the undergraduate level. For those states that do, most require a degree that is completed through a CSWE accredited program.

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation or CHEA is the parent organization to whom CSWE reports. Originally known as the Commission on Curriculum and Educational Excellence (COCEE), this organization evolved into the current Commission on Educational policy (COEP) who is responsible for writing and revising EPAS every eight years. The Commission on Accreditation (COA) is a parallel commission with COEP within the parent CSWE organization. This commission determines the interpretations of the current EPAS document within parameters. COA is responsible for the accrediting of both undergraduate and graduate social work programs (CSWE website, 2015; Personal communication, Charles Zastrow, February 4, 2015). (See Figure 1)

Figure 1. Organization of Council for Higher Education Accreditation

Council for Higher Education Accreditation

Council on Social Work Education

Commission on Educational Policy   Commission on Accreditation
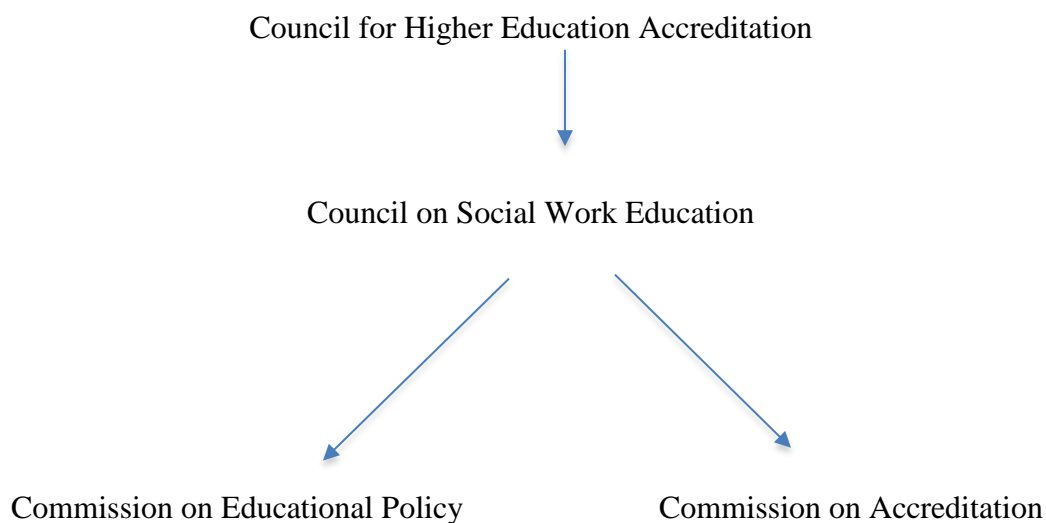
The curriculum design of EPAS includes the program mission and goals, curriculum (both explicit and implicit), and assessment (CSWE website, 2015). A demand for greater accountability in higher education led to implementing objectives in the 2001 EPAS. CSWE emphasized student learning and outcomes in an effort to provide a form of benchmarking. After dissent and discussion, a consensus was reached that created a document for universities to measure how programs complied with CSWE standards. The controversy surrounding the development of the 2001 EPAS suggested how multiple stakeholders involved in social work education had differing agendas of what should be included in the content of this document (Mizahti & Baskind, 2003).

As competency based education became increasingly prevalent in other professions, CSWE revised its standards to include the adoption of competencies in the 2008 EPAS. Competency based education, initiated in 1970, is associated with defined

outcomes and achieved only after exceeding some type of minimum threshold. It focuses

on learning outcomes, which identify measurable changes in behaviors and differs from

objectives that concentrate on processes and are goal centered (Caraccio, Wolfstal,

Englander, Ferentz, & Martin, 2002; Morcke, Dornan, & Eika, 2013). Following the

practice of the academic disciplines of medicine, law and other professions, CSWE

adopted competencies as a key component of the 2008 EPAS. The ten competencies are

underscored by a total of forty-one practice behaviors, all of which need to be measured

individually. Identifying how the ten competencies and forty-one practice behaviors can

be measured is left to the discretion of each social work program. The focus is primarily

on how well students of the individual accredited program achieve the ascribed

benchmarks (Holloway, Black, Hoffman, & Pierce (2009) This shift in EPAS reflects a

movement in social work education where students are not only taught content, but also

need to demonstrate the application of learning through the practice behaviors (Hoffman,

2008).

A criticism of the 2008 EPAS has been that while programs must benchmark the

competencies, the methodology by which this is done remains inconsistent between

programs, making it difficult to have interrater reliability and validity of competency

benchmarking. Indeed, this criticism has led to discussions and publications on the

fidelity of the statistics within educational programs in the United States (Personal

interview, Mary Ann Suppes, December 18, 2014). The changes for the 2015 EPAS

indicate that the "social work practice competence consists of nine interrelated

competencies and component practice behaviors that are comprised of knowledge,

values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes" (CSWE, 2015, p. 2). Concerns

related to how statistical evidence on the effectiveness of the 2008 EPAS as well as the

evaluation of other research on models of competency based education was considered

with the 2015 EPAS (*Response to EPAS 2015*, 2014). In addition, guidelines related to

how the practice behaviors will be assessed have not been made clear, leading to further

questions on methodological considerations with measurement (Personal communication

Charles Zastrow, December 28, 2014).

Quality as Excellence or Exceptional.

Harvey and Green (1993) describe three variations of this concept of quality that

is a common tenet of higher education. Excellence stands for exceptional, which is

absolute, uncompromising, and distinctive. The term reflects the beliefs and values

surrounding the purpose and role of higher education in the broader society (Astin, 1985;

1999; Vlãsceanu, et al., 2004).

Excellence or Exceptional.

The first theme in the literature associated with quality as excellence, is one of

being exceptional. A term of distinction, it is elusive, highly theoretical, and

philosophical. Traditionally in academia, the phrase excellence as exceptional implicitly

incorporates sociopolitical, cultural, and economic values (Knight, 2001, Astin, 1985,

1999; Harvey & Green, 1993). The goal of being exceptional is to simply "be the best"

(Campbell & Rozsnyai, 2002, p. 20). It is borrowed from the 19th century German model

of education, and is a merit-based and competitive initiative whose superiority was

unparalleled for scientific scholarship. Stressing excellence in academia, the focus was on

the principles of Wissenschaft, systematic inquiry, and Lehrfreiheit, autonomy in

teaching. Exceptionalism is an ideology whose esteemed standards are assumed to be

superior and prestigious (Geiger, 2015, pp. 328-329; Lucas, 2006, p. 178)

Houston (2008) and Harvey and Stensaker (2008) concur that assumptions of

social constructs, boundary, and value judgments must be recognized and defined to

understand the dimensions of excellence and/or exceptional. Jucevičienè (2009) adds that

a consensus of experts on the definition of quality allows for an objective approach for

such an analysis on this definition of excellence. This consensus acknowledges multiple

stakeholders who have differing expectations and requirements for this concept.

Developing a shared vision for achieving benchmarks of excellence contributes a

balanced approach to the assessment of higher education quality (S. G. Williams, 2004**).**

Both Harvey and Green (1993) and Ehsan (2004) treat quality as exceptional, an

idealistic notion without a discernable means of quantifiable measurement. Viewed from

an organizational perspective, excellence as exceptional reflects a lack of transparency. It

is weighted toward a culture of traditional values with an emphasis on academic freedom

and status; experience and autonomy are emphasized and promote a mystique of elitist

quality. The need for superiority in a mass educational system is linked to academic

standards and competencies, and implicitly elevates some institutions above others in the

areas of research, knowledge, and professional skills (Harvey, 2002).

Viewing the quest for excellence as a process involving deeply held values, Astin

(1999) sought to incorporate both cognitive and affective student outcomes as

determinants of educational quality (p. 587). Cognitive learning adheres to the traditional

content of knowledge; it is the lens most frequently held by faculty. Affective learning

incorporates attitudes toward content knowledge and encompasses skills associated with

leadership, self-awareness, interpersonal communication, relationships, and social

responsibility, representing a transformational process (Astin, 1999; Astin & Antonio,

2004; Colby & Sullivan, 2009). Studies have demonstrated that the level of students'

involvement correlates positively with their personal development and the degree of

learning (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005; Haworth & Conrad, 1997). Academic

participation, interaction with peers, and faculty involvement are among the key

determinants that combine with high expectations, assessment, and feedback in creating

excellence (Astin, 1999).

The ideal of excellence as a process aligns with the traditional practice methods of

higher education. The diversification of institutional learning environments has changed

the landscape of academia and has increased equity of students' access. While this allows

for greater accessibility, many question whether this focus on skill development of

professions lessens the students' ability to acquire deeper, more abstract knowledge.

Human capacity is not exclusively confined to the concrete. Competencies of skill need

to incorporate intrinsic values as principles of excellence in practice (Bridges, 2006).

Nonetheless, external demands of accountability have forced programs to designate

quantifiable measures to demonstrate the degree of competency achieved by students.

The emphasis here is frequently placed on transferable skills and less on knowledge or

higher-level skills; transferable skills are those associated with specific accredited

professions. Under this approach, the broader intrinsic value and form of excellence in

higher education is replaced with quantifiable goods of practice (Harvey, 2002; Bridges, 2006; Brown, 1994).

Arguing that the semantics of quality are variable and therefore misleading when assigned to excellence, Poole (2010) asserts that quality can be both a noun and an adjective. This illustrates the difficulty in "reaching a universally acceptable definition"; the definition is highly dependent upon the culture invoking the concept. The context of quality draws from suppositions and attitudes that characterize a particular belief or significance (p. 9). French and Wailes (2007) claim that traditional quality standards of excellence are being compromised and replaced by status enhancement within higher educational institutions, the ramification of which is the "capitalization of education" (p. 40). A proliferation of degrees and replacement of traditional academic leaders with corporate business and political types have led to higher education institutions being run as corporate enterprises. Decreasing academic standards, grade inflation, lowered admission qualifications, invoking students as customers, and attacks on academic freedom have led to a rift between academic excellence and business practices (French & Wailes, 2007; Schrecker, 2010). Such an approach confuses excellence with value for money. The role of higher education historically as a social institution embracing the utilitarian philosophy of a public good has been usurped by industrial corporatization, privatization, commercialization, and economic market strategies related to production of workers (Kezar, 2004; Rhoades & Slaughter, 1997; Giroux, 2002b; Schrecker, 2010).

Hierarchical Excellence.

The second theme from the literature on excellence moves the exceptional concept from a philosophical, elitist ideal to a hierarchical structure. R. Bennett (1992) and Christie and Stehlik (2002) note that the concept's scope is narrow and exclusive. Harvey and Green (1993) emphasize an "absolutist measure of quality" that limits attainability to a select few who meet very high standards (p. 12). Claiming that excellence is marketing propaganda put forth by higher education institutions, Wangenge-Ouma and Langa (2010) assert that by representing their organizations as being high quality, higher education institutions are on par with politicians who make promises to potential voters when campaigning for office. Strategic maneuvering of universities and colleges discursively encourages a competitive edge for drawing in various forms of capital and gaining access to both tangible and intangible resources; in essence it is a form of gaming the system within higher education.

Often in an academic setting, hierarchical excellence is measured with inputs and outputs by institutions striving to become exceptional in order to demonstrate improved outcomes. Cleary (2001) observes that performance indicators that allegedly describe quality as excellence are being driven by the greater complexity and demands of numerous accrediting bodies, employers of graduates, and admission counselors faced with increased competition for student admissions and fewer financial resources. Communication of how universities and colleges gauge excellence is critical in the perceptions and expectations of stakeholders within and outside the institution. Furthermore, calls for re-conceptualizing excellence to broaden the framework so as to

include not just academic excellence, but also service and operational excellence would

provide a more comprehensive representation in the definition of the term (Ruben, 2004,

p. 24). While academics are the best known factor in quality distinction, the merits of

service excellence, which references communication and exchanges, is frequently

ignored or mislabeled as being associated with customer relations. The market driven

approach dismisses the appreciation of the fundamental value of relationships. Operations

excellence relates to the processes of efficacy and function. This dimension of excellence

affects internal and external groups, with dysfunction undermining the other two

categories that underscore an institution's reputation within the larger community

(Ruben, 1995; 2004).

The ranking and reputation of a college or university are guided by factors that are

described as measuring excellence; these include securing the best students and largest

pool of resources. Prestige is used to justify a highly competitive process in the

distribution of financial resources and the external validation of the perception as being

exceptional (Dill & Soo, 2005; Green et al., 2006; Harvey & Green, 1993, D. C. Bennett,

2001; Parri, 2006; I. Taylor, 2007). An explosion of ranking systems has created

reactions and criticisms ranging from disputes over methodologies, and outright

boycotting by some higher education institutions, to political and legal interventions in an

effort to thwart publication of the results. Incentives to move up in the rankings game

have given rise to underhanded tactics by administrations to alter admission policies and

selectivity rates, and to misrepresent student test scores. *USNWR*, one of the most popular

ranking publications, does not differentiate between size or level of institutions, instead

placing all schools, regardless of the institutional structure, under the same category for performance measures, leading to concern for the validity of the process. (Salmi, 2013; Asif, Raouf, & Searcy, 2013). In 2013, multiple colleges and universities admitted to falsifying information given to *USNWR* creating scandal and a call for better methods of integrity to verify the data submitted by higher education institutions. The journal declined, citing that they are not accrediting bodies and that the burden for accuracy is on the individual schools (Anderson, 2013).

Assessment of higher education institutions for excellence is not necessarily systematic. Processes may include self-assessments, audits, and benchmarking, or a combination of all three. The descriptive and inconsistent nature of these methods leads to inefficient and ineffective functions that do not serve the intended purpose (Asif et al., 2013). A shift in the paradigm from rankings to benchmarks in recent years has led to a more egalitarian perspective of exceptional as excellence in the form of promoting the potential of all individuals associated with higher education (R. Bennett, 1992). Positive student growth and development with learning, a contributing factor in the transformational process of higher education, are influenced by multiple characteristics associated with excellence. Proposals to create benchmarks for educational processes and practices would reflect the student experience versus the resource and alumni accomplishment approach favored by *USNWR* and other college ranking publications. Curriculum, teaching, and research are intertwined systems that need to represent collaboration with student learning, not competition (Pascarella, 2001; Houston, 2008). Quality is more than a uni-dimensional process. The term is frequently infused with so

many different dimensions that it is often difficult to ascertain the constituent components

and practices.

Citing fitness for purpose as a short-cut to excellence, Harvey (2002) contends

this criterion of quality is directed by the institution or other stakeholders to produce a

definition of excellence standards (p. 252). Quality dimensions that interpret the service-

user or student perspective have been proposed as the best form of methodology for

measuring processes of excellence, although studies connected to this idea have been

primarily small and limited in scope**.** Excellence by this method implies that students are

consumers whose perceptions are focused on the processes. Viewed as a form of service

quality associated with the final product, this perception of quality as excellence is

consistent with the concepts of fitness for purpose or value for money (Srikanthan &

Dalrymple, 2003; Lagrosen, Seyyed-Hashemi, & Leitner, 2004; O'Neill & Palmer, 2004;

Tsinidou, Gerogiannis, & Fitsilis, 2010).

Two recent models have sought to identify the dimensions of excellence. The

first, The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, a private, non-profit

U. S. entity that promotes high quality standards through public policy, published their

report *Measuring up 2008: The national report card on higher education* (National

Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2008). The report identified six concepts,

focusing exclusively on results, outcomes, and improvements associated with quality

educational performance: preparation, participation, affordability, completion, benefits,

and learning. Grades were assigned on a state-by-state basis for each category. For the

last category, learning, all states received an incomplete due to insufficient data (National

Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2008). The second model utilizes the

Baldridge criteria and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). Asif

and Searcy (2014) proposed a structured framework model of excellence that

incorporates key performance factors and evaluation criteria based upon the context,

objectives, and mission of a higher education institution. The hierarchical score

calculations reflect what the institution views as being important and provides a path for

dialogue with stakeholders from differing viewpoints to develop performance excellence

through a proficient process of benchmarking.

Globalization of higher education has led to attempts at international ranking

systems for comparative purposes. Excellence under this method focuses on the

comprehensive research-intensive university. The lack of a stratified typology results in

proxy indicators of quality with student selectivity and research productivity being the

primary drivers of reputation and status of higher education institutions rather than the

educational programs they represent. Ranking systems generally ignore the aspects of

teaching and learning, thereby disregarding the complex diversity and purpose of higher

education institutions across the world. (Altbach, 2006; Marginson & van der Wende,

2007; Dill & Soo, 2005). Students who base excellence on prestige often tend to be

drawn from higher socio-economic groups, supporting the theory that institutional

reputations produce a branding effect and marketing strategy, exacerbating the issues

associated with status both nationally and globally (Marginson & van der Wende, 2007;

Carter, 2005).

Social work too, shares the debate on how excellence is measured. Often, excellence is measured through faculty scholarship performance, which is antithetical to the anti-oppression mission of the profession and ignores the credibility of teaching expertise in the development and transfer of knowledge to students (I. Taylor, 2007). It is still argued whether social work is a professional education or a vocational practice, therefore, casting doubt on how excellence should be defined. The chasm between social work practice and theory suggests students need to be trained to qualify for a job versus learning scholarly knowledge for a profession (Nelson Reid & Edwards, 2006).

Standards of Excellence.

The third theme in the literature on the concept of excellence/exceptionalism is perceived as having greater objectivity than the themes previously discussed. It defines a given set of standards. Quality is established if the criteria for the predefined standards are obtained. Conformance to standards is considered "scientific quality control" and is used to compare a range of services or products in relation to manufacturing (Harvey & Green 1993, p. 4). This is counter to Harvey and Knight (1996) and Harvey (2004) who claim that quality and standards are not interchangeable. Quality as connected to standards implies the threshold is high, thereby yielding the interpretation that the concept of excellence is value-free and can be maintained. To some, this suggests that an investment in accountability symbolizes excellence (Eaton, 2007). However, when pursuing excellence to this end, the focus can shift away from content and be redirected toward insignificant facts. It is a paradox that can contribute to mediocrity rather than excellence (Grbić, 2008; Morley, 2003). Moreover, Carter (2005) declares, "excellence

through accountability exacerbates injustices and expands inequalities because it tends to privilege historically dominant demographics" (p. 309). Citing that traditional ideas of excellence are not value-neutral, but instead are used to defend a narrow definition in order to maintain exclusivity of the dominant cultural norm, Bracy (2000) contends that excellence in higher education should be re-conceptualized to allow for access and inclusion of diverse populations and "not based on a single plane" of measurement (p. 85). R. Bennett (1992) posits that standards will impact the perception of quality, whether such measures are identified having "parallel relativism," or "hierarchical gold standard relativism" (p. 57). The author here is referencing the debate between the inequality of institutional accessibility and prestige ranking.

Within higher education, the process of defining minimum standards for academic programs is often associated with accreditation, indicating what is considered important in academic learning and teaching (Harvey & Green, 1993; Harvey, 2002). The primary objectives of accreditation are to encourage and endorse quality educational preparation of undergraduates for professional responsibilities and to certify that the curriculum meets specific, identified standards, no matter where it is administratively located (Eaton, 2006; Forsythe, Andrews, Stanley, & Anderson, 2011). Accreditation shifts control away from educators to bureaucratic organizations who are assumed to hold legitimate authority and whose function is viewed as a public good. Accrediting bodies determine standards based on a number of auditing indicators with assessment and analysis, measures of the degree to which standards are met, and which can be adjusted to be applicable to a specific program or institution (Hämäläinen, 2003; Harvey, 2004;

Forsythe et al., 2011). Ruben (2007) proposes an integrated approach embracing the

seven category Baldridge-based framework of standards as an Excellence in Higher

Education model for assessment of an institution in seven different areas: a) leadership,

b) strategic planning, c) external stakeholder focus, d) measurement and knowledge

utilization, e) workforce and workplace focus, f) effectiveness of work processes, and g)

organizational outcomes and achievements compared with peers and leaders (p. 18). This

assessment model can be utilized as a performance measure to investigate outcomes and

achievement trends across multiple accrediting agencies. As a performance indicator used

by external stakeholders (primarily accrediting bodies), a self-evaluation by the

institution is frequently one of the components to determine if standards are being

achieved. Completed prior to a visit by an external reviewer, a critical question arising is

whether the self-reported evaluation is really a reflective self-evaluation of the institution

or whether it is merely an exercise in compiling data as a prerequisite to an external

review. Although the final report by the accrediting body is made public, the results of

the higher education institution's self-study are not open to public review (Sarrico, Rosa,

Teixeira, & Cardoso, 2010; Van Kemenade & Hardjono, 2010).

Accreditation is also politically charged, often covertly, and varies with the

shifting paradigm of the purpose of higher education. Accreditation is associated with

control as it is designed to force compliance and adherence to a prescribed set of

standards; hence, accreditation is indirectly a form of accountability. Implicitly,

accreditation presumes that uniformity has value, consistent with a belief that identified

courses should cover the same content. The consequence of this conformity is decreased

innovation, academic freedom and autonomy in teaching (Harvey, 2004; Newton, 2002).

 At the institutional level, accreditation focuses on the general infrastructure, determining

whether specific minimum requirements are being met. Usually the process involves an

evaluation of the physical resources, space, staffing, financial health, governance and

other administrative factors. It is the principal source of demonstrating and validating

quality in higher education and is subject to government oversight and control. Funding is

often linked to meeting accreditation standards; and federal policies certainly impact how

this resource is distributed (Harvey, 2004; Eaton, 2007).

Accreditation highlights peer review and self-examination, with increased focus

on measurement and outcomes, and less on intention and inputs. (Ruben, 2007, p. 8).

Effectiveness is viewed organizationally, with accrediting bodies increasingly serving as

the gatekeepers and overseers for governmental agencies and the general public (Ruben,

2007; Eaton; 2010). Agencies responsible for accrediting institutions and programs

provide an alliance with academia and give a united voice when dealing with the federal

and state governments (Harvey, 2004). Arguing that the goal of higher education should

be more inclusive and relevant to a greater portion of the population, Lomas (2002) posits

that as a result of shifts in accreditation standards, academic institutions have been forced

to change their guidelines and policies. Whether this shift has resulted in movement away

from higher expectations of academic excellence continues to be debated.

Crow (2009); Stensaker and Harvey (2011); and Newton (2002) challenge the

views above, arguing that accreditation has become a ritualistic affair where there is little

agreement on what or how measurement should occur. Academic agents conduct the process, and they rarely test either the methodologies or outcomes. This results in a lack of transparency in the published results. An over-dependence on quantitative outcomes embraces continuous change under the guise of constant improvement. However, the outcome data points fail to consider that education requires cycle times to interpret the true meaning of data and trends (Arnold & Marchese, 2011). Another conundrum of measurement is that the objects measured are linked to subjective or arbitrary perceptions of the entity or group defining quality. This creates highly divergent ideas and complexities across institutions. A systematic approach with key indicators that consider quality principles of excellence has not yet been universally recognized, but the development of such would further a more collegial approach to accreditation involving multiple stakeholders (Dew, 2009).

In 2005, the G. W. Bush administration formed the Commission on the Future of Higher Education under the leadership of Secretary of Education, Margaret Spellings. Known as the Spellings Commission, this 19 member panel was charged with proposing recommendations for a strategic plan with post-secondary education reform in the new millennium, addressing the needs of the nation's diverse population, economic requirements, and labor force (Ruben, Lewis, & Sandmeyer, 2008). The Commission issued a report in 2006 identifying access, affordability, quality, accountability, and innovation as primary areas of concern within the United States higher education system (Spellings Commission, 2006). The report was especially critical of accreditation, citing a failure to address student achievement, innovation, academic quality and rigor with

standards. Proposed changes in regulations would erode the traditional relationship of self-regulatory and self-governing accrediting organizations within higher education institutions. Increasing control mechanisms implemented by the federal government as the defenders of public accountability are altering the role of accreditation in the United States. Quality is now judged in terms of compliance, cost, and outcome data of graduation rates and employment figures (Eaton, 2007; 2010).

Program accreditation is especially important for undergraduate professional and graduate students; in some instances, students are only considered competent to practice in their application for licensing when graduating from an accredited professional program. Unlike institutional accreditation, program accrediting focuses primarily on input factors such as faculty qualifications and research activities, learning and program resources, student admissions, and curriculum (Harvey, 2004). The impact of professional accrediting bodies is minimal on the institutional level, where regional accrediting associations grant certification that qualifies schools for federal student aid programs (Stensaker & Harvey, 2011). More recently, a shift in institutional accrediting values has begun including outputs of graduation rates and employability data (Sykes, 2011). While on the surface, this would appear to be a simple measurement Astin and Antonio (2004) found that approximately 66% of institutional variation for a six-year completion rate could be attributed to differences in the entering-students' characteristics.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has met with criticism charging it with promoting and maintaining low expectations of quality standards (Stoesz & Karger, 2009). As the only recognized accrediting body for the social work profession,

the purpose of CSWE is to monitor and accredit undergraduate and graduate programs of

social work in the United States (CSWE, 2015). Referencing the proliferation with the

number of accredited baccalaureate and master's social work programs, appeals to CSWE

have been made to place a moratorium on the accreditation of new programs. Lowering

admission standards, reducing the educational content in an effort to compete for

students, and poorer quality of programming have been cited as a cause of low salaries

and questionable competency of graduates (Karger & Stoez, 2003, Karger 2012). Low

research publications by the leadership of the CSWE organization as well as many of the

deans and directors of social work programs has prompted calls for either major reforms

or for the ability to have multiple accrediting bodies (Stoesz & Karger, 2009). This

philosophy reflects the conflict between the hierarchical and the relativistic approach to

excellence. Continuing with this critique, objectors to CSWE express the opinion that the

accrediting body is encouraging schools of social work to "attract clones for vocational

indoctrination, not seriously thoughtful individuals" by accepting poor rigor and political

indoctrination on the concept of social justice (Felkner, 2009, p. 121). Professional

education integrates academic knowledge with research-based learning to produce the

outcome of enhanced professional competence (Smely, 2015). The 2008 CSWE EPAS

places field education as the signature pedagogy where knowledge and skills are

combined to promote competence in the profession (CSWE, 2010). Field is also a

significant part of the CSWE accrediting process. However, a systematic review to date

for a meta-analysis failed to reveal even one study to meet inclusion criteria regarding

quantitative studies on field instruction. Consequently, the role of field education remains

an open question for future research. The current evidence to support the assertion that

field qualifies as being pedagogical presently lacks evidence-based support (Holden,

Barker, Rosenberg, Kuppens & Ferrell, 2011).

Excellence encompasses multiple definitions to describe, assess, and measure this

concept. The most commonly assumed criterion for defining excellence within higher

education traditionally underscores the academic dimension: an elitist perspective of

being exceptional or superior and acquired by few. An alternative view espouses

standards with academic institutions as meeting or failing prescribed expectations and

promoting models of accountability. Finally, excellence through accreditation is rendered

by organizations that endorse a minimum set of standards and expectations. These

accreditors function as gatekeepers for governmental agencies and the public with

conformance to standards and a metric for outcomes. As noted above, fundamental

challenges arise when competing interests by multiple stakeholders create difficulties in

determining which definition should be chosen to represent the appropriate description of

quality as excellence.

Quality as Perfection, Zero Defects or Consistency

Perfection and Zero Defects.

When defining quality as having *zero defects*, the goal of this concept is flawless

consistency, with reliability the vehicle for excellence. The word excellence becomes

reconfigured here to represent meeting a specific set of measurements rather than

exceeding of high level of standards (Harvey & Green, 1993). Bentham's utilitarian

perspective as laid out in *Chrestomathia* is a clear example. It identifies five categories

that describe thirty-eight principles to set up a system of school management in higher learning institutions (Bentham, 1816; Hartley, 1995). Perfection in this particular aspect of quality has long been debated amongst academics. Lomas (2002) and Campbell and Rozsnyai (2002) argue that the idea of perfection, while a noble goal in manufacturing, does not necessarily serve a purpose in higher education.

Quality, defined in subjective terms, was important in the post 1930 focus on quality in manufacturing entailing conformance to standards that could be measured in an objective, scientific manner. A shift in this perception of quality occurred during the 1980s, refocusing on the subjective meeting or exceeding of customer expectations in the delivery of services. A more objective but narrower definition of conformance and specifications focused on the processes of producing the product (Reeves & Bednar, 1994). Quality, by the more traditional interpretation of gauging excellence, adheres accurately to specifications of the production of a tangible end product. The focus is on the outcome and efficiency (Garvin, 1987; Reeves & Bednar, 1994). Unlike industry, where conformity is viewed as the ideal, standards are narrowly defined, and outcomes are measured in terms of products being flawless and identical; institutions do not embody the objective of producing and replicating students who are indistinguishable from one another (Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2003; Campbell & Rozsnyai, 2002). Increased *efficiency* is a goal, whereby everyone and everything are micromanaged in the creation of an exact, precise *product,* devoid of ambiguity. A process attaining these objectives is labeled as *best practice,* promoting a rationalization for altering higher education to optimize resource use (Ritzer, 1993; Hartley, 1995, p. 411).

As far back as 1918, Veblen, in his book *Higher Learning in America,* voiced concern over the corporate philosophy invading higher education. From the pragmatic, utilitarian perspective, key factors including efficiency, control, and standardization invaded academia, transforming higher learning with a corporate, reductionist approach. Bound up in *bureaucratic officialism* university management "…has stifled all manly independence and individuality wherever it has exhibited itself at college…(university management) made mechanical efficiency and administrative routine the goal of the university's endeavour." (Veblen, 1918, p. 223). Mukerjee (2011) senses that the infusion of corporate business philosophy into academia is leading higher education institutions to closely controlled mediocrity and a decline in intellectual expression.

Newton (2002) in an investigative study of academics in the United Kingdom, explored the meaning of quality, including one as defined by the ideal of perfection and consistency. He noted a distinction between the prevailing *formal* meanings of quality in the early 1990s and the later *perceptions* of quality by the respondents five to seven years after the implementation of an initiative by university administrations. The research describes academics' responses to the concept of perfection as having consistency. This is viewed as a goal of quality and interpreted as a "failure to close the loop" with vital services, which were "excluded from the formal system for managing academic quality" (p. 46).

Arguing that zero-defect can be applied to an established standard Karapetrovic, Rajamani, and Wallborn (1999) focused on having universities determine who they viewed as the customer, not just from an individual perspective of what is desired, but in

relationship to the broader sense of successful employment of graduates as the end-product. Accreditation requirements for a specific program provide standards that can be translated into curriculum and coursework that will ensure that knowledge, skills, and competence levels will meet the customer's expectations. This does not always translate into consistency or quality. From an *elitist* perspective of quality culture, this ethos is relevant primarily to flagship and selective programs, where reputation is all encompassing (Harvey & Stensaker, 2008).

Accreditation is a framework that measures specific determinants that are incorporated as standards. It is an external, voluntary process in the United States, but is recognized by the government as a structure to evaluate quality. As a form of external quality monitoring, accreditation in the post-secondary institution represents the general public, monitoring and safeguarding quality in the higher educational realm. The accrediting organization serves as the official auditor that determines whether programs and/or institutions are compliant with standards or thresholds set in the specific field of study. This approach introduces a judgment of quality, excludes criticism of the merit of the delivery, and examines comprehensive processes that focus on the mission, resources, and relevant procedures of the institution or a specific program (Chung Sea Law, 2010, p. 70).

As applied to institutions and programs within the university, accreditation criteria are determined with a minimum threshold created for uniformity between higher education institutions and/or programs (Campbell & Rozsnyai, 2002; Harvey, 2002). While accreditation may offer achievable guidelines in defining quality, Blackmur (2008)

argues that the differences in standards and benchmarking required for higher education institutions from different countries have not been adequately addressed. From an accountability perspective, there appears to be a shifting paradigm in many areas of higher education. An emphasis on the professional competency has been evolving since the 1970s, beginning in the medical disciplines. Widespread designation of competencies has been slow due to a lack of consistency in how to define this term or how to evaluate this process (Carraccio, et al., 2002).

Viewed from a different perspective, however, higher education institutions provide an inclusive assortment of areas that include study, scholarly inquiry, research, and specialized divisions of practice such as medicine, law, teaching, and social work. While each is distinctive to its own set of complex standards, there is an overlap of core values associated with excellence (Bridges, 2006). The ideal of excellence is aligned with the aspect of *quality culture*, which has been associated with a democratic style of quality enhancement. Seeking to strive for perfection, development of a quality culture is a transformative process, with psychological underpinnings and a subjective approach to the issue. When embedded throughout the organization, this practice requires the involvement of everyone, from the university as a whole down to the individual department member, with shared philosophical beliefs, values, and principles that are the essence of a core commitment to the achievement of an institution's objectives (Yorke, 1996; 2000; Lomas, 2004; Harvey & Stensaker, 2008). The inherent philosophical belief of zero defects centers on a preventative approach, involving the engagement of all, and

thereby making everyone accountable in the analytical progression of students (Harvey &
Green, 1993).

Noting that a quality assurance culture does not require burdensome reports and
publications or directors; instead, it focuses on the "intellectual and emotional
commitment on the part of everyone in the collegiate community" (Bogue & Hall, 2003,
p. 242). Seen as a goal to be supported and encouraged, *quality culture* is an egalitarian
philosophy based on trust without the constraints of a formal measuring instrument
(Grbić, 2008). Srikanthan and Dalrymple (2003) include both faculty and administration
as stakeholders in the quest for perfection and continuity. They conclude that both groups
seek a divergent set of outcomes, and that all parties desire respect, recognition, and
reward. The organizational norms are supported and achieved by upholding the core
philosophical beliefs of the educational institution. In proposing a conceptual framework,
the authors acknowledge that it would be difficult to apply quality management to
teaching and learning; they define *transformative learning* as a commitment by the
institution's members to viewing *perfection* as meeting the expectations of all the
stakeholders (p. 182). Focusing on an *integrative learning* model of higher education,
which encompasses the components of the individual self, the culture of others, and the
greater society, Booth, McLean and Walker (2009) found diversity in how this
framework was both understood and implemented in five different disciplines.
Underscoring the relativist idea associated with the process of excellence as consistency,
this was a small empirical study and the pedagogical strategies were multidimensional;

however, all the respondents were committed to the integration of academic work, the connection of the educational experience, and scholastic achievement.

In a study of seven English higher education institutions, semi-structured interviews with a senior manager and an academic from each institution focused on quality management tools. Discussions revealed other issues that the subjects considered important for the effectiveness of embedding quality within the institution. The need for quality culture, management models, training, peer-review of teaching, and professional development were identified in addition to the development of transformational leadership, all of which establishes and maintains university quality enhancement. The author found that although cultures of institutions and their component departments were diverse; the use of a quality management model can bring effective strategies that focus on the reflecting, developing, innovating, and improving the philosophy of *quality* and *consistency*. (Lomas, 2004). Philosophically, consistency centers on the transformative aspect of education, not just compliance, and embodies not only education, but also other services; this offers a holistic and collaborative approach to higher education. Consistency from this perspective addresses both pedagogical and institutional agendas (Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2003).

Consistency.

Quality, as defined by consistency, shifts from the standardization of inputs and outputs to that of *specification* and *process*, requiring frequent revisions and reformulation by the institution and its members to achieve excellence. "Encouraging *inter alia* the analytic and critical development of the student," Harvey and Green (1993)

realign the characterization of quality is as a parallel fit with other relativist descriptions

defining this term (p. 16). Findings from a qualitative study by Yeo (2008) revealed that

consistency within higher education is not confined to the classroom, but is inclusive of

other areas of learning along with social interactions within an institution. Satisfaction

with the reliability and consistency of student engagement and comprehensive services

are explicit quality measures, which again focus on processes, not outcomes or outputs.

Reliability of administration, faculty, and facilities correlated with student perception of

quality in higher education institutions (Sultan & Wong, 2013).

In social work, the accreditation process aligns with the concept of *quality of*

consistency, although this is not specifically defined in the literature as such.

Programming within the CSWE framework aligns with the concept of consistency to

ensure the curriculum foundation and content is coherent between programs, both on the

undergraduate and graduate levels in EPAS. Accredited social work programs must

demonstrate that they prepare students for practice in the assessment of identified

benchmarks (CSWE, 2010). With a shift towards competency based education in the

2008 EPAS, the focus has been on outcome measures. These measures are based on

guidelines emphasizing ongoing and equivalent assessment as an index for professional

educational standards (Holloway et al., 2009). One concern with the 2008 EPAS and the

revisions for the 2015 EPAS is that the methodology allows individual schools broad

discretion in choosing how to measure identified competencies and practice behaviors

(personal communication, Charles Zastrow, December 13, 2014). In reference to

characteristics of excellence in social work education, Munson (1994) observed that

while there is a connection between excellence and accreditation, the exact method of measuring excellence is missing from CSWE accreditation standards.

Extending the idea of *gatekeeping* as a means of quality control and consistency, social work educators are placed in this gatekeeper role in order to determine who is suitable for the profession under the domain of professional suitability (LaFrance & Gray, 2004; Moore & Urwin, 1990). Policies and guidelines associated with gatekeeping are supported by competency based education requiring schools to consistently meet the proficient standards of the knowledge, values and skills of the profession. Explicit and coherent criteria contribute to upholding quality in social work programs and graduates (Elpers & FitzGerald, 2013).

Quality as Fitness for Purpose

Deemed a functional definition of quality versus an exceptional concept, fitness for purpose is an inclusive category similar to zero defects. Unlike perfection, which equates with zero defects, fitness for purpose is dependent upon who is identifying the purpose and how it is assessed (Harvey & Green, 1993). As a result, the focus and goals of higher education institutions have been and will continue to be points in ongoing negotiation. How universities and colleges should interpret the three primary responsibilities, preservation, dissemination and the promotion of knowledge, continues to be debated (Shapiro, 2005).

In meeting the expectations, needs, and specifications of the identified stakeholder, fitness for purpose is judged by output or outcomes and not by the process through which it is delivered (Harvey & Green, 1993). The International Organization for

Standardization (ISO) established objectives in 1987 as a means for developing sets of standards of quality for conformity, efficiency, productivity and cost reduction. Quality is therefore judged by conformity to standards that have been predetermined and have been met over time, despite revision and re-evaluation of identified specification and purpose (Izadi, Kashef & Stadt, 1996). Problems arise due to multiplicities of recognized stakeholders and purposes. These often result in conflict and difficulty in assessing quality with any single method or approach, including the ISO standards. A shared vision of what defines quality is displaced by a narrow view precipitated by economic forces (Sahney, Banwet, & Karunes, 2004; Carlson & Fleisher, 2002).

The recent push for competency-based education or CBE attempts to measure knowledge and skills by the capacity for managing tasks in the workplace (M. Brown, 1994). Competency-based standards, however, do not necessarily translate into effective and capable practice by graduates (Warn & Tranter, 2001; Lester, 2014). A systematic review by Frank, Mungroo, Ahmad, Wang, De Rossi, & Horsley (2010) of 15,956 records with 173 further analyzed for content found no clear or accepted definition of CBE in medical education.

In post antebellum America, the paradigm of higher education shifted to link knowledge with professional practice. Business and industrial leaders insisted that knowledge was needed for practical and utilitarian purposes and not just for scholarly learning and culture (Lucas, 2006). Over the last two centuries, higher education has shifted from educating the privileged and elite to offering a spectrum of educational opportunities to a broader, more diverse population, to improve technical skills of the

American society. This change paralleled the United States' transformation from an agricultural, rural community to an industrialized nation where individual success was ranked above the collective good of society. In addition, class stratification of the population intensified with this change, largely due to the professionalization of many jobs (Dill, Massy, Williams & Cook, 1996; Shapiro, 2005; Dorn, 2011).

In another context, quality as fitness for purpose corresponds with how well an individual institution of higher learning effectively aligns programs with its stated mission. For instance, in Colonial America, such a mission sought to promote the common good and centered on a college graduate's societal responsibility, rather than pursuits of personal wealth. Often, higher education provided access to increased social success but not necessarily individual affluence (Dorn, 2011).

The economic malaise of the last decade has called many to question the mission of the universities and the value of a college education. The earlier belief that a college degree was key to economic success has been seriously shaken. A surplus of well-qualified college graduates competing for limited employment opportunities has created this disillusionment. A study of college presidents and graduates published by the Pew Research Center in 2011 revealed split ideas of college missions in both groups. Forty-seven percent of the graduates and thirty-eight percent of the college presidents identified the primary mission of higher education as preparation for being productive members of the workforce. This figure contrasts with thirty-nine percent of graduates and twenty-seven percent of college presidents who identified preparing graduates for becoming responsible citizens as the principal mission of higher education. However, dividing

college presidents between four year and two year institutions shifts the results

considerably. Four year college presidents overwhelming chose preparation for

citizenship over workforce readiness while community college and for-profit presidents

identified workforce training as the primary mission of higher education (Taylor, et al.,

2011). A fundamental strength of the American education system has been the diversity

of the purpose and objectives of public, private, for-profit and non-profit institutions.

When variety is replaced with homogeneity, the core structure of higher education's

purpose begins to erode (Couturier, 2005). Mission differentiation causes stratification

leading to more prestigious institutions receiving greater resources and limiting

opportunities for minority student populations (Bastedo & Gumport, 2003). In addition,

Jacquette, (2013) found colleges expanded to become universities in response to lower

traditional undergraduate enrollment and a loss of tuition revenues. A desire to be more

diverse to draw a greater number of potential students created change in the direction and

mission of higher education institutions. Indeed, *corporate branding* has been proposed

and adopted as a way of enhancing the image of a university and of marketing to recruit

students and economic resources (Heaney & Heaney, 2008, p. 66).

The traditional mission of higher education has centered first on teaching and

second on research. Recently the concept of a third mission, one of community

involvement and partnership has been suggested. One aspect of this third mission,

assisting with regional economic development, has been disputed. Concerns are being

expressed that teaching and research are becoming subservient to the financial gain from

grants and other external income (Loi & DiGuardo, 2015; Shore & McLauchlan, 2012).

Attitudes of faculty toward economic partnerships between universities and regional

businesses were found to be positive. These partnerships were viewed as aligning with

university missions in contributing to the greater public good as well as to teaching and

knowledge creation. However, commercialization of university-based academic research

was negatively viewed as representing a conflict of interest with industrial or corporate

profits (Goldstein, Bergman, & Maier, 2013).

The public purpose of higher education today still extends beyond the individual's

economic benefit. While viewed as sources for innovation, inspiration, and discovery,

institutions also instill the qualities and values associated with the foundation of a

democratic society for the common good. Values are a prime element of organizational

cultures in academia, heavily influencing factors contributing to the quality of individual

programs and the institutions as a whole (Harvey & Green, 1993). Fitness of institutional

goals and purpose derive from corresponding expectations of its stakeholders. This

fitness is not confined to outputs, but incorporates other areas including professional

standards involving ethics, behaviors, and capabilities of those associated with the

organization, thus developing a much larger framework for judging aspects of fitness and

quality (Lester, 2014). Lagemann and Lewis (2012) propose three concepts they consider

vital to the civic responsibilities and education of all who engage in teaching and working

with students in colleges and universities. These include: a) civic learning; b) civic

education regarding larger societal issues, and c) institutional modeling of civic features

of virtue, integrity and responsibility. Academic and professional disciplines include

deliberation on issues, which reflect a larger civil, moral, social, and political relevance.

Intellect is not confined to training and preparing students for a specific profession or vocation. Standards and expectations of academic, personal, and professional behavior are themes of morality and actions that are neither confined nor reduced to rules and regulations, but are institutional qualities embedded within the university itself as a civic responsibility to a larger society. Identifying the public purpose of higher education, Couturier (2005) cites the *The Futures Project* that lists seven points for recognizing the value of higher education as a public and societal need versus an individual demand from the educational system. The role of higher education should be defined in relation to the goals of the individual state and reflect a relationship representing the public interest and measuring what is valid and applicable to the mission of the partnership between the state and higher education institution.

The civic mission of higher education is reflected in *The Wisconsin Idea*, a philosophical precept attributed to former UW President Charles Van Hise and his friend and former classmate, Governor Robert M. LaFollette, which exemplifies serving the greater society in a significant, shared relationship. Conceived in the early 1900s, The Wisconsin Idea "signifies a general principle: that education should influence people's lives beyond the boundaries of the classroom" (History of the Wisconsin Idea, n.d.). Higher education while advancing employment capabilities also encourages civic engagement that leads to addressing other serious societal issues with economic implications (Levine, 2014)*.*

The value of acquiring a college degree extends beyond a monetary benefit. These advantages include self-discipline, a broad general knowledge, and problem-solving

abilities. All of these attributes contribute to an understanding of the complex issues of society. Undergraduate education combines theoretical concepts with concrete application (Carlson & Fleisher, 2002). The deeper meanings and purposes of higher education for citizenry and the public good often are thrust to the side in a commodity-driven environment. Corporate culture redefines education as a private initiative; responsibility for obtaining a degree is viewed as an economic transaction whose purpose is to provide one with greater future wealth (Aper, 2010, Giroux, 2002b). Under pressure from business and political influences, higher education continues to evolve to vocational training at many colleges- except at elite institutions. The result is lower expectations of students, less engagement, grade inflation, and a dilution of the academic process. Critics charge that the grades students achieve no longer reflect learning, distorting the measure of knowledge attained and offsetting some of the societal impact of having more students receive a degree   (Carlson & Fleisher, 2002; French & Wailes, 2007; Dill, 2014).

Redefining students as customers aligns with the business model approach to higher education. Viewing and characterizing students as customers, alludes to the idea that meeting their expectation of work requirements (cost) and receiving high grades (benefit) involves meeting student-determined standards of excellence. The broad base offered by the liberal arts core and coursework that requires a high degree of reading and analysis is replaced by knowledge, limited in scope to a specific major (Carlson & Fleisher, 2002; Harvey & Green, 1993). Perceiving students as customers invites disparities between those who attend high-cost, prestigious institutions and those who for whatever reason attend less costly, less esteemed schools. Uniformity of curriculum with

scripted courses and teaching methods are found in lower quality institutions while elite

universities often maintain broad, highly intellectual studies, with their graduates

capturing the highly paid positions (Carlson & Fleisher, 2002; Naidoo, Shankar & Veer,

2011). Ritzer (1996) likens this to the *McDonaldization* of higher education symbolizing

the consumer mentality with fast food restaurants in providing scholarship and content

that is devoid of anything distinctive or exceptional save for a select few.

In this setting, accountability, a broad concept often associated with higher

education policy-making, has taken on a plethora of definitions dependent upon who is

defining the term and in what context it is being applied. Approaches of policymakers in

the 1990s focused on mission differentiation that restructured the emphasis on evaluation

from process to product, resulting in a stratification of scholastic programs that often

negatively impacted fields of study dominated by minority populations and women.

Teaching and research are utilitarian tools to enhance the economic impact on the

national and local economies with funding shifts to STEM programs (science,

technology, engineering, and mathematics) and away from the humanities and liberal

arts. This reallocation of resources limits access and opportunity for particular

populations, compromising a historical and fundamental principle of higher education in

the United States (Bastedo & Gumport, 2003; Jarvis, 2014).

Outcome-based education has been associated with quality assurance measures.

Criteria for assessment correspond to the individual institutional purpose and goals. The

process measures outcomes based on the achievement of learning goals as demonstrated

through curriculum, teaching, assessment and support. Determined as a method to effect

change with accountability models of education, outcome-based measures demonstrate student achievement providing mechanisms of accountability in addition to transparency of the approach (Tagg, 2010).

Carlson and Fleisher (2002) argue that treating students as customers has led to a business model approach and assumes that students are equipped to determine what they need to learn. Fitness in this situation is viewed in the context of customer satisfaction as more vocational training than academic intensity. Employment and work performance are part of the purpose and considered major determinants of quality. A drawback to this approach is that it is longitudinal and observable only after a multi-year or decade lag.

Taken from a social work perspective, CSWE through its accreditation process requires programs to reflect on how their mission aligns with that of their institutions. In addition, EPAS competencies require critical reflection on issues of social justice surrounding at risk populations. Fook (2004) evokes critical reflection as a transformative process in creating change and emphasizing multiple dimensions of awareness and knowledge. Evaluating professional practice of graduates by both direct and indirect measures, in a shift from objectively based education to competency based education, determines effectiveness and promotes change in the social work education curriculum and delivery (Drisko, 2014). While not a perfect tool, competency based assessment for skills and knowledge of social work practice serves as a method of evaluating social work students and program outcomes (Lu, et al., 2011; Drisko, 2014). Social work programs are required to link measurable practice behaviors to EPAS competencies to assess and evaluate identified benchmarks. Issues related to the implementation and effectiveness of

competency based education have not been readily addressed by CSWE (Robbins, 2014; Drisko, 2014). Questioning the recent expansion of new social work programs nationwide, Karger and Stoesz (2003) and Karger (2012) critique the wisdom of such growth, noting that the overall quality of students and programs is negatively affected both in fitness of graduates to practice and potential earnings. Fitness for purpose can become compromised through unbridled expansion of programs.

Fitness for purpose in the concept of higher education has shifted from the principle of learning and knowledge to one of accountability; outcomes can be quantified to determine quality. This approach denies the transformative capability and reduces the context of education to one of conformity and cost (Harvey, 1998).

Quality as Value for Money

Value for money is associated with 'getting what you pay for' and insinuates that quality positively correlates with cost. According to this principle, quality is not related to the prestige of the institution, but instead relies on accountability and efficiency (Harvey & Green, 1993). The *value added* approach to higher education is seen by some as the only acceptable method to ascertaining quality, with the acknowledgement that institutions differ and that no single measurement system is adequate (D. C. Bennett, 2001; Biggs, 2001).

The difficulty with the value added approach lies in how the process is defined. Value is multi-dimensional and its measurement often complex and expensive. Moreover, the value created may take years to assess and may not yield an absolute standard (D. C. Bennett, 2001, Boyle & Bowden, 1997). Human capital theory applicable to higher

education implies that teaching knowledge and skills that will result in a productive workforce. Neoliberalism leads to a political, economic, and cultural shift that redefines education institutions as a competitive industry in a commodity driven market. This dynamic regards students as consumers, degrees as products, and educators as providers, devaluing the higher education system (Connell, 2013).

In recent years value for money has been linked to effectiveness and efficiency; and performance indicators have been implemented by a number of states as a means of tying funding to empirical results. Driven by political forces whose mantra is accountability, state legislators seek to control the escalating costs of higher education. Market-based solutions for increased efficiency are advocated by business-oriented interests who seek to redefine the role of higher education to one of job preparation (Dougherty, Natow, Bork, Jones, & Vega, 2013). For example, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, in his 2015 budget proposal, sought to change the language of the Wisconsin Idea to read "meet the state's workforce needs", thereby completely altering the mission of Wisconsin's public university system (Herzog, 2015). Redefining individuals as consumers, Walker's concept, which is a reductionist approach is connected more to reducing the process to vocational training rather than increasing the quality of education. Central to this narrow consumerist approach is the belief that obtaining a degree as a credential is crucial to individual economic success, rejecting the significance of knowledge and learning as quality indicators (Saunders, 2010). The rise of market driven influences has intertwined equity and quality. Political manipulation results in the marginalization of equity of access to education as it shifts budgets away

from higher education. The focus has turned to compliance with a simple set of technical skills that can be quantifiably measured. While these skills can be improved upon through accountability monitoring, this reductionist approach ignores more complex issues that affect educational systems (Mockler, 2014).

Viewed from a holistic, systems approach, higher education institutions are composed of subsystems. Such subsystems interact continuously and are affected directly by external educational policies (Mizikaci, 2006). Quality assurance for academia has been shaped by business management systems with a utilitarian focus on market values of competition, performance, and efficiency. The emphasis on consumer-led education has created concerns over declining academic standards in an exchange for credentials to enter the labor market (Henkel, 1997). Privatizing state higher education institutions has been proposed in several states as a means of decreasing financial burdens of state appropriations and increasing institutional autonomy from state regulators. As private institutions compete with public universities for financial resources, the diversity and strength of the entire American educational system is called into question, with the threat of diminishing commitment for serving the public good (Couturier, 2005).

External quality assurance, a form of measuring value for money in higher education, varies among educational institutions and programs and is not linear (Harvey, 2006). Beginning in the 1990s, the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) gained prominence although the initial move in this direction was geared toward obtaining resources rather than improving the actual quality in education (Ewell, 1993; Quinn, Lemay, Larsen, & Johnson, 2009). The approaches of Deming's model of TQM (1986)

and Garvin's work on defining quality (1984) focused on industrial and manufacturing specifications of product excellence. While not directly applicable to higher education, their influence has been noticed in the education literature. Deming's model of TQM, espoused a methodology of statistical analysis. TQM's structure was composed of elements (purpose, concepts, tools, methods, and plan of action) and the interrelationship of these elements to produce a systematic approach in all problem-solving issues (Houston, 2007; Padró, 2009).

W. Edwards Deming, a statistician and American consultant to Japan following World War II, convinced the Japanese manufacturing industry to adopt his processes; this subsequently led to higher quality products and increased productivity. The Deming System of Profound Knowledge (1986) consisted of fourteen points. It focused on product and service, calling for new processes of training, education, leadership, pride of workmanship, and continuous improvement while eliminating slogans, quotas, barriers, mass inspections, and fear. Ultimately, TQM's goal is to transform manufacturing culture (Hazzard, 1993; Munoz, 1999; Bogue & Hall, 2003). An application of TQM to higher education is seen in UK's Education Reform Act of 1988. Edwards (1991) saw the main theme of this act as fitness for purpose, with the emphasis on teaching and quality assurance structures as value. He judged that infusing TQM principles into the UK higher education model improved educational product and institutional image. This act allowed universities to satisfy their customers (i.e. students) and funders, thus giving these institutions a competitive advantage in the global higher education market. Principal components of TQM are viewed as valuable resources in attracting students, improving

satisfaction with the education process, and providing a competitive edge. Studies focus

primarily on services, atmosphere, and modes of delivery in university settings, with

students being in the roles of both customers and products (Zineldin, Akdag, &

Vasicheva, 2011; Shahdadnejad & Alroaia, 2013; Chen, 2012).

Viewed not as a panacea or placebo, but as having potential in adapting to the

needs of higher education, many of the themes of TQM, including continuous quality

improvement, staff and student participation in the process, consistent quality, meeting

the needs of the customer, coordination and cooperation of service delivery, and

managerial procedures to monitor quality, can contribute significantly to the effectiveness

and efficiency of higher education institutions. Value is viewed as creating graduates fit

for the purpose that they seek to serve (G. Williams, 1993). Garvin (1987) identified

eight approaches to defining quality satisfaction, focusing his attention on product and

service quality as related to manufacturing. His eight elements are performance, features,

reliability, conformance, durability, serviceability, aesthetics, and perceived quality.

These elements have been applied to describe value in higher education. The user-based

approach recognizes that although quality and satisfaction are related, they are not the

same (Harvey & Green, 1993, Lagrosen, et al., 2004, Houston, 2007, Harvey & Williams,

2010a; 2000b; Van Kemenade, et al., 2008).

Garvin's strategic analysis is related to output of a product and how one achieves

what one seeks to achieve. He proposed that most companies pursue one or more a

product niches, which appeal to particular groups in the market. Elite companies with

brand name recognition may have the resources to engage in all aspects across the market

and charge accordingly. Garvin's work related to higher education has been applied to a user-based definition, which focuses on the marketing, operations, and economic aspects through which institutions attempt to distinguish themselves by both quality and satisfaction (Garvin, 1984; Lagrosen et al., 2004).

Six Sigma, yet another business manufacturing approach to quality assurance, was first attributed to Mikel Harry from Motorola in the mid-1980s and was later popularized by General Electric (Ramanan & Ramanakumar, 2014). It focuses on improving cost efficiency and product quality; the goal of the Six Sigma approach revolves around continuous efforts to improve processes. The principles and strategy of this methodology include the following steps: defining the problem, measuring the current process through data collection, analyzing data for cause and effect, developing improvements based on the findings, and implementing controls to improve and sustain performance. In higher education, Six Sigma is primarily a theoretical approach and has been proposed as a methodology to contribute to the effectiveness of academic institutions. This approach to quality assurance has not been widely implemented to date (Antony, Krishna, Cullen & Kumar, 2012; Jenicke, Kumar, & Holmes, 2008).

Harvey and Green (1993) assert that TQM is unable to accommodate the intricate, multifaceted and interrelated structures associated with higher education. The philosophy of TQM of ensuring that organizations 'get it right' the first time is reductionist and disaggregated by nature, thereby only addressing the input and output scope of an organization (Houston, 2007; Harvey & Green, 1993). Citing differences why the implementation of TQM could be complex, the organizational leadership and the

commitment to the process of producing a paradigm shift were found to be significant

barriers for success (Munoz, 1999). Complexities of applying TQM extend to multiple

contexts. Historically, academia has emphasized individual autonomy, along with

separation of staff, faculty, and administration, opposing the principles of TQM, which

focuses on teamwork. A lack of integration between departments for strategic planning,

implementation, and evaluation poses a challenge. In addition, financial support has

shifted priorities in major research institutions away from the classroom and toward

research grants as a way to manage decreased state funding (Boyle & Bowden, 1997).

Quinn et al. (2009) found a lack of interdepartmental trust, concerns with the confidence

by administrators in the application of TQM, the resistance in labeling students as

customers, the autonomy of academics and their lack of appreciation for market issues as

problematic to the effectiveness of this theory, with little empirical evidence of the costs

and benefits of employing this process.

Houston (2007) and Koch (2003) challenge the fit of TQM to the philosophy to

higher education. TQM is applicable to technical changes in manufacturing but a poor

match for the complexities of higher education. Favoring a comprehensive systems-

approach of processes and outcomes, higher education focuses on the core concept of

learning, a more relevant aspect of value. The systems approach acknowledges

continuous change and adaptability of social, technical, and managerial subsystems, all of

which are interconnected. As higher education becomes globally competitive, policies

concerning quality measures will continue to be heavily influenced by external factors,

requiring methodologies that are valid, reliable, and transparent (Mizikaci, 2006).

Arguing that the operational process is planned by administrators and fails to include the faculty and staff who are most impacted and who need to make the daily decisions, Ewell (1993) laments that TQM is used by administrators as a short-term, control-oriented fix to satisfy student demands. Referencing the accountability culture, Zepke and Leach (2007) question the assumptions of methodologies made with statistical measures, including the Deming, Garvin, and Six Sigma approaches. Such accountability measures underlie the legislative policy focus on student retention and outcomes. Strategies for fitting the purpose of higher education are wholly dependent upon the perception of the individual stakeholder, which can be conflictual in nature, limiting any metric of quality (Sahney, et al., 2004; Houston, 2007).

Customer charters or rankings were developed as a tool to report the cost potential students and families can anticipate paying for tuition and other services (Harvey & Green, 1993). The idea behind rankings or league tables is to provide more informed choices for education and thus create a competitive free-market whereby consumers or customers can make informed choices; but this does not necessarily insure quality (Marginson & van der Wende, 2007; Harvey & Green, 2003). This concept has created a market for a proliferation of publications of college rankings. These publications assert that they measure value (Altbach, 2012; Hazelkorn, 2011).

Ratings of undergraduate programs have become one popular method of demonstrating how cost is associated with quality (Bogue & Hall, 2003). Indicators of quality vary amongst ranking systems and methodologies can be murky and lack transparency. Institutional reputations are gained and lost through rankings and once

established, are often difficult to change (Bowman & Bastedo, 2011). The use of ranking,

values, and inclusion criteria in the methodology can vary extensively and alter results

between ranking systems (Aguillo, Bar-Ilan, Leven, & Ortega, 2010).

Globalization of higher education has given rise to multiple international ranking

systems. While still evolving, these systems are quite divergent in their performance

indicators but carry potential in how they shape educational policy throughout the world

(Marginson, 2007; Altbach, 2012). Dill and Soo (2005) in a comparison and analysis of

five commercial university ranking systems from Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and

the United States found major differences in methodologies, formatting and content. One

criticism is the absence of comparable measures of teaching quality; instead the focus is

on research productivity, giving research institutions greater visibility and higher

rankings in comparison to teaching focused universities and colleges. Teaching quality is

assessed via faculty-student ratios and the number of PhD faculty, which does not

measure the quality of institutional teaching (Altbach, 2012). *USNWR* has been a primary

source of ranking in the United States. The ratings formula for *USNWR* relies heavily on

subjective measures, allowing for manipulation by higher education institutions.

Although influential, this system relies on inputs, reputation, and outcome measurements

with a range of indicators that are analyzed to produce a single score as a gauge of quality

(Ehrenberg, 2003; D. C. Bennett, 2001; Hazelkorn, 2011). A myriad of stakeholders

beyond potential students and their families rely on this information. Private investors,

philanthropists, the media, employers, policymakers, and the government reference

global rankings and influence beliefs internationally both inside and outside higher

education (Hazelkorn, 2011; Marginson, 2007). Even when given information on cost, families may choose a more expensive institution assuming this will offer a better value. Reputation is driven by rankings, creating an anchoring effect that reinforces the prestige hierarchy within higher education (Bowman & Bastedo, 2011). A consequence of college rankings has been a rise in the cost at higher ranked institutions due to intense competition among students for admission. In addition, institutions that are considered prestigious cite high rankings as justification for steep tuition (Tofallis, 2012; Zemsky, 2011).

Turning from the institutional level to the program level, professional associations are critical in assessing quality. Social work programs accredited through CSWE must be periodically reaffirmed based on measurement of attainment of EPAS standards. The practice behaviors under each competency standard must be measured at least twice and by two different means for each program. One drawback to this system is that each school is unique in how the EPAS practice behaviors are measured and the benchmark threshold employed. In 1999, the Baccalaureate Education Assessment Package (BEAP), a five-instrument assessment was developed as a cohesive method of program evaluation. As of 2001, approximately thirty percent of the CSWE undergraduate programs used the BEAP, now revised to include six-assessment instruments, for their program evaluations. (Rodenheiser, et al., 2007). Reorganized in 2013, BEAP became the Social Work Education Assessment Project (SWEAP) and currently compares over 300 undergraduate programs that have implemented this package, which includes survey tools for students, alumni, employers, curriculum, and field (http://sweap.utah.edu). However, CSWE does

not mandate that schools use this assessment tool. In addition, not all schools employ all

six instruments and schools are only compared to others using the same indicators. At

present, there are 504 CSWE accredited programs and value is assessed by accreditation

standards (CSWE, 2015). Graduates from CSWE accredited programs are eligible for

some form of licensing or certification in most states (Social Work Degree Guide, n.d.).

The business approach to quality as value focuses on the aspects of cost and

efficiency of an institution's process. Rankings represent subjective measures, and are

often stratified by a few key quantitative statistics that can be contaminated by reputation.

Respondents of surveys may or may not be informed about either the institution or its

peers. The best process of assessing value may lie in the professional associations. They

complete comprehensive reviews together with exhaustive self-studies that frequently

include a site visitation before issuing a report to affirm that the appropriate quality

standards have been met. As the value-added approach becomes further associated with

economic individualism and market demands for resource efficiencies, performance

outcome measures are increasingly assumed to represent quality in higher education.

Quality as Transformation

Highly subjective within the context of higher education, transformation pertains

to the *cognitive transcendence* of the individual and is not confined to concrete, discrete

variables (Harvey & Green 1993, p. 24). The concept of transformation relates to the

philosophies of such writers as Kant, Aristotle, and Marx. It is not one-dimensional by

nature, instead taking depth and breadth of knowledge to a greater level of understanding.

Transformation can be difficult to quantify and includes a wide range of factors. The

development of critical thinking skills, self-critical analysis of preconceptions, interpersonal relatedness, and the enhancement of learning through empowerment encompass the theory of the transformative process (Harvey & Green, 1993; Lomas, 2002; Harvey & Newton, 2004; Watty, 2006). Described as a higher order concept, there is an assumption that transformation is the fundamental element of higher education. "Other concepts, such as perfection, high standards, fitness for purpose and value for money, are possible operationalizations of the transformative process rather than ends in themselves" (Harvey & Knight, 1996, pp. 15-16).

Transformational theory assumptions are taken from constructivism. Associating the idea of transformation with learning through consciousness raising or *conscientization* and *dialogue*, Freire (1970) drew his theory from his literacy education work with oppressed populations in Brazil. He viewed education as a political act and consciousness as influenced by cultural, socioeconomic, and political contexts. Human beings are seen not as objects who are submerged in the world, but as subjects, who are independent and have the ability to transcend, create, and self-reflect, thus disassociating themselves from a repressive society. Freire's method of transformative learning focuses on individual and group interaction as agents of change. Learners develop an ability to analyze, question, and act on the economic, social, and political structures that contribute to oppression. The process of conscientization emancipates individuals by empowering them to construct their own meaning of the world through critical consciousness (Dirkx, 1998; Johnson, 2011).

Mezirow's theory of transformative learning draws from the fields of cognitive and developmental psychology. Central to his theory is the interpretation of experiences, assumptions, and knowledge acquired through interactions with the environment. This results in the internal coding that shape norms, beliefs, ideologies, feelings, and language, which guide an individual's perceptions. (Mezirow, 1981; 1991; 1994). Viewed as a paradigm, this collection of personal frameworks influences and shapes how knowledge is acquired and disseminated as a rational, reflective process. (Mezirow, 1991, 1994; Di Biase, 2000). Mezirow (1994) categorized a two-dimensional, three-variable structure, formed by political, psycho/social, and cultural expectations, to describe this process. *Meaning perspectives,* develop through sociolinguistic, psychological, and epistemic codes, which form and reflect a person's *meaning scheme*. Meaning schemes are an anthology of everything that shapes our interpretation, resisting knowledge that does not align with our own experiences. Transformation results from critical self-reflection of the assumptions that influence personal expectations, with perspective transformation seen as the "engine of adult development" (p. 228). As the distinguishing feature of adult learning, perspective transformation is the shift that can result from a key incident in an individual's life or through the collective transformations of meaning schemes. Describing adult learning, Mezirow (1991; 1994) defines these as the refining, learning, and transforming of meaning schemes, and the transforming of meaning perspectives by reflection of content, process, and premise of problem solving, resulting in meaningful change. Meizirow (1991) identified reflection as having the components of content, process, and premise. Kreber (2004) found premise reflection to be the least common in

teaching knowledge and experience. Predicated on reflection and discourse, adult education ideally seeks to reduce the indoctrinating influences and coercive effects of a power differential between the instructor and students (Mezirow, 1994; 1996).

While Mezirow's developmental perspective is an implicit part of transformational learning, Daloz (1986) identifies meaning construction as a key element of personal growth and a dynamic influence in adult formal education. Daloz focuses on non-traditional adult learners and personal change, using the educator as a mentor in higher education. As adults move through different life phases of development, old meaning structures lose relevance or no longer fit their current life experiences. New meaning structures give clarity and significance to changes in the world of adult learners. The content and process of change are holistic and intuitive, encouraging the interruption of old relationships of meaning and supporting the creation and construction of new structures of the self and the world (Dirkx, 1998; Daloz, 1986; 2012).

Delineating between perspective transformation and educational transformation, the former involves the external journey of an individual, whose goals and functions align with the process of higher education in developing problem-solving skills, competency, and awareness. The latter, educational transformation, has a *holistic orientation* symbolic of the personal and collective unconscious. Boyd and Myers (1988) challenge Mezirow's theory of transformative education and learning (p. 280). Differing from Freire and Mezirow, Boyd and Meyers hold that learning as an expressive or an emotional-spiritual dimension is mediated through symbolism. By including the concept of self-awareness, this model comprises three distinct phases. They lead to a personal illumination and

transformation. Further, they integrate the person's inner journey of understanding with external achievements congruent with the goals of education. The first of the three phases involves *receptivity* - by listening and allowing for alternative expressions of meaning, which can cause anxiety and discomfort. The second phase is *recognition* - awareness that previously held ideas of reality are being challenged and offer a range of choices. The final phase is *grieving* - a crucial dynamic that enables an individual to relinquish old frameworks of interpretation formerly a fundamental part of their identity. Creating new understandings leads to personal growth both internally and within the external environment. (Boyd & Myers, 1988).

Viewed by Kegan (1979; 2000) as an individualized lifelong process, transformation evolves and can advance or hinder change and personal growth. The individual's learning process is a changing continuum, with underlying epistemological assumptions that follow a pattern of increasingly complexity. The meaning making of one's learning experiences creates a greater assessment and understanding of knowledge and how it is gained (Kegan, 2000; Glizinski, 2007; Dirxx, 1998).

Identified as a resource in a student's cultural climb for societal power and wealth, institutions of higher education and undergraduate degree programs have flourished. The number of credits a student is required to accrue before receiving their degree is easily quantifiable and is a simple statistical measure of success in higher learning. What is not so easily discerned is the level of understanding achieved in deconstructing and constructing concepts, ideas, relationships, and situations, measured from multiple perspectives (Glisczinski, 2007). This form of education merely reinforces

patterns and conditioning that provides a linear frame of reference and filters out experiences not associated with a defined parameter.

While fundamental knowledge is critical in developing problem-solving skills, understanding tasks, and learning to meet specific objectives, it fosters little capacity within transformative learning. The latter paradigm emphasizes reflective discourse while promoting the poverty of knowledge (Cranton & King, 2003; Glisczinski, 2007; Habermas, 2007). Breneman (1990) found liberal arts colleges paying homage to the idea of transformation in their mission statements while moving toward discipline and professional career education. Emphasis on institutional rankings and the growing economically driven competitive pressures within the U. S. higher education system has driven liberal arts institutions to shift curriculum closer to either a vocational or a research orientation (Baker, Baldwin, & Makker, 2012).

Demands of accountability, invariably associated with external stakeholders, are most frequently linked to quality assurance, referencing "…policies, attitudes, actions and procedures necessary to ensure quality is being maintained and enhanced" (Woodhouse, 1999, p. 30). This reference to quality focuses on inputs and outputs but often overlooks educational theory and processes, student learning, enhancement, and change, creating barriers to innovation in teaching and learning (Nicholson, 2011). As noted by Harvey and Knight (1996) quality as a process explores evolving changes and emerging outcomes of transformative learning, where stakeholders are participants, not products. Quality assurance, as based solely on accountability measures of outcomes, is

philosophically incompatible with the concept of transformative enhancement of learning (Harvey & Knight, 1996; Nicholson, 2011).

Describing a liberal arts education as a "transformative pedagogy and a learning centered paradigm" Storrs and Inderbitzin (2006) advocate greater innovation of alternative learning experiences, which challenge the traditional approach of passive learning found in many traditional classrooms (p. 175). Involving interdisciplinary collaboration, this approach criticizes the conventional canon of disciplinary boundaries and hierarchy while encouraging oppositional cultures of thought. The archetype of transformative learning extends beyond the collaborative model to emphasize individual and social construction of meaning. Such an approach offers expansion and fosters critical thinking skills through reflection, exposure to new ideas, intentional learning, and innovation in a larger society (Astin & Antonio, 2004; Boyd & Meyers, 1988; Mezirow, 1991; Kumagai & Lypson, 2009; Moore, 2005). Learning on this level denotes transformative education as sustainable, able to gain knowledge from change, continually evolving, and adapting to achieve new life goals (Bennetts, 2003). With a focus on instructional learning, Wilson and Parrish (2011) describe how "meaningful encounters" can leave a "lasting impact on a person's sense of competence or place in the world" (pp. 11-12). The incorporation of indicators of personal meaning, competence, and relationships interact with instructional design, and new media tools for an even greater impact on the transformative process. Adding creativity as a significant factor in transformational teaching and learning, challenges traditional outcomes of higher education (Kleiman, 2008). Colby and Sullivan (2009) view educators as facilitating the

transformation of undergraduate students through the integration of personal identity, moral purpose, and reasoning, building analytical capabilities that will serve individuals far beyond their college experiences.

Transformation translates is a reciprocal process between student and teacher, empowering and enhancing the learning landscape (Harvey & Stensaker, 2008). As stakeholders, faculty must commit to the process by setting high standards for themselves, and by requiring assessment and evaluation that monitor and improve the exchange between one another (Abrahamson & Kimsey, 2002, Storrs & Inderbitzin, 2006). Noting that one's experience in higher education is by no means *value neutral*, Ettling (2006) embodies the postmodern viewpoint of an open system of reality, which is not constrained to a linear cause and effect of relationships and change, but influenced by multiple forms of understandings drawn from social and physical environments. This systems approach focuses on the transactions and interactions, creating both disequilibrium and equilibrium within the educational milieu (p. 60).

A seminal review of empirical studies on Mezirow's transformative learning theory by E. W. Taylor (1997) found considerable support for Mezirow's model. All of the reviewed studies conducted qualitative research methods of naturalistic designs, using semi-structured interviews of participants. Thirty-nine studies were identified and analyzed, with the majority found in unpublished dissertations and conference records and only three articles from peer-reviewed journals. Study participants were at various stages of their lives and the conditions surrounding their transformational experiences differed. The role of context was recognized as needing greater investigation, along with

a broader definition of perspective transformation. E. W. Taylor (1997) also acknowledged several shortcomings. These include the lack of empirical research on the process that leads to transformational learning; the recognition of how relationships influence this process; the minimization of critical reflection; and the role of unconscious learning. Finally, he recommended for future research methods other than interviews; the inclusion of cultural diversity; a description of how transformation takes place in the classroom; and the "relationship between critical reflection and alternative ways of knowing" (p.34).

Publishing an updated extensive review of new empirical research E. W. Taylor (2007) identified forty-one peer reviewed journal studies on transformational learning completed from data obtained from 1998 to 2005 and fit criteria of a) having transformational learning as the primary theoretical framework, b) containing a definitive methodology section, and c) presenting findings contributing to the review of transformational learning theory. Virtually all of the studies were with adult populations, and the research methods remained primarily qualitative designs; however, studies had advanced to include longitudinal models, action research, content analysis, stimulated recall, and mixed methods approaches. Results of the empirical reviews were grouped into: the role of reflection, relationships, the meaning of a perspective transformation, fostering transformative learning, and the relationship between context and transformative learning (p. 175).

These studies affirm Mezirow's theory of transformative learning. However, they shift from identification of the transformative experience to understanding the factors that

shape it, how this can be applied in practice, the complex nature of relationships and critical reflection, the nature of perspective transformation, and the function of background. Significantly, recognition was found to be not enough to elicit change; relational supports through pedagogy, institutional backing, and trust in the process were critical factors for action on new understandings and insights. Identified by E. W. Taylor (2007) in an updated review were shortcomings of the established research, which still does not adequately address the relational nature of transformative learning, along with the role of culture and differences with variables such as age and gender. Encouraging, was the emergence of empirical research beyond the discipline of education and outside the United States, where 35% of the studies were conducted, demonstrating a wider acceptance of Mezirow's theory of transformative learning.

Table 1. Quality as Transformation

Process	Theorist	Methods of Change
Learning viewed as being influenced by cultural, socioeconomic, and political contexts	Freire (1970)	Change achieved through conscientization and dialogue
Learning is influenced by political, psycho/social, and cultural expectations	Mezirow (1981; 1994)	Change occurs with the interpretation of experiences, assumptions, and knowledge acquired through interactions with the environment
Learning is viewed as passing through the developmental stages of life	Daloz (1986)	Change is holistic and intuitive through the constructivist lens of meaning
Learning is an expressive or an emotional-spiritual dimension mediated through symbolism	Boyd and Meyers (1988)	The interpretation of experiences, assumptions, and knowledge acquired through interactions with the environment

Within the field of social work, transformation is frequently associated with achievement of competence. The term transformation does not appear explicitly in the 2008 or 2015 EPAS standards of CSWE, but changes from the 2001 EPAS standards acknowledge the need for competency within all systems of micro, mezzo, and macro practice (CSWE, 2010, 2015). Referenced within the implicit curriculum are descriptions applicable to transformation associated with the "educational environment in which the explicit curriculum is presented" to help shape the student as a professional social worker through the "the culture of human interchange; the spirit of inquiry; the support for difference and diversity; and the values and priorities in the educational environment, including the field setting" (CSWE, 2010, p. 10). Developing cultural competence is one avenue of transformational learning, facilitating forces that produce positive change and reduce constricting influences (Blunt, 2007). External quality monitoring and evaluation undertaken by an accreditation body such as CSWE, emphasizes the concept of transformation through student empowerment, learning goals and objectives, and competencies that reflect a measurement of excellence (Harvey, 2006; Poulin, Silver, & Kaufmann, 2007; Buchan et al., 2004; Hull, Mather, Christopherson, & Young, 1994; Rodenheiser et al., 2007).

Philosophically, transformation as a concept of quality in higher education may produce the greatest impact of any of Harvey and Green's (1993) five concepts, but is the most difficult to quantify. The potential of empowerment and critical thinking is a process; it is unique for each individual. As Harvey and Green (1993) note, quality as transformation is related to the degree of change of an individual's conceptual ability and

self-awareness, extending beyond completion of a degree and offering a transformative

process for the life span (p. 26).

Globalization and Quality in Higher Education

Globalization has prompted a call for professionals who have the required skills to

meet the needs of the global market, focusing on the societal, political, and economic

aspects influencing higher education. (Campbell & Rozsnyai, 2002; Altbach & Knight,

2007). Poole (2010) contends that the economic market model of competition from the

British neo-liberal perspective is seeking to shape global education.

Criticisms of international and global education assert that poor quality control

and standards are problematic with identified international standards of quality varying or

non-existent (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Concepts of what defines quality in higher

education continue to be debated, with the idea of having *global excellence* an achievable

standard (Cartwright, 2007, p. 288). Watchful stakeholders, particularly governments and

other funding entities focus on the fitness for purpose and value for money concepts as

criteria for judging quality worldwide (Rush & Hart, 2006). External and internal

determinants of quality shift to correspond to the environment in which they are applied.

Most countries have issued policies to monitor institutions of higher education but

differences in these policies across countries make it difficult to develop and establish

consistent international standards. Encouraging cooperation among its members, the

European Union has promoted the development of strategies to measure institutional

quality of higher educational systems (Van Damme, Van der Hijden; & Campbell, 2004;

Campbell & Rozsnyai, 2002). Under the Bologna Declaration of 1999, the European

Credit Transfer System was developed to synchronize higher education credits across

borders. This shift towards integration of European universities seeks to improve the

competitive abilities of their higher education system in the world arena. This

restructuring of institutions was designed to improve both professional and financial

effectiveness. (Hrubos, 2002).

As a result of globalization, foreign economic, social, cultural, and political

influences are significantly impacting social work education. This is bringing the social

issues and problems that social workers to must understand to a new level (Dominelli,

2010). Knowledge of how global issues affect policy and practice calls for an increased

awareness by social work educators to address relationships and the interdependence of

world's inhabitants. Immigrants seek to escape poverty by moving to more prosperous

areas; hence, social workers in those regions will be unable to avoid the challenges of

globalization. Traditional social work education and practice in the United States has

increasingly focused on the individual and is clinically based, with emphasis on

pathology. This model does not align with the ideology of societies that value a

communal or collectivist approach and for whom survival is the primary social problem

(Jones & Truell, 2012; Caragata & Sanchez, 2002).

Polack (2004) contends that the social work curriculum needs to infuse content on

social justice issues from a global perspective at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International

Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) adopted in 2004 an international definition of

social work. Nine sets of global standards for social work education were developed by

these two organizations (Sewpaul & Jones, 2004; 2005). The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development: Commitment to Action was released in March 2012, committing to achieving stable and resilient communities in conjunction with addressing the underlying causes of poverty and oppression. Conversely, Webb (2003) challenges the concept of global social work arguing that the social and political contexts are interpreted differently on a local level; and any attempts to define the profession under a universalist definition devalues the profession's identity from the local practice context, making sustainability doubtful. Instead of attempting to universalize definitions and values, the focus needs to emphasize collaboration to address social injustice and poverty, to acknowledge differences, and to recognize commonalities in developing goals (Gray & Fook, 2004).

Effective social work education and training are integral links in the development of policies that will foster positive outcomes (Jones & Truell, 2012). Gabel and Healy (2012) encourages social work education to consider the universally common characteristics and practice methods "that continue to inform and challenge social work practice" on a global level (p. 632). Social work graduates need to be informed and to develop an understanding beyond the traditional trichotomy of micro, mezzo, and macro systems practice with the implications of globalization, both positive and negative. An integrative social work curriculum needs to adopt a meta-practice framework that is interrelated and sustainable, as a response to global change (Dominelli, 2010; Grise-Owens, Miller, & Owens, 2014). Aligning with the 2008 and the proposed 2015 EPAS core curriculum competencies globalization of social work education and practice calls

for incorporating the knowledge, skills and values associated with the profession within a

multicultural context.

Summary

Harvey and Green (1993) in their seminal work argued that quality cannot be

limited to a single definition, belying the idea that this term can be interpreted

consistently among the proliferating stakeholders who seek to define the mission of

higher education. They categorize the concept of quality into five distinct but

interconnected classifications; transformation is the overarching concept, with the others

subsumed within this theme.

A shortcoming of Harvey and Green's 1993 theory is the authors' fail to

acknowledge culture as a critical influence. Culture, which is a complex and fluid term,

integrates components of psychological beliefs, conjectures, and acquired knowledge,

creating symbolic meaning that reflects what is believed to be true at that point in time

(Baligh, 1994; Kekäle, 1999). Culture resonates throughout all aspects of a society,

including higher education; this is echoed within individual institutions down through

specific disciplines and departments. Just as the society has evolved, becoming more

complex, so too, has culture within the academy (Austin, 1990; Schrecker, 2010).

Disciplines are influenced by the organizational environment and mission that inspire the

norms and beliefs that define the meaning of quality as it is viewed to those inside and

outside academia (Tierney, 1988).

Culture has shaped how the field of social work has evolved since it became an

accredited profession in the early 1900s. The inclusion of undergraduate programs in

1974, identification of academic standards through CSWE, and the change from objectives to competencies in social work education further exemplify how the field has progressed over time. Culture in social work education is primarily limited to describing situations that influence social workers or the client populations they serve.

Although undergraduate social work educators are key stakeholders in social work programming, they often have little input into what determines quality or even how it is defined. The literature fails to define quality in undergraduate social work education, except for individual factors associated with specific aspects of the field. The contextual framework for the present study is based on the five concepts of quality as defined by Harvey and Green (1993). This study explores how undergraduate social work program directors and faculty propose to define each of Harvey and Green's (1993) five concepts, and how each concept could be operationalized in undergraduate social work education. The study attempts to develop a cohesive definition of the five concepts of quality as they might be applied to undergraduate social work education. These definitions can contribute to understanding how quality is perceived and interpreted, thus identifying considerations for future research, accreditation standards, and implications for stakeholder resource allocation.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL APPLICATION

When defining the concept of quality, this study incorporates two theories, human capital and constructivism. Human capital theory is relatively new and taken from the free market economic bastion at the University of Chicago in the late sixties. Constructivism roots are much older and can be traced back to the ancient Greek philosophers. Each theory provides the framework in how the different aspects of quality are distinctive, yet related.

Human Capital Theory

Human capital theory grew out of the work of the economic philosopher Adam Smith (1963/1776) and observes that individuals who possess knowledge, skills, and experience have increased productivity, yielding either a personal benefit or an organizational gain. From a historical perspective, formal education was not a direct measure of human capital. Prior to the industrial revolution, knowledge and skills were primarily acquired through apprenticeships, with education being in the form of learning a trade of which literacy was not generally a component. Education before the advent of industry centered on religion and philosophy rather than technical knowledge and skills associated with monetary gain (Mokyr, 2013). In the current age, a key to developing human capital is investment in education. On a micro level, education contributes to personal benefits including improved health, social change, economic growth, and in less

99

quantifiable terms, an overall improvement in the quality of life (Sweetland, 1996;

Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008). At the organizational level, the focus is on employees as

valuable resources and assets. Subjectively as well as objectively, human capital is about

the potential of maximizing company profit (Bourdieu, 1986). On a macro level, the

economic prosperity of a society is dependent upon the investment in human capital, of

which education is a potential for advancing monetary productivity (Olaniyan &

Okemakinde, 2008).

 Bourdieu (1986) from the sociological perspective divides human capital into

three distinct forms: economic capital, which reduces all exchanges to immediate

financial transactions, cultural capital, which determines how various social classes

allocate cultural and economic investment into scholastic achievement that in turn

converts into economic capital; and social capital, which symbolizes relationships of

social connections that can translate into economic capital (p. 281). Marshall in his

seminal work on human capital economics during the late 19th and early 20th centuries

emphasized the role of family with the long-term benefits of investment in human capital

(Rosenthal & Strange, 2008; Rosen, 1994). Gofen (2009) in a study on first generation

college students, further delineates cultural and social capital to include family capital as

a form of non-material resources. Investment in resources made by families translates

into future economic capital benefits for the children. The combination of social, cultural,

and economic capital when linked together promote academic achievement and create

opportunities for advancement.

Becker (1962) from the economics school at the University of Chicago developed the concept of human capital, hypothesizing that education and training raise an individual's capability, which results in increased productivity and efficiency. This outcome produces an increase in personal income, which is a direct gauge of the value of human capital (Bloom, Hartley, & Rosovsky, 2007; Välimaa & Hoffman, 2008).

The rate of economic return on educational investment has long been thought to be a critical motivator in advancing research, innovation, and development in the creation of new technology and products and is the crux of human capital theory (Bell, 1973; Becker, 1993). Individuals who attend college can expect to accrue greater financial wealth when compared to those without a degree (Attewell & Lavin, 2012). A linear relationship seems to exist between educational degrees and economic growth. This form of credentialing leads to a highly skilled labor force, and to greater economic output for society (Becker, 1962, 1993). In a progressively competitive job market, higher education credentials legitimize the perception of status, as possessing a degree is viewed as being advantageous. Institutional quality and status have also been found to positively influence income in comparison to graduates who receive degrees from less prestigious or lower-quality institutions with some majors enjoying a higher salary than others. The economic stakes in choosing an institution extend to cost, which usually results in a higher debt burden to the individual along with the belief that future total compensation will be greater (Thomas, 2003; Thomas & Zhang, 2005). Although lower and middle socioeconomic graduates realize monetary benefits from receiving a degree, access to higher quality education is often compromised, leading to an inequity of opportunity for

them relative to higher socioeconomic graduates (Zhang & Thomas, 2005). While

statistically significant, Thomas & Zhang (2005) found the college quality factor to be

considerably smaller than previous studies.

Demographic effects account for a portion of the variation of return on economic

investment. As an example, a baby-boom followed by baby-bust will affect the return on

human capital, delayed by a generation. Geographic effects account for a second factor

with growth of urban areas and job opportunities increasing demand for human capital.

The spillover has a role in the consequential impact on the return of investment on

education (Rosen, 1994; Rosenthal & Strange, 2008). Discrimination accounts for a third

feature. Gender disparity, with females realizing considerably less financial gains

compared to males, especially between older women and men, even after adjusting for

occupation. Furthermore, the number of hours worked has also influenced economic

returns for educational attainment (Thomas & Zhang, 2005; Rosen, 1994).

The proliferation of higher education institutions and degrees in more recent years

has brought diminishing financial returns and status. With increased number of degree-

holding applicants, employers focus more on individual abilities and personal attributes

than on the mere possession of a degree. The more prestigious and well-established

programs provide greater employment prospects to graduates (Berggren, 2010;

McGuinness, 2006). In addition, the link between the level of education and personal

income is heavily influenced by both political determinants and by personal choice of

field or major (Tomlinson, 2008; Brown & Hesketh, 2004; Van Dyke & Dixon, 2013).

An exploratory study by Tomlinson (2008) found in addition to possessing a degree,

students were concerned with value-added skills related to competency, personal and behavioral characteristics, and experience in securing employment. Advantages associated with cultural and social resources reflected differences in economic opportunity and status with employment, thus reinforcing disparity and inequality. Ability bias confounds the role of education attainment in later career success, especially when combined with other mitigating ability factors including experience, family background, and skills, thereby diminishing the value of the degree itself in determining future earnings (Rosen, 1994).

In today's knowledge society, (Välimaa & Hoffman, 2008) globalization has led to a mobility of talent across the globe and greater competition for jobs. Furthermore, higher education in a post-modern world is expected to provide "people, research, knowledge, technologies, and products" (p. 266). The economics of higher education institutions has been altered to reflect a more supply side perspective, with an increasing number of institutions, an expansion in the diversity of programs within universities, and a decline in specialized providers of higher education (Brown, 2011).

The idea of public versus private goods was discussed by Samuelson (1954) who defined a pure public good as having the ability to be inexhaustible and/or non-excludable with intangible benefits that are not confined to individuals. What characterizes a public good in practice can be ambiguous and often guided by assumptions. Knowledge, which is considered a public good, has benefits that can be subject to interpretation (Marginson, 2011). The belief that higher education is a public good has been altered in recent years as the political and cultural environment of

American society has changed. The influence of education in relation to human capital

appears to be dependent upon what the intellectual and political elite of a nation view as

valuable. (Marginson, 2011; Mokyr, 2013). A private good is defined as one being non-

rivalrous and non-excludable and characterized as having benefit solely to the individual.

Higher education while traditionally considered a form of public good, also has aspects of

private virtue in that it directly benefits the individual in the form of monetary gain

(Marginson, 2011).

      The role of the university is being redefined through changing educational policy.

Social, economic, and political constructs create discourse on the relationship and

landscape of higher education to the greater society (Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008;

Välimaa & Hoffman, 2008; Sweetland, 1996).

      Applicability of quality as perfection or consistency to human capital theory rests

with the belief that consistency will take the form of accreditation. Documentation and

sanctioning of programs will provide the quality standards by which graduates of higher

education will be judged by employers (Harvey, 2002, pp. 250-251). Assessed on

standards of competence, institutions of higher learning will give graduates transferable

skills and knowledge designated by employers as being valuable for entry into specific

vocations or careers. Universities will be judged on the outputs of accreditation i.e.

employment, reflecting a quantifiable cost/benefit of an investment into a degree (Harvey

2002; Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2007). The growing conceptualization as having

universities and colleges be learning societies that are consumer driven has brought a

shift from lifelong learning to having knowledge neatly packaged and contained into

various modes of delivery. Effectiveness is calculated by a narrow range of tangible

measures such as course completion, retention, and graduation rates. Consistency with set

standards is achieved through quality control of processes and products. Essentially

approaching quality through this consumer market approach emphasizes the role of

higher education as contributing to individual wealth creation and economic advancement

(Morley, 2003; Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2007). Perfection is viewed as meeting the

standards for performance and outcomes, which are measured in an objective,

quantifiable manner; thus this form of quality will be guided by exceeding consumer

expectations (Reeves & Bednar, 1994; Morley, 2003). The value of education becomes

explicitly addressed as a series of utilitarian performance indicators and a source of labor

for a market economy (Chung Sea Law, 2010; Morley, 2003).

Identifying that the fitness for purpose dimension of higher education is

dependent upon the perception of the stakeholder, Harvey and Green (1993) acknowledge

that quality is judged by specifications of a product, which are mediated by a much larger

system that dictates the desired design and characteristics of this final product. These

specifications heavily influence the requirements of educational services, creating an

ever-changing definition of quality. Quality assurance is often framed in the context of

who is driving the definition of fitness and the circumstances behind that decision, with

market led competition placing a higher emphasis in one realm in relation to another area.

Competing personal and economic interests have created a conundrum on how higher

education institutions define and fulfill their mission and purpose (Bastedo & Gumport,

2003). The apex of higher education rests upon universities providing a richness of

information to counter a poverty of understanding by students in comprehending knowledge that can be critically analyzed and deconstructed, not merely reduced to forms of replication. Contributions to the institutional mission of higher education include conferring knowledge acquisition, not through just instrumental skill learning, but with reflective learning, which promotes application, synthesis, and evaluation; all of these attributes are ways in which higher education contributes to human capital (Glisczinski, 2007, p. 318).

Value for money is associated with economic foundations of quality. Focusing on the potential of direct and indirect economic returns on investment in human capital through higher education contributes to greater individual and societal benefits via increased productivity. Often politically motivated, the investment in education is explicitly linked to efficiency and effectiveness in producing quantifiable outcomes (Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008; Harvey & Green 1993). The value added approach to human capital is stratified due to complex variables of social and cultural attributes, which affect the long-term investment associated with higher education (Thomas & Zhang, 2005). Glisczinski (2007) differentiates cultural capital which focuses on what is perceived to be correct by the mainstream and by established political, commercial, social, and educational associations from human capital, which supports the individual through assets of energy and resources. Lack of critical discourse combined with lack of investment in the process of developing human capital contributes to students' confusing knowledge for understanding and corroding their ability to distinguish between

instrumental learning of facts and transformative awareness and actualization of their significance.

The value-added approach is not confined to monetary or market gain, but rather in whatever means can be signified as having value (Bowen, 1977). The culture of accountability has led to a paradigm shift from relationships to economic terms of a provider/producer to commodity/consumer nexus. Expressed in terms of efficiency, the diminishing financial support combined with increased demands of accountability has led to greater outcome expectations from governmental resources secured within the higher education domains. Quantifiable indicators incorporate multiple stakeholder systems that share performance measures, drawing on a human capital framework. Students, faculty, and the overall institutions share a hierarchical approach to assessing inputs, processes and outcomes in response to social, political, and economic trends with global competiveness and knowledge capital (Coates, 2007; Bowen, 1977). The quality of higher education has moved from a democratic form of accountability measures that emphasized a collective public purpose to a neo-liberal form of a value-added or investment return approach involving externally imposed control measures and performance indicators that embrace a free-market system to higher education. These ideological goals represent a paradigm shift from perceiving higher education as a public good to viewing it as a private commodity (Ranson, 2003; Biesta; 2004).

Constructivist Theory

Constructivism, also known as constructionism, is a theory of knowledge, encompassing a vast number of disciplines. These include developmental, linguistic, and

counseling psychology, biology, science philosophy, mathematics, sociology, social work, and any field associated with forms of living systems (Rockmore, 2005). D. E. Carpenter (2011) notes that constructivism is best judged when understood in the context of ontology, which comprises the metaphysical study of the nature of reality and epistemology that is the philosophical study of knowledge, its origins, truths, and limits (p. 118). Although considered a post-modern theory, constructivism has philosophical origins in relativism as it describes how individuals develop and process knowledge. The framework in which constructivism operates varies with the context or domain of application (Mir & Watson, 2000).

The three distinct historical eras associated with the development of human belief systems are pre-modern, modern, and post-modern; these stages reflect different beliefs and approaches to seeking and understanding truth and reality (D. E. Carpenter, 2011). Attempts to understand life combining religion, belief, and principles hallmarked the pre-modern period from the sixth century BC through the fifteenth century AD. The period from the Renaissance to the mid to late twentieth century brought forth logical positivism, which held that knowledge and truth were only gained through observation, with a rational approach involving empirical testing and deductive reasoning. The post-modern period beginning with the latter half of the twentieth century puts forth the idea that knowledge is constructed or created with viable and subjective truths rather than with valid and absolute truths (D. E. Carpenter, 2011; Sexton 1997).

The ancient Greek philosopher, Protagoras (c.490-c.420BC) proclaimed that "Man is the measure of all things: of things which are, that they are, and of things which

are not, that they are not." This is interpreted to mean there is no absolute truth, no true

objectivity, with reality being that of each individual's perception, therefore knowledge

of the external world is dependent upon a perceptual experience. Consequently, no one

perception is held to being truer than another (Rockmore, 2005; Reynolds, Sinatra, &

Jetton, 1996, p. 94).

Kant (1724-1804), with his philosophical approach to constructivism delineates

between mathematics and philosophy. The former is dependent upon what can be created,

made, or produced while the latter analyzes what has been revealed, exposed, or

discovered (Rockmore, 2005; Reynolds et al., 1996). Kant's position on human

knowledge focused on the mind, which he felt was an instinctive organ affecting thoughts

and experiences (the heuristic) with a *priori knowledge* (the basic phenomenon)

occurring. Kant believed that knowledge combined the a priori state of the human mind

with the experiences resulting from the interaction of individuals with the world around

them. Kant's interpretation has been "viewed as the foundation of constructivist theory"

(D. E. Carpenter, 2011, p. 119).

Vaihinger (1852-1933) proposed the "as if" philosophy, which challenged the

idea that humans really understand the world's fundamental reality. Instead, man creates

systems of beliefs and thoughts that are constructed realities. This conceptual form of

constructivism assumes these ideas to be true as a means to harmonize with what is

perceived to be authentic in order to co-exist in an irrational world (von Glasersfeld,

1989; D. E. Carpenter, 2011).

From a metatheoretical perspective on constructivism, reality is said to exist on three levels: 1) in the external world, 2) in the cognitive system, and 3) in the knowledge created through human action (Popper, 1966; Dowd & Pace, 1989, p. 214). Hence, the human mind functions similar to a sensory motor system whereby an individual constructs knowledge and theories of the world and of themselves. Piaget (1886-1980) in his work on cognitive development viewed the child as a biological organism who utilized sensorimotor structures and responses to construct a way of knowing within their world. Continued interaction with the environment and biological maturation allow for assimilating experiences into organized behavioral patterns through a hierarchical process, with new patterns emerging as information is gained. Relative equilibrium of a child is maintained with knowledge development through this adaptive process with the assimilation of new experiences. The new information and experiences result in the reorganization of the existing accumulated knowledge structure through disequilibrium; subsequently, the process of accommodation occurs when the assimilation is no longer possible. (Piaget, 1954, 1977; Rockmore, 2005; Reynolds et al., 1996). This cognitive developmental process extends Piaget's model into adulthood, creating a framework for understanding constructivist change process in psychotherapy and other forms of counseling (Dowd & Pace, 1989). In his work on radical constructivism von Glasersfeld (1917-2010) proposed that knowledge and understanding are cumulative. Both concepts are dependent upon the perception and subjective internalization of experiences by an individual rather than an actual representation of what transpires. This adaptive process serves to help individuals make sense of their environment and adjust to it (von

Glasersfeld, 1989, 1990). The constructivist epistemology has led to the development of variants of constructivism, identified as cognitive, radical, social, critical, and cultural respectively (D. E. Carpenter, 2011; Phillips, 1997). Recent developments in neuroscience have revealed a greater understanding of how subjective behaviors, emotions, and experiences relate to the function of the brain and nervous systems. Neurobiological research proposes an interdependent relationship between emotions and rationality recognizing that this association fosters transformative learning (E. W. Taylor, 2001). Their empirical findings converge with constructivist theoretical underpinnings. A recent meta-analysis on neuroimaging investigating human emotion found specific regions of the brain that were activated during emotional and perceptual experiences (Lindquist, Wager, Kober, Bliss-Moreau, & Barrett, 2012).

Institutional cultures with their norms, values, and beliefs share common elements incorporating symbols, language, practices, and narratives that are subject to the interpretative processes of those individuals connected with the organization (Toma, Dubrow, & Hartley, 2005). The foundation of culture is predicated on the concept of truth and what is defined as truth. While beliefs and truths are logically connected, it is the concept of truth that defines what is to be believed. Related to both components is the concept of values, which together influence the order of life within the culture of a system (Baligh, 1994). Institutions of higher education viewed as a social system, demonstrate subsystems of both convergent and divergent disciplines. Convergent disciplines display greater self-regulation, more homogeneous standards, and fairly stable leadership. Alternatively, divergent disciplines are characterized by greater deviance of

boundaries, theories, and structures that are frequently subject to shifts in standards. The

context in which both subsystems function depict the epistemological structure of higher

education institutions, which are based on the collective socially constructed values,

beliefs, and norms within organizations (Trowler, 2008; Becher, 1989). The social reality

and change within universities involve the relationship between the structural aspect

describing the influence of disciplines on academic faculty, and the agentic component,

belying the identity and narrative construction of the dynamics between members

(Trowler, 2008, p. 1). Social constructivism inhabits the basic fabric of institutions,

describing the educational ideologies that define who they are and what they represent to

the outside world.

Traditionally, quality is defined in terms of excellence (Lomas, 2002, 2004).

However, as Poole (2010) reflects, described in this context, quality as excellence

becomes a variable that is dependent upon the linguistic context in which it is rendered.

From the constructivist perspective, quality as excellence has transitioned from "an

attribute to a commodity" (Barcan, 1996, p. 134). As with Kant's delineation between

mathematics and philosophy, an attribute can be described as a characteristic that can be

uncovered or revealed, while a commodity can be depicted as being something created or

produced, giving it quantifiable traits (Barcan, 1996; Rockmore, 2005)

The true meaning of quality as excellence in its narrative form becomes a

complex set of principles, whose ontological arête is constantly changing and evolving.

Quality as excellence is a particular construct that is subject to the interpretation of the

different stakeholders with disagreement of how this is both defined and measured

(Cleary, 2001). Harvey and Green (1993) describe excellence in one form as having set standards to be exceeded: the "what" of standards is in comparison to identified measures while the degree of "how much" indicates the benchmark criteria by which the standard is measured. Defining excellence is value laden by nature, thereby presenting difficulties in reaching a consensus on how this is to be articulated in multiple domains due to the subjective nature of its meaning (Coates, 2010; Astin 1999). Institutions of higher education are constantly challenged by the broader forces of social, political, and cultural influences that demand tangible outcomes. How schools respond as they attempt to meet these expectations without sacrificing standards of educational quality has reshaped the landscape and mission of higher education (Berg, Csikszentmihalyi, & Nakamura, 2003). A constructivist defining of excellence has led to multiple ideals and perspectives all utilizing the same word without a coherent meaning (Harvey & Green, 1993; Rush & Hart, 2006).

Divergent views of excellence extend to the program level in higher education institutions varying with the type of degree being offered. Accreditation can be viewed as a hallmark of excellence as it establishes definable requirements and principles of knowledge, skills, and resources that are unique to a specific profession. How the requirements and principles are defined becomes altered as external social, political, and cultural contexts change, compelling programs to undergo periodic reviews to demonstrate continued qualifications (Dew, 2009). Indeed the quality standards of excellence in social work through EPAS have changed from objectives to competencies,

reflecting a paradigm shift from defining attainment of academic standards to demonstrating skills and abilities of the profession post-graduation (CSWE, 2010).

The implication of quality as perfection is difficult to apply in the area of higher education. The concept suggests that teaching and learning can be considered products, narrowly defined with formal, tangible processes that guarantee consistency and conformance to standards while promoting efficiency (Reeves & Bednar, 1994). Thus rigid standards in higher education are reinforced through monitoring and external reviews that break down educational processes into small, separate, and measurable parts. As such, this system makes learning devoid of individual accomplishment for the sake of educational orthodoxy (Newton 2002; Mukerjee, 2011). Graduates of higher education are not identical in their achievements, nor should they be expected to demonstrate this conformity. Unfortunately, in this highly subjective context, perfection is more applicable to manufacturing (Campbell & Rozsnyai 2002; Knight, 2001). Learning, along with the nature of quality is personal and often unique, with no clear definition applicable to all circumstances (Reeves & Bednar, 1994). Quality as perfection is socially constructed and as such, wields tremendous power as a constantly shifting ideal significant of cultural change (Morley, 2003). By contrast, the reductionist view that seeks to turn learning and teaching into standardized, tangible outputs implies that quality can be attained in a perfunctory way (Poole, 2010).

Consistency is a quality characteristic, which unlike perfection denotes a degree of flexibility and variation rather than arguing strict specifications with error aversion. Viewed as a holistic, collaborative process, it incorporates an integrative,

ontological approach encompassing multiple perspectives toward common goals and

shared expectations (Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2007; Harvey & Stensaker, 2008).

Institutional or program accreditation recognizes that certain explicit standards with

curriculum design and content, mission, resources, and other processes meet an identified

threshold (Chung Sea Law, 2010). The accreditation process allows a broad scope in

determining how these standards are to be measured yet reflects an interpretation within a

consistent framework (Campbell & Rozsnyai, 2002). Acknowledging the complexity and

uniqueness of individual programs and/or institutions embraces a constructivist position

by building adaptability into the process based on the individual culture of the program or

institution (Chung Sea Law, 2010; Munson, 1994). Each complements the other with key

components of the educational experience (Abrahmson & Kimsey, 2002).

Transformation is highly interpretative, as it is understood from the point of the

individual. Subjective and objective reframing of experiences and knowledge are shaped

by beliefs and values that construct new meaning-making systems. Mezirow's theory of

learning is based on a constructivist assumption: "Learners interpret and reinterpret their

sense experience is, central to making meaning and hence learning" (Mezirow, 1994, p.

222). Viewed as an ongoing change process, transformation empowers students and seeks

to add value to their learning experience, education promoting this change process rather

than providing a form of service to a customer (Harvey, 2002). A more comprehensive

understanding of an individual's world is developed when explored through the reflection

with one's interactions with others. Leading to personal growth, transformation creates

new socially constructed realities and understanding of how beliefs and values affect

individual choices and development (Laff, 2005). Core concepts of quality as transformation lie in critical reflection and change. Developmental change occurs through a structure of assumptions and conventional perceptions as an individual progresses through the life cycle. Perspective transformation engages critical reflection, challenging banal assumptions of meaning schemes and representing a developmental shift in the framework of social reality of the world (Tennant, 1993). The characteristics of transformation through higher education on an institutional level emphasize learning as a process, using innovation and engagement to enhance and empower students through a qualitative change. Adding value to the learning experience, it is ongoing, facilitated throughout the university, and encourages dialogue, responsiveness to change, teamwork, and trust (Harvey & Green, 1993; Harvey, 2002).

Constructivist Theory in Qualitative Research.

While the definition and meaning of quality can be perceived as being socially constructed, operationally; the focus remains on how to measure and quantify the word (Watty, 2006; Hubbell, 2007; Van Kemenade et al. 2008). Harvey and Green (1993) propose a theoretical perspective related to higher education. Their work builds upon the two antecedent theories of constructivism and post-positivism. Ontologically relativist and epistemologically subjectivist, constructivist grounded theory reshapes the interaction between researcher and participants in the research process and in doing so brings to the fore the notion of the researcher as author. Professional ideals, values, and attitudes are influenced by the culture from which they were acquired (Sexton, 1997).

Quality as a concept for research from a constructivist perspective is dependent upon the context and influences that have shaped and maintained the participant's viewpoint.

In educational institutions, quality is viewed as a desirable outcome, sought through efficiency and accountability to advance their position and/or reputation in the educational market. Elements that define quality can be seen as conflictual and include inputs, fiscal ability, educational experiences, process results and outputs (Harvey & Green, 1993; Harvey 2002; Lagrosen, et al., 2004).

Following suit, social work programs have sought ways to define and measure quality based on the above elements. In the early 1980s, the development of competency-based programming impacted baccalaureate social work education with an attempt to tie this concept to curriculum designs in programs. Although initially accepted, a key factor diminishing the influence of this movement is the difficulty in reducing social work competencies to specific, observable behaviors, which can be measured for reliability and validity. In essence, this reductionist approach of the competency based model reiterates the empiricist position by converting behaviors into some form of measurement (Gingerich, Kaye, & Bailey, 1999).

Changes in CSWE standards have led to the development of social work learning outcomes to serve as the standard benchmark of accountability for accredited social work programs. Learning outcomes, defined as abilities, are embedded in social work curricula and assessed throughout the educational process. The focus has turned to learning versus teaching, but from a social constructionist perspective, this is often difficult due to the individualistic nature of this approach. Learning is an epistemological process that

requires diversity of options for implementation. Knowledge requires self-awareness of the individual's cultural background upon beliefs and behaviors; skills are acquired in critical thinking and perspective and values reflect the need for personal integrity and non-discriminatory practice (Gingerich, et al., 1999, Mcphee & Bronstein, 2002). Constructivism provides a natural fit for documenting this transformation of learning. In deconstructing traditional models of classroom education the idea of multiple epistemologies can enhance and broaden the vision and mission of social work practice (Campbell & Unger, 2003).

Constructivist inquiry is conducted in various modalities that include face to face narratives and interviews, observation, analysis of documents, and organizational reports, with a key strategy focused on the participants' views and how these are constructed (Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006; Ponterotto, 2005; Manning, 2000; Polkinghorne, 2005; Fassinger, 2005). Within the research design model employing qualitative methods, the multi-dimensional perspective of the subjective-objective blend and the social constructivist epistemology allow for a nontraditional paradigm in the composition of design, affording the development of a foundational approach to interpretative validity (Lloyd, 2008; Pouliot, 2007; Manning, 2000). One aspect of constructivist inquiry is that the model of the study cannot be fully determined in advance, with fluidity a principal feature of this form of research. The interaction between the researcher and the participant reflects the development of a deeper understanding that shapes and molds the research design, allowing for emergent meanings. The complexity of constructivism, often contradictory in nature, creates a paradox reflective of the individuals'

interpretation of their experiences (Ponterotto, 2005; Manning, 2000; Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). Constructivist inquiry provides a vertical depth that cannot be obtained by the use of traditional quantitative methods. Meaning is contextualized through language, allowing for a unique description by the participant (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 138).

The development of constructivist grounded theory in research requires theoretical sensitivity. It demands that researchers accrue continual experience and knowledge as they collect and analyze data. The accumulation of knowledge combined with a sense of awareness develops insight and the capacity to give logic and understanding to the pertinent data through a cyclical process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Higginbottom & Lauridsen, 2014). Charmaz (2014) proposes that researchers are subjective and consistent with their interpretation of data, but recognize how their ideas are influenced and relate to prior experiences, positions, and perspectives. The collection of data involves identifying themes, interactions, relationships, and groupings, refining the categories and ideas as new information is captured and analyzed against existing data (Charmaz, 2014; Lal, Suto, & Ungar, 2012). Findings are thus interpreted not as a single reality but as multiple realities constructed by participants and by the researcher, making the process a relativist and subjective ontological approach, demonstrating the complexities involved with an emerging theory (Charmaz, 2014; Ponterroto, 2005; Wertz, et al., 2011; Lal et al., 2012; Holstein & Gubrium, 1995).

Sample size in constructivist grounded theory is often times difficult to predict, with the focus on the "quality on the data obtained as opposed to the quantity of

individuals recruited" (Lal et al., 2012, p. 10). Described as a theoretical sampling with emerging theory, Charmaz (2014) characterized this process as an ongoing assessment that contains multiple perspectives and viewpoints. The recruitment of additional participants is determined through the examination of additional information or data for the contribution to new themes, categories, relationships, or ideas. The sample size for qualitative research on emerging theory varies and continues until a level of saturation occurs. A review of the literature on adequate sample size reveals a range of between 10 to 60 participants, although the number varies, with a larger number not necessarily leading to a higher quality of results (Starks & Trinidad 2007; Lal et al., 2012).

The analysis and quality of the findings under constructivist grounded theory is dependent upon the transparency of the guidelines and systematic, rigorous procedures of coding and diagramming, representing both structure and process (Mills et al., 2006). The analytical process considers how to maintain a balance between accurately describing the experiences of the participants and depicting the results into a meaningful theoretical interpretation. Qualitative inquiry as an approach in the development of constructivist grounded theory strives to assert the credibility of a study and to reaffirm this methodology as a legitimate form of discovery research (Thomas & James, 2006; Charmaz, 2014; Mills et al., 2006).

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

To date there have been no studies in the literature that define quality in social work from an educator's perspective. This study involved a qualitative methodology; its philosophical research approach concentrates on the narrative descriptions of the participants. Using semi-structured interviews to gather data and bring depth to the questions asked during this process, the study attempted to determine a cohesive definition and operationalization of the five concepts of quality: a) excellence, b) perfection/consistency, c) fitness for purpose, d) value for money and e) transformation. The interviews were recorded with a voice-activated recorder and the transcribed either manually or through Dragon Voice. Structural coding operations identified current themes and sub-themes associated with the definition of quality, its application to undergraduate social work education, the operationalization of each of the five concepts, and any other concepts that the participants identified that described quality not related to the aforementioned five or could be considered a sub-category of one of the five.

Describing the educators' perspective is important as this can reveal if there is agreement on the five concepts, not only to construct a cohesive definition, but also to consider how personal beliefs may impact perceptions of the essence of quality in social work education. Westerheijden (1999) and Watty (2006) suggest that quality in higher education needs to be connected to a specific process that becomes the catalyst for

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transformative change. CSWE mentions the term quality three times in the 2008 EPAS; however, in the 2015 EPAS this term is used six times, twice when discussing the accreditation process.

"The accreditation review process provides professional judgments on the *quality* of a social work education program in an institution. These findings are based on applying the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) promulgated by the Commission on Educational Policy (COEP) and the COA. The essential purpose of the accreditation process is to provide a professional judgment of the quality of the program offered and to encourage continual improvement. Moreover, systematic examination of compliance with established standards supports public confidence in the *quality* [emphasis added] of professional social work education and in the competence of social work practice" (CSWE, 2015, p. 4).

CSWE does not define the concept of quality, but only alludes to the assumption that somehow, the definition is known and agreed upon by everyone. Yet, educators, who are the primary channels of delivery in the learning environment, have little input or guidance into how CSWE judges quality in social work education. Gambrill (2001) identifies quality and accreditation in social work as linked to evaluating outcome measures of graduates, ignoring the context of how the process of social work education may influence the concept. Social work educators are sometimes viewed as gatekeepers, but this view fails to acknowledge faculty's perception of quality in this role (Bracy, 2000; Sowbel, 2012).

Research Design/Instrumentation

Qualitative research facilitates the exploration of concepts and issues in detail and depth. The inductive approach together with qualitative methods explores multiple dimensions that can emerge from the data, without the constraints of a narrowly defined or a linear hypothesis. Subjective, personal, and socially constructed, qualitative inquiry investigates ideas based the beliefs, attitudes, and experiences of the participants (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2013).

This study included an exploratory research project using a cross-sectional sample of undergraduate social work program directors and faculty members associated with CSWE accredited programs in the State of Wisconsin. At the end of this study, there were fifteen *accredited* BSW programs in the state, which include both private, not for profit and public, not for profit.

Table 2. CSWE Accredited Programs in Wisconsin

College	City	Public or Private
Carthage College	Kenosha	Private, not for profit
Concordia University, Wisconsin	Mequon	Private, not for profit
George Williams College of Aurora University	Williams Bay	Private, not for profit
Marian University	Fond du Lac	Private, not for profit
Mount Mary College	Milwaukee	Private, not for profit
University of Wisconsin	Eau Claire	Public, not for profit
University of Wisconsin	Green Bay	Public, not for profit
University of Wisconsin	Madison	Public, not for profit
University of Wisconsin	Milwaukee	Public, not for profit
University of Wisconsin	Oshkosh	Public, not for profit
University of Wisconsin	River Falls	Public, not for profit
University of Wisconsin	Stevens Point	Public, not for profit
University of Wisconsin	Superior	Public, not for profit
University of Wisconsin	Whitewater	Public, not for profit
Viterbo University	La Crosse	Private, not for profit

While a private for profit institution may offer a CSWE accredited undergraduate social

work program within the United States, no such institution exists within the State of

Wisconsin.

This was a qualitative study that did not entail a control group. The experiences

and the meanings attached by the individuals illustrated their understanding of each these

five attributes of quality. Narrative information obtained in relating aspects of quality

other than the five concepts will be coded into sections to determine if there are other

consistent, descriptive terms.

From the descriptions provided by the BSW program directors and faculty, a

consistent, concise definition of each of the five concepts was developed. Methods of

application of the concepts along with the proposed operationalizations were also

identified in the interviews.

Sampling.

The population sampled would have ideally included all undergraduate social

work program directors in the State of Wisconsin and *at least* 2 faculty members from

each program. This is a purposeful form of sampling that provides a broad scope of

material reflective of diverse views and insight into the subject matter (Patton, 2002;

Merriam, 2001; Manning, 2000). Currently, there are fifteen accredited BSW programs.

However, Concordia University Wisconsin was not included in the study since this writer

was a faculty member there at the time of the interviews, presenting a situation of

possible bias for this study. In addition, George Williams College was excluded, as it is a

satellite program of Aurora University, an Illinois based institution. At the time of the

initial proposal for this study, the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point was in

candidacy. Since then, this institution has received full CSWE accreditation and therefore

has been included in this research project. The maximum number of respondents would

have included 26 faculty members and thirteen program directors. A demographic profile

of participants' gender, race, and length of years in the specific institution, current

position, length of time in this position, and tenure status was obtained. The highest

degree awarded in social work, the public or private status of the institution, and the total

enrollment of students in all social programs offered were all identified. All participants

were over the age of twenty-one and not considered a vulnerable population.

This exploratory study used a narrative, qualitative approach and a semi-

structured interview format. After a pilot interview was completed with a retired

Wisconsin BSW faculty member, revisions to the initial interview format were made to

decrease the possibility of bias in the presentation and phrasing of the questions.

This research study sought to ascertain the meaning of the five key concepts of

quality in the minds of social work educators. The resulting interpretations by the

participants of each term reflect the factors and determinants associated with BSW

programming. These interpretations incorporate the knowledge, skills, and values with

the applications of interpersonal relatedness and critical thinking aligned with the 2008

and the proposed 2015 EPAS (2010; 2015).

Investigative Technique and Design

Information was gathered through semi-structured interviews using inquiry

techniques to elicit from each participant a description of all five key concepts associated

with quality and how they are applicable to undergraduate social work education. In addition, each participant was asked how he or she anticipated how each term could be operationalized and measured. Moreover, the final question asked inquired if there was another concept of quality that should be included, and if so, whether it was a sub-category of one of the other five or a separate category.

Following each interview, the responses were transcribed into a written format. The transcriptions were sent via e-mail to each participant of their interview for comments and/or clarification of any ambiguities. This assisted in ensuring accuracy in the information collected. Reminders were sent to those participants who did not initially respond to the request for verification of the interview transcript. Phone contact was also completed to participants who still did not respond. Two individuals gave verbal approval, while four individuals never responded to multiple requests for review and verification.

Data Collection

Collection of data commenced by initially contacting program directors of BSW programs and faculty, seeking permission to meet and interview directors and two full-time faculty members. Several schools had small social work departments, with three or less full-time faculty, including the director. Therefore, selection was based on availability, resulting in the total number of interviews decreasing from the maximum number of 39 to 30.

All interviews were completed face-to-face using a semi-structured format, and recorded with permission for later transcription. Participants were also requested to

complete a demographics questionnaire (See Appendices XX and YY). The recorded

portion of the interviews lasted between 21 to 84 minutes. On the consent forms given to

each participant, Harvey and Green's five concepts of quality were listed (See Appendix

WW). The participants were asked to give their own definition to each of these five

concepts listed and relate them to undergraduate social work education. To avoid possible

bias, the participants were not given the definitions as described by Harvey and Green.

During each of the interviews, none of the participants admitted familiarity with Harvey

and Green's 1993 article on which this study was based.

Data Analysis Plan

This study involved a thematic analysis of the collected interview data, searching

for patterns and themes. The author and another educator analyzed the data from each

interview transcript independently. Results were then compared. In the event of a

discrepancy, a third individual agreed to review the results, but proved unnecessary.

As interviews were completed and transcribed, common themes and ideas within

the text were isolated, compiled, classified, and coded. The system was refined as new

categories emerged from additional interviews. Inductive analysis is contextual and

facilitates a creative synthesis of the data, focusing on multiple perspectives (Patton,

2002). Common words, descriptions, and themes obtained through the interviews were

identified for each of the five concepts of quality: 1) excellence or exceptional, 2)

perfection or consistency, 3) fitness for purpose, 4) value for money, and 5)

transformation.

There is no existing data on defining the five concepts of quality in social work education. This writer sought to develop a relevant and cohesive definition of each concept and proposed method of operationalization or measurement.

Ethical Considerations.

The design for this study was approved by expedited reviews through the IRB committees of Loyola University Chicago and Concordia University Wisconsin respectively. Steps were taken to ensure confidentiality of faculty and program directors. Identifiable characteristics that could impact them or their specific institutions were removed in the analysis. Any specific quotes used in the text were sent first to the particular interviewee for permission and accuracy. To protect confidentiality, comments were randomly numbered to decrease the possibility of identification of their original source. The data collected will be maintained for a period of five years after completion of the study before being destroyed. The consent form indicated that participation was strictly voluntary and that an individual could choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Please see the consent form (Appendix WW).

Biases.

Bias is inherent with any qualitative study as perceptions are shaped by the individual experiences, values, beliefs and culture (Patton, 2002, Manning, 2000). This writer's direct involvement within the academic community of social work may have represented potential bias during the individual interviews in how the information was presented to the participant. Careful consideration was made to prevent undue influence during the data collection and analysis process.

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study.

Since this was a qualitative study, certain forms of bias and limitations were undoubtedly present. The perceptions of the BSW program directors and faculty in Wisconsin may or may not reflect a broader population of the social work academic community within the United States. The results may or may not be generalizable to BSW programs and may not apply to MSW programs. While this study involved faculty and program directors of accredited social work schools in the State of Wisconsin, the generalizability is limited to the schools participating in this project. Limitations include a restricted availability of faculty and other contingent factors.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS

This qualitative study seeks to explore how quality, based on the five concepts identified by Harvey and Green (1993), is defined and understood by BSW program directors and faculty, and to consider whether a cohesive definition can be developed based on the data obtained. The previous chapter discusses the process by which the data was collected, analyzed, and coded. This chapter presents the results of those analyses.

Demographics

Since the sample size of this study was small with only thirty participants, the distributions of some demographics neither normal nor uniform. All thirteen programs are represented in the categories of program directors, faculty or both in this study. Overall, there were eight male (26.7%) and 22 female respondents (73.3%). Eleven program directors in the state were interviewed, four of them male (36.4%) and seven were female (63.6%). Of the twenty-six faculty initially proposed for the study, nineteen were interviewed, comprising four males (21.1%) and fifteen females (78.9%). All interviews were conducted face to face between June 2014 and January 2015. Six recorded interviews were lost prior to transcription. Three of these individuals, two program directors and one faculty member, agreed to be re-interviewed and were included in the results. The ethnicity of the participants was quite homogenous, with an overall breakdown "White" at 93.3% and "Native American/Alaskan" at 6.7%, which is

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fairly reflective of the population of Wisconsin. All of the participating program

directors were "White". Faculty ethnicity was represented by 89.5% "White" and 10.5%

"Native American/Alaskan".

A wide range was found in the respondents' "Years in current Position" and

"Number of Years at the Institution", reflecting a diversity in age and experience (See

Tables 3 and 4).

Table 3. Years in Current Position

	Mean	Median	Range	S.D.
Overall N=30	8.6	6.0	1-32	8.0
Program Directors N=11	7.7	3.0	1-20	7.5
Faculty N=19	9.1	7.0	1-32	8.4

Table 4. Years at the Institution

	Mean	Median	Range	S.D.
Overall N=30	13.0	10	1-41	9.6
Program Directors N=11	12.4	12	1-26	6.9
Faculty N=19	13.3	9	1-41	11.0

For the total sample, the majority of the respondents in the sample were tenured

(53.3%). However, the breakdown revealed that 81.9% of the program directors were

tenured compared with 36.8% of the faculty (See Table 5).

Table 5. Tenured v. Not Tenured

	Tenured	Not Tenured
Overall N=30	53.3%	46.7%
Program Directors N=11	81.8%	18.2%
Faculty N=19	36.8%	63.2%

While most of the program directors held the rank of either associate professor or full professor (72.8%), most of the faculty held the rank of assistant professor (57.9%) (See Table 6).

Table 6. Rank

	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Professor	Other (Instructor, Lecturer)
Overall N=30	43.3%	20%	30.0%	6.7%
Program Directors N=11	18.2%	36.4%	36.4%	9.1%
Faculty N=19	57.9%	10.5%	26.3%	5.3%

The majority of the programs in the State of Wisconsin offer only the BSW in social work (61.6%); only 23.1% of the participating institutions offer both BSW and MSW programs, and only two (15.4%) offer BSW, MSW, and PhD programs. Two institutions, the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh and the University of Wisconsin Green Bay were listed separately. Previously, the two institutions had shared a collaborative program, but this was in the process of being dissolved at the time of the study. There was a greater than 2:1 ratio of public versus private institutions (69.2% and 30.8%). No

MSW or PhD programs were offered at any of the private institutions. The number of

students per program varied, with a mean of 265.0, a median of 125, and a range of 75-

843, with a SD of 262.6. One unexpected finding was that the largest social work

program offered only the BSW degree (See Appendix A for full review of results).

Quality as Excellence

The concept of excellence is also noted as exceptional. For brevity, it will

hereafter, be referred to simply as excellence. The concept may be divided into three

variants, similar to those identified by Harvey and Green (1993).

Quality as Excellence as Theoretical or Philosophical

The first variant is one that is the traditional, philosophical view of excellence,

denoting a distinct and implicit form of quality that is not measurable, yet so exclusive

that it is instinctive and attainable by an elite few Harvey and Green (1993). Program

directors and faculty focus their answers on both the comprehensive meaning of

excellence and its applicability to higher education institutions. Faculty emphasize the

philosophical definition of excellence in relation to an institution (See Tables 7 and 8).

Table 7. Definition of Excellence as Theoretical or Philosophical – Comprehensive
Meaning

Program Directors	A quality that acts upon the concept of going above expectations and directed towards perfection by demonstrating neither an excess or a deficiency	
Faculty	A philosophy of success that involves exceeding expectations and performing at the very high end of a continuum	Exemplary, the "best", and remarkable with everyone desiring to achieve this, but rarely obtaining it

Table 8. Definition of Excellence Theoretical or Philosophical – Related to Higher
Education Institutions

Program Directors	A very high standard of education	
Faculty	Inclusive of a liberal arts core that involves a high level of teaching and learning, integrating core concepts	Academic excellence that is ethical, responsible, extending beyond graduation and involving a commitment to lifelong learning

Quality as Excellence as Narrowly Measured

Quality as excellence that is narrowly measured is the second variant. It views

excellence based on the highest standards, pertaining to both inputs and outputs. The data

revealed that this form of excellence received the greatest number of responses from

participants defining this concept. Three themes are established with faculty, curriculum,

and program. Within these themes, there appears to be a fair amount of agreement

between program directors and faculty, with one exception under the subtheme of faculty.

On the theme of "Faculty", both groups agree that faculty excellence includes not just

teaching of students, but also extends beyond the boundaries of a classroom to include

advising, service, and field. Program directors linked professional ethics with this narrow

framework of excellence, whereas faculty's concentrated on teaching abilities and

academic freedom. One outlier is the program director who identifies as an indicator of

excellence having undergraduates return as faculty members after obtaining a PhD from

another institution. The text from the interview reveals that this director feels that former

graduates desiring to return to the institution to teach is an indicator of quality (See Table

9).

Table 9. Definition of Excellence as Narrowly Measured – Faculty

Program Directors	Expertise of faculty who are team members, advise, complete service, and exhibit social work values	Faculty who uphold the values associated with the NASW Code of Ethics	Former undergraduates who return as faculty after receiving their PhDs elsewhere
Faculty	Motivation of faculty to achieve excellence in the pedagogy of students in the classroom, field, and advising	Faculty who make students thinkers along with developing knowledge and skills	Faculty who have academic freedom with teaching

The second theme of "Curriculum" was delineated from programs reflecting a differentiation of the two by both groups. Program directors held an inclusive view of both implicit and explicit curriculum, with faculty expressly defining contents of the curriculum that determined differing levels of excellence (See Table 10).

Table 10. Definition of Excellence as Narrowly Measured – Curriculum

Program Directors	A cohesive and comprehensive implicit and explicit curriculum reflective of the program	
Faculty	Broad content of curriculum, including the field internship within a SW program that reflects relevance, timely topics, academic preparedness, and communication skills	Curriculum that demonstrates an understanding of the core concepts of micro and macro social work including ethics, boundaries, diversity, and being open-minded

Finally, the third theme relates to social work "Programs", with overall agreement between program directors and faculty. Exceeding standards with the implicit and explicit curriculum and with the use of benchmarks for assessment and evaluation are recognized as being exceptional and holding students to a higher expectation. Faculty also explicitly

cite particular assets distinguishing excellence programs as including partnering and

responding to the needs of the greater community (See Table 11).

Table 11. Definition of Excellence Narrowly Measured – Programs

Program Directors	Implicit and explicit curriculum that reflects standards and exceeds benchmark outcomes	Defining and establishing measurements of excellence with competency practice behaviors and student growth and development	Programs that are balanced and hold high expectations of students, encouraging leadership qualities	
Faculty	BSW programs whereby the culture is one of exceeding expectations with students, curriculum, and CSWE standards	Programs that exceed rubrics and benchmarks that describe indirect and direct measures for assessment and evaluation of competencies, and practice behaviors	Programs that promote critical thinking, the mission and core values of social work	The reputation of a program and its ability to partner and respond to the greater community

Quality as Excellence with Meeting a Set of Standards

The third variation of quality as excellence or exceptional concerns an objective

approach to this concept by meeting a set of standards, frequently associated with

accreditation processes in higher education. Specifically applied to the profession of

social work, CSWE is the sole accrediting body; it requires programs to meet a specific

set of standards. CSWE accreditation of programs is imperative in all fifty states for

graduates to be eligible for licensing. The comments of the participants who identified

specific associations with CSWE or EPAS competencies were placed under this variance

of excellence. Program directors and faculty align closely with two separate themes

emerging from the data, although both relate to the CSWE accreditation process. "Overall

CSWE Standards" is the first theme tied directly to programs, and "Practice Behaviors

Associated with EPAS" the second, with EPAS, the specific document used to measure

program standards (See Tables 12 and 13).

Table 12. Definition of Excellence with Accreditation Standards – Overall CSWE
Standards

Program Directors	Adherence to CSWE standards and outcome measures		
Faculty	Establishing curriculum that meets CSWE standards and is individualized for program goals	Program excellence that exceeds CSWE standards	Faculty of the program, using a team approach and going above the CSWE standards

Table 13. Definition of Excellence with Accreditation Standards

Program Directors	EPAS competencies and practice behaviors that are benchmarks for programs
Faculty	Adherence to CSWE standards and outcome measures

Quality as Excellence: Operationalization

In the operationalization of excellence, the variants of 1) philosophical, 2)

narrowly measured, and 3) accreditation are not individually delineated. The first variant

being theoretical is not suitable for operationalization: therefore, it pertains to variants

two and three. Three themes of student, faculty, and program were identified.

Technically, the third variant of accreditation can be regarded as a meta-view with

programs, faculty, and students, as its components. The first and second themes of

"Students" and "Faculty" measure the individual versus the collective program. Program

directors and faculty both cite the use of benchmarks and competencies to assess the

concept of excellence, in addition to the accomplishments post-graduation. Faculty

specifically note admission to graduate programs as means to operationalize this concept.

One outlier is a program director who suggests assigning credit for demonstrating

competence, which coincides with the idea of competency based education-issuing

degrees based on demonstration of competence instead of grades (See Table 14).

Table 14. Operationalization of Excellence – Students

	Evaluating and ranking of competency and practice behavior outcomes by measuring assignments, role plays, class participation, and service learning	Performance post-graduation	Honor credit for demonstration of excellence as part of the competency based education
Program Directors			
Faculty	Assessing and evaluating competencies with benchmarking of individual students with assignments, exams, and field internships using pre/post surveys, self-evaluations, faculty, and field instructors	Admission to graduate programs	

The second theme of "Faculty" suggests that faculty are responsible for defining

excellence in social work. Directors operationalize this theme through the use of student

and peer reviews while faculty identify the use of only student reviews. Additionally,

program directors indicate that faculty need to demonstrate how they function as a team within the social work program; the specific method of achieving this is not given (See Table 15).

Table 15. Operationalization of Excellence – Faculty

Program Directors	Feedback and evaluations from students and peers	Evidence that faculty are functioning as a team and in unison with the program
Faculty	Student evaluations of faculty	

The final theme identified under operationalization is "Programs", encompassing measures used to evaluate programs. This falls under the definition of variants two and three. While faculty do not explicitly distinguish accreditation review of the implicit and explicit curriculum, the factors cited within both groups relate to this indicator. In addition, one faculty member specified the lack of ethical violations as a measurement of excellence; it could be applicable to either variants two and three (See Table 16).

Table 16. Operationalization of Excellence – Program

	Accreditation review of the implicit and explicit programs that include defined syllabi with grading rubrics, benchmarks to evaluate course assignments, delivery and other aspects of the program	Systematic feedback loop that includes qualitative surveys from all stakeholders	Rates of graduate employment in the field, certification, and licensure
Program Directors			
Faculty	Program outcomes using multiple quantitative benchmarks and rubrics including exams, surveys, field evaluations, and curriculum indicators	Qualitative measures that include student, client and employer feedback	Employment data, licensing and certification pass rates, and ethical violations of graduates

Quality as Perfection (Zero Defects) or as Consistency

Definition.

Participants appeared to understand that perfection or zero defects differs from consistency; therefore, these two were categorized under separate headings. Both directors and faculty largely rejected the notion that perfection was a suitable definition in education. Each group did perceive consistency to different than perfection.

Perfection or Zero Defects.

The responses to quality as perfection can be divided into themes. The first denies the existence of such a concept in higher education. The second acknowledges that perfection exists but is not unattainable. Finally, the third includes miscellaneous ideas that define perfection. Perfection is considered non-existent in the realm of higher education by many participants in both groups. Program directors disagreed as one cited perfection with not being compatible with excellence, while another thought that while perfection is impossible, it is something to strive in seeking excellence. Faculty echoed the belief of program directors in finding perfection not to exist in higher education, but rather to serve as the ultimate goal. Multiple faculty viewed perfection as an absence of flaws, errors, or defects and always hitting benchmarks-impossible in higher education (See Table 17).

Table 17. Definition of Perfection or Zero Defects – Does not Exist

Program Directors	Does not exist and is impossible to achieve, but striving to moving in that direction	Perfection is not congruent with excellence
Faculty	Does not exist in higher education although this is the goal	An absence of flaws errors, or defects and always hitting benchmarks. Does not exist in social work programs

Some program directors acknowledged the second theme of perfection as existing, however, the term is deemed pathological, value laden, or a concept applicable in industry, and not achievable in higher education. Some faculty also agreed that this theme of perfection exists, but felt it to be pathological and elusive because everyone possesses deficits. Faculty further observed that perfection in one area does not extend to overall perfection. For example, having perfection in the educational setting may not translate to the practice setting. Finally, faculty viewed perfection as achieving a rather small set of specifications that is unreasonably narrow in higher education (See Table 18).

Table 18. Definition of Perfection or Zero Defects – Exists, but not Attainable

Program Directors	Exists, but pathological and value laden	Unachievable and unattainable	A term appropriate for industry and not higher education
Faculty	Elusive, as all human beings and programs have deficits; pathological to conceive this as possible in higher education	Perfection in one area not always indicative of overall perfection; attainable in education but not in practice	Meeting a small set of specifications and is unattainable in higher education

The third theme under the concept of perfection or zero defects consists of diverse ideas expressed by participants, which cannot be neatly defined or limited to a single category. For program directors, two thoughts regarding perfection included the concept

of continuous improvement, with uniform perfection being at one end and treating each

student as a unique individual at the other end. Faculty added the idea of perfection as an

educational process identifying problems, suggests changes, and involves multiple

stakeholders. Perfection requires experience, the investment of energy and commitment,

taking years to successfully refine. Finally, faculty tied perfection to excellence, noting

that excellence is achievable, while the perfection is not (See Table 19).

Table 19. Definition of Perfection or Zero Defects – Ideas

Program Directors	The concept of continuous improvement with perfection at one end of this spectrum	Treating each student as an unique individual to the extent that is possible	
Faculty	A process that identifies problems, the need for change and involves multiple stakeholders	Requires experience, investment of energy and commitment, and take years to achieve	Ties in with excellence, which is achievable unlike perfection

Operationalization.

Program directors and faculty were in agreement with how to operationalize the

concept of perfection or zero defects. Both groups agreed that either it cannot be

measured or it is the highest possible achievement on a continuum. Second level coding

was not performed on this data as responses were quite limited and narrow in context

(See Table 20).

Table 20. Operationalization of Perfection or Zero Defects

Program Directors	Doesn't exist and therefore cannot be measured	Placed on a continuum for improvement
Faculty	Not measureable	Benchmarking progress on a continuum to achieve

Consistency

Definition.

Consistency is considered to have greater validity as a concept when compared to

perfection. In defining consistency, three main subthemes emerge from the data relating

to students, faculty, and program. Under the subtheme of "Students" there was overall

agreement between the two groups on how consistency is applicable (See Table 21).

Table 21. Definition of Consistency – Students

Program Directors	A continued continuum of student's growth in knowledge, skills, and processes with practice competency
Faculty	Consistency and reliability of students who can demonstrate continued skill development and applications of behaviors consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics

Program directors are more detailed with defining how consistency applies to

faculty, whereas, faculty emphasizes consistency in terms of programming (See Table

22).

Table 22. Definition of Consistency – Faculty

Program Directors	Faculty that demonstrate consistency and reliability with teaching, research, expectations, and standards	Faculty who are flexible with change, involved with the program, and demonstrate professional growth	Faculty who are student centered through advising and personal growth
Faculty	Educators who demonstrate consistency, reliability, and validity of what is taught to students	Offer ongoing support and evaluation of students by faculty with developing knowledge and skills	

"Programming" was the final subtheme under consistency. Faculty responses added considerable details in defining consistency under this heading. One faculty participant bluntly maintained that consistency is "over-rated", but this response was an outlier. A few faculty tie the concepts of excellence and fitness for purpose to consistency, affirming that the various concepts of quality are intertwined. Program directors view consistency as connected to programming and its applicability to excellence with curriculum, student opportunity, and fostering ongoing growth (See Table 23).

Table 23. Definition of Consistency – Programming

Program Directors	Moving forward towards excellence in developing curriculum, opportunities for students and ongoing program growth			
Faculty	Development, assessment, and evaluation of program policies and procedures that are consistent, align with goals, is followed by everyone and changed when appropriate	Adherence to standards with student admissions, teaching, learning, and field internships	Reputation is tied to consistency, which is more attainable than perfection, but contributes to its quest of excellence and fitness for purpose	Consistency is over-rated

Operationalization.

In operationalizing consistency themes of assessment and outcomes were found in the data. Assessment was further divided to include the subthemes of surveys, rubrics, and feedback loops, whereas, outcomes did have any subthemes.

Under the subtheme of "Assessment with Surveys", program directors' stress inclusivity, with exit surveys of all stakeholders that had involvement with the social work program. Faculty's focus centers on student and alumni surveys. Both groups stress the importance of the student experience. Faculty responses are more specific, advocating the use of open ended surveys on to improve classes. Presumably this mix-methods approach would allow for greater depth while alumni surveys provide a means of determining employment status (See Table 24).

Table 24. Operationalization of Consistency – Assessment with Surveys

Program Directors	Exit surveys of students, graduates, alumni, field instructors, and other stakeholders	
Faculty	Class assessment and self-evaluation open-ended exit surveys of students and graduates	Alumni surveys that include measuring employment

Both groups reference the subtheme of "Assessment with Rubrics". Participants noted rubrics are applicable in multiple areas of student activities within a program as well as to programming, tying consistency to functionality. Faculty responses also reveal the need for multiple measures in the assessment of student practice behaviors in accordance with the EPAS accreditation process (See Table 25).

Table 25. Operationalization of Consistency – Assessment with Rubrics

Program Directors	Specific rubrics connected to student assignments, practice behaviors, readings, exams, lecturing, student portfolios, and programming	
Faculty	Rubrics for student assignments, portfolios and programs	Multiple assessment measures with the practice behaviors under each of the EPAS competencies

The last subtheme, "Assessment with Feedback Loop" reviews a program's

processes. In general, directors and faculty responses are consistent, with a variance in

guidelines. Program directors note written documentation and the identification of a

contact person that the students can seek out for questions. Faculty responses focus on the

design process and the attempts to minimize differences that arise between administration

and faculty over a specific type of measurement (See Table 26).

Table 26. Operationalization of Consistency – Assessment with Feedback Loop

Program Directors	Input and ongoing feedback loop from all stakeholders related to change	Clear, written expectations of behavior in accordance with the NASW guidelines and how to measure this	Having a central person in the program that students can contact for questions
Faculty	Input and feedback loops with faculty, advisory board and field instructors	A design and process rather than a measurement per say	

Faculty gives repeated emphasis to the theme of "Outcomes" in comparison to

program directors. Faculty is focused on the inclusion of policies, procedures, student

performance, graduation, the pass rates of the national exam for students, and ethical

violations of alumni. Program directors are broader with their responses. They include

CSWE self-studies, student outcomes, and a reference to social work as a professional

degree (See Table 27).

Table 27. Operationalization of Consistency – Outcomes

Program Directors	Self-study for CSWE accreditation	Measuring outcomes with student practice behaviors, grades, and GPAs, with the measurement on a continuum against EPAS standards	Outcomes or products (as in professional degree)	
Faculty	Self-assessment (study) similar to the one completed for CSWE with reaffirmation with a program that meets benchmarks and standards	Measurement and evaluation of policies and procedures that determine consistency, and are followed across the board on an individual, departmental, and throughout the university	Instructor and faculty evaluations to measure students' skills, knowledge, performance, attitudes, behaviors, dress, attendance and graduation rates	Monitor graduates for ethical violations

Quality as Fitness for Purpose

Definition.

In this category, four main themes emerged from the data. Both program directors

and faculty identified fitness for purpose as applicable to the students, faculty, and social

work programs. Faculty also identified fitness as the relevancy of the social work

program to the university as a whole.

The four main themes were divided into subcategories for both program directors and faculty. Under the theme of "Students", program directors and faculty were fairly aligned, focusing on the importance of students developing self-awareness and possessing the core values of the social work profession. In particular, faculty elaborated on this idea to include ethics, academic record, and motivation to become a social worker. Faculty identified students as needing to manage their own values and the discrepancies that occur between the ideal and realism. This idea could also be categorized as a concept that supports the core values of the profession. Program directors and faculty specifically indicated the importance of the student being a good "fit" with the former focusing more on the profession and the faculty focusing on the program and/or school. Finally, program directors tied fitness of students to academic standards that meet EPAS competencies. Adherence to the NASW Code of Ethics would fall under the professional practice competency of EPAS. These expectations were tied to the student successfully meeting the qualifications for the BSW degree (See Table 28).

Table 28. Definition of Fitness for Purpose – Students

Program Directors	Developing self-awareness and having the core values and beliefs that "fit" with the profession	Developing the knowledge and skills that elicit growth in students as they move from student to professional	Meeting the competencies of EPAS, adhering to the NASW Code of Ethics, and meeting the minimum expectations of the BSW degree in the classroom and in field
Faculty	Students possess the values, beliefs, knowledge skills, ethics, academic record, motivation, and commitment to the profession	Students understand social work, develop self-awareness through self-assessment, manage their own values, and the discrepancies between ideal and realism	Fitness of the individual with the program and/or school

The second theme was identified as "Faculty". Program directors and faculty both identified the duty of faculty to include gatekeeping; this idea was noted multiple times by different participants. Both groups also viewed faculty's task as being a role model for students. Faculty extended this to include teaching, collegiality, and practice experience. In addition, faculty perceived their fitness as being "authentic" to the purpose and mission of the social work program. Program directors connected the mental and ethical fitness to teaching and curriculum, and also noted that faculty should appreciate the big picture and not just the individual pieces (See Table 29).

Table 29. Definition of Fitness for Purpose – Faculty

Program Directors	Mental and ethical fitness of faculty, skills with teaching and curriculum and the appreciation of the big picture	The modeling of the core values of social work by faculty	Gatekeeping of students by faculty throughout the program for appropriate fitness to the profession
Faculty	Gatekeeping of students and the overall program	Faculty who are collegial, can teach, possess practice experience, and serve as role models to students with the values of the profession, educating them and providing feedback; assisting with developing appropriate knowledge, skills, and boundaries while encouraging autonomy	Being authentic to the purpose and mission of the program

Identifying the "Social Work Program" as the third theme, program directors addressed the achievement of goals aligned with the Harvey and Green (1993) concept of excellence. Faculty centered on excellence in a broader context by describing program fitness to include sustainability and meeting the needs of multiple stakeholders. Exhibiting a parallel process between students and faculty, meeting goals and CSWE standards in addition to being a suitable fit into the environment and culture of the university, leads to achieving excellence. Faculty also included producing graduates who are employable, able to achieve state certification and who are admissible to graduate school as pertinent to the description of fitness (See Table 30).

Table 30. Definition of Fitness for Purpose – Social Work Program

Program Directors	Identifying addressing, and achieving the goals of the program to achieve excellence			
Faculty	Having the program meet the students' needs, with curriculum, learning, service to create an educational environment with the university for developing their knowledge, skills, and abilities in becoming a generalist practice professional	Having a mission that aligns with the program, the university system, and the greater needs of the community	The program is sustainable, offers a parallel process between students and faculty, designed to achieve excellence and meeting goals and CSWE standards, and is a good fit for the culture of the university	Graduates who are employable, achieve certification, and admission to graduate school

The theme of the "University" was identified by faculty as pertaining to fitness

for purpose with its role of providing the overall education, resources, and organizations

for students. Important too, was the perception by faculty that the core values of the

profession and the university be congruent (See Table 31).

Table 31. Definition of Fitness for Purpose – University

Faculty	The core values of the university mirror the values of social work with social justice and profession development, and the program's purpose aligns with that of their institution	The university provides the appropriate overall education and resources for students needed for competence and practice	Participation of students and faculty in university organization that support social work

Operationalization.

Three main themes emerged from this data: students, faculty, and program that

matched the same categories under the definition of fitness for purpose. For students,

assessing how to operationalize this concept identified both direct and indirect measures.

Both groups indicated completion of assignments, coursework, and field, using an

evaluative process. Program directors valued students demonstrating ethical behavior

while faculty focused on the use of self-assessment measures as indirect means of

operationalizing fitness. In addition, program directors felt exit exams, surveys, or

interviews were appropriate methods to measure fitness (See Table 32).

Table 32. Operationalization of Fitness for Purpose – Students

Program Directors	Achievement of competencies with the succession completion of field, assignments and coursework	Demonstrating ethical behavior	Exit exams, surveys, or interviews
Faculty	Field instructor and faculty evaluations	Self-assessment through class assignments and field that include self-awareness and self-reflection	Achievement of course work and the field experience

Program directors proposed measuring fitness for purpose with the faculty theme

through student advising and periodic peer review. Faculty defined operationalizing this

category through gatekeeping responsibilities, the assessment and evaluation of students'

competencies using both direct and indirect measures, and a focus on diversity (See Table

33).

Table 33. Operationalization of Fitness for Purpose – Faculty

Program Directors	Faculty peer review	Student advising
Faculty	Gatekeeping	Assessment and evaluation of students using direct and indirect measures of competencies with course activities and assignments

The final theme, the social work program, revealed a difference in focus between program directors and faculty. The former centered on the direct indicators used in writing the self-study for the CSWE accreditation reaffirmation process. Faculty's emphasis was on the analysis of the department in relation to the institution in determining fitness. They suggested that the input and feedback from students, advisory boards, alumni, field instructors, and other stakeholders measure the level of program "fitness". Finally, faculty also noted the admission process to the major, specific coursework addressing the topic of diversity, continued growth of the program, graduate pass rates of the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) exam, employment, and admission to graduate schools were all measures of fitness. While faculty had identified the university in the definition of fitness for purpose, none of the participants offered a method to measure this theme (See Table 34).

Table 34. Operationalization of Fitness for Purpose – Social Work Program

Program Directors	Completion of the self-study for CSWE		
Faculty	Qualitative and quantitative analysis of the department to determine fit with the institution	Input and feedback from students, advisory boards, alumni, field instructors and other stakeholders	Specific coursework that addresses the topic of diversity
Faculty	Evaluation of each course and the faculty	The admission process to the major	Outcome measures of course objectives, ASWB exam pass rates of graduates, employability and admission to graduate schools
Faculty	Continued growth of the program		

Quality as Value for Money

Definition.

Five themes emerged from the data for the concept of value for money. Intrinsic value was mentioned most frequently faculty and second most often by program directors. Financial cost / benefit was mentioned most often by program directors and second most frequently by faculty. Employability emerged as a separate theme from financial cost. The social work program and the overall educational experience were the final themes mentioned as related to value for money.

Under "Intrinsic Value", program directors viewed this theme as connected more to the relational piece associated with the implicit curriculum, which EPAS references as the learning environment for students in their educational preparation as professional social workers (CSWE, 2015). Faculty expanded on this idea, not only to include the

relational piece with the learning environment, but moreover, to embrace the societal

benefits of student experiences and interactions (See Table 35).

Table 35. Definition of Value for Money – Intrinsic Value

Program Directors	The value of the implicit curriculum with the relational piece is as important as the explicit curriculum
Faculty	Intangible, value that includes learning, relational, and societal benefits with implicit and explicit experiences and interactions

The second theme associated with money was the financial impact of obtaining a

social work degree. The "Financial Cost/Benefit" or the "Bang for the Buck" reference

emerged from several interviews in both groups. Again, program directors and faculty

allied with their views on this theme, but diverged on its focus. Program directors

associated the cost / benefit as related to whether the institution was public or private,

while faculty viewed cost / benefit as the return on investment given the salary a graduate

one be expected to earn upon completion of a degree. Student loan debt was a concern

identified by faculty, who defined the cost/benefit to include the ability to pay off student

loans from the salary received with employment (See Table 36).

Table 36. Definition of Value for Money – Financial Cost/Benefit

Program Directors	Cost/benefit worth what you paid for and how this aligns with public v. private institutions	
Faculty	Cost/benefit worth what you paid for related to a return on the investment with salary	Salary commensurate with the ability to pay off student loans

The theme of "Employability" was listed separately from the theme of financial

cost / benefit. Program directors and faculty agreed with the expectation of employability

after graduation, while faculty included job satisfaction as part this description. Both

groups also agreed that passing the national exam is an indicator of value associated with obtaining employment. Faculty responses also noted the flexibility that a social work degree provides in matching to the type of jobs available to BSW graduates. This flexibility is enhanced by the trend having duel undergraduate majors (See Table 37).

Table 37. Definition of Value for Money – Employability

Program Directors	Ability to obtain employment in the field after graduation	Passing the national exam for state certification	
Faculty	Ability to obtain employment in the field after graduation that is satisfying	Passing the national exam for state certification	Flexibility of the social work degree, including having duel degrees to enhance employment prospects

Under the theme of "Social Work Program" there was less agreement between program directors and faculty. Whereas, program directors focused on faculty commitment and pay, as well as having an accredited, quality program, faculty's emphasis was the curriculum's "value-added" component to students. This included the type of course work offered, how courses are delivered to students, the relational piece connected to student / faculty ratio, and the field experience as linking to the program (See Table 38).

Table 38. Definition of Value for Money – Social Work Program

Program Directors	Faculty commitment and pay	Having an accredited, quality social work program	
Faculty	Curriculum is "value-added" in how it is delivered and coursework offered	The relational piece with student / faculty ratio	The learning experience of students in field

The final theme identified was value derived from the "Overall Educational Experience". Program directors and faculty agreed on including the general education received from an institution. The program directors included other institutional activities that support social work values. Faculty described the benefits of a degree that encompasses the overall educational experience. The university's recognition of the worth of a social work program was viewed by program directors as an indicator of value within the higher education institution (See Table 39).

Table 39. Definition of Value for Money – Overall Educational Experience

Program Directors	Inclusion of general education and other institutional activities that support social work values	How the university perceives the value of having a social work program
Faculty	Benefit of having a degree that encompasses the overall educational experience and how it is delivered	

Operationalization.

In operationalizing the concept of value for money, four themes were found in the data that corresponded to the themes found in the definitions: financial cost/benefit, employability, the social work program, and the overall educational experience. Intrinsic value, however, while deemed important, was declared difficult to measure, and no methods to operationalize this theme were identified. For the theme of "Financial Cost/Benefit", program directors suggested that the time taken to recoup the amount of student loan debt incurred was a method relevant to measure this definition. Faculty proposed graduate and alumni surveys as a way to track salaries and income levels. Concerning student loan debt, faculty suggested the number of graduates who were in deferment or in forbearance in comparison to those who were able to meet their financial

loan obligations as a form of measurement for the financial cost / benefit theme (See

Table 40).

Table 40. Operationalization of Value for Money – Financial Cost/Benefit

Program Directors	The length of time needed to recoup the cost of the degree and degree and the amount of student loan debt incurred	
Faculty	Longitudinal alumni surveys related to salary and income levels	Ability to meet student loan debt compared to the number of graduates in deferment or forbearance

Under the theme of "Employability", both program directors and faculty

mentioned post-graduation employment rates. Further, faculty classified job turnover as a

measure associated with this theme. In addition, employer satisfaction surveys of

graduates were cited as being a measure that could be used to determine employment of

graduates (See Table 41).

Table 41. Operationalization of Value for Money – Employability

Program Directors	Employment statistics post-graduation		
Faculty	Outcome employment rates post-graduation	Job turnover in the field	Employer satisfaction surveys of graduates

Program directors and faculty had some alignment with the "Social Work

Program" theme. Program directors identified measures to include program accreditation,

the pass rate of the national ASWB exam, exit surveys of students, alumni surveys, and

field performance evaluations. Faculty perspective differentiated other several areas

compared to program directors. They did not include program accreditation, but did cite

program graduation rates, and specifically, narrative (qualitative) and quantitative student

exit surveys and alumni surveys as primary means of measurement. Faculty recognized

volunteer and service projects as aligned with program value. They also felt that

benchmarking cost comparisons of other programs could be used as a tool to measure

value. The final suggestion for operationalizing this theme was the admission of students

to graduate programs as a measure of quality of the education at the undergraduate level

(See Table 42).

Table 42. Operationalization of Value for Money – Social Work Program

Program Directors	CSWE accreditation of social work program	Pass rates of national exam	Exit surveys of students and alumni surveys	Field performance evaluations
Faculty	Program graduation rates	Pass rates on national exam	Qualitative and quantitative exit surveys of students and alumni surveys	Volunteer and service hours
Faculty	Benchmark costs compared to other programs			Admission to grad school

The final theme of the "Overall Educational Experience" revealed agreement

between program directors and faculty, although the focus was generally different

between the two groups. Both groups agreed upon outcome studies related to retention

and graduation rates as a measurement.

Program directors tied faculty salaries, student/faculty ratio, NESE findings, the

cost of time, activity, and labor to the overall value of higher education, which faculty did

not identify. Faculty indicated that alumni surveys could be used as a measurement, but

this tool was not listed by program directors (See Table 43).

Table 43. Operationalization of Value for Money – Overall Educational Experience

	Graduation and retention rates	Faculty salaries and low student / faculty ratio	NESE findings	Time, activity, and labor cost
Program Directors				
Faculty	Retention and graduation rates	Alumni surveys		

Quality as Transformation

Definition.

As a concept transformation is divergent in both definition and how it is operationalized. Program directors and faculty each identify two primary themes. For directors, "Student Development" and the "Broader Context" emerge while faculty recognize "Student Development" and "Program". The theme of "Student Development" is further divided into the subcategories of "Overall Change", "Student Development of the Professional Self", and "Student Development of the Personal Self". A third level of coding is completed with the sub-category of "Student Development of the Professional Self"; due to the variances of the responses "Overall Change" and "Professional Skills" are listed separately (See Tables 44 and 45).

Table 44. Definition of Transformation – Student Development of the Professional Self -
Overall Change

	Observation of how students flourish in the social work program	Growing, challenging, and becoming something in life	Going from a less than perfect state to a perfect state
Program Directors			
Faculty	An individualized change that starts when the student enters the program and extends throughout the life span	Clarification that the student is right for the profession	Economic transformation

Table 45. Definition of Transformation – Student Development of the Professional Self-
Professional Skills

Program Directors	Being challenged to look at other perspectives and diversity	The ability to develop critical thinking skills (excellence)	Accomplishing and understanding the knowledge, values, and skill of social work (canon) as a professional (continuum)
Faculty	A process that involves a different way of thinking, evaluating, and analyzing in context from a holistic perspective	Developing critical thinking skills, distinguishing situations, advocating for clients to inform judgment	Understanding policy, the political issues and social justice

The sub-category of "Students Developing the Personal Self" under "Student

Development" reveals the change that students undergo within themselves as they

progress through their educational experience. This form of transformation is very

individualized and subjective by nature (See Table 46).

Table 46. Definition of Transformation – Students Developing the Personal Self

Program Directors	The student understanding of social work and how this aligns for them personally	Developing self-awareness, having good boundaries, and self-analysis that facilitates changes in the student's world view		
Faculty	A metamorphosis that involves challenges to their personal view of reality	Self-reflection and introspection that fosters personal growth and self-awareness	Taking risks that result in a direction not anticipated	That "wow" moment – the threshold of experience

There is divergence between program directors and faculty beyond the scope of

student transformation. Program directors view transformation from the context of

change, encompassing multiple levels, although admittedly, this is difficult to quantify.

Faculty responses center on change specifically at the program level (See Table 47).

Table 47. Definition of Transformation – Broad versus Narrow Focus

Program Directors	Fundamental change on all levels of the university and its culture	
Faculty	Pedagogical learning reflecting change within the program to meet the needs of students and the community	Curriculum reflective of the institutional mission with learning

Operationalization.

Operationally, the concept of quality as transformation is described by program

directors and faculty through four main themes. "Surveys", "Faculty Assessment with

Test, Assignments, and Field", "Student Self-Assessment" and "Other Evaluative

Measures" are identified, with the last theme combining miscellaneous measures.

Under the theme of "Surveys" both groups focus on graduates and alumni, while

program directors include all stakeholders associated with the program (See Table 48).

Table 48. Operationalization of Transformation – Surveys

Program Directors	Surveys of graduates, colleagues, alumni, and other stakeholders
Faculty	Surveys of graduates and alumni

Under the theme of "Faculty Assessment", pre- and post-tests, and assignments

that demonstrate benchmarking are associated with both groups, with faculty specifically

citing the use of rubrics (especially concerning the topic of ethics) in addition to tying all

measures to the EPAS competencies (See Table 49).

Table 49. Operationalization of Transformation – Faculty Assessment

Program Directors	Pre-post testing tied to student experience and knowledge	Measurement by faculty of assignments, papers, and other exercises with benchmarking	
Faculty	Pre and post tests	Faculty assessment of student assignments, tests, field and behaviors that focus on knowledge, analysis, and self-evaluation encompassing EPAS	Use of rubrics with assignments, especially related to the topic of ethics

Student self-assessment that focuses on change is the third theme found in the

data. Faculty include qualitative measures and personal portfolios to demonstrate

transformation whereas program directors were broader (See Table 50).

Table 50. Operationalization of Transformation – Student Self-Assessment

Program Directors	Self-assessment related to personal change that reflects a connection	
Faculty	Self-assessment, self-reflection, individual portfolios that reflect change	Qualitatively measures with individual stories of change

Finally, the last theme encompasses other measures of operationalizing

transformation. Among these, SWEAP (Social Work Education Assessment Project) is

listed by both groups. In addition, the use of focus groups by directors or advisory board

and longitudinal studies using qualitative analysis of alumni are identified by faculty (See

Table 51).

Table 51. Operationalization of Transformation – Other Evaluative Measures

Program Directors	SWEAP	Focus groups
Faculty	SWEAP	Advisory board feedback and longitudinal qualitative analysis of alumni

Other Concepts of Quality

Definition.

At the end of each interview, participants were asked to identify any concepts they felt were not covered under the five previous concepts identified by Harvey and Green (1993). Three separate themes emerged from this data. Both program directors and faculty noted "Quality of Faculty" as one theme. Divergence occurred how this was defined. Program directors identified faculty who possessed all of the qualities of the five original concepts, and hold moral values that encompass all other concepts. Faculty was more focused on the relationship with students and felt quality in this area centered on the faculty-student relationship that exceeded normal expectations and included mentoring of students through the program. Two other themes identified by program directors were associated with "Defining Overall Quality" and "Defining a Measurement". The former, a philosophical approach related to combining all of the other concepts, and the latter, that centered on defining and developing a specific measurement of quality and then determining if it actually works. This was in reference to the changes in EPAS by CWSE, every eight years under the assumption that somehow the system is flawed and needs revising (See Tables 52, 53 and 54).

Table 52. Other Concepts of Quality – Quality of Faculty

Program Directors	Faculty who possess traits of quality that encompass excellence, consistency, fitness, and transformation	
Faculty	Faculty-student involvement that exceeds normal expectations	Mentoring of faculty to students

Table 53. Other Concepts of Quality – Overall Quality

Program Directors	Eudemonism and arête that will combine all other concepts

Table 54. Other Concepts of Quality – Measurement

Program Directors	Defining a specific measurement strategy and determining if it is effective

Only one participant identified a method of measurement, and this was a program director who noted that the only form of measurement that would be appropriate for eudemonism and arête would be a narrative conversation on what would constitute societal happiness within the field of social work. No other forms of measurement for these three themes were identified by either program directors or faculty (See Table 55).

Table 55. Other Concepts of Quality – Operationalization – Overall Quality

Program Directors	Narrative regarding what constitutes societal happiness within the field of social work

Other concepts were identified as fitting into one of the previous categories: excellence, perfection /consistency, fitness for purpose, value for money, or transformation. Program directors distinguished three of the concepts, while faculty noted all five.

Within the concept of "Excellence", additional themes emerged. Program

directors and faculty were in agreement with two areas. Collegiality and cohesiveness of

faculty lead to strong curriculum and modeling for students. Furthermore, faculty

espoused that support by both the institution and faculty result in a strong program that is

associated both with excellence and transformation. Program directors noted that an

atmosphere which supports qualitative inquiry and problem-solving aligns with

excellence, while faculty suggested that integrity, ethics, and keeping abreast of change

support competency based education. Both groups implicitly referenced the commitment

of faculty to programming. Finally, divergence was noted with two definitions; program

directors observing that a school's reputation as rated by peers align with the concept of

excellence, and faculty contributing the development of strong admission criteria (See

Table 56).

Table 56. Additional Themes Associated with Excellence – Definition

Program Directors	Collegiality that results in cohesiveness; creating a strong curriculum and modeling for students	Creating an atmosphere that supports qualitative inquiry and problem-solving	Reputation of the school that is based on peer ratings
Faculty	Support by the institution and faculty throughout the program (also associated with transformation)	Faculty integrity, ethics, and keeping pace with change and learning to the curriculum to effectively prepare students in a competency based education	Developing strong admissions criteria that reflects a strong program

In the measurement of other options associated with "Excellence", program directors did not offer any strategies. Faculty presented two ideas that included a comprehensive exam that would cover all aspects of the program, field evaluations of undergraduates that demonstrate ethical behavior reflective of the NASW Code of Ethics. This was extended to include alumni, presumably through surveys (See Table 57).

Table 57. Additional Themes Associated with Excellence – Operationalization

Faculty	Comprehensive exam of students	Demonstration of ethical and professional behavior in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics with student field evaluations	How a person chooses to live their life as a social work professional

For other themes associated with the concept of "Perfection/Consistency", faculty noted two associated with consistency. They are student satisfaction with developing a continuity of skills and an implicit curriculum that includes an environment conducive to learning. Program directors identified no additional themes with this concept. The only method suggested to measure these additional themes were student surveys, which had been previously noted under perfection/consistency (See Tables 58 and 59).

Table 58. Additional Themes Associated with Consistency – Definition

Faculty	Student satisfaction with continuity of skill development	An environment that is conducive to learning-a part of the implicit curriculum

Table 59. Additional Themes Associated with Consistency – Operationalization

Faculty	Student surveys

Associated with the concept of "Fitness for Purpose", program directors noted a student-based theme, assisting students to determine whether social work is an appropriate fit for them. Faculty included the student theme under advising. Additionally, faculty proposed a separate theme associated with programming that included qualifications of faculty, standards for admission, resources, self-care and support of faculty, as well as outcomes tied to the culture of the institution. No formal means of operationalization were tied to these themes associated with "Fitness for Purpose" (See Table 60).

Table 60. Additional Themes Associated with Fitness for Purpose – Definitions

Program Directors	Assisting students who struggle with fitting into the program	
Faculty	Student satisfaction with the program	Inputs, processes and outcomes with qualification of faculty, admission standards, advising, resources, self-care of faculty with organizational support and tied to the culture of the institution

The concept of "Value for Money" included one theme identified by faculty, involving the financial investment in obtaining a degree and whether this was "worth it". This theme had been previously emerged as a definition during the course of the collective interviews. There was no mention by the faculty of how this could be operationalized (See Table 61). Program directors did not propose any additional themes for this concept.

Table 61. Additional Themes Associated with Value for Money – Definition

Faculty	Satisfaction with the financial investment in the individual's degree – was it worth it?

Additional themes of "Transformation" revealed descriptions that were similar to those which are found in the section specific to this concept. Program directors enlarged transformation to include students' acquiring a greater understanding of the world, societies, and people so they refrain from imposing their agenda onto clients. Faculty members less succinct with their proposed definitions; they included gradual student development through the integration and mastery of all components of their education as well as the satisfaction attained through the recognition of their own personal growth (See Table 62)

Table 62. Additional Themes Associated with Transformation – Definitions

Program Directors	A breadth of understanding of the world, societies, and people	Not imposing student's agenda on clients
Faculty	Student development through forward movement with integrating and mastering of all aspects of education	Satisfaction attained through the recognition of being different than when you came

In operationalizing the additional themes associated with "Transformation", program directors and faculty agreed that field evaluations are the best source of measurement, while faculty also recommended student exit surveys to measure them (See Table 63).

Table 63. Additional Themes Associated with Transformation – Operationalization

Program Directors	Field evaluations	
Faculty	Field evaluations	Student exit surveys

Summary

The review of the demographics may provide greater insight into the results of the data as they reflective of the population of the State of Wisconsin. Were this study to be replicated in other states, the results may vary based differing demographics. Detailed comments taken from the transcripts for the applicable concepts can be reviewed in the appendices (See Appendices B-VV).

CHAPTER SIX

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This exploratory study sought to look at how social work program directors and faculty would define their understanding of quality as based on the five concepts described by Harvey and Green (1993). "Quality" is often used descriptively and with the assumption that the reader perceives to hold the same definition as the writer. Driving this study was premise that before quality can be quantified, the term must be defined.

Exploratory Research Question #1

The first research question explored in this study was: *What are the relevant characteristics that describe quality according to BSW program directors and BSW faculty in the State of Wisconsin?* In this study, the participants were asked to respond to the notion of quality using the theoretical model by Harvey and Green (1993) to motivate their responses. While the concepts offered by the aforementioned authors have produced a plethora of literature on the subject, none have been explicitly applied to the field of social work education. Indeed, when conducting the interviews for the study, none of the participants admitted any knowledge of this seminal article. While a number of the participants indicated they would have desired to read the article prior to the interview, not only would have created bias, but would have narrowed the focus of their responses to fit with the theoretical framework found in the article.

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The responses obtained reflected individual perceptions based on personal beliefs and values of their experiences in social work education. In turn, these perceptions influenced their responses to the five concepts of Harvey and Green (1993) but also elicited thoughts about the concepts that many of the participants admitted they had never thought about in this manner prior the interview. Respondents were ambiguous concerning the concepts of perfection and fitness for purpose. With other concepts, participants identified multiple aspects, expanding the original definition into subcategories with different themes. Identification of measurement is a key component to the usefulness of defining quality in relation to social work education. There was considerable crossover between the concepts in how concepts could be operationalized, offering an integrated approach in the possible quantifiable dimensions of quality. A summary of the responses can be reviewed in Appendices B through TT.

Exploratory Research Question #2

The second research question examined: *How do the two populations understand these indicators and to what degree is consistency found?* Although an important issue in higher education, there is no clear, concise definition of quality. In the course of the interviews, program directors and faculty identified similar themes and ideas, often stated differently. Faculty's scope of reference is often more narrow than program directors and this seemed to be reflected in overall responses for all five concepts.

Excellence.

The first concept, excellence or exceptional was divided into three separate variants by Harvey and Green (1993). Responses by participants were delineated in a

similar manner, although the definition of excellence in connection to meeting a set of standards was linked specifically to CSWE accreditation. As a theoretical variant respondents associated the philosophical approach to excellence with its distinct drive towards perfection with being the "best", incorporating an attitude of success. This belief is motivated by perceptions of those within the academy and more explicitly, within the social work departments. As Astin (1999) so aptly notes, the quest for this form of excellence involves values and beliefs of the traditional models of higher education.

Other stakeholders, even social workers outside of academia, may hold different attitudes of what defines the *elitist* view of excellence (Harvey and Green, 1993; Jucevičienè, 2009). While program directors recognize the theoretical aspect of excellence in higher education as a high standard, faculty referencing this academic excellence included the liberal arts components and ethics that reach beyond student graduation. This reflects not only the values of social work education, but also the more traditional approach of the liberal arts education model originally established in this country and modeled after Oxford and Cambridge (Berquist & Pawlik 2008). One faculty member noted: "I'm teaching for life-long learning…a commitment of academic excellence going beyond the classroom…and graduation."

Hierarchical excellence of faculty did not solely focus on the expertise of teaching students, but also as faculty who were part of a team, seeking to extend their skills for advising, service, and pedagogy; reflecting the philosophical constructs of Friere (1970) with transformation. As one program director stated about what describes faculty who would be considered excellent: "Faculty who see themselves as a work in progress,

integrating the new with the old." Rubin (2005) views academics as the key factor in

quality distinction, embracing a more responsive and integrated method of defining

excellence versus a narrow and rigid standard.

Curriculum represents the components of policy and practice in social work that

serve as a conduit to educational excellence through learning and development. The

recent shift to competencies embraces assessment as an outcome measure to determine

effectiveness of student learning in addition to evaluating the need to modify curriculum

and other aspects of programs (Astin & Antonio, 2012). CSWE accreditation of social

work programs with EPAS reviews both the implicit and explicit curriculum of programs.

This reinforces the position that the learning environment is as influential in molding

graduates as the explicit curriculum, which determines their competence (CSWE, 2016).

Program directors and faculty reiterated this in their belief that the curriculum's content

must be comprehensive and inclusive of all core concepts. One faculty member

described excellence with curriculum as involving:

> Those programs that really look at this from every angle and decided this is how
> we are going to change the curriculum so it reflects excellence… They (programs)
> were able to understand…the theoretical foundation of competency based
> education and apply that (to their curriculum).

Competency based assessment first appeared in the 2008 EPAS as the

overarching philosophy that lurched forward with assessment and outcomes as a response

to the accountability driven policies governing state and federal entities (Kuh & Ewell,

2010; Astin & Antonio, 2012). The hierarchical approach to this form of excellence

reflects the commitment of programs and institutions to the charge of fostering ongoing quality of teaching and learning.

Harvey and Green (1993) define hierarchical excellence on an institutional level as striving to be an organization whose reputation distinguishes its status as one of the select few. Program directors and faculty responses concerning this form of excellence closely relate to BSW programs and departments. Identifying with the original premise of elitist as believed to be the exceptional standard of excellence, participants linked student outcomes, curriculum, and CSWE standards, complementing the framework developed by Asif and Searcy (2014b) for an integrated performance measurement of excellence. In addition, faculty sought to define this form of excellence as programs that explicitly advance critical thinking, the mission, and core values of social work, all of which affect the reputation of the institution through which prestige can impact financial resources (Harvey & Green, 1993; Dill & Soo, 2005).

Finally, the last variant of excellence involves conformance to predefined standards. Most frequently, this aspect of excellence is equated to accreditation. Respondents viewed this form of quality as meeting or exceeding the standards demanded by CSWE. Harvey and Green (1993) assert that this is the weakest form of excellence, as quality by this notion is conformance; it can issued with a benchmark involving a range or scale or as merely as a pass/fail, implying that standards are relative and static, which they are not. The practice behaviors connected to the competencies of EPAS can be interpreted and measured in ways determined by the individual programs, rendering the criteria for quality as highly subjective. The conundrum of meeting and/or

exceeding standards of CSWE accreditation was espoused by a faculty respondent who

expressed frustration with the assessment process:

> You would have to define what the minimum benchmark standards…but one of
> our issues is how do we even define what the benchmarks are because in the
> literature no one bothers to define what these are.

While the implication of conformance to a set of standards implies the achievement of a

high degree of excellence, it is certainly not value-free, allowing for a smoke and mirrors

approach to the process. As Grbić (2008) and Morley (2003) proclaim, pursuit of

excellence by this means can shift the focus from content towards presentation of

irrelevant details.

Perfection/Consistency.

The second concept, perfection, zero defects or consistency was originally found

in manufacturing, where the need to meet specifications, consistently without mistakes

was deemed the higher form of excellence, but one that is attainable by all, unlike

hierarchical excellence, which can only be accomplished by a select few. Harvey and

Green (1993) reject this notion of quality under the auspice that emphasis is placed on

processes and not inputs or outputs, thus is rejected as an antithesis to what defines

quality in higher education. Virtually all participants rejected the idea of perfection as an

applicable concept for social work. While acknowledging its existence, perfection was

deemed "pathological", "elusive", "value laden", and "unachievable". As one faculty

respondent indicated "Perfection in one area is not always indicative of overall

perfection." While manufacturing assumes that inputs are consistent and equal, this is

certainly not the case in higher education where the inputs are human beings who arrive

at variable levels of abilities and skills and are continual works in progress during their tenure at a college or university. Even upon graduation, this process is not complete and the graduates are definitely not perfect. Perfection under these terms is a utopian concept destined for a fictional novel.

Describing perfection as an actual concept, one faculty participant noted: "…the question is maybe what we strive for but we are continuously chasing our tail. We are never going to achieve perfection and I think that is what makes us excellent." A program director found perfection to be "like an industrial term…it's unrealistic to think you are going to have zero defects. That's the whole idea of why you need to convince student they need to continuously update their knowledge and skill base."

While they denied its applicability to social work, the idea of perfection intrigued to several participants in the study. Viewing perfection in this way, as one end of a spectrum, measures processes not outputs or outcomes, differing from the belief that the term must be associated solely with achieving a specific standard. Perfection from this perspective takes on an approach, whereby all members of an institution share the philosophical ideals for the institution's mission and goals (Lomas, 2004; Harvey & Stensaker, 2008). It is highly unlikely that *all* members of an institution could conceivably attain this goal; resonating this form of quality with the theoretical form of excellence, creating an idealistic model and one is, for all intents and purposes, impossible to implement given the diversity of educational institutions.

Harvey and Green (1993) acknowledged that the concept of perfection could include consistency, but postulated this as another process directly leading to conformity.

Thus, Demming's TQM model (1986) of continuous quality improvement and Garvin's

proposed theory of quality satisfaction are reductionist approaches. They are often used

as a short term "fix" in promoting alleged accountability demands by legislators (Zepke

& Leach, 2007. However, consistency can possess multi-dimensional parts of the whole,

which is how program directors and faculty identified this concept with themes centering

on students, faculty, and programming.

The reviewed literature does not reference consistency as related to students, other

than perhaps to view them as "customers" mirroring the business approach to higher

education. This is distained by many in academia as viewing students as customers and

degrees as products, reducing this type of consistency to a form of customer service

(Giroux, 2002a; Ritzer, 1996). Even Harvey and Green (1993) considered that

consistency in higher education stifles student development of critical thinking and

analysis. While program directors and faculty categorized consistency as twofold; one as

reliability and the second, as a process of forward movement. These translate into skills

and behaviors of students and faculty, equating to both the competency aspect of social

work education and the push for a more relativist view of excellence as demonstrated by

student and faculty actions. Commenting on consistency, a program director stated:

"Consistency involves the idea of the need for the continued growth of everyone (faculty

and students) …striving to move forward." Faculty spoke of how consistency translates

into reliability. "Consistency is something that is good because it means reliability…you

can count on someone…I think that is more attainable." This is certainly compatible with

studies by Sultan and Wong (2013) and Yeo (2008) who found this form of consistency, i.e. reliability correlating with student perception of quality.

Consistency of social work programs was found to be an essential component of the accreditation process, although one faculty member wryly commented: "consistency is over-rated…preventing creativity" and does not take into account "different instructors…styles, and expectations as well as with their same experiences with clients." Faculty were quite vocal in their belief that standards provide consistency in all aspects of programming, and adherence to these was needed. Contributing to the continuity and expectations of student learning, which can be measured, was more attainable than perfection, and was a major factor in the overall reputation of the program. Referencing students, one faculty member noted: "Fostering consistent and constant development (of students) is important. You want them to work on that, do it throughout their career, and not just while they are in school."

Program directors, focusing on the components of curriculum development, student opportunities, and program growth need stability to accomplish these tasks, which consistency offers while still allowing for flexibility. Quoting one director: "…that's where consistency comes in…about the opportunity for success…continuity in that they (students) are all getting the same access to the curriculum, advising services…and opportunities in a way that they (students) are going to have access (in the program)… you have to be able to be flexible."

In this sense, consistency is associated with excellence in meeting or exceeding standards and fitness for purpose in higher education. Becker's theory of human capital

investment applies to this concept. Consistency over time should enhance social work programs and the value to the students who graduate from them. This would be expected to improve the students' economic return from their educational investment.

Fitness for Purpose.

As the third concept, fitness for purpose speaks to how quality is judged based on the intention and objective for which it is to serve. Harvey and Green (1993) suggest that quality by this principle is centered on either 1) customer requirements or 2) how fitness for purpose can be assessed in relation to the mission. The authors described customer requirements as provider-determined specifications. This form of fitness parallels manufacturing, whereby companies and corporations determine the needs of customers, ostensibly because they have more information about customer needs. Applied to higher education, the paradigm has changed from educating students for knowledge, underlying the Kantian philosophy, to one of preparing students for employment or professional practice, which is directed by Bentham's utilitarian viewpoint (Bentham, 1816). Becker further expands this utilitarian perspective with an insight that education builds students' human capital, enhancing their ability to earn economic returns throughout their future career. While the utilitarian perspective is a more pragmatic approach, emphasizing employment needs and the value-added component, it does not stress the intellectual virtues of higher education. The participants of this study fall into the utilitarian perspective, but with a twist to include those values championed by the profession, which are reflect the virtues of an individual and not merely the skills. While students are judged by how well they develop and meet the competencies of EPAS, both groups did

acknowledge the core values and ethical standards traits pertaining to fitness. One

program director who identified fitness of students in several ways queried:

> They (students) have to be functional in society…as a social worker are you fit
> for that purpose? Can you perform the duties and have what it takes, the skills to
> be a social worker? Are you smart enough to be a social worker? …Do (you) have
> the desire to do this work?

Faculty too, acknowledged both the skills and the virtues that student must possess in

order to be "fit" for the profession. One faculty revealed that she has potential social

work students complete a written assignment on why they are at _____ and the

reason they want to pursue social work. In addition, she commented: "There are always

four or five that switch their major…it is not just about the motivation factor, but also in

term of aligning with the values and beliefs of social work."

Fitness for purpose extends to faculty. Increasingly complex challenges faced by

faculty in educating students require flexible teaching pedagogy; forms of scholarship,

and practices are necessary to keep abreast of the constant change enveloping higher

education (Hutchings, Huber, & Ciccone, 2011). When faculty are engaged in work they

have a personal commitment, there is a lower risk of burnout. Decreased resources,

autonomy, and increased administrative responsibilities contribute to an environment that

fuels burnout and attrition in academia (Shanafelt, West, Sloan, et al. 2009). Still,

organizational commitment is a determinant that can predict turnover. Faculty who feel a

strong commitment and alliance to the institutional mission and goals are more likely to

remain, while role conflict, workload, and alternative job opportunities have a negative

correlation (Daly & Dee, 2006). Respondents indicated that being part of the faculty

requires fitness that includes skills and commitment. Demands of the position include

gatekeeping, upholding the core values of the profession, being role models to students,

and appreciating the "bigger picture". These pressures necessitate faculty to continually

update and maintain their human capital investment (Becker, 1962).

Academic salaries in social work are low compared to other disciplines, especially

the hard sciences and other professional disciplines (Higher Ed Jobs, 2016). Therefore,

the intrinsic value of the position must offset the lack of economic rewards. The culture

of the university can enhance or deter faculty retention and job satisfaction. As one

program director so aptly illustrated:

> Fitness for purpose incorporates excellence and perfection…in terms of how do
> we (faculty) maintain or sustain…to keep our own fire burning and not take away
> from other people's energy or their creative ideas and make life so unbearable for
> them that they become frustrated, burned out or just leave.

Finally, the concept of fitness is linked directly to the program theme. Harvey and

Green (1993) defined fitness as fulfilling the mission of the institution. This concept can

be expanded to include programs that meet CSWE accreditation standards, promote a

positive educational environment, and produce graduates who are employable.

Accountability measures and multiple stakeholders have created conflicting ideals of

what fitness for purpose should represent in higher education. The mission of higher

education has evolved from one of dissemination of knowledge to students to an

economic investment by students. This reflects how the institutional mission has changed

to capitalize on demands for quantifiable skills and measureable outcomes (Sahney et al.,

2004). Still, respondents believe that excellence can be achieved through this means by

the creation of programs that stress academic achievement, learning and skills, and in

responding to the needs of the community. Discussing the parallel process of the

university mission and how the social work program fits within this context, a program

director offered the following:

> One of _____core elements is social justice, and I think that is a very
> natural fit with the social work program in striving for greater social equality and
> justice….do we align or does our mission (of the university) align with what we
> expect with the quality of students?

While Harvey and Green (1993) hold a narrow scope of fitness for purpose, restricted to

customer specifications and mission, participants in this study expanded fitness to include

a more complex definition; this recognizes additional elements relevant to the field of

social work, specifically fitness of students, faculty, and programs. The profession, which

involves multifaceted relationships extending from the micro to the macro levels, requires

significant soft skills as well as hard knowledge, both of which contribute to the fitness

for purpose.

Value for Money.

Frequently viewed by governmental bodies as the only "true" form of

accountability, the fourth concept of value for money concerns the *value added* approach

that has redefined higher education institutions to be producers of products in a

commodity driven market (D. C. Bennett, 2001; Connell, 2013). Quality thereby, is

linked to efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public resources (Harvey & Green,

1993). This consumerist approach of the corporate model advocated by many legislative

officials was clearly exemplified by Wisconsin's Governor Scott Walker, who attempted

to modify the Wisconsin Idea to explicitly say that the state higher education system's

mission should be to "meet the state's workforce needs", reducing a college degree to a

vocational job application (Karen Herzog, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, February 4,

2015). The participants of this study strongly refute this idea as evidenced by the results

of this section of the study. As this study was conducted in Wisconsin, the governor and

the legislative actions may have influenced the comments received during interviews.

In contrast to the value to obtaining a social work degree, both directors and

faculty noted the importance of the intrinsic benefit. While the intrinsic value was not

mentioned by Harvey and Green (1993), it is one connected to the inherent "core values

of social work: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of

human relationships, integrity, and competence" (NASW Code of Ethics, 1999 p. ?).

One participant, a seasoned faculty member remarked:

> The intrinsic value…students base instead of on money…the satisfaction they
> (students) get out of being of help to others. That was the intent for coming into
> the (social work) program; again, to be of service to humanity and it is happening
> for them so it is of value.

Unlike the current political movement of economic individualism, intrinsic value aligns

with the architecture of higher education; its original intent was to foster leadership,

societal responsibility, and service to others (Geiger, 2015; Lucas, 2006). Intrinsic value

is difficult to appraise, but does lessen its significance. As another faculty member

indicated "I see it more as a societal value or obligation…it goes back to education

people to develop a democratic society" while another added: "Nothing we do is short

term. It's really hard to measure the impact of a social worker."

Value for money is most often linked to the economic benefit of a degree to the recipient. Becker (1962) in his seminal work referenced education as an element that will lead to an increased future economic rate of return, making this a sound investment for individuals a society as a whole. Described in several interviews as the "bang for the buck", participants acknowledged the financial worth as a crucial indicator and one could that could be a deterrent, if used as the only consideration in pursuing a social work degree. Student loan debt, which has steadily climbed in conjunction with the rising cost of higher education, has created an invisible wall that prevents students from considering college, especially first-generation college and minority groups (Long & Riley, 2007; Burdman, 2005).

Differences in the cost of public v. private institutions in a competitive-driven market associate value with the monetary price tag of a degree. The political demand for efficiency has allegedly stripped the idea that brand name signifies status and quality leading to greater economic rewards. However, Thomas and Zhang (2005) dispute this perception with contrary findings that indicate quality of an institution positively influences potential growth in future earnings to degree recipients. Therefore, due their increased potential benefits, these institutions may offer good value for money despite their higher cost. Attending elite institutions also holds allusions concerning social class, race, gender and admission to high status graduate programs. For less elite private institutions, the mission of the program with unique points makes it attractive to specific types of student and influences their decision choice. Research has shown that students who are engaged in learning-community environments are more likely to demonstrate

stronger academic marks, greater engagement on campus, and to receive better academic and social support (Zhao & Kuh, 2004; Pascaralla & Terenzini, 2005). Private higher education institutions frequently have lower faculty to student ratios compared to public institutions, offering students a greater opportunity to capitalize on learning-communities that extend beyond the classroom. Participants at both private and public institutions were cognizant of the costs and benefits associated with the student's financial investment in a degree. Beyond the economic benefit, service and mission are draws to social work programs. One faculty participant noted: "Our mission has service in it…offering on campus support social service type of activities." A program director candidly commented:

> We try to not just pay attention to what they (students) are learning in the classroom, but then also the co-curricular; the immersion activities, having international internships, the study-abroad program, and other things as much as we can…Value for money…needs to be taken into consideration with what does the student really want?

Value is also linked to fitness for purpose. With the ever increasing number of BSW programs, the stated and implicit missions of the individual program should align with the inclusive mission of the institution. Harvey and Green (1993) drive home this point with referencing the "niche market" concept (p. 19). Higher education institutions can establish their reputations by offering programs deemed to be "special", meeting clearly stated objectives and goals, making them competitive and thereby maintaining their value.

Tied to the explicit benefit of social work education is employability after graduation. Probably the number of graduates who obtain a job is the easiest

measurement of accountability, and one method to determine efficiency, although a

rather crude indicator of measuring effectiveness. It does not look at other factors that can

impact employment opportunities, including the retention rate of employees within

organizations, and other more qualitative aspects of job satisfaction. The need for social

workers continues to grow with a 12% increase predicted from 2014 to 2024 (Bureau of

Labor Statistics, 2016). This gives greater economic value compared to many liberal arts

fields.

Social work, similar to nursing, is a profession that offers multiple avenues down

the yellow brick road. Undergraduate curriculum in CSWE accredited social work

programs prepares graduates for entry level social work practice through competency

based education (CSWE, 2008, 2015). From the marketability perspective, a faculty

member emphatically stated:

> Value for money means …we are making sure that students are marketable upon
> leaving. Their educational investment is giving them…their employability and
> they can obtain a license… It's giving, them a career they are seeking and what
> they came here for originally.

The versatility of the social work degree extends to students seeking dual majors

or minors. Students at several institutions can obtain a Spanish minor or a dual major,

which can increase their appeal to employers who serve the Spanish-speaking

community. Bi-lingual social workers are a valuable asset as there are approximately 34

million Spanish speaking people in the United States (Balderrama, 2008). Taking

business or policy minors would benefit individuals who may be pursuing administrative

positions in social service agencies.

Several states have certification or licensing for BSW graduates from CSWE accredited programs. The State of Wisconsin offers a certification process, whereby, baccalaureate social workers can apply for the Certified Social Worker (CSW) endorsement (NASW, Wisconsin Chapter, n.d.). This certification is a requirement for employment with some child welfare and other human service organizations in the state, giving students who pass the exam an advantage over other applicants. Social work is a profession, involving professional practice. Evetts (2014) defines a profession as one that is primarily classified as being in the service sector, requiring specialized knowledge gained in higher education and/or schooling, a specific vocational training, and experience. Professional practice usually involves some type of credentialing or licensing, legitimizing its existence, offering some mechanism of occupational jurisdiction, while promoting self-interests that include wages, status, and authority (Abbott, 1988; Evetts, 2014). Graduates who are employable will potentially raise their human capital with certification and therefore the return on their investment, tying into Becker's (1962) theory. When referencing licensing with employment, a program director offered:

> Regarding the concept of value for money is in the State of Wisconsin typically require certification to work in the social work role. How many times do they (students) need to take that exam (National Social Work Exam) to pass it?...Are they prepared to take that exam and pass it so they can get certified when they graduate?...How long does it take to get a job that pays you a living wage doing social work?...That would be the economic piece. If you can't get a job and you can't get certified, then that is not a good use of resources.

Respondents identified how social work programs represented value for money. This theme is also intertwined with the last one of the value for money concepts,

representing the overall educational experience. Portrayed in a variety of ways by participants, these themes were distinctly different. Programs pertained to maintaining accreditation, faculty-student ratio, curriculum offerings and course delivery, faculty commitment, and interestingly, faculty salaries. This was brought up by a program director who noted that "Faculty salary?...This is a poor indicator of what we think we should be quality in BSW education…If you stay some place, your salary isn't going to move much over the years." Harvey and Green (1993) did not address programs but as free-market thinking pushes competition, higher education institutions are increasingly forced to shrink or dissolve programs that are not profitable, with the realization that in order to survive, programs must produce revenues greater than their cost.

Referencing the value of the program to the institution, a faculty member noted: "An institution looks at value for the money or they wouldn't offer to have our social work program here in terms of accreditation…they are looking at whether social work is a good value for the payout they are making." This same individual also noted that where they are employed, the program in which were employed has been allowed to offer "value-added" courses to the curriculum. These are primarily electives that have proved to be quite popular to both majors and non-majors.

Related to stewardship of resources, which also connects to the last theme of the overall educational experience, one program director noted that "_____is trying to maximize their dollar per student and per program as well." While another noted "We (as a program) have a duty to provide the best education we can for the money they (students) are paying." Recent cuts in programs, due to

multiple factors of decreased student admissions, low student enrollment or graduation rates, and increased emphasis on job placement post degree have resulted in retirement, buyout, or layoffs of tenured faculty and "special arrangements" for students attempting to complete the discontinued degree (Concordia in Minnesota Will Cut 9 Majors, 2016; Rivard, 2013).

Value for money measures the benefits less the cost. The benefits include both intrinsic (non-monetary) and extrinsic (monetary) factors. Similarly, cost may be divided into the intrinsic (non-monetary) and extrinsic (monetary) elements. In the current environment, politicians and corporate enterprises have bastardized the definition of value by focusing only on the extrinsic benefits and costs, while systematically ignoring the intrinsic aspects. The comments from the interviews are a correction, as the respondents have clearly indicated the importance of intrinsic value.

Transformation.

Described as a critical component of higher education, the last concept, transformation, is a meta-concept that is inclusive of the other four: excellence, perfection, fitness for purpose, and value for money. It is also, perhaps, the most difficult to quantify due to its subjective and relational nature, making it an antithesis to the accountability driven cultures of higher education, that discount its value (Harvey & Knight, 1996; Harvey & Green, 1993).

While the purpose of higher education appears to have been drifting towards professional training, this does necessarily overlook the development of the personal self. Based on the tenets of constructivism, transformation symbolizes the crux of what the

entire higher educational experience should represent: *change*. Looking at this concept

from the value-added approach, the pursuit of a college degree is a financial waste if a

student does not experience significant change from the time they enter the institution

until graduation. Knowledge may be powerful, but without the ability to discern the

implicit and explicit meaning of information, the transformative power of learning is lost

(Glisczinski, 2007; Habernas, 2007).

Social work education represents change on multiple levels. Although EPAS does

not actually use the term its document, transformation's footprint is found throughout the

content. During the course of the interviews for this study, defining transformation

brought the most enthusiasm from participants, but recognizing that the

operationalization of this concept can be idiosyncratic and subjective. This concept also

brought with it the greatest degree of diversity among respondents' definitions, requiring

a lengthiest coding process under the theme of "Students Development of the

Professional Self". This sub-theme of overall transformation reflects the metamorphosis

as described by Kegan (1979; 2000), that learning is a continuum, constantly changing

and is a lifelong process. Describing this process as a type of development, one faculty

participant stated:

> Transformation equals growth and change…and that is part of the inculcating
> process...the experiences that people have and the challenges they meet…and
> work through them. There are really big ways that you can see people
> transform…with some students, the effect is smaller…it's a holistic, life-long
> kind of thing.

However, transformation in the provision of professional growth should include forward

economic movement, creating a value-added benefit from seeking a social work degree.

Specific to many first-generation college students, the economic transition into the

middle socioeconomic class as a result of completing a degree was eloquently put by a

veteran faculty member who observed:

> Transformation occurs across so many different dimensions, not only during the
> time that people are students within the university, but also beyond. One of the
> things we have seen…over a period of quite a number of years is the
> transformation of poverty to a stable, at least middle income for people…they
> (graduates) have been able to take on leadership roles within their families…and
> their communities in ways they had never anticipated.

The literature in higher education generally does not contain references to

transformation in the above context, but for those programs that have a high first-

generation college or minority population; this usage of the word is very relevant, clearly

speaking to Becker's (1962) human capital theory on the economic rewards of a college

investment.

The other subcategory of the theme of the Development of the Professional Self

ascribes to the acquisition of proficient skills. Harvey and Green (1993) reference this as

enhancing the participant (p. 24). Transformation in this regard has students becoming

both part of the process and the finished product, subscribing to a quantitative approach

in measuring skill capability and knowledge. Enhancing the participant is the premise for

competency based education (CBE) that focuses on assessment, curriculum, delivery,

outcomes, and certification. This is an efficient methodology, championed by many

licensed professions as a way to ensure proficient professionals (Lichtenberg, Portnoy,

Bebeau, Leigh, Nelson, Rubin, N. J., ... & Kaslow, 2007). This value-added approach to

education that has a prescriptive v. descriptive reductionist education model; it is

currently championed by CSWE in their emphasis on outcome measures (CSWE, 2016).

While advocating the development of professional skills, participants broadened Harvey

and Green's (1993) model to include skills that are more difficult to quantify and that

may be as applicable to excellence as they are to transformation; these include critical

thinking, analysis that informs judgment, policy understanding, political issues, and

social justice. Regarding the development of professional skills, a faculty participant,

who had also been a practitioner, described professors as helping students to develop as

professionals, noting: "… we are helping students transform into someone with skills and

competencies to help people achieve whatever their goals are…and their life's

expectations." Describing transitioning from student to practitioner, a faculty member

used the analogy akin to Star Trek noting: Students transform…they grow, and pass into

being a master – going where they have not been before". Another faculty respondent

voiced:

> […]it's (students) looking at the world in social work, and at people-micro,
> mezzo, macro, through a lens that they have never seen before or even thought
> about...They have changed by gaining intellectual and educational
> knowledge…and by increasing their critical thinking skills. They have changed
> by adding tools to their tool box, meaning interventions and skills.

The growth of the professional and personal selves is inexorably linked. The theme

relating to "The Development of the Personal Self" referenced the self-awareness and

self-reflection of *empowering the participant* (Harvey & Green, p. 25). This relates to

students' conceptual abilities that are integral to their learning processes. This

transformation capitalizes on Mezirow's transformative learning theory where students

alter their perceptions of their world through self-reflection on their previous assumptions

(Mezirow, 1994). This also ties into constructivism whereby the experiences, values, and beliefs of individuals are unique to them. Personal growth and change is exclusive for each student; some demonstrating greater progress than others. A director asserted that "We have to challenge students and get them to look at other perspectives…and diversity. They need to become more skilled and knowledgeable in working across cultures." Another director said: "Self-awareness of what they know and they don't know…their personal values…that really fit with this profession." A faculty member succinctly described transformation as that "'wow' moment. "You feel it, you live it and you become it." Summing up what personal transformation means, one faculty respondent enthusiastically commented:

> I think this is where the heart of education is really at, you know. More than anything else, this is what (social work)…I'm putting a value base on this in a different way…wanting them (students) to be more critical of their thoughts with examining things in more depth and being more visionary for new ideas…developing a sense of creativity…you can see things in all kinds of ambiguity and getting away from dichotomous thinking.

Faculty defining transformation beyond the scope of student metamorphosis focused on social work programs. To keep up with a changing environment, programs must be both pedagogical and versatile. Curriculum should reflect this adaptability and still align with the institutional mission for learning. Referencing the community surrounding the university where they were employed, one of the faculty explained:

> Social work programs can go through transformational experiences….what do we (programs) need to do to really be responsive to the…community? At _____ we are trying to do that in different ways…giving students more opportunity for flexibility…to have a broader array and thinking outside the box…

Referencing Erikson's theory on psychosocial development, Shulman (2005) described

the principles of teaching in professions as having *signature pedagogy (p. 52).* Elements

of pedagogy implicitly determine how knowledge is scrutinized, evaluated, recognized or

rejected, and the functions mastery in the field. Included are the dimensions of *surface*

structure, deep structure, and *implicit structure* (pp. 54-55). While all three are equally

important, they are not treated equally. Shulman argues that what is missing is the

clinical pedagogy of practice and performance (p. 55). Clinical pedagogy personifies how

learning in the classroom is exemplified by students' clinical experiences and developing

professional character. In the profession of social work, the field internship experience is

defined as the *signature pedagogy* by CSWE (2016, p. 12). Pedagogies influence the

culture of not just the field experience, but also the design and delivery of programs, and

the allocation of resources by universities (Shulman, 2005). Changing technology,

conditions, and issues all influence clinical practice. Programs are the keepers of the keys

that should recognize the value of clinical pedagogy in the formation of skills that

encompass the mind, body, and spirit for which knowledge can be a catalyst but not the

solution.

Tying transformation to a form of excellence, another faculty remarked: "The

program itself I would say just doesn't exist to do what the accreditation standards say,

but go to a higher level. They are invested in the students and …the students'

clients…that they serve." Despite the historical pronouncement that social work is not a

profession (Flexner, 1915), today it is recognized as a profession, but one that must serve

two masters: accreditation standards and the welfare of people. This can create conflict, frustration, and ambiguity, but it can also establish the seeds of transformation.

Finally, program directors indicated that transformation can occur in a broader context. These respondents, perhaps because they have other responsibilities outside their department, view transformation as a force that creates changes at the individual level, but extends its impact to affect the entire culture of the university community. Contrary to views from other realms not associated with higher education, universities are not insular silos immune from outside influences. Indeed, they are an integral part of society. The effects of transformation are not always positive. They can have a chilling effect on the overall culture of higher education and those directly connected to it. Describing the recent push to place higher education under corporate rule Giroux (2002b) lamented: "As corporate culture and values shape university life…This suggests a perilous turn in U.S. society, one that threatens our understanding of democracy as fundamental to our basic rights and freedoms and the ways in which we can rethink and re-appropriate the meaning, purpose, and future of higher education" (p. 438).

Transformation is not confined to individuals; it extends outside the walls of the university and to the profession as a whole. It is the heart of the learning process; it occurs throughout the life-time of the individual, and, in actuality, describes the profession. As one faculty member expressed: "Social work has become transformational as a profession…changing and expanding…there is a value to be seen (in application) to all sorts of different professions where social workers bring a unique perspective."

Quality social work programs transform their students into professionals. They also transform themselves to meet the challenges of a changing society. Their graduates go out as professionals and seek to transform the lives of those they serve.

Exploratory Question #3

The third research question considered: *Can a cohesive definition be developed of each concept: excellence; perfection; fitness for purpose; value for money; and transformation?* While there were common themes found in each of Harvey and Green's five concepts of quality, the results elicited various degrees of agreement and disagreement. Within limits, there was consensus on certain issues. The lack of a complete agreement may be due to how situations are viewed from different positions. The department chair/program directors often do not mirror faculty, as they are involved in other dimensions of the university that faculty rarely encounter. Another factor influencing consensus may be due to the relatively small sample size. A larger sample may reveal a greater variance of responses. A proposed definition of each concept, based on areas consensus taken from the data analysis will be discussed in the next chapter.

Exploratory Question #4

The fourth research question looked at: *Are there other concepts that define quality that do not fit into one of the categories identified by Harvey and Green (1993)?* When asked this question only about half of the participants offered any additional insights into what other concepts could be used to describe quality. Of those that did propose new concepts, even fewer offered a method of operationalizing them. Several respondents also indicated that their concepts could be considered sub-categories of one

of the five Harvey and Green (1993) concepts. The one theme that was identified by both

program directors and faculty "Quality of Faculty" was defined differently by program

directors and faculty. While program directors focused on the overall quality of

department faculty, presenting a macro approach to this concept, faculty identified

involvement with students and mentoring as describing this proposed concept, reflecting

a micro approach. This divergence may be due to the lens through which this notion is

viewed. Program directors, responsible for the department's wellbeing, look at faculty as

being a part of the whole, combining management and leadership skills required for a

successful program. Faculty, who are more "front-line" have more frequent contact with

students, may view their responsibilities from a narrower focus and take a relational

approach to this concept. No one offered a method of operationalizing this concept, thus

this idea could be very subjective.

The second concept proposed was based on the ancient Greek philosophical view

of arête; this is the belief that education develops moral virtue, which endows the mind,

body, and soul with principles that create passionate citizens (Heater, 2002). This

combines with the other Greek philosophical thought, eudemonism; this is often

translated to advance the ethical wellbeing and welfare of others. In this framework,

positive practices are attributes of an organization, contributing to the engagement,

identity, effectiveness and satisfaction of the faculty, staff, and students (Cameron, Mora,

Leutscher, & Calarco, 2011). The program director who suggested this concept

indicated:

It's a meta-concept of all of them excellence, perfection, fitness, value, and transformation…I would apply this to peoples' understanding of what is the good society? What is the happy person in the good society? I would see this as the apex of social work goals…It's really about people being happy in their social world.

From the constructivist theoretical perspective, arête and eudemonism narrative discourse and reflecting individual values and beliefs, make its ability for quantifiable measurement highly difficult at best.

The third concept is related to measurement and is associated with the CSWE accreditation process, which is updated every eight years. As one program director noted:

Under the theory of change we can quantify (the skills of) a competent social worker and that these are the practice behaviors that define that…but we really have to test that to see if it is true…It's an expensive study and no one has put the resources into it to answer that question and there is a lot of politics (involved).

Since EPAS was first implemented in 1952 with the founding of CSWE, it has been updated every eight years, with the most recent change implemented with the 2015 EPAS; forcing social work schools to redefine how they measure outcomes with the assumption that the previous method is flawed and somehow must be revised. This tinkering with standards makes it more difficult for schools to measure longitudinal data using a consistent methodology.

Other themes proposed by the participants were subsumed into one of the original Harvey and Green (1993) concepts. Under excellence, collegiality and cohesiveness of faculty were considered critical in promoting excellence in programming and additionally, transformation. This ties into the belief that the institutional culture can support or hinder efforts in maintaining strong curriculum and programs. Differences

appeared when addressing excellence with programming. Program directors thought

reputation-based peer-reviews of schools would reflect excellence while faculty felt that

development of stronger admissions criteria would better define excellence of programs.

Related to reputation, the current methodology of *USNWR* as part of their current

methodology of ranking social work programs includes a review by social work program

deans and/or directors, but often this is a muddied variable based on the reputation of the

institution (Singer, 2007). In addition, the perception of directors is focused on the macro

aspect of the school in relation to the greater institution, while faculty's attention is

directed more at a program level and gatekeeping. In operationalizing these additional

themes of excellence, faculty proposed comprehensive exams, which are currently used

in some schools to measure learning. Other methods proposed consist of field evaluations

and surveys of alumni looking at ethical and professional behavior aligned with the

standards of the NASW Code of Ethics.

Concerning the concept of perfection or consistency, faculty suggested that

student satisfaction of learning and skill development supported by an environment that

facilitates this idea contributes to the consistency of programs. While the program

environment is mentioned in the EPAS (CSWE, 2016) implicit curriculum, there is no

formal benchmark associated with this initiative, although faculty suggested the use of

student and alumni surveys to measure the conduciveness of a program's milieu. This

idea connects to organizational culture, where consistency can benefit learning, both in

and outside of the classroom; however, this is associated more with processes than

outcomes (Yeo, 2008).

Additional themes associated with the concept of fitness for purpose included faculty assisting students who struggle as to whether social work is a good "fit" and contributing to student satisfaction with the program. Faculty further noted that for goodness of fit inputs, processes, and outcomes associated with assessment of programs are critical to the culture of the institution. Faculty, however, did not relate to the idea of accountability, which reflects the shift to defining the business model to fitness for purpose. Instead, they linked this form of fitness to the more traditional mission of higher education, which is connected to teaching and knowledge (Harvey and Green, 1993; Lester, 2014). As no one offered a method of operationalizing these additional themes, a combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques might be used to assess these ideas.

Under the concept of value for money, one additional theme emerged from faculty; it regarded student satisfaction with the financial investment necessary to obtain the degree. As previously noted, this theme had been found in the data during the course of the interviews on the concept of value for money. As social work salaries are not commensurate with other bachelor level professional degrees, the intrinsic value of an education must offset the extrinsic expectation. Driven by the neoliberal concept of the consumerist approach to higher education, the value of a degree has been increasingly linked solely to its economic return (Connell, 2013). While no method of operationalization was offered with this specific theme, a quantifiable measurement would be difficult to attain, as satisfaction is a private value reflecting an individual's personal ideal of fulfillment.

Finally, the concept of transformation reiterated familiar themes gleaned from the data taken from the original interviews on this concept. Program directors, perhaps because of their position, appreciated the macro perspective and brought forth the theme of students' understanding of the bigger picture, encompassing the greater society and world without passing judgment on situations due to personal agendas. Faculty took a more general approach, considering the individual development of students; learning critical thinking and analysis leads to empowerment with learning. This process is the fundamental element of the transformative theory of change (Harvey and Knight, 1996).

CHAPTER SEVEN

LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Limitations of the Study

This qualitative study has multiple limitations. Representing a small, non-random sample from the State of Wisconsin, it is limited in scope. There are no for-profit institutions that possess an accredited social work program in the state. With respect to the value-added component, faculty and directors at for-profit institutions may possess differing views in comparison to those at non-profit colleges and universities.

As there are 496 accredited baccalaureate social work programs in the United States, ideally, a much larger sample would have given this study greater depth and breadth. Second, as a qualitative design, inherent and individual biases are inevitable. Having two coders helped to minimize but not necessarily eradicate this issue.

Finally, as a social work educator, this writer knew a large percentage of the participants through the Wisconsin chapter of CSWE. This in itself can lead to bias as participants may have attempted to reply to the questions with what they felt was the desired response. Several respondents expressed frustration that they were not given access to the article prior to the interview, although the name of the article and the five concepts of quality were listed in the consent form. When it was explained that the intent was to understand the participants' views of the concepts based on their own values, beliefs, and experiences versus what Harvey and Green (1993) had proposed, most

acknowledged that they would have read the article and then phrased their responses accordingly. This reflects the bias from years as a student being tested to determine if one could respond with the correct textbook answer.

Implications for Future Research

The study finds the concept of quality means different ideas to different people. Would faculty in the west share similar ideas of the concepts of quality as those who teach in the plains region, midwest, east, or the south? If CSWE is to use the term "quality" then being able to define what this means may allow for greater consistency its the evaluation of programs.

In the past few years there has been an increase in pressure on higher education institutions to prepare students for employment, effectively altering the original idea of the liberal arts education. This has resulted in an assault on the humanities and social sciences with threats of significant cuts to funding of research in these areas (Schneider, 2012). Emphasis has been refocused toward the concepts of fitness for purpose or the value added component related to job placement and capital investment. This redirection foregoes the more traditional concepts of education that include excellence and transformation that exemplify the broader development of intellectual skills, the sense of ethical responsibilities and civic duty, and the ability to adapt to today's constantly changing environment. The consequence of this change is a redistribution of resources, favoring some departments at the expense of others. Such has been the case recently in the State of Kentucky where the current governor has explicitly threatened to defund degrees within the humanities and the arts (Cohen, 2016). How accrediting bodies

distinguish quality varies among professions. Unless one explicitly defines this term, the waters remain muddied.

Watty's 2003 study of accounting academics in Australia assesses only four of the five concepts proposed by Harvey and Green (1993), with the author arguing against the concept of perfection and consistency as one associated with manufacturing and not education. Watty offers definitions taken from Harvey and Green (1993), applying them to accounting education and asking non-administrative academics to rank them in order of their "beliefs" and "attitudes" (p. 294). Beliefs identify faculty perceptions of administrators' definition of quality while attitudes focus on the respondents' beliefs of what should be promoted or encouraged. The response from the 36 Australian universities sampled was 28%, an above average return rate for a mail survey. Participants in this study regard transformation as the approach that should characterize accounting education, but feel that fitness for purpose is the goal of department and school administrators. A similar methodological study of quality across accredited undergraduate social work programs using definitions specific to social work including both faculty and program administrators would reveal whether there was congruence with regard to beliefs and attitudes between the two groups. This would be a starting point for developing or strengthening quality metrics and goals for departments while influencing policy decisions and initiatives at higher levels.

Proposed Definitions of Quality Related to Undergraduate Social Work

Education

The following section proposes a definition for each Harvey and Green (1993) quality concept as applicable to social work education based on the findings of this study.

Excellence.

This concept can be divided into three subcategories.

1. The theoretical definition of excellence relates to the philosophical concept of success in higher education; it involves exceeding expectations by being the "best". While many desire this form of excellence, few achieve it.

2. Excellence, which is narrowly defined and pertains to students, faculty, and programs, is associated with inputs and outputs. Students display the values, skills, and behaviors of social work that extend beyond the classroom and graduation while faculty achieve excellence by motivating students through pedagogy in the classroom, field, and with advising. Programs that achieve this form of excellence have high benchmarks and standards with a culture that promotes "exceeding expectations".

3. Associated with accreditation, programs that excel are those that exceed CSWE standards with student performance of EPAS competencies. This also is tied to a program's reputation within the greater community.

Perfection or Consistency.

While perfection may be the ultimate goal, it does not exist in social work practice. In contrast, the concept of consistency encompasses students, faculty, and

programs. It includes a continuum of demonstrated student growth of social work knowledge and skills. Faculty consistency exhibits personal growth while maintaining standards of teaching and research. Program consistency reflect adherence to standards, policies, and student achievement to which reputation is tied.

Fitness for Purpose.

Fitness for purpose is applicable equally to students, faculty, programs, and the university. Students exhibit the core values of the profession, develop a self-awareness to manage their own biases, and meet the competencies of EPAS. Faculty teach the knowledge and skills, model social work values, and act as gatekeepers of the program. The program's mission aligns with the university, CSWE standards, and the greater needs of the community; its graduates are employable, can achieve licensing, and gain admission to graduate school. The university provides the appropriate opportunities, education, and resources for student achievement.

Value for Money.

The intrinsic value of a social work degree includes intangible benefits and balances the actual cost of an education with employability and financial rewards. It is exemplified by social work programs with a low student-faculty ratio and a value-added curriculum that makes the student's financial investment worthwhile.

Transformation.

Transformation is a metamorphosis in which students develop their professional selves and skills that include the ability to analyze multiple perspectives and ways of thinking. Their personal selves, fostering growth, self-reflection, and awareness are key

factors to the profession, reflecting the knowledge gained from their social work education, and leading to career accomplishments.

Conclusion

Before quality in undergraduate social work can be measured, it must first be defined. The description is influenced and interpreted by the culture of the social work program, the university, and the greater society. Their interaction creates the social work education milieu, determining and reflecting how undergraduate education continues to evolve and change. Social work, as with other disciplines in academia, is heavily influenced by organizational ethos and philosophy, resonating cultural norms and values. The organizational culture of a higher education institution is shaped by its mission, environment, how members are socialized, communication patterns, leadership, how governance is executed, and how strategies are developed (Tierney, 1988). The concepts of this framework all impact how quality will be determined and measured in higher education and, more explicitly, in undergraduate social work education.

APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Participant	Male	Female	Nat.Am./Alk	AFA/Blk	Asian	Hisp/Lat.	PacIsland	NonH/White	Other	Director	Faculty	YrsInPos.	YrsatInst	TenuredYes	TenuredNo	AsstProf	AssocProf	FullProf	OtherRank	BSW	MSW	PhD	Public	Private	Students
Program Dir.																									
#1	x							x		x		16	1.5	x			x			x				x	80
#2		x						x		x		2	12	x			x				x			x	250
#3		x						x		x		18	18	x				x		x				x	87
#4	x							x		x		2	26	x				x			x			x	257
#5		x						x		x		2	9		x	x				x				x	75
#6	x							x		x		1	13	x			x			x				x	487
#7		x						x		x		3	11		x				x			x		x	843
#8	x							x		x		20	20	x				x		x				x	125
#9		x						x		x		7	7	x			x			x				x	125
#10		x						x		x		13	13	x				x		x					75
#11		x						x		x		1	6	x			x				x			x	170
Faculty																									
#1		x						x			x	7	7		x		x			x				x	80
#2		x						x			x	5	5		x	x				x				x	116
#3		x						x			x	14	20		x			x		x				x	87
#4	x							x			x	17	17		x				x	x			x		487
#5		x						x			x	3	7		x	x				x			x		487
#6		x						x			x	3	3		x	x				x				x	87
#7		x						x			x	4	5		x	x					x		x		257
#8		x						x			x	9	9	x			x					x	x		843
#9	x							x			x	16	16	x				x		x				x	75
#10		x	x								x	11.5	11.5	x			x						x		750
#11		x						x			x	32	32	x				x		x				x	116
#12		x						x			x	3.5	3.5		x	x				x			x		125
#13		x						x			x	7	7		x	x					x		x		170
#14	x		x								x	25	25	x			x						x		75
#15		x						x			x	3	26				x				x				125
#16		x						x			x	2	41	x			x			x			x		75
#17		x						x			x	7	9		x	x						x		x	843
#18		x						x			x	1	1		x	x				x				x	75
#19	x							x			x	3	7		x	x						x			750

APPENDIX B

QUALITY AS EXCELLENCE OR EXCEPTIONAL – THEORETICAL OR
PHILOSOPHICAL: DEFINITION

Program Directors
1. A quality that acts upon the concept that is directed towards perfection
2. A very high standard of education, content that is delivered that is keeping with the standards of the field and includes current research in the field
3. Demonstrates neither an excess or a deficiency

Faculty
1. Exemplary or outstanding
2. Involves a commitment to lifelong learning
3. The best of a situation or concept
4. Responsible and ethical
5. Philosophy of success and excellence
6. A well-rounded education that includes a liberal arts core
7. Integrative process of educating that pulls the individual pieces together
8. What everyone wants to achieve with exceeding expectations, but rarely obtains
9. Performing in an outstanding way and at the very high end of the continuum
10. Pushing what is expected into what's next and how to advance something
11. The best of a situation or concept
12. Remarkable and well above the average
13. Above average or excelling
14. Academic excellence of going above and beyond in the classroom and after graduation
15. A high level of teaching and learning

APPENDIX C

QUALITY AS EXCELLENCE OR EXCEPTIONAL – THEORETICAL OR
PHILOSOPHICAL: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors
Philosophical (Comprehensive)
1. A quality that acts upon the concept that is directed towards perfection, demonstrating neither an excess or a deficiency

Philosophical (Institutional)
1. A very high standard of education

Faculty
Philosophical (Comprehensive)
1. Pushing what is expected into what's next and how to advance something
2. Philosophy of success and excellence
3. Above average or excelling
4. Exemplary or outstanding
5. Going beyond the pale
6. What everyone wants to achieve with exceeding expectations, but rarely obtains
7. Performing in an outstanding way and at the very high end of the continuum
8. The best of a situation or concept
9. Remarkable and well above the average

Philosophical (Institutional)
1. Involves a commitment to lifelong learning
2. Academic excellence of going above and beyond in the classroom and after graduation
3. Being responsible and ethical (in education)
4. A well-rounded education that includes a liberal arts core
5. Integrative process of educating that pulls the individual pieces together
6. A high level of teaching and learning

APPENDIX D

QUALITY AS EXCELLENCE OR EXCEPTIONAL – THEORETICAL OR
PHILOSOPHICAL: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors
Philosophical (Comprehensive)
- A quality that acts upon the concept that is directed towards perfection, demonstrating neither an excess or a deficiency

Philosophical (Institutional)
- A very high standard of education

Faculty
Philosophical (Comprehensive)
- A philosophy of success that involves exceeding expectations and performing at the very high end of a continuum
- Exemplary, the "best", remarkable, and what everyone want to achieve, but rarely obtains

Philosophical (Institutional)
- Excellence that is inclusive of a liberal arts core that involves a high level of teaching and learning that integrates the individual concepts
- Academic excellence that is ethical, responsible, extends beyond graduation, and involves a commitment to lifelong learning

APPENDIX E

QUALITY AS EXCELLENCE OR EXCEPTIONAL – MEASUREMENT THAT IS
NARROWLY DEFINED: DEFINITION

Program Directors
1. Defining what excellence would be compared to a benchmark of average
2. Measuring growth and development throughout the educational experience and practice
3. Performance after graduation
4. Expertise of faculty that includes an ability to be a team member
5. Faculty who also advise students and complete service
6. Defining each competency practice behavior
7. Identifying factors that are useful when people are in leadership positions in the field and include creativity and practice challenges
8. Benchmarking by using rubrics
9. Setting benchmarks
10. Balance that is represents of continuum in the development of a student's learning
11. Post-graduation employment and certification
12. Looking at the implicit and explicit curriculum
13. What is the implicit and explicit curriculum of a program
14. Former undergraduate students who return as faculty after receiving PhDs elsewhere
15. Programmatic that includes having a cohesive and comprehensive curriculum
16. Established individual measurements of excellence with the competencies and practice behaviors
17. Faculty who exhibit the values associated with the NASW Code of Ethics

Faculty
1. Broad content within a SW program
2. Rubrics and benchmarks that describe competency and behaviors
3. Encouraging students to take part in travel and explore other fields that are related to merge the two together
4. Classes that are skill based while others are more focused on critical thinking, with both given importance, individually and as a program
5. Responding to the community needs
6. Faculty who have academic freedom with teaching
7. Departments who have faculty who promote pedagogy in the classroom and in field
8. Setting benchmarks
9. Looking at the feedback from stakeholders within the program and the community
10. Setting up outcome measures for all facets
11. Academic preparedness as demonstrated with curriculum
12. Faculty who make students thinkers and not just help them develop knowledge and skills
13. The field internship
14. Performance post-graduation by employers
15. The curriculum of a program
16. Indirect and direct measures, including assessment and evaluations

17. Appropriate and sufficient structure, curriculum, infrastructure, and resources
18. Feedback loop
19. Course material that is relevant to recent and timely topics
20. Physical facilities and equipment
21. The use of indirect and direct measures for a student and a program
22. Having rubrics set in place so expectations are known
23. Rubrics with multiple faculty rating students
24. Having some form of outcome measures for students and the program
25. Putting benchmarks in place
26. Faculty who advise and mentor outside of the classroom
27. Looking at the self-studies for CSWE
28. Durability of relationships within the community
29. Understanding the core concepts of social work, ethics, boundaries, diversity, and being open-minded
30. Understanding the bigger picture from a macro perspective
31. Good verbal and written communication skills
32. Overall outcome measures to be met

APPENDIX F

QUALITY AS EXCELLENCE OR EXCEPTIONAL – MEASUREMENT THAT IS
NARROWLY DEFINED: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors
Faculty
1. Expertise of faculty that includes an ability to be a team member
2. Faculty who exhibit the values associated with the NASW Code of Ethics
3. Faculty who also advise students and complete service
4. Former undergraduate students who return as faculty after receiving PhDs elsewhere

Curriculum
1. Defining each competency practice behavior
2. Looking at the implicit and explicit curriculum
3. What is the implicit and explicit curriculum of a program
4. Programmatic that includes having a cohesive and comprehensive curriculum

Program
1. Defining what excellence would be compared to a benchmark of average
2. Identifying factors that are useful when people are in leadership positions in the field and include creativity and practice challenges
3. Measuring growth and development throughout the educational experience and practice
4. Established individual measurements of excellence with the competencies and practice behaviors
5. Benchmarking by using rubrics
6. Setting benchmarks
7. Post-graduation employment and certification
8. Performance after graduation
9. Balance that is represents of continuum in the development of a student's learning

Faculty
Faculty
1. Faculty who have academic freedom with teaching
2. Departments who have faculty who promote pedagogy in the classroom and in field
3. Faculty who are motivated to advise and mentor in and out of the classroom

Curriculum
1. Course material that is relevant to recent and timely topics
2. Academic preparedness as demonstrated with curriculum
3. The field internship as part of the curriculum
4. Broad content of curriculum within a SW program
5. The curriculum of a program
6. Understanding the core concepts of social work, ethics, boundaries, diversity, and being open-minded
7. Understanding the bigger picture from a macro perspective
8. Good verbal and written communication skills

Program:
1. Rubrics and benchmarks that describe competency and behaviors

2. Encouraging students to take part in travel and explore other fields that are related to merge the two together
3. Classes that are skill based while others are more focused on critical thinking, with both given importance, individually and as a program
4. Setting benchmarks
5. Indirect and direct measures, including assessment and evaluations
6. Looking at the feedback from stakeholders within the program and the community
7. Performance post-graduation by employers
8. Overall outcome measures to be met
9. Appropriate and sufficient structure, curriculum, infrastructure, and resources
10. Feedback loop
11. Physical facilities and equipment
12. The use of indirect and direct measures for a student and a program
13. Having rubrics set in place so expectations are known
14. Rubrics with multiple faculty rating students
15. Having some form of outcome measures for students and the program
16. Putting benchmarks in place
17. Setting up outcome measures for all facets
18. Looking at the self-studies for CSWE
19. Durability of relationships within the community

APPENDIX G

QUALITY AS EXCELLENCE OR EXCEPTIONAL – MEASUREMENT THAT IS
NARROWLY DEFINED: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors
Faculty
- Expertise of faculty who are team members, advise students and complete service
- Faculty who exhibit the values associated with the NASW Code of Ethics
- Former undergraduate students who return as faculty after receiving PhDs elsewhere

Curriculum
- A cohesive and comprehensive implicit and explicit curriculum reflective of the program

Program
- Defining what excellence would be compared to a benchmark of average
- Identifying factors of leadership positions in the field and include creativity and practice challenges
- Measuring excellence through growth and development with the educational experience and practice via competencies
- Post-graduation employment and certification

Faculty
Faculty
- Have academic freedom with teaching
- Faculty who make students thinkers along with developing knowledge and skills
- Motivation of faculty to achieve excellence in the pedagogy of students in the classroom, field, and advising

Curriculum
- Broad content of curriculum, including the field internship within a SW program that reflects relevance, timely topics, academic preparedness, and communication skills
- Curriculum that demonstrates an understanding of the core concepts of micro and macro social work with ethics, boundaries, diversity, and being open-minded

Program:
- Rubrics and benchmarks that evaluate students and the program to measure outcomes as part of the CSWE accreditation process
- Programs that encouraging students to explore other fields, provide classes that develop skills and critical thinking
- Appropriate and sufficient structure, curriculum, infrastructure, and resources
- Responding to feedback and needs of the community

Post-graduation performance by employers

APPENDIX H

QUALITY AS EXCELLENCE OR EXCEPTIONAL: SET OF STANDARDS
RELATED TO ACCREDITATION: DEFINITION

Program Directors
1. Outcome measures as dictated by CSWE
2. Adherence to CSWE standards for programs
3. CSWE standards, but these are too broad and need to be individualized for programs
4. Related to core competencies of EPAS and CSWE
5. Competencies and practice behaviors that CSWE has outlined as being "good enough" and average expectations

Faculty
1. Students meeting the competencies and practice behaviors of EPAS
2. Faculty going above the CSWE standards
3. Exceptional programs
4. Establishing curriculum to reach program goals
5. Standards set by CSWE, with alleged autonomy with curriculum development
6. Exceeding CSWE standards, which are the benchmark
7. Competencies and practice behaviors that reflect learning
8. Having a team approach with faculty with awareness of what others are doing
9. Program excellence
10. The total impact of the program related to going above the standards
11. CSWE standards are a baseline standard with exceptional being able to understand and explain the process to others

APPENDIX I

QUALITY AS EXCELLENCE OR EXCEPTIONAL: SET OF STANDARDS
RELATED TO ACCREDITATION: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors
Overall CSWE Standards
1. Adherence to CSWE standards for programs
2. CSWE standards, but these are too broad and need to be individualized for programs
3. Outcome measures as dictated by CSWE

Practice Behaviors Associated with EPAS
1. Competencies and practice behaviors that CSWE has outlined as being "good enough" and average expectations
2. Related to core competencies of EPAS and CSWE

Faculty
Overall Standards
1. Program excellence
2. Exceptional programs
3. Establishing curriculum to reach program goals
4. Standards set by CSWE, with alleged autonomy with curriculum development
5. Faculty going above the CSWE standards
6. CSWE standards are a baseline standard with exceptional being able to understand and explain the process to others
7. Exceeding CSWE standards, which are the benchmark
8. Having a team approach with faculty with awareness of what others are doing
9. The total impact of the program related to going above the standards set by CSWE

Practice Behaviors Associated with EPAS
4. Students meeting the competencies and practice behaviors of EPAS
5. Competencies and practice behaviors that reflect learning

APPENDIX J

QUALITY AS EXCELLENCE OR EXCEPTIONAL: SET OF STANDARDS
RELATED TO ACCREDITATION: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors
Overall CSWE Standards
- Adherence to CSWE standards and outcome measures

Practice Behaviors associated with EPAS
- EPAS competencies and practice behaviors that are benchmarks for programs

Faculty
Overall CSWE Standards
- Establishing curriculum that meets CSWE standards and is individualized for program goals
- Program excellence that exceeds CSWE standards
- Faculty of the program, using a team approach and going above the CSWE standards

Practice Behaviors Associated with EPAS
- Students meeting the competencies and practice behaviors of EPAS that reflect learning

APPENDIX K

QUALITY AS EXCELLENCE OR EXCEPTIONAL: OPERATIONALIZATION

Program Directors
1. Evaluations from students of faculty
2. Feedback of faculty by peers
3. Honor credit for demonstration of excellence (as with competency based education)
4. Individual evaluation of competency with ranking
5. Grading rubrics
6. Benchmarks
7. Graduates employment in the field
8. Performance after graduation
9. Licensing and certification pass rate
10. Outcome measurements with activities
11. Measuring outcomes of competency practice behaviors from EPAS
12. Evaluation of the program's implicit and explicit curriculum through accreditation
13. Assignments and role playing
14. Student participation and evaluation in class and field
15. Participation in service learning
16. Evidence that faculty are functioning as a team and in unison with the program
17. Judging the activities, readings, assignments, lectures, in conjunction with the delivery of these components (within a program)
18. Well defined rubrics, syllabi, activities that are designated on an appropriate developmental level for students
19. Career placement
20. Certification and/or licensure
21. Alumni surveys
22. Evaluation of course assignments
23. Oral presentations
24. Quality of written work
25. Accreditation review
26. Qualitative surveys
27. Systematic feedback from field instructors, advisory members, and other stakeholders

Faculty
1. Evaluation of individual assignments or observations
2. Program outcomes related to graduating prepared students into the profession
3. Quantitative benchmarks augmented by a set of qualitative measures
4. Exit surveys of students
5. Field assessments and evaluations
6. Field instructor evaluations
7. Feedback surveys by employers
8. Field internship evaluations
9. Admission to graduate programs
10. Exit exams of graduates
11. Outcome measures for programs

12. Rubrics
13. Field instruments to measure outcomes
14. Benchmarks for evaluation
15. Feedback from employers of graduates
16. Licensing and certification pass rates
17. Measurement of student learning contracts and competencies (of students)
18. Rubrics to judge outcomes
19. Student evaluations of programs and faculty
20. Exit surveys
21. Student self-evaluations
22. Rubrics with multiple indicators
23. Multiple assessment reviews of a student
24. Benchmarking students
25. Benchmarking curriculum indicators
26. Field internship evaluations
27. Assignments
28. Tests and exams
29. Field evaluations
30. Exit exam
31. Outcome measures for the program
32. Client satisfaction in the field placement
33. Student field evaluations
34. Benchmarking for outcomes
35. No ethical violations after graduation and working in the field
36. Assignments and exams
37. Field evaluations
38. Measuring classroom expectations and competencies with assignments, tests, papers, and presentations
39. Field evaluations of students
40. Licensing pass rate
41. Employment data post-graduation
42. Pre- and post-surveys
43. Measurement of curriculum development
44. Student satisfaction surveys
45. Exams
46. Measurement of outcomes for students and programs

APPENDIX L

QUALITY AS EXCELLENCE OR EXCEPTIONAL: OPERATIONALIZATION –
CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors

Students

1. Honor credit for demonstration of excellence (as with competency-based education)
2. Individual evaluation of competency with ranking
3. Performance after graduation
4. Outcome measurements with activities
5. Measuring outcomes of competency practice behaviors from EPAS
6. Assignments and role playing
7. Student participation and evaluation in class and field
8. Participation in service learning
9. Oral presentations

Faculty

1. Evaluations from students
2. Feedback from peers for faculty
3. Evidence that faculty are functioning as a team and in unison with the program

Program

1. Grading rubrics
2. Benchmarks
3. Rates of graduate employment in the field
4. Licensing and certification pass rate
5. Evaluation of the program's implicit and explicit curriculum through accreditation
6. Judging the activities, readings, assignments, lectures, in conjunction with the delivery of these components (within a program)
7. Well defined rubrics, syllabi, activities that are designated on an appropriate developmental level for students
8. Career placement
9. Certification and/or licensure
10. Alumni surveys
11. Evaluation of course assignments
12. Quality of written work
13. Accreditation review
14. Qualitative surveys
15. Systematic feedback from field instructors, advisory members, and other stakeholders

Faculty

Students

1. Evaluation of individual assignments or observations
2. Field assessments and evaluations
3. Field instructor evaluations
4. Admission to graduate programs
5. Measurement of student learning contracts and competencies (of students)
6. Student self-evaluations
7. Multiple assessment reviews of a student

8. Benchmarking students
9. Field internship evaluations
10. Measuring classroom expectations and competencies with assignments, tests, papers, and presentations
11. Field evaluations
12. Pre- and post-surveys
13. Exams
14. Measurement of outcomes for students
15. Field evaluations of students

Faculty
1. Student evaluations of faculty

Programs
1. Program outcomes related to graduating prepared students into the profession
2. Quantitative benchmarks augmented by a set of qualitative measures
3. Exit surveys of students
4. Feedback surveys by employers
5. Exit exams of graduates
6. Outcome measures for programs
7. Rubrics for assignments
8. Benchmarking of students and programs
9. Field instruments to measure outcomes
10. Benchmarks for evaluation
11. Feedback from employers of graduates
12. Licensing and certification pass rates
13. Rubrics to judge outcomes
14. Student evaluations of programs
15. Exit surveys
16. Rubrics with multiple indicators
17. Benchmarking curriculum indicators
18. Assignments
19. Tests and exams
20. Exit exam
21. Outcome measures for the program
22. Client satisfaction in the field placement
23. Student field evaluations
24. Benchmarking for outcomes
25. No ethical violations after graduation and working in the field
26. Assignments and exams
27. Licensing pass rate
28. Employment data post-graduation
29. Measurement of curriculum development
30. Student satisfaction surveys

APPENDIX M

QUALITY AS EXCELLENCE OR EXCEPTIONAL: OPERATIONALIZATION –
CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors

Students

- Evaluating and ranking of competency and practice behavior outcomes by measuring assignments, role plays, class participation, and service learning
- Performance post-graduation
- Honor credit for demonstration of excellence (as with competency based education)

Faculty

- Feedback and evaluations from students and peers
- Evidence that faculty are functioning as a team and in unison with the program

Program

- Accreditation review of the implicit and explicit programs that include defined syllabi with grading rubrics, benchmarks to evaluate course assignments, delivery and other aspects of the program
- Systematic feedback loop that includes qualitative surveys from all stakeholders
- Rates of graduate employment in the field, certification, and licensure

Faculty

Students

- Assessing and evaluating competencies with benchmarking of individual students with assignments, exams, and field internships using pre/post surveys, self-evaluations, faculty, and field instructors
- Admission to graduate programs

Faculty

- Student evaluations of faculty

Programs

- Program outcomes using multiple quantitative benchmarks and rubrics including exams, surveys, field evaluations, and curriculum indicators
- Qualitative measures that include student, client and employer feedback
- Employment data, licensing and certification pass rates, and ethical violations of graduates (none)

APPENDIX N

QUALITY AS PERFECTION OR ZERO DEFECTS: DEFINITION

Program Directors

1. Impossible, unachievable
2. Nothing is perfect, but one strives to improve the situation of what is found in an attempt to achieve a state of perfection
3. Perfection does not exist
4. An industrial term not appropriate for higher education
5. Moving into excellence or trying to have practice competency on a continuum
6. Always room for improvement
7. Incongruent with excellence
8. Unrealistic to have zero defects, but can move in that direction
9. Perfection does not exist and therefore cannot be measured
10. No such thing as perfection in undergraduate social work education
11. Focus on the concept of improvement, with perfection being at one end
12. Value laden to the point of being pathologized
13. The ability to treat each student as unique to the extent that is possible

Faculty

1. Attempting perfection but knowing it is not possible
2. Perfect programming is not feasible
3. Recognize the need for change and awareness when things are not working
4. Having a process in place for recognizing and addressing problems and issues
5. Ties in with excellence
6. Perfection is the absence of flaws
7. Perfection is not attainable, but instead it is what can be learned from mistakes
8. Perfection is not attainable as all human beings have flaws, unlike excellence, which can be achieved
9. Perfection in one area is not always indicative of overall perfection
10. An educational process to go through
11. Doesn't exist in higher education
12. Can strive for perfection, but it is not achievable
13. Perfection is zero errors, never making a mistake or having defects
14. Unattainable as human beings
15. No such thing exists (perfection)
16. All programs have deficits, which are opportunities for growth
17. Program is flexible
18. We don't strive to measure "defects"
19. Excellence and perfection are the same
20. A process of how to reach perfection
21. The process of perfections involves multiple stakeholders
22. Zero defects is an ideal that is not really possible
23. Perfection is elusive
24. Never going to achieve perfection, unattainable but instead, do the best that can be done
25. No such thing as perfection, but the goal is to continue and strive to achieve it.
26. It is the process that counts and not the outcome

27. Zero defects as having an absence of problems with hitting benchmarks and graduating
28. Meeting a small set of specifications
29. Perfection is not attainable
30. Perfection ideally take years of experience and considerable investment of energy and commitment
31. Pathological to believe it is attainable in higher education
32. Attainable only in the educational setting, not the practice setting

APPENDIX O

QUALITY AS PERFECTION OR ZERO DEFECTS: DEFINITION –
CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors
Does not Exist:
1. Perfection does not exist
2. Impossible and unachievable
3. Doesn't exist in higher education as there is always room for improvement
4. Does not exist and is incongruent with excellence
5. Unrealistic to have zero defects, but can move in that direction
6. Does not exist and therefore cannot be measured
7. Nothing is perfect, but one strives to improve the situation of what is found in an attempt to achieve a state of perfection
8. No such thing as perfection in undergraduate social work education

Can Exist but Not Appropriate or Attainable:
1. Value laden to the point of being pathologized
2. Impossible, unachievable
3. An industrial term not appropriate for higher education

Ideas:
1. Focus on the concept of improvement, with perfection being at one end
2. The ability to treat each student as unique to the extent that is possible

Faculty
Does not Exist:
1. An absence of flaws
2. Having an absence of problems; hitting benchmarks and graduating
3. Doesn't exist in higher education
4. Having zero errors, never making a mistake or having defects
5. No such thing exists (perfection) in higher education
6. No such thing as perfection, but the goal is to continue and strive to achieve it;

Can Exist/Not Appropriate or Attainable:
1. Attempting perfection but knowing it is not possible
2. Perfection is not attainable, but instead, what can be learned from mistakes
3. Is not attainable as all human beings have flaws, unlike excellence, which can be achieved
4. Pathological to believe it is attainable in higher education
5. Perfect programming is not feasible
6. Perfection in one area is not always indicative of overall perfection
7. Can strive for perfection, but it is not achievable
8. Unattainable as human beings
9. All programs have deficits, which are opportunities for growth
10. We don't strive to measure "defects"
11. Zero defects is an ideal that is not really possible
12. Perfection is elusive
13. Never going to achieve perfection, unattainable but instead, do the best that can be done
14. Attainable only in the educational setting, not the practice setting
15. Is not attainable

Ideas:

1. An educational process to go through
2. Program is flexible
3. Recognize the need for change and awareness when things are not working
4. Having a process in place for recognizing and addressing problems and issues
5. Ties in with excellence
6. Excellence and perfection are the same
7. A process of how to reach perfection
8. The process of perfections involves multiple stakeholders
9. Meeting a small set of specifications
10. Ideally take years of experience and considerable investment of energy and commitment to achieve
11. The goal is to continue and strive to achieve it; the process is what counts and not the outcome
12. The process is what counts and not the outcome

APPENDIX P

QUALITY AS PERFECTION OR ZERO DEFECTS: DEFINITION –
CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors
Does Not Exist
- Perfection does not exist
- Impossible and unachievable, but can move in that direction with striving to improve with moving in that direction
- Doesn't exist and is incongruent with excellence

Can Exist but Not Appropriate or Attainable
- Exists, but pathological and value laden
- Impossible, unachievable
- An industrial term not appropriate for higher education

Ideas:
- Focus on the concept of improvement, with perfection being at one end
- The ability to treat each student as unique to the extent that is possible

Faculty
Does not Exist:
- An absence of flaws, errors, or defects with always hitting benchmarks and does not exist in social work
- Doesn't exist in higher education, although this is the goal

Can Exist but Not Appropriate or Attainable:
- Elusive as all programs have deficits; pathological to believe it is possible in higher education
- Perfection in one area is not always indicative of overall perfection
- Attainable only in the educational setting, not the practice setting

Ideas:
- A flexible, educational process to go through in recognizing problems issues and the need for change, involving multiple stakeholders
- Aligns with excellence
- Meeting a small set of specifications
- Ideally take years of experience, considerable investment of energy and commitment to achieve

APPENDIX Q

QUALITY AS PERFECTION OR ZERO DEFECTS: OPERATIONALIZATION

Program Directors
1. Doesn't exist and therefore cannot be measured
2. Impossible to measure
3. Not measureable
4. Improvement measures that attempt to achieve a state of perfection
5. Cannot be measured as each student is unique
6. Not measureable
7. Perfection cannot be measured directly, but placed on a continuum

Faculty
1. Cannot be adequately measured
2. Not measureable
3. Having a process in place to measure progress on a continuum
4. Focus on the process instead of the outcome
5. Not measurable
6. Benchmarks but knowing what works in one area to measure movement toward perfection may not in work in another
7. A process in which to count the number of errors
8. Improvement measures that attempt to achieve a state of perfection
9. Not measureable
10. A process that strives to reach perfection
11. Not measureable
12. Not measureable
13. No valid, consistent way to measure
14. Having a process that measures mistakes and loopholes
15. Cannot be measured as each student is unique

APPENDIX R

QUALITY AS PERFECTION: OPERATIONALIZATION – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors
- Doesn't exist and therefore cannot be measured
- Perfection cannot be measured directly, but placed on a continuum for improvement

Faculty
- Not measureable
- A process that is a benchmark to measure errors, improvement and progress on a continuum that strives to reach perfection

*Coding Level II not performed due to limited responses in each category

APPENDIX S

QUALITY AS CONSISTENCY: DEFINITION

Program Directors
1. Moving into the realm of excellence, but here will always be mistakes
2. Having fair access to courses and programming
3. Reliability related to faculty with teaching and adherence to standards
4. Practice competency on a continuum
5. Faculty who keep up with changes
6. Having tolerance for mistakes of others because of workload
7. Important for the development of curriculum
8. Reliability related to faculty with teaching and adherence to standards
9. Faculty who are involved with the program
10. Faculty delivery, research, and teaching that reflects consistent reliability and validity
11. Consistency with how faculty teaches
12. Students who are moving forward with constantly developing their skills
13. Forward movement with the program
14. Need for this (consistency) with teaching and learning
15. Consistency with grading
16. Students forward movement with knowledge and processes
17. An ongoing, developing concept in the program
18. Continuity of faculty with advising, both professionally and personally
19. Providing consistent opportunity for the success of students
20. Having faculty who are consistent with expectations
21. Faculty having knowledge of each student's strengths and challenges
22. Continued growth of everyone (faculty and students) and striving to do better

Faculty
1. Consistently applying that knowledge in field
2. Knowing what works and the flexibility to alter what is not
3. Policies and procedures that are followed across the board on an individual, departmental basis and throughout the university
4. Reputation is tied to being consistent
5. Creating a program where students can continually learn
6. Educators are being consistent with content and teaching and a process in place to evaluate this to measure if students are learning
7. Having continuity with what students are learning
8. Consistency is more attainable than perfection, especially with processes and programs
9. Continuity between faculty and students with cases/papers and over time with how courses are taught
10. Students continuing to develop and improve skill level
11. Important to develop with skill level (students) and the evaluation of skills (faculty and program)
12. Determining whether the program processes are consistent with its goals and outcomes

13. Continuous assessment and improvement of the program
14. Consistency by faculty with content and concepts being taught in the program
15. Knowing what to expect (reliability) of the program and faculty
16. Reliability of faculty and students
17. Consistency is attainable within programs
18. This concept is driven by policy
19. Adherence to a set of standards
20. Consistency needs to include flexibility for change when needed
21. Having consistent expectations for students with behavior and performance
22. Consistency with teaching objectives, cohort model whereby everyone goes through the program together along with the field experience
23. Classes that are linked together
24. Support by faculty to students
25. This is linked to excellence and fitness for purpose
26. Gatekeeping into the program to ensure appropriate admissions
27. Maintaining continuity according to a set of standards for the program, including the quality of field placements
28. Students continually demonstrating the social work knowledge, skills, and behaviors of the profession
29. Program needs to be consistent with expectations, but this requires flexibility in order to accommodate special needs and/or requires higher levels of support in order to attain excellence
30. Knowledge, values, and skills that are developed and consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics
31. Having a set of criteria for the program and for the faculty
32. Consistency is over-rated
33. Having quality field placements for the program
34. Having specific policies and procedures in place
35. Having expectations of faculty, internships, and students with process in place to assure this component
36. Trying to keep moving forward
37. Having consistency contributes to the quest for perfection

APPENDIX T

QUALITY AS CONSISTENCY: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors
Students
1. Continued growth (of students) and striving to do better
2. Practice competency on a continuum
3. Students who are moving forward with constantly developing their skills
4. Students forward movement with knowledge and processes

Faculty
1. Reliability related to faculty with teaching and adherence to standards
2. Having tolerance for mistakes of others because of workload
3. Having faculty who are consistent with expectations
4. Faculty who keep up with changes
5. Faculty who are involved with the program
6. Continued growth of everyone (faculty and students) and striving to do better
7. Consistency with grading
8. Consistency with how faculty teaches
9. Need for this (consistency) with teaching and learning
10. Faculty delivery, research, and teaching that reflects consistent reliability and validity
11. Continuity of faculty with advising, both professionally and personally
12. Faculty having knowledge of each student's strengths and challenges

Program
1. Moving into the realm of excellence, but here will always be mistakes
2. Forward movement with the program
3. Important for the development of curriculum
4. An ongoing, developing concept in the program
5. Providing consistent opportunity for the success of students
6. Having fair access to courses and programming

Faculty
Students
1. Knowledge, values, and skills that are developed and consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics
2. Consistently applying that knowledge in field
3. Students continuing to develop and improve skill level
4. Important to develop with skill level (students)
5. Reliability of students
6. Students continually demonstrating the social work knowledge, skills, and behaviors of the profession

Faculty
1. Educators are being consistent with content and teaching and a process in place to evaluate this to measure if students are learning
2. Continuity between faculty and students with cases/papers and over time with how courses are taught
3. Important to develop with the evaluation of skills (faculty)

4.   Knowing what to expect (reliability) of the faculty
5. Reliability of faculty
6. Support by faculty to students

Program

1. Determining whether the program processes are consistent with its goals and outcomes
2. Knowing what works and the flexibility to alter what is not
3. Policies and procedures that are followed across the board on an individual, departmental basis and throughout the university
4. Reputation is tied to being consistent
5. Creating a program where students can continually learn
6. Having continuity with what students are learning
7. Consistency is more attainable than perfection, especially with processes and programs
8. Important to develop with the evaluation of skills (program)
9. Continuous assessment and improvement of the program
10. Knowing what to expect (reliability) of the program
11. Consistency is attainable within programs
12. Consistency is over-rated
13. Consistency needs to include flexibility for change when needed
14. Having expectation of faculty, internships, and students with process in place to assure this component
15. This concept is driven by policy
16. Having consistency contributes to the quest for perfection
17. Consistency with teaching objectives, cohort model whereby everyone goes through the program together along with the field experience
18. Classes that are linked together
19. This is linked to excellence and fitness for purpose
20. Gatekeeping into the program to ensure appropriate admissions
21. Maintaining continuity according to a set of standards for the program, including the quality of field placements
22. Having consistent expectations for students with behavior and performance
23. Program needs to be consistent with expectations, but this requires flexibility in order to accommodate special needs and/or requires higher levels of support in order to attain excellence
24. Adherence to a set of standards
25. Having quality field placements for the program
26. Having specific policies and procedures in place
27. Having a set of criteria for the program and for the faculty

APPENDIX U

QUALITY AS CONSISTENCY: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors
Students
- A continued continuum of student's growth in knowledge, skills, and processes with practice competency

Faculty
- Faculty that demonstrate consistency and reliability with teaching, research, expectations, and standards
- Faculty who are flexible with change, involved with the program, and demonstrate professional growth
- Faculty who are student centered through advising and personal growth

Program
- Moving forward towards excellence in developing curriculum, opportunities for students and ongoing program growth

Faculty
Students
- Consistency and reliability of students who can demonstrate continued skill development and applications of behaviors consistent with the NASW Code of Ethics

Faculty
- Educators who demonstrate consistency, reliability, and validity of what is taught to students
- Ongoing support and evaluation of students by faculty with developing knowledge and skills

Program
- Development, assessment, and evaluation of program policies and procedures that are consistent and followed by everyone
- Continued evaluation of program processes and outcomes that align with the goals that can be changed when appropriate
- Adherence to standards with student admissions, teaching, learning, and field internships
- Consistent expectations of everyone involved with the program and meets the needs of students
- Reputation is tied to consistency, which is more attainable than perfection, but contributes to its quest of excellence and fitness for purpose
- Consistency is over-rated

APPENDIX V

QUALITY AS CONSISTENCY: OPERATIONALIZATION

Program Directors
1. Ongoing feedback loop related to change
2. Surveys of alumni, field instructors, and others
3. Assignments, activities, readings, exams, lecturing, and programming
4. Self-study for CSWE accreditation
5. Rubrics for assignments and practice behaviors
6. Input and feedback from field instructors and agencies
7. Exit surveys to measure student experience
8. Outcomes or products
9. Student GPA and consistency with grades in classes
10. Clear, written expectations of behavior in accordance with the NASW guidelines and how to measure this
11. Student assignments
12. EPAS to measure practice behaviors of students, with the measurement on a continuum
13. Student portfolios
14. Two-year post-graduation survey
15. Having a central person in the program that students can contact for questions

Faculty
1. Self-assessment (study) similar to the one completed for CSWE with reaffirmation
2. Graduation rates
3. State jurisprudence exam and the ASWB national certification exam
4. Having a program the meets CSWE standards
5. Open-ended questions in class survey to assess how to improve classes
6. Specific means to measure policies and procedures that are followed across the board on an individual, departmental, and throughout the university
7. Evaluation of policies and procedures that are adhered to by faculty and students
8. Field performance evaluations
9. National ASWB exam pass rate
10. Feedback loops with advisory board and field instructors
11. CSWE benchmarks
12. Self-evaluation with exit surveys of classes and graduates
13. Employment rates following graduation
14. Benchmarks that align with CSWE
15. Rubrics for assignments
16. Measurement tool to determine consistency – a form of counting
17. A design and process rather than a measurement per say
18. Final field evaluation
19. Exit surveys
20. Student portfolios
21. Rubrics for assignments
22. Two-year post-graduation surveys
23. Assignments

24. Assessments at different levels during the program on a continuum to measure skills and knowledge
25. Teacher or faculty evaluations and feedback
26. ASWB exam pass rates
27. Advisory board input and feedback
28. Multiple assessment measures with the practice behaviors under each of the EPAS competencies
29. Monitor graduates for ethical violations
30. Assignment and course rubrics and program rubrics
31. Peer review of faculty
32. Minimizing differences between administrators and faculty
33. Alumni survey
34. Professionalism scale for attitudes, behaviors, dress, and attendance

APPENDIX W

QUALITY AS CONSISTENCY: OPERATIONALIZATION – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors
Surveys
1. Surveys of alumni, field instructors, and others
2. Two-year post-graduation survey
3. Exit surveys to measure student experience
Rubrics
1. Rubrics for assignments and practice behaviors
2. Assignments, activities, readings, exams, lecturing, and programming
3. Student assignments
4. Student portfolios
Feedback Loop
1. Input from field instructors and agencies
2. Ongoing feedback loop related to change
3. Clear, written expectations of behavior in accordance with the NASW guidelines and how to measure this
4. Having a central person in the program that students can contact for questions
Outcomes
1. Self-study for CSWE accreditation
2. EPAS to measure practice behaviors of students, with the measurement on a continuum
3. Outcomes or products
4. Student GPA and consistency with grades in classes

Faculty
Surveys
1. Open-ended questions in class survey to assess how to improve classes
2. Self-evaluation with exit surveys of classes and graduates
3. Employment rates following graduation through surveys
4. Exit surveys
5. Two-year post-graduation surveys
6. Alumni survey
Rubrics
1. Rubrics for assignments
2. Student portfolios
3. Assignments
4. Rubrics for assignments
5. Assignment and course rubrics and program rubrics
6. Multiple assessment measures with the practice behaviors under each of the EPAS competencies
Feedback Loop
1. Feedback loops with advisory board and field instructors
2. Advisory board input and feedback
3. Peer review of faculty
4. A design and process rather than a measurement per say
5. Minimizing differences between administrators and faculty

Outcomes

1. State jurisprudence exam and the ASWB national certification exam
2. Field performance evaluations
3. Having a program the meets CSWE standards
4. Specific means to measure policies and procedures that are followed across the board on an individual, departmental, and throughout the university
5. Evaluation of policies and procedures that are adhered to by faculty and students
6. National ASWB exam pass rate
7. CSWE benchmarks
8. Graduation rates
9. Benchmarks that align with CSWE
10. Self-assessment (study) similar to the one completed for CSWE with reaffirmation
11. Measurement tool to determine consistency – a form of counting
12. Final field evaluation
13. Assessments at different levels during the program on a continuum to measure skills and knowledge
14. Teacher or faculty evaluations and feedback
15. ASWB exam pass rates
16. Professionalism scale for attitudes, behaviors, dress, and attendance
17. Monitor graduates for ethical violations

APPENDIX X

QUALITY AS CONSISTENCY: OPERATIONALIZATION – CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors
Surveys (Assessment)
- Exit surveys of students, graduates, alumni, field instructors and other stakeholders

Rubrics (Assessment)
- Specific rubrics connected to student assignments, practice behaviors, readings, exams, lecturing, student portfolios, and programming

Feedback Loop (Assessment)
- Input and ongoing feedback loop from all stakeholders related to change
- Clear, written expectations of behavior in accordance with the NASW guidelines and how to measure this
- Having a central person in the program that students can contact for questions

Outcomes
- Self-study for CSWE accreditation
- Measuring outcomes with student practice behaviors, grades, and GPAs, with the measurement on a continuum against EPAS standards
- Outcomes or products

Faculty
Surveys (Assessment)
- Class assessment and self-evaluation exit surveys of students and graduates
- Alumni surveys that include measuring employment

Rubrics (Assessment)
- Rubrics for student assignments, portfolios and programs
- Multiple assessment measures with the practice behaviors under each of the EPAS competencies

Feedback Loop (Assessment)
- Input and feedback loops with faculty, advisory board and field instructors to minimize differences between administrators and faculty
- A design and process rather than a measurement per say

Outcomes
- Pass rates with state jurisprudence exam and the ASWB national certification exam
- Self-assessment (study) similar to the one completed for CSWE with reaffirmation with a program that meets benchmarks and standards
- Instructor and faculty evaluations to measure students' skills, knowledge, performance, attitudes, behaviors, dress, and attendance
- Graduation rates
- Measurement and evaluation of policies and procedures that determine consistency, and are followed across the board on an individual, departmental, and throughout the university
- Monitor graduates for ethical violations

APPENDIX Y

QUALITY AS FITNESS FOR PURPOSE: DEFINITIONS

Program Directors
1. Identifying and addressing the needs of the program
2. Faculty who appreciate the bigger picture
3. Awareness of one's own values and the their impacts on practice
4. Gatekeeping through monitoring of students with current or past mental health issues
5. Competency as a minimum expectation with the EPAS practice behaviors
6. Meeting the minimum expectations for a BSW degree
7. Successfully moving from student to professional
8. Self-awareness of one's own values and their impact on practice
9. Goodness of fit to be in the profession
10. Mental and ethical fitness of faculty
11. Align with the core values and beliefs of the profession
12. Gatekeeping by faculty to maintain appropriate admission to the program
13. Knowledge and ability to work with people
14. Consistency and good communication of faculty
15. Individual faculty fitness with the program
16. Achieving the goals of the program
17. Students should focus should be on the greater good of all and not just the individual
18. Adhering to the NASW Code of Ethics
19. Awareness of one's own values and (as a student) and how this can be conflictual
20. Do students in the program reflect the expectations of the program with performance in the classroom
21. Growth in students and forward progression
22. Activities related to what is appropriate for the profession, e.g. learning appropriate skills
23. Goodness of fit with teaching and curriculum
24. Relational-how one responds to feedback
25. Activities related to what is appropriate for the profession, e.g. learning appropriate skills
26. Focus on the program and not just the individual in the program
27. Self-awareness and self-assessment
28. Modeling of values by faculty
29. Gatekeeping with the admission process and the field experience
30. An elaboration of excellence related to achievement of appropriate goals

Faculty
1. Determine if students are prepared to work with clients on serving the needs of the client population
2. Authenticity to the purpose and the mission of the program
3. Mutual fit between the program and the university in terms of creating an educational environment for developing knowledge, skills and abilities of students
4. Faculty to monitor student fit
5. Giving feedback to students

6. The core values of the university mirror the core values of social work with social justice and professional development
7. The program curriculum enhances the learning process for professional development
8. Service learning is woven into the curriculum and a gauge of fitness
9. Having the program meet the university's mission
10. Modeling of values by faculty
11. Having students fit within the social work program
12. Gatekeeping- of the program
13. Have the program enable students to fit
14. Students have the characteristics of what it takes to succeed in the profession, including the personality and academic record
15. The mission of the university aligns with the mission of social work
16. Participation in university organizations that support social work
17. The program implicitly impacts the greater community and working together
18. Students understand the profession
19. Faculty who know how to teach (good social worker does not equate to being a good educator)
20. Faculty development and training
21. How well students are trained and prepared for the profession
22. Purpose of the program
23. Student knowledge
24. Design a program that "fits" with CSWE standards and meeting outcomes
25. Helping students resolve discrepancies between ideals and realities
26. Undergraduate faculty who have practice experience
27. Goodness of fit for the profession
28. Gatekeeping measures for the program
29. Student self-awareness of one's own values and their impact
30. Assessing the needs of the community to keep the program current
31. Provision of appropriate resources for students to be successful
32. Self-assessment with application of being able to function within a setting and not allow personal issues to intercede
33. Aligning classes with the needs of the students as a professional
34. Meeting the needs of the surrounding community
35. Are the students receiving the appropriate overall education needed for practice and competence
36. Modeling as a means of acculturation to the profession for students
37. Is the program aligning with the needs of social work
38. Achieving the goals of the program
39. Student achievement of the skills needed for practice and competence
40. Commitment and motivation to the profession
41. Goodness of fit with the values and beliefs of our profession
42. Ability and skill to do the job
43. Collegiality of faculty
44. Effectiveness related to the drive and mental stability

45. Fitness of the program with the student
46. Aligns with quality as excellence
47. Fitness to the individual and the program and/or school
48. Fitness with goals of the program
49. Fit with the culture of the university
50. Relevancy of coursework to practice
51. Inoculation of values and ethics in the profession
52. Offers a parallel process between students and faculty
53. Helping students establish boundaries but maintain autonomy
54. Strong program that is sustainable
55. Gatekeeping with the admission process and the field experience
56. Monitoring of students with current or past mental health issues (gatekeeping)
57. Actually doing your stated mission and purpose
58. Having a mission that aligns with the program, the university system, and the greater needs of the community
59. Preparation for generalist practice in social work
60. Admission to graduate school
61. Not all institutions fit with the profession of social work
62. Purpose of the program fits the mission of the university
63. Education of students with the values, knowledge, and skills of SW
64. Employability and licensing capability

APPENDIX Z

FITNESS FOR PURPOSE: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors
Students
1. Competency as a minimum expectation with the EPAS practice behaviors
2. Meeting the minimum expectations for the BSW degree
3. Successfully moving from student to professional
4. Adhering to the NASW Code of Ethics
5. Self-awareness of one's own values and their impact on practice
6. Goodness of fit to be in the profession
7. Align with the core values and beliefs of the profession
8. Knowledge and ability to work with people
9. Self-awareness and self-assessment
10. Relational in how one responds to feedback
11. Awareness of one's own values (as a student) and how this can be conflictual
12. Students in the program reflect the expectations of the program with performance in the classroom
13. Growth in students and forward progression
14. Activities related to what is appropriate for the profession, e.g. learning appropriate skills
15. Students should focus should be on the greater good of all and not just the individual

Faculty
1. Mental and ethical fitness of faculty
2. Faculty who appreciate the bigger picture
3. Awareness of one's own values and their impact on practice
4. Gatekeeping by faculty to maintain appropriate admission to the program
5. Consistency and good communication of faculty
6. Individual faculty fitness with the program
7. Goodness of fit with teaching and curriculum
8. Modeling of values by faculty
9. Gatekeeping with the admission process and field experience
10. Gatekeeping through the monitoring of students with current or past mental health issues

Program
1. Achieving the goals of the program
2. Identifying and addressing the needs of the program
3. An elaboration of excellence related to achievement of appropriate goals
4. Focus on the program and not just the individual in the program
5. Gatekeeping measures for the program

Faculty
Students
1. Students have the characteristics of what it takes to succeed in the profession, including the personality and academic record
2. Students understand the profession
3. How well students are trained and prepared for the profession

4. Student knowledge
5. Resolving discrepancies between ideals and realities
6. Goodness of fit for the profession
7. Self-awareness of one's own values and their impact
8. Student achievement of the skills needed for practice and competence
9. Commitment and motivation to the profession
10. Goodness of fit with the values and beliefs of our profession
11. Ability and skill to do the job
12. Effectiveness related to the drive and mental stability
13. Fitness of the individual and the program and/or school
14. Inoculation of values and ethics in the profession
15. Self-assessment with application of being able to function within a setting and not allow personal issues to intercede
16. Education of students with the values, knowledge, and skills of SW

Faculty
1. Gatekeeping- of the program
2. Faculty to monitor student fit
3. Giving feedback to students
4. Faculty who know how to teach (good social worker does not equate to being a good educator)
5. Undergraduate faculty who have practice experience
6. Gatekeeping of the program
7. Education of students with the values, knowledge, and skills of SW
8. Collegiality
9. Modeling as a means of acculturation to the profession for students
10. Helping students establish boundaries but maintain autonomy
11. Modeling of values by faculty
12. Gatekeeping with the admission process and the field experience
13. Monitoring of students with current or past mental health issues (gatekeeping)
14. Authenticity to the purpose and the mission of the program
15. Determine if students are prepared to work with clients on serving the needs of the client population

Program
1. Having the program meet the university's mission
2. Having students fit within the social work program
3. Have the program enable students to fit
4. Mutual fit between the program and the university in terms of creating an educational environment for developing knowledge, skills and abilities of students
5. The program curriculum enhances the learning process for professional development
6. Service learning is woven into the curriculum and a gauge of fitness
7. Faculty development and training
8. The program implicitly impacts the greater community and working together
9. Strong program that is sustainable
10. Aligns with quality as excellence

11. Purpose of the program
12. Design a program that "fits" with CSWE standards and meeting outcomes
13. Meeting the needs of the surrounding community
14. Assessing the needs of the community to keep the program current
15. Aligning classes with the needs of the students as a professional
16. Is the program aligning with the needs of social work
17. Achieving the goals of the program
18. Fitness with goals of the program
19. Fitness of the program with the student
20. Fit with the culture of the university
21. Relevancy of coursework to practice
22. Offers a parallel process between students and faculty
23. Actually doing your stated mission and purpose
24. Having a mission that aligns with the program, the university system, and the greater needs of the community
25. Preparation for generalist practice in social work
26. Employability and licensing capability
27. Admission to graduate school
28. Purpose of the program fits the mission of the university

University

1. The core values of the university mirror the core values of social work with social justice and professional development-#2
2. Not all institutions fit with the profession of social work-#3
3. The mission of the university aligns with the mission of social work
4. Participation in university organizations that support social work-#3
5. Provision of appropriate resources for students to be successful-#7
6. Are the students receiving the appropriate overall education needed for practice and competence-#9
7. Purpose of the program fits the mission of the university-#27

APPENDIX AA

FITNESS FOR PURPOSE: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors

Students
- Developing self-awareness and having the core values and beliefs that "fit" with the profession
- Developing the knowledge and skills that elicit growth in students as they move from student to professional
- Meeting the competencies of EPAS, adhering to the NASW Code of Ethics, and meeting the minimum expectations of the BSW degree in the classroom and in field

Faculty
- Mental and ethical fitness of faculty, skills with teaching, and curriculum, appreciate the bigger picture
- The modeling of the core values of social work by faculty
- Gatekeeping of students by faculty throughout the program for appropriate fitness for the profession

Program
- Identifying, addressing and achieving the goals of the program to achieve excellence

Faculty

Students
- Students possess the values, beliefs, knowledge, skills, ethics, academic record, motivation, and commitment to the profession.
- Understand social work, develop self-awareness through self-assessment, manage their own values and the discrepancies between ideal and realism
- Fitness of the individual with the program and/or school

Faculty
- Gatekeeping of students and the overall program
- Faculty who are collegial, can teach, possess practice experience, and serve as role models to students with the values of the profession, educating them, providing feedback, and assisting with developing appropriate knowledge, skills, and boundaries while encouraging autonomy
- Being authentic to the purpose and the mission of the program

Program
- Having the program meet the students' needs, with curriculum, learning, service to create an educational environment with the university for developing their knowledge, skills, and abilities in becoming a generalist practice professional
- Having a mission that aligns with the program, the university system, and the greater needs of the community
- The program is sustainable, offers a parallel process between students and faculty, designed to achieve excellence and meeting goals and CSWE standards, and is a good fit for the culture of the university
- Graduates who are employable, achieve certification, and admission to graduate schools

University

- The core values of the university mirror the core values of social work with social justice and professional development, and the program's purpose aligns with that of their institution.
- The university provides the appropriate overall education and resources for students needed for competence and practice.
- Participation of students and faculty in university organizations that support social work

APPENDIX BB

FITNESS FOR PURPOSE: OPERATIONALIZATION

Program Directors
1. Self-study for the program
2. Exit exam, survey and/or interview
3. Peer review of faculty
4. Faculty advising of students
5. Achievement of student competencies
6. Ethical behavior in the field, program
7. Periodic review of faculty
8. Assignments
9. Competencies related to program activities
10. Goals and task that are to be achieved, assessed, and evaluated
11. Field evaluations

Faculty
1. Feedback from faculty, field instructors, agencies and employers
2. Admission process to the major
3. Gatekeeping
4. Alumni surveys
5. Continued growth of the program
6. Outcomes in relation to course objectives
7. Inputs
8. Assessment with course activities and assignments
9. Qualitative and quantitative measurement
10. Gatekeeping
11. Field instructor's evaluation of students
12. Advisory board
13. Alumni survey
14. Field logs for self-reflection and self-awareness
15. Feedback from students, field instructors
16. Assignments
17. Self-assessment
18. ASWB exam pass rate
19. Assignments related to self-awareness and self-reflection
20. Student feedback
21. Evaluations of each course and the faculty
22. Field experience
23. Assignments that include diversity
24. Faculty evaluation of direct and indirect measures
25. Specific coursework that address the topic of diversity
26. Employability and admission to graduate schools, outcome based measurements
27. Evaluation of students
28. Analysis of the department and how it functions relative to the institution
29. Field instructor evaluations

APPENDIX CC

FITNESS FOR PURPOSE: OPERATIONALIZATION – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors
Students:
1. Field evaluations
2. Achievement of assignments and course outcomes
3. Achievement of competencies
4. Ethical behavior in field and program
5. Goals and tasks that are to be achieved, assessed and evaluated
6. Exit exam, survey, or interview

Faculty:
1. Peer review of faculty
2. Faculty advising of students

Program:
1. Self-study of the program for CSWE

Faculty
Students
1. Field instructor's evaluation of students
2. Achievement of assignments
3. Self-assessment
4. Assignments related to self-awareness and self-reflection
5. Evaluation of students
6. Field logs for self-reflection and self-awareness
7. Field experience
8. Field instructor's evaluation of students

Faculty
1. Gatekeeping
2. Assessment with course activities and assignments
3. Faculty evaluation of direct and indirect measures
4. Student feedback
5. Field instructor evaluations
6. Evaluations of each course and the faculty
7. Analysis of the department and how it functions relative to the institution
8. Assignments that include diversity

Program
1. Admission process to the major
2. Continued growth of the program
3. Inputs from all stakeholders
4. Qualitative and quantitative measurement
5. Advisory board
6. Alumni surveys
7. Outcomes in relation to course objectives
8. Feedback from students, field instructors
9. ASWB exam pass rate
10. Feedback from faculty, field instructors
11. Specific coursework that address the topic of diversity

12. Employability and admission to graduate schools, outcome based measurements
13. Student feedback
14. Analysis of the department and how it functions relative to the institution
15. Evaluations of each course and the faculty
16. Analysis of the department and how it functions relative to the institution

APPENDIX DD

FITNESS FOR PURPOSE: OPERATIONALIZATION – CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors
Related to Faculty:
- Faculty peer review
- Student advising

Related to Students:
- Achievement of competencies with the successful completion of field, assignments, and coursework
- Ethical behavior
- Exit exam, survey or interview

Related to the Program:
- Completion of program self-study for CSWE

Faculty
Related to Faculty
- Gatekeeping
- Assessment and evaluation of students using direct and indirect measures of competencies with course activities and assignments that include diversity

Related to Students
- Field instructor and faculty evaluations of students
- Self-assessment through assignments and field that include self-awareness and self-reflection
- Achievement of course work and field experience

Related to the Program
- Qualitative and quantitative analysis of the department to determine fit with the institution
- Input and feedback from students, advisory boards, alumni, field instructors, and faculty
- Specific coursework that address the topic of diversity
- Evaluation of each course and the faculty
- The admission process to the major
- Outcome measurements of course objectives, ASWB pass rate of graduates, employability and admission of graduates to graduate schools
- Continued growth of the program

APPENDIX EE

VALUE FOR MONEY: DEFINITIONS

Program Directors

1. The cost of the entire program public v. private related to the cost and length of time to realize a return a lifetime investment
2. Bang for the buck as value for what you pay for
3. Employability after graduation
4. Relates to faculty salaries but not always an inclusive way of measuring value
5. Value includes general education in addition to social work major
6. Ability to gain employment after graduation
7. Cost of the program versus job salary that includes a living wage and benefits
8. Accreditation equates to value as having certain standards
9. The value-added component of co-curricular activities
10. Program's value to the university
11. Getting what you pay for
12. Getting the value of what you put into a degree and what you expected from doing so
13. Program should be providing the top level of education for the money
14. Implicitly the commitment of the faculty
15. Is the activity or object of value consistent with what is paid out for it
16. Cost/benefit analysis relative to the obtaining the degree
17. The intrinsic value as well as the extrinsic value
18. Bang for the buck/Getting what you pay for
19. Ability to pass the national ASWB exam
20. Implicit curriculum related to relational piece not always able to be measured, but certainly a factor in value
21. Cost of SW compared to other programs
22. The value is about the diversity of the degree

Faculty

1. University's perception of what is considered value
2. Value is to society and not just the individual
3. Curriculum that is "value-added" in what is offered and how it is structured
4. Passing certification or licensing
5. Provision of intangibles not related to money
6. Someone who has all the skills and knowledge to become a social worker
7. Duel degrees that facilitate chances of employment after graduation
8. Bang for the buck with cost/benefit
9. Ability to obtain employment after graduation
10. College education is not always something that can align with a formula to measure it
11. Experiential value through service
12. Return on the investment to earn a living and pay off student loans
13. Cost of education in relation to parents and family
14. Education seen as a societal value or obligation
15. Intrinsic value versus monetary value
16. Ability to make a decent living

17. Provision of a liberal education and holistic resources that contributes to a productive life
18. Intrinsic value that cannot always be measured
19. Special coursework not offered at other schools
20. Cost/benefit ratio in relation to salary versus the cost of an education
21. The cost of an education compared to what you can expect for a salary
22. Societal value is huge, but he social worker is not adequately compensated
23. Society extends little value to the benefits of the profession in terms of the impact for society's most vulnerable populations
24. High-risk profession compared to the pay received
25. Cost/benefit with salary compared to the cost of the degree/education
26. Student/faculty ratio as a relational concept
27. Salary after graduation compared to student loan debt
28. Personal intrinsic gain that is not associated with monetary compensation
29. The best bang for their dollars/buck/money
30. Societal benefits may help reduce student loan debt
31. Students feel the educational experience was beneficial
32. Benefit of having a degree over the course of a lifetime
33. Student perception of value relative to the cost of the degree
34. Value of learning and not just about the grade related to cost
35. SW degree has multiple options for practice and an ability to adjust to the community's changing needs
36. Program satisfaction and the entire university experience
37. The value of obtaining a degree and the bang for the buck
38. Ties in with fitness and will the students' needs be met in a "quality" manner
39. Living the social work values
40. Ability to pay off student loan debt
41. Volunteer and service of the program as a whole that include student-faculty interactions and commitment to the community represent the intrinsic value of the program
42. Ability to gain employment in the field of social work after graduation
43. Value of learning from field instructors in the field experience for students
44. Value is in what the individual perceives as satisfactory
45. Focus is not necessarily on money or cost
46. Students are marketable after graduation
47. Good value for the money
48. Growing field that has multiple options for employment
49. Bang for the buck
50. Getting the educational experience and not just a piece of paper
51. Job satisfaction and the intrinsic values associated with the field
52. The comprehensive manner in which higher education is delivered

APPENDIX FF

VALUE FOR MONEY-DEFINITIONS-CODING LEVEL I

Program Director

Intrinsic Value

1. Implicit curriculum related to relational piece not always able to be measured, but certainly a factor in value
2. The intrinsic value as well as the extrinsic value

Financial Cost/Benefit

1. Bang for the buck as value for what you pay for
2. Cost of the program versus the job salary that includes a living wage and benefits-
3. Bang for the buck/Getting what you pay for
4. Cost of SW compared to other programs
5. Getting what you pay for
6. Getting the value of what you put into a degree and what you expected from doing so
7. Cost/benefit analysis relative to the obtaining the degree
8. Is the activity or object of value consistent with what is paid out for it
9. The cost of the entire program public v. private related to the cost and length of time to realize a return a lifetime investment

Employability

1. Ability to gain employment after graduation
2. Ability to pass the national ASWB exam
3. Employability after graduation

Social Work Program

1. Relates to faculty salaries but not always an inclusive way of measuring value
2. Accreditation equates to value as having certain standards
3. Program should be providing the top level of education for the money
4. Implicitly the commitment of the faculty
5. The value is about the diversity of the degree

Overall Educational Experience

1. Value includes general education in addition to social work major
2. The value-added component of co-curricular activities
3. Program's value to the university

Faculty

Intrinsic Value

1. Experiential value through service
2. Provision of intangibles not related to money
3. Intrinsic value that cannot always be measured
4. Cost of education in relation to parents and family
5. Education seen as a societal value or obligation
6. Intrinsic value versus monetary value
7. Value is to society and not just the individual
8. Provision of a liberal education and holistic resources that contributes to a productive life
9. Societal value is huge, but he social worker is not adequately compensated

Financial Cost/Benefit

1. Return on the investment to earn a living and pay off student loans
2. Bang for the buck with cost/benefit
3. Ability to pay off student loan debt
4. Ability to make a decent living
5. The best bang for their dollars/buck/money
6. Cost/benefit ratio in relation to salary versus the cost of an education
7. The cost of an education compared to what you can expect for a salary
8. High-risk profession compared to the pay received
9. Cost/benefit with salary compared to the cost of the degree/education
10. Salary after graduation compared to student loan debt
11. Student perception of value relative to the cost of the degree
12. The value of obtaining a degree and the bang for the buck
13. Good value for the money
14. Bang for the buck

Employability
1. Passing certification or licensing
2. Ability to gain employment in the field of social work after graduation
3. Duel degrees that facilitate chances of employment after graduation
4. Ability to obtain employment after graduation
5. SW degree has multiple options for practice and an ability to adjust to the community's changing needs
6. Someone who has all the skills and knowledge to become a social worker
7. Students are marketable after graduation
8. Growing field that has multiple options for employment
9. Job satisfaction

Social Work Program
1. Curriculum that is "value-added" in what is offered and how it is structured
2. University's perception of what is considered value
3. Special coursework not offered at other schools
4. Student/faculty ratio as a relational concept
5. Program satisfaction and the entire university experience
6. Ties in with fitness and will the students' needs be met in a "quality" manner
7. Value of learning from field instructors in the field experience for students

Overall Educational Experience
1. College education is not always something that can align with a formula to measure it
2. Benefit of having a degree over the course of a lifetime
3. The comprehensive manner in which higher education is delivered
4. Value is in what the individual perceives as satisfactory with the educational experience
5. Student feel the educational experience was beneficial
6. Getting the educational experience and not just a piece of paper

APPENDIX GG

VALUE FOR MONEY – DEFINITIONS – CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors
Intrinsic Value
- The relational piece of the implicit curriculum, which is as important as the explicit curriculum

Cost/Benefit
- Expectations with getting what you pay for or "bang for the buck"
- How cost is comparable to other programs and institutions
- Cost/benefit return on investment of obtaining a degree

Employability
- Ability to secure employment after graduation with the BSW degree
- Passing the national AWSB exam

Social Work Program
- The implicit commitment of faculty
- Faculty salaries
- Having an accredited program that offers a high level education and a degree that is versatile

Overall Educational Experience
- The general education and institutional activities offered in addition to the social work major
- How the institution perceives the value of the program

Faculty
Intrinsic Value
- The intangible value, which is inclusive of benefits not associated with money
- The value that is not always measurable that includes implicit and explicit experiences and interactions
- Value that is associated with learning, relational, and society at large

Cost/Benefit
- Cost/benefit return on the investment of a degree related to salary
- The salary is sufficient to pay off debt incurred from student loans

Employability
- Securing employment with a job that is satisfying
- Passing the national AWSB exam
- Flexibility of the social work degree or having dual degrees

Social Work Program
- A value-added curriculum that has unique course work and how this is delivered that is satisfactory to students
- The relational piece associated with student-faculty ratio
- The field experience of students

Overall Educational Experience
- The lifetime benefit of having a degree
- How the education was delivered and the overall perceptions of the educational experience

APPENDIX HH

VALUE FOR MONEY: OPERATIONALIZATION

Program Directors:
1. Alumni survey
2. Pass rate of national exam
3. Low student-faculty ratio
4. Accreditation of programs
5. Exit survey
6. Time, effort, activity, and labor aligning with a measurement of cost, but that value is very subjective in how it can be perceived
7. Employment statistics post-graduation
8. How long it takes to recoup the cost of the degree and the amount of student loan incurred
9. Alumni survey
10. Field performance
11. Outcome studies related to retention and graduation rate, NESE findings

Faculty:
1. Pass rate of national certification/licensing exam
2. Ability to meet student loan debt compared to how many in deferment or forbearance
3. Outcome measurements with success rates of admission to graduate school
4. Longitudinal alumni surveys 5 – 10 years graduated
5. Job turnover rate within the field
6. Income measurement of graduates
7. Alumni surveys
8. Outcome measures of employment
9. Benchmarking of costs compared to other programs
10. Longitudinal alumni surveys related to salary
11. Exit surveys
12. Alumni surveys related to salary over a period of time
13. Employer satisfaction survey
14. Employment rates after graduation
15. Student exit surveys, both qualitative (narrative) and quantitative
16. Alumni surveys for employment post-graduation
17. Retention and graduation rates
18. Alumni surveys
19. Benchmarking in comparison to other programs on a micro, mezzo, and macro level
20. Total volunteer hours of students and faculty
21. Pass rates on the ASWB exam
22. Outcome measures of graduation
23. Qualitative (narrative) and quantitative surveys of graduates
24. Service projects
25. Outcome measures for licensing/certification exam
26. Alumni surveys related to benefits of the degree

APPENDIX II

VALUE FOR MONEY: OPERATIONALIZATION – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors:
Financial Cost/Benefit
1. How long it takes to recoup the cost of the degree
2. The amount of student loan incurred

Employability
1. Employment statistics post-graduation

Social Work Program
1. Pass rate of national exam
2. Accreditation of programs
3. Field performance
4. Exit survey
5. Alumni survey

Overall Educational Experience
1. Faculty salaries
2. Low student-faculty ratio
3. Outcome studies related to retention and graduation rates
4. NESE findings
5. Time, effort, activity, and labor aligning with a measurement of cost, but that value is very subjective in how it can be perceived

Faculty:
Financial Cost/Benefit
1. Ability to meet student loan debt compared to how many in deferment or forbearance
2. Longitudinal alumni surveys related to salary
3. Alumni surveys related to salary over a period of time
4. Income measurement of graduates

Employability
1. Outcome measures of graduate employment
2. Employer satisfaction survey
3. Job turnover rate within the field
4. Employment rates after graduation
5. Alumni surveys for employment after graduation

Social Work Program
1. Pass rate of national certification/licensing exam
2. Alumni surveys
3. Outcome measures of graduation rates
4. Benchmarking of costs compared to other programs
5. Exit surveys
6. Student exit surveys, both qualitative using (narrative) and quantitative
7. Alumni surveys
8. Pass rates on the ASWB exam
9. Benchmarking in comparison to other programs on a micro, mezzo, and macro level
10. Service projects

11. Total volunteer hours of students and faculty
12. Outcome measurements with success rates of admission to graduate school
13. Outcome measures for licensing/certification exam
14. Longitudinal alumni surveys 5 – 10 years graduated
15. Qualitative using a narrative approach and quantitative surveys of graduates

Overall Educational Experience

1. Alumni surveys related to benefits of the degree
2. Retention and graduation rates of students

APPENDIX JJ

VALUE FOR MONEY: OPERATIONALIZATION – CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors:

Financial Cost/Benefit
- How long it takes to recoup the cost of the degree associated the amount of student loan incurred

Employability
- Employment statistics of graduates

Social Work Program
- Program accreditation
- Pass rate of national exam
- Alumni and student exit surveys
- Field evaluations

Overall Higher Education
- Faculty salaries and low student-faculty ratio
- Outcome studies related to retention and graduation rates
- NESE findings
- Time, effort, activity, and labor aligning with a measurement of cost

Faculty:

Financial Cost/Benefit
- Ability to meet student loan debt compared to how many in deferment or forbearance
- Longitudinal alumni surveys related to salary and income

Employability
- Employment rates post graduation
- Job turnover in the field
- Employer satisfaction surveys

Social Work Program
- Pass rate of national certification/licensing exam
- Outcome measures of graduation rates
- Student and alumni exit surveys, both qualitative using (narrative) and quantitative methodology
- Benchmarking in comparison to other programs on a micro, mezzo, and macro level
- Service projects and volunteer hours of student and faculty
- Outcome measurements with success rates of admission to graduate school

APPENDIX KK

QUALITY AS TRANSFORMATION: DEFINITION

Program Directors
1. Challenging students to look at other perspectives and diversity
2. Ties into excellence with the ability to develop critical thinking skills
3. Fundamental changes with students, culture, or the university community
4. The student's understanding of what social work is and how that is a good fit for the on a personal level
5. Self-awareness related to values, strengths, and shortcomings
6. Observation of how students flourish during the tenure in the social work program
7. Getting out of one's comfort zone and being challenged
8. From a personal level, it is self-awareness, having good boundaries, and self-analysis that helps (students) view the world differently
9. Growing, challenging, and becoming something in life
10. Thinking differently, excited about learning and the profession
11. Difficult to quantify
12. Developing self-awareness and a meta perspective
13. Going from a less than perfect state to a perfect state
14. There is a personal as well as a professional transformation
15. From the professional level, it means applying the knowledge, words, language, and skill with confidence and being competent in the field
16. On a continuum with accomplishing and understanding the knowledge, values, and skill of social work (canon) as a competency

Faculty
1. Evolved to be something different from the beginning to the end
2. Self-reflection
3. A different way of thinking
4. Not making assumption, evaluating, analyzing, and thinking about the perspective in context
5. Learning that is pedagogical
6. A metamorphosis
7. Thinking in a different way and be more critical with examining things in depth
8. More visionary in accepting new ideas and moving away from dichotomous thinking
9. Process that includes liberal arts and social work curriculum and the field component
10. Self-reflection
11. Use information in the environment to inform your judgment
12. Risk that results in people moving in a direction not anticipated
13. Change in the students from when they enter and well into their career
14. Helps to clarify whether someone is right for the profession
15. Having students examine what is their reality, not their parent of what they learned growing up
16. A process which is ongoing and on a continuum
17. Transformation can occur over time and not be recognized until a critical moment occurs

18. Different for each individual both with how it occurs and how it is measured
19. Change that involves programs keeping up with the times
20. The process of becoming something or someone else
21. Challenged in beliefs and values
22. Change and a blossoming as it relates to social justice
23. Also includes economic transformation
24. Multiple and alternative avenues of thought, with creativity and ambiguity
25. Introspection and having a greater sense of who they are and what they stand for
26. Putting new lenses on to see details on all levels of the world
27. That "wow" moment—the threshold of the experience
28. Happens primarily with the field experience and help tie everything together
29. You feel it, you live it, and you become it
30. Students to identify their values and how those fit with the values of social work
31. An understanding of the importance of policy and political issues
32. Being creative, setting standards and goals based on what is best for the clients
33. Changes with thoughts, attitudes, and behavior that are congruent with the goals of the social work program
34. Growth and change that results in a deeper understanding
35. An inculcating process
36. Self-determination and self-awareness
37. A major change in students that often occurs in field and is a process
38. Looking at people and situations from a different lens
39. A holistic perspective
40. The ability to change into something different and occurs throughout the life span
41. Recognizing your strengths and challenges
42. An understanding of the importance of policy and political issues
43. Pushing students for personal growth, developing critical thinking skills, and appreciating nuances
44. Distinguishing between realistic and unrealistic possibilities
45. Students developing skills
46. Period of growth and change
47. To look at the world and life in a different way
48. Recognizing your own biases and how they have impacted your perception of the world
49. Students appreciate and understand how they can be an advocate to clients
50. Blossoming and positive change on a personal level
51. Transformation of the program where you look at how you need to change in order to be responsive to the social work community
52. Part of the mission of the university
53. Starting as one thing and becoming another

APPENDIX LL

QUALITY AS TRANSFORMATION: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors
Student Development
1. The student's understanding of what social work is and how that is a good fit for the on a personal level
2. Self-awareness related to values, strengths, and shortcomings
3. Observation of how students flourish during the tenure in the social work program
4. Challenging students to look at other perspectives and diversity
5. Getting out of one's comfort zone and being challenged
6. Growing, challenging, and becoming something in life
7. Thinking differently, excited about learning and the profession
8. Developing self-awareness and a meta perspective
9. Ties into excellence with the ability to develop critical thinking skills
10. Going from a less than perfect state to a perfect state
11. On a continuum with accomplishing and understanding the knowledge, values, and skill of social work (canon) as a competency
12. There is a personal as well as a professional transformation
13. From the professional level, it means applying the knowledge, words, language, and skill with confidence and being competent in the field
14. From a personal level, it is self-awareness, having good boundaries, and self-analysis that helps (students) view the world differently

Broader Context
1. Fundamental changes with students, culture, or the university community
2. Difficult to quantify

Faculty
Student Development
1. Evolved to be something different from the beginning to the end
2. Self-reflection
3. A different way of thinking
4. Not making assumption, evaluating, analyzing, and thinking about the perspective in context
5. Learning that is pedagogical
6. Having students examine what is their reality, not their parent of what they learned growing up
7. Students to identify their values and how those fit with the values of social work
8. Thinking in a different way and be more critical with examining things in depth
9. More visionary in accepting new ideas and moving away from dichotomous thinking
10. Multiple and alternative avenues of thought, with creativity and ambiguity
11. Use information in the environment to inform your judgment
12. Risk that results in people moving in a direction not anticipated
13. Helps to clarify whether someone is right for the profession
14. A process which is ongoing and on a continuum
15. Can occur over time and not be recognized until a critical moment occurs
16. Different for each individual both with how it occurs and how it is measured

17. Being creative, setting standards and goals based on what is best for the clients
18. Starting as one thing and becoming another
19. The process of becoming something or someone else
20. A metamorphosis
21. Self-reflection
22. Someone who has been changed and how they have changed
23. Challenged in beliefs and values
24. Introspection and having a greater sense of who they are and what they stand for
25. Putting new lenses on to see details on all levels of the world
26. That "wow" moment—the threshold of the experience
27. Happens primarily with the field experience and help tie everything together
28. You feel it, you live it, and you become it
29. Changes with thoughts, attitudes, and behavior that are congruent with the goals of the social work program
30. Growth and change that results in a deeper understanding
31. An inculcating process
32. Self-determination and self-awareness
33. Looking at people and situations from a different lens
34. A holistic perspective
35. The ability to change into something different and occurs throughout the life span
36. A major change in students that often occurs in field and is a process
37. Recognizing your strengths and challenges
38. Change and a blossoming as it relates to social justice
39. An understanding of the importance of policy and political issues
40. Pushing students for personal growth, developing critical thinking skills, and appreciating nuances
41. Distinguishing between realistic and unrealistic possibilities
42. Students developing skills
43. Period of growth and change
44. To look at the world and life in a different way
45. Recognizing your own biases and how they have impacted your perception of the world
46. Students appreciate and understand how they can be an advocate to clients
47. Blossoming and positive change on a personal level
48. Change in the students from when they enter and well into their career
49. Also includes economic transformation

Program

1. Learning that is pedagogical
2. Change that involves programs keeping up with the times
3. Transformation of the program where you look at how you need to change in order to be responsive to the social work community
4. Part of the mission of the university
5. Process that includes liberal arts and social work curriculum and the field component

APPENDIX MM

QUALITY AS TRANSFORMATION: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors
Student Development of the Professional Self
1. Observation of how students flourish during the tenure in the social work program
2. Challenging students to look at other perspectives and diversity
3. Getting out of one's comfort zone and being challenged
4. Growing, challenging, and becoming something in life
5. Thinking differently, excited about learning and the profession
6. Ties into excellence with the ability to develop critical thinking skills
7. Going from a less than perfect state to a perfect state
8. On a continuum with accomplishing and understanding the knowledge, values, and skill of social work (canon) as a competency
9. From the professional level, it means applying the knowledge, words, language, and skill with confidence and being competent in the field

Student Development of Personal Self
1. The student's understanding of what social work is and how that is a good fit for the on a personal level
2. Self-awareness related to values, strengths, and shortcomings
3. Developing self-awareness and a meta perspective
4. From a personal level, it is self-awareness, having good boundaries, and self-analysis that helps (students) view the world differently

Broader Context
1. Fundamental changes with students, culture, or the university community
2. Difficult to quantify

Faculty
Student Development of the Professional Self
1. Evolved to be something different from the beginning to the end
2. A different way of thinking
3. Not making assumption, evaluating, analyzing, and thinking about the perspective in context
4. Use information in the environment to inform your judgment
5. Thinking in a different way and be more critical with examining things in depth
6. Helps to clarify whether someone is right for the profession
7. Starting as one thing and becoming another
8. Can occur over time and not be recognized until a critical moment occurs
9. Different for each individual both with how it occurs and how it is measured
10. Happens primarily with the field experience and help tie everything together
11. Looking at people and situations from a different lens
12. A holistic perspective
13. Change and a blossoming as it relates to social justice
14. An understanding of the importance of policy and political issues
15. Pushing students for personal growth, developing critical thinking skills, and appreciating nuances
16. Distinguishing between realistic and unrealistic possibilities
17. Students developing skills

18. A major change in students that often occurs in field and is a process
19. Students appreciate and understand how they can be an advocate to clients
20. Change in the students from when they enter and well into their career
21. Also includes economic transformation
22. Risk that results in people moving in a direction not anticipated
23. A process which is ongoing and on a continuum
24. Being creative, setting standards and goals based on what is best for the clients
25. The process of becoming something or someone else
26. Someone who has been changed and how they have changed
27. Putting new lenses on to see details on all levels of the world
28. You feel it, you live it, and you become it
29. The ability to change into something different and occurs throughout the life span

Students Development of the Personal Self
1. Self-reflection
2. Having students examine what is their reality, not their parent of what they learned growing up
3. Students to identify their values and how those fit with the values of social work
4. More visionary in accepting new ideas and moving away from dichotomous thinking
5. Multiple and alternative avenues of thought, with creativity and ambiguity
6. A metamorphosis
7. Self-reflection
8. Challenged in beliefs and values
9. Introspection and having a greater sense of who they are and what they stand for
10. That "wow" moment—the threshold of the experience
11. Changes with thoughts, attitudes, and behavior that are congruent with the goals of the social work program
12. Growth and change that results in a deeper understanding
13. An inculcating process
14. Self-determination and self-awareness
15. Recognizing your strengths and challenges
16. Period of growth and change
17. To look at the world and life in a different way
18. Recognizing your own biases and how they have impacted your perception of the world
19. Blossoming and positive change on a personal level

Program
1. Learning that is pedagogical
2. Change that involves programs keeping up with the times
3. Transformation of the program where you look at how you need to change in order to be responsive to the social work community
4. Part of the mission of the university
5. Process that includes liberal arts and social work curriculum and the field component

APPENDIX NN

QUALITY AS TRANSFORMATION: DEFINITION – CODING LEVEL III

Program Directors
Students Development of the Professional Self
    Overall Change
- Observation of how students flourish during the tenure in the social work program
- Growing, challenging, and becoming something in life
- Going from a less than perfect state to a perfect state

    Professional Skills
- Being challenged to look at other perspectives and diversity
- Ties into excellence with the ability to develop critical thinking skills
- On a continuum with accomplishing and understanding the knowledge, values, and skill of social work (canon) as a professional

Students Development of the Personal Self
- The student's understanding of what social work is and how that is a good fit for the on a personal level
- Developing self-awareness, having good boundaries, and self-analysis that helps (students) view the world differently from a meta perspective

Broader Context
- Fundamental changes with students, culture, or the university community that is difficult to quantify

Faculty
Students Development of the Professional Self
    Overall Change
- An individualized change that evolves over time; starting when the student enters the program and extends throughout the life span
- Helps to clarify whether someone is right for the profession
- Also includes economic transformation

    Professional Skills
- A process that involves a different way of thinking, evaluating, and analyzing in context from a holistic perspective
- Developing critical thinking skills, distinguishing situations, advocating for clients to inform judgment
- Understanding policy, the political issues and social justice

Students Development of the Personal Self
- A metamorphosis that involves challenges to beliefs, attitudes, and values of their reality
- Self-reflection and introspection that fosters personal growth, understanding, and self-awareness
- Taking risks that result in positive change in a direction not anticipated
- That "wow" moment—the threshold of the experience- you feel it, you live it, and you become it

Program
- Learning that is pedagogical, reflecting change within the program to meet the needs of students and the community
- Curriculum that reflects the university's mission of learning

APPENDIX OO

QUALITY AS TRANSFORMATION: OPERATIONALIZATION

Program Directors
1. Assignments and written papers
2. Survey of student related to how they view the change in themselves
3. Surveys of colleagues and other stakeholders
4. Alumni surveys
5. Pre-test/post-test for both student experience and knowledge
6. Focus groups
7. Self-assessment surveys
8. Qualitative change in behaviors after transformative events that demonstrate a connection
9. SWEAP- using both the direct and the indirect measures that are tied to competencies in the Introduction to Social Work course and the last policy course
10. Measurements of imperfections and how those improve over time in relation to assignments, papers, exercises, objectives, and task in social work development
11. Alumni surveys

Faculty
1. EPAS competency evaluations
2. Alumni surveys
3. Rubrics
4. Exit surveys
5. Qualitative measures
6. Field evaluations
7. Qualitative measures as it is individualized
8. Advisory board to provide feedback
9. Anecdotal and sharing of stories
10. Pre-tests/post tests
11. Service learning and field evaluations
12. Student feedback
13. Advisory board
14. Faculty input and assessment
15. Qualitative measurement
16. SWEAP
17. Individual portfolios
18. Field evaluations
19. Threshold measurement with assignments, tests, behaviors, and field
20. Qualitatively measure with individual stories
21. Class assignments
22. Qualitative research to assess the process 5 to 10 years after graduation
23. Assignments that are focused on the depth of an argument or position
24. Specific assignments related to self-evaluation
25. Qualitative analysis
26. Self-reflection and self-assessment on confidence and certainty
27. Measure knowledge of critical skills through assignments or test
28. Faculty assessment

29. Self-assessment
30. Pre and post tests
31. Rubric related to ethical decision-making

APPENDIX PP

QUALITY AS TRANSFORMATION: OPERATIONALIZATION – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors

   Surveys
1. Survey of student related to how they view the change in themselves
2. Surveys of colleagues and other stakeholders
3. Alumni surveys
4. Self-assessment surveys

   Test / Assignments
1. Pre-test/post-test for both student experience and knowledge
2. Assignments and written papers
3. Measurements of imperfections and how those improve over time in relation to assignments, papers, exercises, objectives, and task in social work development

   Other Evaluative Measures
1. SWEAP- using both the direct and the indirect measures that are tied to competencies in the Introduction to Social Work course and the last policy course
2. Focus groups
3. Qualitative change in behaviors after transformative events that demonstrate a connection

Faculty

   Surveys
1. Exit surveys
2. Alumni surveys

   Faculty Assessment: Tests / Assignments / Field
1. Rubrics
3. Assignments that are focused on the depth of an argument or position
4. Faculty assessment
5. Pre-tests/post tests
6. Rubric related to ethical decision-making
7. EPAS competency evaluations
8. Class assignments
9. Specific assignments related to self-evaluation
10. Faculty input and assessment
11. Pre and post tests
12. Faculty assessment
13. Threshold measurement with assignments, tests, behaviors, and field
14. Field evaluations
15. Service learning and field evaluations
16. Measure knowledge of critical skills through assignments or test

   Other Evaluative Measures
1. Qualitative analysis
1. SWEAP
2. Qualitative measures as it is individualized
3. Advisory board to provide feedback
4. Self-assessment
5. Anecdotal and sharing of stories

6. Student feedback
7. Advisory board
8. Qualitative measurement
9. Individual portfolios
10. Qualitatively measure with individual stories
11. Self-reflection and self-assessment on confidence and certainty
12. Qualitative research to assess the process 5 to 10 years after graduation

APPENDIX QQ

QUALITY AS TRANSFORMATION: OPERATIONALIZATION – CODING LEVEL
II

Program Directors

Surveys
- Student self-assessment surveys related personal change
- Surveys of colleagues, alumni, and other stakeholders

Faculty Assessment: Test / Assignments
- Pre-test/post-test for both student experience and knowledge
- Measurements relation to assignments, papers, exercises, objectives, and task in social work development to benchmark improvement

Other Evaluative Measures
- SWEAP- using both the direct and the indirect measures that are tied to competencies in the Introduction to Social Work course and the last policy course
- Focus groups
- Student qualitative change in behaviors after transformative events that demonstrate a connection

Faculty

Surveys
- Exit surveys
- Alumni surveys

Faculty Assessment: Tests / Assignments / Field
- Rubrics, including ethics
- Faculty assessment of assignments, tests, and behaviors that focus critical knowledge and analysis, self-evaluation, and field encompassing the EPAS competencies
- Pre and post tests

Other Evaluative Measures
- Qualitative analysis of graduates and alumni over a 5 – 10 year period
- SWEAP
- Advisory board to provide feedback
- Student feedback that include self-reflection and self-assessment, and portfolio

APPENDIX RR

OTHER CONCEPTS OF QUALITY: DEFINITIONS

Program Directors

1. Excellence: Collegiality that demonstrates a cohesive unit, which results in a strong curriculum and modeling for students
2. Eudemonism and arête as meta concepts in terms of combining excellence, perfection, fitness for purpose, and transformation
3. Excellence: Creates an atmosphere and encourages qualitative inquiry and problem-solving
4. Transformation: The ability not to impose our agenda on clients
5. Fitness for Purpose: Assisting students who struggle with whether they should be in the program
6. Faculty who possess traits of quality that encompass excellence, consistency, fitness, and transformation
7. A breadth of understanding of the world, societies, and people
8. Excellence: Reputation of the school that is based on being rated by peers in higher education
9. Defining the measurement and linking it to a specific and determining if it really works as with CSWE accreditation

Faculty

1. Excellence: Developing admission criteria
2. Transformation: Threshold – mastering and moving forward
3. Mentoring relationship between faculty and students
4. Integrity and acting on ethics
5. Satisfaction: Fits with all five concepts as a subcategory
    a. Excellence: What is learned with the knowledge and the curriculum
    b. Perfection / Consistency: Continuity of skills
    c. Fitness for Purpose: Satisfaction with being in the program
    d. Value for Money: Investment- was it worth it?
    e. Transformation: Did you leave being different than you were when you came?
6. Transformation and/or Excellence: Support by the institution and faculty throughout the program
7. Fitness for Purpose: Inputs that include:
    a. Qualifications of faculty
    b. Standard for admission
    c. Advising
    d. Resources
8. Fitness for Purpose: Self-care of faculty and balance with organizational support
9. Excellence: Effectiveness with preparation of students
10. Perfection: Environment conducive to learning as part of the implicit curriculum
11. Transformation: Integration of all aspects of a student's education
12. Excellence: Competency based education
13. Excellence: Faculty's need to continue to keep pace with change and learn
14. Process and outcomes with expectations tied to the culture of the institution

15. Faculty-student involvement – going above and beyond what would normally be expected of faculty
16. Transformation: Student development

APPENDIX SS

OTHER CONCEPTS OF QUALITY: DEFINITIONS – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors
Meta Concepts of Quality
Quality of Faculty
1. Faculty who possess traits of quality that encompass excellence, consistency, fitness, and transformation

Overall Quality
1. Eudemonism and arête that will combine other concepts of excellence, perfection, fitness for purpose, and transformation

Measurement of Quality Concepts
1. Defining the measurement and linking it to a specific measurement strategy and determining if it really works, as with CSWE accreditation

Other Themes Associated with Excellence
1. Collegiality that demonstrates a cohesive unit, which results in a strong curriculum and modeling for students
2. Creates an atmosphere and encourages qualitative inquiry and problem-solving
3. Reputation of the school that is based on being rated by peers in higher education

Other Themes Associated with Fitness for Purpose
1. Fitness for Purpose: Assisting students who struggle with whether they should be in the program

Other Themes Associated with Transformation
1. The ability not to impose our agenda on clients
2. A breadth of understanding of the world, societies, and people

Faculty
Quality of Faculty
1. Faculty-student involvement – going above and beyond what would normally be expected of faculty
2. Mentoring relationship between faculty and students

Other Themes Associated with Excellence
1. What is learned with the knowledge and the curriculum
2. Developing admission criteria
3. Faculty's need to continue to keep pace with change and learn
4. Effectiveness with preparation of students
5. Competency based education
6. Integrity and acting on ethics
7. Support by the institution and faculty throughout the program, also associated with transformation

Other Themes Associated with Perfection/Consistency
1. Satisfaction with developing continuity of skills
2. Environment conducive to learning as part of the implicit curriculum

Other Themes Associated with Fitness for Purpose
1. Satisfaction with being in the program
2. Process and outcomes with expectations tied to the culture of the institution
3. Inputs that include:
   a. Qualifications of faculty

      b. Standard for admission

      c. Advising

      d. Resources

4. Self-care of faculty and balance with organizational support

5. Satisfaction with being in the program

Other Themes Associated with Value for Money

1. Satisfaction with the financial investment in the individual's degree- was it worth it?

Other Themes Associated with Transformation

1. Student development

2. Threshold – mastering and moving forward

3. Integration of all aspects of a student's education

Satisfaction with leaving the institution being different than you were when you came

APPENDIX TT

OTHER CONCEPTS OF QUALITY: DEFINITIONS – CODING LEVEL II

Program Directors
Meta Concepts of Quality
Quality of Faculty
- Faculty who possess traits of quality that encompass excellence, consistency, fitness, and transformation

Overall Quality
- Eudemonism and arête that will combine other concepts of excellence, perfection, fitness for purpose, and transformation

Measurement of Quality Concepts
- Defining the measurement and linking it to a specific measurement strategy and determining if it really works, as with CSWE accreditation

Additional Themes Associated with Excellence
- Collegiality that demonstrates a cohesive unit, which results in a strong curriculum and modeling for students
- Creates an atmosphere and encourages qualitative inquiry and problem-solving
- Reputation of the school that based on peer ratings

Additional Themes Associated with Fitness for Purpose
- Assisting students who struggle with whether they should be in the program

Additional Themes Associated with Transformation
- The ability not to impose our agenda on clients
- A breadth of understanding of the world, societies, and people

Faculty
Quality of Faculty
- Faculty-student involvement – going above and beyond what would normally be expected of faculty
- Mentoring relationship between faculty and students

Additional Themes Associated with Excellence
- Support by the institution and faculty throughout the program, also associated with transformation
- Faculty integrity, ethics, and keeping pace with change and learning to the curriculum to effectively prepare students in a competency based education
- Developing strong admissions criteria that reflects a strong program

Additional Themes Associated with Perfection/Consistency
- Satisfaction with developing continuity of skills
- Environment conducive to learning as part of the implicit curriculum

Additional Themes Associated with Fitness for Purpose
- Student satisfaction with the program
- Inputs, processes and outcomes with qualification of faculty, admission standards, advising, resources, self-care of faculty with organizational support and tied to the culture of the institution

Additional Themes Associated with Value for Money
- Satisfaction with the financial investment in the individual's degree- was it worth it?

Other Themes Associated with Transformation

- Student development through forward movement with integrating and mastering of all aspects of education
- Satisfaction attained through the recognition of being different than when you came

APPENDIX UU

OTHER CONCEPTS OF QUALITY – OPERATIONALIZATION

Program Directors

1. Field evaluations (Transformation)
2. Narrative conversations on what constitutes happiness within our society as a whole in the field of social work (Overall quality)

Faculty

1. Students demonstrating professionalism and ethical behavior based on the NASW Code of Ethics in field evaluations (Excellence)
2. Student surveys (Consistency)
3. Comprehensive exam of students (Excellence)
4. Student exit surveys (Transformation)
5. How a person chooses to live their life as a social work professional (Excellence)

APPENDIX VV

OTHER CONCEPTS OF QUALITY– OPERATIONALIZATION – CODING LEVEL I

Program Directors
Overall Quality
- Narrative conversations on what constitutes happiness within our society as a whole in the field of social work

Transformation
- Field evaluations

Faculty
Excellence
- Comprehensive exam of students
- Students demonstrating professionalism and ethical behavior based on the NASW Code of Ethics in field evaluations
- How a person chooses to live their life as a social work professional

Consistency
- Student surveys

Transformation
- Student exit surveys

*Coding Level II not performed due to limited responses in each category

APPENDIX WW

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Project Title: Defining Quality in Undergraduate Social Work Education in the State of Wisconsin
Researcher(s): Mary R. Weeden
Faculty Sponsor: James Marley, PhD, School of Social Work

Introduction:
You are being asked to give permission to take part in a research study being conducted by Mary R. Weeden, doctoral candidate, for her dissertation under the supervision of Dr. James Marley, in the School of Social Work at Loyola University of Chicago.

Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether you would like to participate in the study.

Purpose:
The purpose of this study is to examine how the five concepts of quality as constructed by Harvey and Green (1993) are defined by Program Directors and faculty in baccalaureate social work programs within the State of Wisconsin. The initial part of the study will involve interviews with all program directors of BSW programs within the State of Wisconsin and at least two faculty members of the social work department. The information will then be analyzed to determine whether a cohesive definition of each concept can be identified.

Procedures:
If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to:

- Participate in either a face to face or phone semi-structured interview, lasting approximately 60 – 90 minutes and voice recorded using Dragon.

- Participants will be asked to define five key concepts of quality: 1) excellence, 2) perfection or consistency, 3) fitness for purpose, 4) value for money, and 5) transformation.

- Participants will be asked how they would propose to measure each of the five concepts of quality: 1) excellence, 2) perfection or consistency, 3) fitness for purpose, 4) value for money, and 5) transformation.

- Participants will be voice recorded using Dragon Voice Recognition Hardware.

Risks/Benefits:

There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life.

While there is no direct benefit to your participation in this study, the information will be helpful in developing a standardized definition of quality in the field of undergraduate social work education.

Confidentiality:
- All information gathered during this interview will be confidential. Data will be coded so that no names will appear on the final report.
- Only the researcher will have access to the data.
- Audiotapes made during the course of the research will be stored in a locked cabinet and will be destroyed at the conclusion of the research. Written transcription will be kept for five years and then destroyed per protocol.

Voluntary Participation:

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you do not want to be involved in this study, you do not have to participate. Even if you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or to withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have questions about this research study, please feel free to contact Mary R. Weeden at 262.243.2685 or at e-mail address: mweeden@luc.edu. If you have questions about this research project or interview, feel free to contact the faculty sponsor Dr. James Marley at Loyola University Chicago, School of Social Work. He can be reached at 312.915.7033 or jmarley@luc.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Loyola University Office of Research Services at (773) 508-2689.

Statement of Consent:
Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and agree to participate in this research study**.** You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

_____   _____

Participant Signature   **Date**

_____   _____

Researcher's Signature   **Date**

APPENDIX XX

DEMOGRAPHICS

1.	Male: _____	Female: _____

2.	Primary race/ethnic background:

	American Indian/Alaskan Native:		_____
	African-American/Black:		_____
	Asian:		_____
	Hispanic/Latino:		_____
	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander:		_____
	White (Non-Hispanic/Latino):		_____
	Other, not specified:		_____

3.	Do you hold the position of:

	Program Director: _____		Faculty: _____

4.	Years at your current position: _____

5.	Total number of years at your current institution: _____

6.	Are you tenured? Yes: _____	No: _____	N/A: _____

7.	Do you hold the rank of:

	Instructor:		_____
	Assistant Professor:		_____
	Associate Professor:		_____
	Full Professor:		_____
	Other (please specify)		_____

8.	Please check which category best describes your *social work* degree
	program(s):
	(Note: The level of degree(s) awarded at your institution)

	Bachelor's Degree only:		_____
	Bachelor and Master:		_____
	Bachelor/Master/Doctorate:		_____

9.	Is your college or university a:

Public/Non-profit institution: _____
Private/Non-profit institution: _____

10.   Approximately how many students do you have in total for all programs?

Total students of all social work programs: _____

APPENDIX YY

INTERVIEW FORMAT

In 1993, Harvey and Green wrote an article entitled "*Defining quality*." In this article, the authors address the concept of quality in higher education by proposing five different categories of quality. I will be stating these five categories and request that you define and/or describe them in your own terms. I will also ask you to describe these five concepts in relation to how they would apply to undergraduate social work education. Is there a way these concepts can be measured? If so, how would you propose doing this?

1. Please define the concept of excellence or exceptional. How would you relate this term to the field of undergraduate social work education? Is there a way that you would propose to measure this concept?

2. Please define the concept of perfection or consistency (i.e. zero defects). How would you relate this term to the field of undergraduate social work education? How would you propose to measure this concept?

3. Please define the concept of fitness for purpose. How would you relate this term to the field of undergraduate social work education? How would you propose to measure this concept?

4. Please define the concept of value for money. How would you relate this term to the field of undergraduate social work education? How would you propose to measure this concept?

5. Please define the concept of transformation. How would you relate this term to the field of undergraduate social work education? How would you propose to measure this concept?

6. Is there another concept that was not covered but should be included in the definition of quality? If so, please define this concept and how it would be applicable to undergraduate social work education. How would you propose to measure this concept?

Thank you for your time. Your opinion is greatly appreciated and helpful to my dissertation.

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VITA

Mary R. Weeden graduated with her Associate in Applied Science degree in Nursing, obtaining her Registered Nurse (R.N.) certification in 1977. While working as a nurse in hospital intensive care units, Ms. Weeden enjoyed the challenges of working with patients and their families as they sought to cope with non-medical issues complicating their lives and medical problems. She recognized the profession of social work as a calling where she could combine her medical background with her people skills and awareness of available community resources. Returning to school, Mary received her Bachelor of Social Work degree (BSW) from Aurora University in 1989, graduating Cum Laude. She was employed in an inpatient psychiatric facility, combining her counseling and medical skills to work with females and males who suffered from eating disorders. Ms. Weeden pursued her Master of Social Work (MSW) at Aurora University, graduating in 1992. Her master's thesis focused on self-esteem and sex-role traits in eating-disordered women.

After receiving her certification as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) in 1995, Mary was employed in a variety of practice positions, primarily in the medical field, leading groups and working with individuals. She worked first with patients at a hospital's chemical dependency unit and later with inpatient, outpatient, home care, and hospice services, combining her nursing and social work skills. Ms. Weeden also continued working with eating-disordered clients in a private practice setting. In fall of

1999, she began teaching as an adjunct instructor at Aurora University; this later transitioned into a full-time position in the social work department. There she helped develop the MSW program at AU's George Williams College campus in Wisconsin, where she taught in both the BSW and MSW programs and served as Field Coordinator. Enjoying the challenge of academia, teaching a variety of social work courses primarily in practice, Ms. Weeden began pursuing her doctoral degree in social work at Loyola University in 2008. While finishing her degree, she accepted an assistant professor of social work position at Concordia University Wisconsin in 2011. Mary continues to work with eating-disordered clients, has given multiple presentations on this subject and is a contributing author to two social work college textbooks. Her other passions are in the field of social work education and ethical considerations in research. Ms. Weeden has published in both areas. Teaching is her where her heart lies; she enjoys watching students strive to excel and realize their potential in a profession that contributes to improving the lives of those around them.