Date:     November 20, 2020

To:       Human Service Programs

FROM:   Yvonne Chase, President, CSHSE

RE:       COVID Update

## Accreditation/ re-accreditation process

At the recent CSHSE Board meeting, the Council determined it will be necessary, given the pandemic, to continue virtual site visits for any program due for a site visit before June 30, 2021. The virtual site visits conducted in the last three months have gone very well. Much of the process associated with preparing and hosting virtual site visits mimics what Human Service programs and accreditation site visitors experience during on-site visits.

Programs are still required to ensure site visitors have the information and evidence they need, and evaluators are expected to conduct interviews so that the virtual site visits include and engage constituencies in the process no differently than if the visit was being conducted on-site. However, there are some aspects of virtual site visits that must be carefully planned in advance of the visit, including those associated with the use of technology, the logistics of the process, and preparations that are unique to a virtual site visit.  CSHSE  has developed guidelines specifically for virtual site visits and the VP for Accreditation is sending those guidelines to programs that are preparing for site visits.

Date:     July 8, 2020

To:       All Accredited Human Service Programs

FROM:   Yvonne Chase, President, CSHSE

RE:       Preparing for AY20/21   Next Steps!

CSHSE recognizes that colleges and universities are preparing for a very different academic year, some with classes completely online and others a mix of formats. Regarding accreditation requirements, many of the changes that were put into place to finish the spring semester, will need to continue through the fall semester and perhaps into the spring semester 2021.

For human service programs, there are two items to keep in mind:
- the accreditation / re-accreditation process in terms of submission of self-studies and the site visit process, and
- the requirements for field placements in agency settings.

## Accreditation/ re-accreditation process

CSHSE has adopted a policy, effective through December 31, 2020, regarding programs that are due for site visits before the end of the calendar year.  **All site visits during this period will be virtual site visits.**  Much of the process associated with preparing and hosting virtual site visits mimics what Human Service programs and accreditation site visitors experience during on-site visits. Programs are still required to ensure site visitors have the information and evidence they need, and evaluators are expected to conduct interviews so that the virtual site visits include and engage constituencies in the process no differently than if the visit was being conducted on-site. However, there are some aspects of virtual site visits that must be carefully planned in advance of the visit, including those associated with the use of technology, the logistics of the process, and preparations that are unique to a virtual site visit.  CSHSE  has developed guidelines specifically for virtual site visits and the VP for Accreditation is sending those guidelines to programs that are preparing for site visits.

Accredited programs should follow the CSHSE policy on Accreditation Standards and State and/or Local Laws Governing Human Services Education Programs Seeking Accreditation *(Appendix H, July 2020 Member Handbook,).* CSHSE is continuing the 45-day timeline for the readers of current self-studies and maintaining the due dates of current reader reports. *(If you have concerns about the current deadline for your self-study, be sure to contact the VP of Accreditation.)*

## Field placements / Quality & Quantity

Meeting the requirement for the number of hours required in field placements as well as the quality of the learning experience continue to be issues as programs plan for the fall semester. *Institutional policies, state and local laws have precedence over CSHSE standards.*  As with the spring semester, programs should follow the institutions' directives as to class, fieldwork, internship, practicum, or clinical hours.  Programs should make every effort to comply with the CSHSE Standards as much as possible and should consider alternate ways of having students complete their field hours in this type of environment (e.g., video conferencing with client simulated interactions, special case studies or other assignments that will reflect the student learning outcomes described in their field placement agreements). Any type of alternative plan should be thoroughly documented in preparation for the next accreditation cycle.

## Resources from CHEA:

To aid higher education institutions in their planning for Fall 2020, CHEA has provided additional information/ materials for colleges and universities.OpenSmartEDU.org has released a full complement of planning tools. This toolset is comprised of a comprehensive operational guide, an assessment calculator, and a planning template. All are available at OpenSmartEDU.org.

The latest addition is the free, customizable Smartsheet Return-to-Campus Planning Tool, which turns the COVID-19 Planning Guide for Higher Education into an actionable plan. Smartsheet is the work management platform designed to help teams and organizations align their people with their technology. The Smartsheet Higher Education Return-to Campus Planning Tool empowers leaders to plan and monitor the progress around essential health and safety factors related to return-to-campus operations. With the tool, institutions can:

- **Assign work** across planning groups and institutions
- **Develop** timelines to meet key deadlines and drive accountability
- **Visualize critical data and milestones** on a dashboard to drive alignment and transparency

**About OpenSmartEDU.org:** OpenSmartEDU.org is a free resource developed as a collaborative process of the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and Tuscany Strategy Consulting (TSC). This website is designed to guide colleges and universities in planning operating strategies for both near- and long-term amid the many challenges of COVID-19.

CSHSE encourages programs to share their creative approaches to this "new normal" with other programs and with CSHSE.  The goal remains the same – to prepare future human service professionals through a quality education!

# Council for Standards in Human Service Education

*Assuring best practices in Human Service Education through evidence-based standards and a peer-review accreditation process*
**https://cshse.org**
**3337 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA  22314-5219**
**571-257-3959**

**Date: May 4, 2020**
**To: All Accredited Human Service Programs**
**FROM: Yvonne Chase, President, CSHSE**
**RE: CSHSE Programs Q& A Regarding COVID 19**

Q1:  How will COVID-19 impact our accreditation/reaccreditation?

*A: The changes to CSHSE accredited programs are occurring in two areas:*
- *Programs scheduled for Spring 2020 site visits are receiving extensions until travel restrictions are lifted.  We will be developing a protocol for virtual site visits in case that becomes necessary in the future.  The Council anticipates resuming site visits once campuses reopen in Fall 2020 but will have a better sense of timing once travel resumes.*

- *With regard to field placement hours for the Spring 2020 semester, Human Service programs may determine that hours to date for students are sufficient to count for completion of their field placement, as long as the instructor determines that the hours to date have met the expectations and student learning outcomes for this semester's work. Programs must document the number of hours completed by the student and the criterion used to determine successful completion (April 2020 Memo to All Accredited Human Service Programs).*

Q2: How will the self-study extensions and deadlines be handled in light of institutions moving to remote/online learning due to COVID-19?

*A: CSHSE is continuing the 45-day timeline for the readers of current self-studies and maintaining the due dates of current reader reports. If you have concerns about the current deadline for your self-study, be sure to contact the VP of Accreditation, your assigned lead reader, and/or the Council member assigned to help support your program in completing the self-study.*

Q3:  Many programs are making accommodations for summer fieldwork courses. Can we follow the same guidelines for fieldwork hours as outlined for spring 2020?

*A: Many colleges and universities are still not allowing students to be physically present at field work sites in the community.  If your program generally offers summer fieldwork placements, you will need to document how the learning objectives are being met remotely or through alternate assignments.*

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Q4.  We are in the process of requesting an extension to apply for our interim reaccreditation. I was wondering if the updated policy regarding "*Board Accreditation/Reaccreditation Decisions"* (Appendix I, July 2019, pp. 97-99) will affect our reaccreditation process.

> *A:  The recent policy change to "Board Accreditation/Reaccreditation Decisions" does not impact programs at the time they are filing for an extension. The policy will only impact programs at the point that the Board is making a decision about accreditation/reaccreditation.*

Q5:  I was wondering if the Council considered taking a stance, putting out a statement, etc., to member schools about Standard 20 and completing the fieldwork hours?

> *A: In March 2020 the Council sent a memo to all accredited programs indicating that institutional policies, and state and local laws have precedence over CSHSE standards.  Different approaches are being taken in various programs, depending on their resources and the extent to which technology is available.  It is <u>important</u> for programs to <u>document</u> how they are responding to changes and to include those details in their next self-study.  (Refer to April 2020 memo mentioned in response to question Q1.)*

Q6.  Does the Council agree that programs can develop alternatives for assuring that our fieldwork students are demonstrating knowledge and integrating the skills of the 12 standards to meet requirements of existing credit hours are able to graduate on time?

> *A: Many programs are working with students to complete agency projects and utilizing online technology to support fieldwork hours: e.g., agency projects that can be done at home (resource directories, data gathering, teleconferencing), seminars, virtual simulations, virtual volunteer work, etc. Alternate activities are based upon a program's local resources and technical support.*

Q7.  We have two fieldwork placements in our program which total 315 hours.  If students can complete at least 250 hours, which is your requirement, we plan to allow them to graduate.  What are your recommendations if they cannot finish the 250 required hours because of CV-19 restrictions?  We are considering giving them an incomplete grade but would like your input.

> *A: Many programs are working with students to complete agency projects and utilizing online technology to support fieldwork hours, (e.g., agency projects that*

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*can be done at home, resource directories, data gathering, teleconferencing, seminars, virtual simulations, virtual volunteer work, etc.).  Alternate activities should be based upon a program's local resources and technical support.  The Council encourages the completion of agency projects and the use of technology during this unprecedented time. **Programs will need to document the number of "fieldwork hours" completed by each student and the criterion used to determine successful completion in the next self-study submission.***

Q8.  We are currently working on field placements for fall, based on the campus (and agencies) reopening.  We have learned that our university insurance policy will not cover students in the field if they contract CV-19.  We have submitted this information to our legal department and to risk management but would like to know what the Council recommends.

A.  *The Council is not aware of any program's policy for student field placements that covers health insurance.  As you have done, programs should discuss this issue with their legal and risk management departments.  In some disciplines (e.g., nursing, dental hygiene, etc.), students are required to show proof of having their own health insurance prior to being approved for a field placement.  In this "new normal" environment, the Council recommends that programs follow the directions of the college or university's legal department and document in the next self-study how they have addressed this issue.*

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**Date: April 21, 2020**
**To: All Accredited Human Service Programs**
**From: Dr. Yvonne Chase, CSHSE President**
**RE: Responses to COVID-19**

With the onset of COVID-19, universities quickly moved to online courses and students (and faculty) were prohibited from being on campus. In a previous letter to all accredited programs, I indicated that institutional policies, state and local laws have precedence over CSHSE standards. Different approaches are being taken in various programs, depending on their resources and the extent to which technology is available. It is important for programs to document how they are responding and to include those details in their next self-study.

We have received several inquiries regarding the completion of field hours for this semester. Programs may use the following policy guidance from CSHSE:

> *Human Service programs may determine that hours to date for students are sufficient to count for completion of their field placement, as long as the instructor determines that the hours to date have addressed the expectations and student learning outcomes for this semester's work. Programs must document the number of hours completed by the student and criterion used to determine successful completion.*

**Date: March 10, 2020**
**To: All Accredited Human Service Programs**
**FROM: Yvonne Chase, President, CSHSE**
**RE: The Coronavirus**


As universities make plans for the possibility of temporary closures due to the spread of the coronavirus, CSHSE is receiving inquiries regarding the possibility of students in field placements being unable to complete the number of required field placement hours before the end of the semester. Programs are asking if this could negatively affect their accreditation status.

CSHSE recognizes that colleges and universities are taking actions in preparations for a potential Covid-19 outbreak on campuses. Accredited programs should follow the CSHSE policy on Accreditation Standards and State and/or Local Laws Governing Human Services Education Programs Seeking Accreditation (Appendix H, July 2019 Member Handbook, p. 95)

Institutional policies, state and local laws have precedence over CSHSE standards. If your campus closes and CSHSE Standards cannot be met (e.g. fieldwork hours, curriculum instruction), the program should follow the institution's directives as to student makeup of credit, class, fieldwork, internship, practicum, or clinical hours. Programs should make every effort to comply with the CSHSE Standards as much as possible and should consider alternate ways of having students complete their field hours in this type of emergency (e.g., video conferencing with client simulated interactions, special case studies or other assignments that will reflect the learning process taking place in their field placements, etc.).

If your university puts these types of emergency measures in place, when the program submits the next accreditation cycle self-study, make note of this emergency and how the college and program handled the situation (within the self-study's introductory section where the program shares changes that have occurred over the past five years). CSHSE will continue to follow the accreditation timelines as outlined in the July 2019 Member Handbook (pp 19-20). Site visits will be mutually arranged with the program, program's institution, and site visitors. We will need to monitor the situation on a day-to-day basis as well as addressing the impact for the future. This is a learning process and your approaches will provide good examples for us all.