The Evolution and Changing Context of Social Work Education

Sheldon R. Gelman

Abstract: *The nature of social work education has changed dramatically over the course of my academic career: From the degree(s) required for a faculty position to the number of years of practice experience; from expectations for research and publication, to criteria for promotion and tenure; from residential instruction to distance education; from an emphasis on foundation curriculum to practice competencies and outcomes; and, from a commitment to service to a quest to be the highest "ranked" program within the highest ranked institution. Given that change is an ongoing phenomenon, it is difficult to anticipate curriculum direction or plan one's career path with a high degree of certainty. The future is often determined by external events, fate, where you are at a specific time, the assistance of others, and the opportunities that are presented. These changes and the evolution of social work education as a field of professional practice can best be demonstrated by reflecting on my own experiences in becoming a faculty member and serving in various academic positions over the last 45 years. The contrast between my personal experiences and those of the typical student in 2014 may help demonstrate some of the changes that have occurred in social work education over the intervening years.*

Keywords*: Social work education, academic careers, professional development, mentoring*

I did not begin my professional career with the intent of becoming an academic. When I received my MSW in 1967, I was a group worker with a special interest and expertise in the field of disabilities. Yet I have served as a full time tenured faculty member in two universities, one public (baccalaureate program), the other private (master and doctoral programs), as a graduate school dean for 21 years, and for 12 of those 21 years as a university academic administrator.

My interest in social work began in high school through my involvement with a local community center, where I later served as a club leader and eventually as director of youth programming following my graduation from the University of Pittsburgh (Pitt) with a BS in psychology. During my junior year, I had the opportunity to participate in a summer internship program that exposed me more formally to careers in various fields of social work practice. I was assigned as a case aide in a public assistance office where I made home visits and recertified eligibility of recipients for financial assistance and food stamps. As a college senior I worked as a child care worker in the child psychiatric unit at the university's teaching hospital. This experience working with a multidisciplinary team with special needs children helped me realize the value of pursuing an MSW degree.

Sheldon R. Gelman, Ph.D., ACSW, MSL is a Professor in the Wurzweiler School of Social Work at Yeshiva University in New York, NY.

Contrasting Educational Realities

As a group work major, my first year field placement had been at the Industrial Home for Crippled Children. My second year placement was at Pressley Ridge, a residential treatment center for emotionally disturbed children. In both field placements I was part of a small student unit, staffed by doctoral students from the university, who provided weekly individual and group supervision with a heavy emphasis on the use of "process recording" as a learning tool. It was my first year field instructor, the late Mildred Sirls Pratt (University of Illinois, Normal) who taught me to set realistic and achievable goals for clients and to evaluate the outcomes of practice interventions.

While the MSW program at the University of Pittsburgh required the completion of 60 credits (including field work), I had the opportunity to schedule two additional elective courses, one within the school in program evaluation and the other in the School of Education in special education. By contrast, today's students in addition to selecting a method, population or social problem as their area of concentration, typically have a range of options to choose from among various specializations or certificates (e.g., gerontology, child welfare, veterans, and substance abuse). While my MSW studies required completion of four semesters of group work methods courses, today's students usually complete two semesters of foundation methods and only two semesters of the advanced methods or concentration courses.

The focal point of student life in the social work program at Pitt was the library, where, in the absence of the internet, students actually congregated to read assigned and recommended readings, a phenomenon that contributed significantly to both an atmosphere of informal learning as well as socialization to the profession. During the sixties and prior to the onset of the era of entitlement, classes were rarely missed and requests for extra time to complete assignments were unusual. Despite the many benefits associated with the internet, unfortunately, many students see little need to enter a library to access its resources. Similarly, for many schools, socialization to the profession is not necessarily a conscious or structured experience beyond familiarity with the NASW Code of Ethics.

At that time, it was the rare student who simultaneously held down a job, and most students attended school full time. In order to finance my MSW education at the University of Pittsburgh, I entered the Professional Education Program (PEP) offered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The program provided tuition and a biweekly stipend for individuals willing to commit themselves for two years of post masters practice in an institutional setting serving those with mental and developmental disabilities. Consequently, the cost of my education was not an issue. I was able to attend full time and it was not necessary for me to take out a student loan. Unfortunately, today's graduate students do not have access to the same funding sources to cover the cost of tuition. They often can only afford to attend school part time and juggle personal obligations and responsibilities with their educational and field work commitments.

Post-Masters Practice

Following graduation I began my professional social work career at the Laurelton State School. Because of my training and experience as a group worker, I was retained as a consultant by a local school district and by the Northeastern Federal Penitentiary at Lewisburg. The Penitentiary also included a prison camp located in Allenwood (PA), which housed large numbers of young conscientious objectors to the Vietnam War. The population at the camp was difficult for the staff to relate to, given that many of their own children had been drafted and were serving overseas. The majority of the professional staff at federal penitentiaries were commissioned officers of the US Public Health Service. Several of my colleagues at the penitentiary encouraged me to apply for a Public Health Service commission. This was an interesting career option in that I had received two previous draft notices for which I had received temporary deferrals. My application to the Public Health Service was successful and I was offered a commission as an officer with an assignment at the Federal Penitentiary at Lexington, Kentucky upon completion of my employment commitment at Laurelton. I mention this simply to point out that often our careers take interesting and unanticipated turns ultimately forcing us to make choices we never anticipated ever having to confront.

While at Laurelton I was involved in a number of program initiatives where my group work skills and innovative program ideas impacted my planned career path. One of the programs I developed was an orientation group for newly admitted residents of the facility. Because this was an approach that had not been previously utilized with this population, my supervisor, William Delaney, ACSW, and Elizabeth Treadway, ACSW the coordinator of the PEP program encouraged me to write about my work. They also encouraged me to join the American Association on Mental Deficiency (AAMD) as well as maintain my transitional student membership in NASW. The social work section of AAMD was sponsoring a writing competition for new professionals. I submitted my program description to the competition and was selected as one of the winners. In addition to a very small cash award and conference registration, I was invited to present my paper at the annual meeting of the association in San Francisco. This paper was ultimately published in a major mental health journal, my first publication.

Laurelton was utilized by nearby universities as an internship site. In my role as director of a special unit for aggressive and acting out high functioning residents, I was requested to provide task supervision to undergraduate students from the social work program and the special education masters program at The Pennsylvania State University (Penn State), as well as undergraduate students in psychology and sociology from several other colleges in the area. This was my first academic exposure in a non-student role and I found it both interesting and gratifying. The performance evaluations I received from the students I supervised, resulted in an unexpected offer of a faculty position in the Sociology Department at Penn State. The baccalaureate social work program, housed within this department, was directed by Margaret B. Matson PhD, who encouraged me to pursue this opportunity following the completion of my obligation to the Pennsylvania Professional Education Program.

Growth of Social Work Education

When I started my academic career in 1969 there were approximately 65 accredited MSW programs and 120 registered BSW programs in the United States (BSW accreditation did not begin until 1974). By 1979 the number of MSW programs had grown to 86 and accredited BSW programs to 178. By 1989 the number of MSW programs stood at 91 and BSW programs numbered 230. Program growth continued through the 1990's reaching a combined total of 391 BSW and MSW programs by 1999. Growth in programs continued into the 21st century reaching a combined total of 516 accredited programs in 2004. Today there are a total of 718 accredited social work programs at the baccalaureate and masters levels, with an additional 29 baccalaureate and masters programs in candidacy.

While enrollment has fluctuated over time, shifting from full time residential instruction to part time study, and now to online learning, the one thing that is clear is that the number of social work programs has quadrupled in the last 45 years. Similarly, the number of institutions offering doctoral programs in social work/social welfare has doubled during that same time period. Teaching positions have grown exponentially. Yet, membership in professional social work organizations like NASW and CSWE has not kept pace with this program expansion. Interestingly, only a relatively small number of individuals trained as social workers identify or affiliate with these two major social work organizations. The membership of both these organizations reflects only a small proportion of faculty teaching in social work programs. While the growth in programs has created new opportunities for aspiring academics, the positions are increasingly part-time or non tenure track.

Practice or an Academic Career? The Importance of Mentoring

This was my first career dilemma. I had two appealing competing offers of employment, one as a commissioned officer in the US Public Health Service assigned to the federal penitentiary in Lexington, Kentucky; the other as an assistant professor at a public prestigious land grant university. With my MSW degree, well established clinical and interpersonal skills, and experience working with diverse populations, I was qualified for both positions. Penn State was only 50 miles from our home in Lewisburg, PA and 130 miles from our families in Pittsburgh. Kentucky was a long way from everyone and everything we knew. I accepted the Penn State offer in late spring of 1969 and attended the AAMD conference in San Francisco two weeks later. At the conference I met Meyer Schreiber, formerly of the US Children's Bureau who had chaired the AAMR writing competition mentioned earlier. He explained what I would need to do if I were serious about pursuing a career in academia. He cautioned me, from his own personal experience, that I would need my doctorate if I was going to succeed. Without a doctoral degree I would have limited opportunities in academia. He was convinced that there was only one doctoral program that would meet my needs and interests and that there was only one person who could guide my specific interests in disabilities and corrections. The program was the Florence Heller School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare at Brandeis University, in Waltham, Massachusetts. The faculty member was Gunnar Dybwad, an

attorney who was also a social worker. During the conference, Schreiber facilitated my introduction to Professor Dybwad, who in turn encouraged me to apply to The Heller School.

From the day I started my academic career at Penn State, Margaret B. Matson, a sociologist by discipline and widely recognized as a pioneer in baccalaureate social work education and field work education in particular, encouraged me to write and to pursue my doctorate. Her guidance and mentoring coincided with the advice and encouragement I was receiving from Mike Schreiber. Penn State graciously granted me a leave-of-absence after only one year of service to enroll in the doctoral program at Brandeis' Heller School, but not before Margaret Matson had arranged for me to meet Lillian Ripple, Acting Executive Director at CSWE. CSWE contracted with me, as part of a federal grant it had received, to compile an annotated bibliography entitled *Toward Building the Undergraduate Social Work Library*. As I reflect on this series of serendipitous events I am convinced more than ever that quality guidance and mentoring are critical to creating opportunities for professional growth and career development. Yet opportunities for meaningful mentoring may no longer be available as students spend less time in residential instruction.

I returned to Penn State in September of 1972 with my dissertation completed. With Margaret Matson's ongoing mentoring and my PhD in hand, I was promoted to associate and then full professor and granted tenure. When Margaret retired in 1978, I assumed her position as director of Penn State's accredited baccalaureate social work program, a position I held through the 1989/90 academic year. During my time at Penn State, program structure and curriculum were modified to conform to changing CSWE accreditation standards. By that time, newly hired full time faculty members were expected to have earned their doctorate prior to applying for an academic position.

The Historical and Political Evolution of Social Work Accreditation

In 1919, seventeen schools with baccalaureate and masters training programs in social work/social welfare came together to form the Association of Training Schools for Professional Social Work. Several of these programs were agency based rather than college or university based and all reflected urban settings. This organization later came to be known as The American Association of Schools of Social Work (AASSW). Interestingly, in 1939 AASSW voted to limit its membership to graduate training programs. Rural masters and the majority of baccalaureate programs, comprised primarily of Land Grant Colleges and State Universities with a strong public service mission, then formed their own organization in 1942, The National Association of Schools of Social Administration (NASSA). AASSW retained sole responsibility for accrediting graduate social work programs through 1943 when NASSA was recognized as the accrediting authority for undergraduate programs and the first year of graduate education leading to an M.A. or M.S. degree. The overlapping authority, confusion, and tension continued in the field with the publication of the Hollis-Taylor report in 1951, which advocated for a graduate model of professional social work training. Professional social work training developed along two separate paths characterized by differing philosophies of education that reflected differences in status, role, and mission.

The year 1951 was also significant because of the founding of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), which replaced AASSW and NASSA. While the creation of a "big tent" for social work education was the product of years of negotiation with input from the educational establishments, professional membership organizations, and employing social service agencies, the tension between graduate and undergraduate education remained with baccalaureate programs being viewed by many graduate programs and faculty as being less than professional. During the late 1970's and early 1980's the Annual Program Meetings (APM) of CSWE were filled with open hostility between baccalaureate program directors and graduate school deans.

However, the responsibility for accreditation of social work programs now rested with one organization, the Council on Social Work Education. In 1959, the Council's 13-volume *Curriculum Study*, known as the Boehm Report, became the blueprint for all professional social work education, with the exception of doctoral studies. Curriculum policy guidelines were issued by the Council every ten years beginning in the early 1960's with combined Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) being promulgated in 2001, 2008, and 2015 (forthcoming). NASW first recognized the BSW degree as a professional social work degree in 1968 and CSWE began accrediting BSW programs along with MSW programs in 1974. The role of baccalaureate social work education was further defined and specified in 1978 with the publication of *Educating the Baccalaureate Social Worker: Report of the Undergraduate Social Work Curriculum Development Project* (Baer and Federico).

Throughout my first 20 years in social work education, I maintained membership in both NASW and CSWE, yet I identified primarily with BSW educators, clearly recognizing that BSW educators and BSW graduates were not valued by many of my social work education counterparts. As I indicated above the historic tensions between the program levels continued even though we now lived in the same "big tent." From 1983-1985, I served a three year term on the CSWE Commission on Educational Planning. The subcommittee of which I was a member, attempted to define the elements of a social work education "continuum." While the subcommittee reached agreement on roles, functions, and overlapping areas of BSW and MSW knowledge and skills, the organization declined to formally adopt the notion of a "continuum" of preparation for professional practice. Doctoral social work programs, while clearly part of an educational "continuum" remained outside of the jurisdiction of EPAS. While the Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education (GADE) has adopted a set of principles for doctoral social work education, doctoral programs remain outside the purview of CSWE's specialized accreditation.

While social workers are now licensed or certified in all 50 states, there are still states that do not offer licensure to baccalaureate social workers, including New York, because of continuing opposition from the clinical societies, some graduate faculty, and public employee unions. This is an interesting phenomenon given that there are three times as many accredited baccalaureate programs in New York than accredited MSW programs and about a quarter of the BSW programs are in institutions also offering the MSW.

Doctoral Studies: Being at the Right Place at the Right Time

Doctoral education is more than completing a set of required courses, passing comprehensive exams, and writing a dissertation. Doctoral education is a process that is as important as the degree received at the end of the process. My doctoral education at The Heller School was far from ordinary or routine. While the course work was for the most part stimulating and instructive, it was my classmates, the mentoring by faculty, and my external involvements that brought my education to life. I entered the program as one of eleven doctoral students, all of whom had extensive policy, practice or teaching experience and more than half of whom would go on to become deans of graduate social work programs. My wife and I arrived in Waltham in late August of 1970 with two small children, a graduate student loan (for help with living expenses), and a fellowship that covered tuition and provided a small stipend. Within one week as a doctoral student, I was offered a position as an adjunct faculty member to teach a policy course at the Boston University School of Social Work. Within two months I was volunteering with groups of teenagers, working with and advocating on behalf of institutionalized individuals with intellectual disabilities. Within three months I was co-coordinating, with a Heller classmate, a prison reform program at the Concord Reformatory. Finally, within four months I was working on a federal grant that provided the data for my dissertation. Networks and relationships are critical in creating professional and career opportunities.

The opportunities for informal learning at Heller and with Professor Dybwad and his wife Rosemary were unbelievable. It is important to understand the context in which my informal learning occurred. The late 1960's and early 1970's were a critical time in establishing and defining the rights of the mentally disabled in this country and the world. The "right to education," the "right to treatment," the "right to habilitation in the least restrictive setting," the deinstitutionalization/community care movement, and the principle of "normalization" in the care and treatment of the disabled were taking place around me. Gunnar Dybwad was a key player in these events, including an advisor or expert witness in most of the landmark court cases of the day. He had been the first director of the ARC (Association for Retarded Children) and was a consultant to the President's Committee on Mental Retardation (PCMR). Rosemary was the Secretary General of the International League of Societies for Persons with Mental Handicaps. Their home was a stopping place for like-minded advocates from around the world. At least once a month, notes would appear in the study carrels of the doctoral students with interests in the disabilities field, inviting us to appear after dinner (they wanted us to have dinner with our families) at their home. There was no agenda and rarely did we know in advance who the visitor would be. We were never disappointed and often did not return home until well after midnight. To what and to whom we were exposed in this informal learning environment was priceless and provided unbelievable networking opportunities. We not only learned about the "normalization" principle, but we interacted with those who had formulated the principle in Scandinavia and actually implemented it there. We met with parents and teachers who were developing innovative education and treatment programs in developing countries. We also met with justice department officials, parent advocates, and attorneys who were filing litigation aimed at advancing the rights of the disabled.

Periodically, a note would appear in my study carrel asking that I stop by Professor Dybwad's office. The conversation often included a request that I ask my "good wife" to pack me an overnight bag—destination unknown. The most unusual of these requests involved being picked up at 5 AM on a Friday morning by Professor Dybwad and Dennis Haggarty, Esq., a member of the President's Committee on Mental Retardation. We drove to Logan Airport and flew to New York's LaGuardia Airport. We were met by an unmarked van and driven to a monastery on Staten Island to meet with an unusual gathering of advocates, attorneys, educators, and media personalities. That planning meeting resulted in the filing of litigation that led to the eventual closing of the infamous institution known as Willowbrook.

Over the course of my doctoral education I had the opportunity to meet and interact with most of the authors I cited in my dissertation as well as the majority of class action attorneys involved in litigating right to treatment cases. My exposure and relationship with foreign visitors later provided introductions and access to practitioners abroad. One of those connections led to my 30 plus year involvement with Barnardo's, England's largest children's charity. No extra credit was received and no tuition charges were incurred, but the learning/mentoring process and research opportunities were priceless.

In addition to the coursework required for the degree, I was also encouraged to enroll in an interdisciplinary course led by a Boston University law professor along with graduate students from Harvard, Boston College, and Boston University. The seminar was offered under the auspices of Judge David Bazelon of the Washington, DC Court of Appeals. Judge Bazelon had decided the landmark St Elizabeth Hospital right to treatment case.

When it became time to form my dissertation committee I included Professor Dybwad, Dr. Kenneth Jones, whose federal grant I was coordinating, and Dr. David Gil. Dr. Gil had just completed his volume *Unraveling Social Policy*. During my first year policy seminar with Dr. Gil, the students actually critiqued every idea and construct of the draft manuscript during his class prior to its publication. I was the first student to utilize part of his analytic policy framework in a dissertation. The outside member of my committee came from the Harvard School of Public Health, William C. Curran, an attorney. The involvement of Professor Curran once again almost altered my career path when he invited me to enroll in the public health program at Harvard. My experiences as a doctoral student were unique to the times and the individuals involved. The opportunities and connections facilitated by my mentors required a total immersion in the process. It is difficult or impossible to replicate those experiences and learning opportunities when doctoral study is part time and spread out over extended periods.

My Philosophy of Education

The form and nature of my master and doctoral education had a significant influence on my philosophy of education and my career path. I had the luxury of being a full time student in both my MSW and PhD programs. I was able to benefit from classroom and unusual informal learning and earning opportunities. I was fortunate to have had the exposure to and influence of a significant number of individuals who served as mentors

and who guided my learning and development as an academic scholar. How I relate to and interact with students, colleagues, and bureaucracies has been shaped by those experiences. Throughout my academic career I have attempted to mentor my own students in the way that I was mentored. I provided exposure, access, and involvement by maintaining an "open door" policy for students and colleagues and involving them in the work I was doing.

My development as a scholar developed over time and was enhanced by my association with numerous mentors, collaboration with scores of colleagues, and involvement in several professional organizations. As I have indicated, I was fortunate not to have to worry about the cost of tuition or the burden of student loans. I was a product of the times, a time before the profession was impacted by the wonders and burdens of technology, changing sets of expectations for academics, and educational delivery systems driven by economic mandates, budget shortfalls, and increasing demands for accountability. Unfortunately, future academics will not have the options or opportunities that were available to me. They will be faced with excessively high tuition, a heavy debt burden, limited access to mentors and the networks and connections they generate, and a learning environment that is shifting away from residential instruction.

Technology is wonderful. It provides access to resources and materials instantaneously. One can explore new ideas, review literature, and have access to cutting edge research being conducted around the world without leaving one's office. It is possible to "skype" with colleagues around the world, collaborating on research and writing. Technology has eliminated the need to spend endless hours in the library searching for primary sources. But with all its benefits, it has made many of our students look for the quick and expedient way to complete assignments. Many students do not know how to write and they prefer to communicate in "tweets." They accept as gospel what they find on the Internet, and feel comfortable lifting entire sections of material they discover in their perfunctory online searches, even though they know it can and will be detected. They record class lectures verbatim on their laptops or tablets, but are reluctant to engage in thoughtful class discussions. They "text" in class and cannot be separated from their I-phones or androids. They enroll in on-line courses, not because of access issues, but because they believe it is more convenient or easier. They also often have conflicting obligations or responsibilities that take precedence over their education requirements. Many avoid involvement in the informal opportunities that are made available by the program or faculty mentors.

Academic Expectations and Scholarship

Entry into and advancement in an educational setting is determined by a faculty member's educational achievement (completion of a specified degree(s)), level of scholarship (the number quantity and quality of publications in professional journals), grant funding, service to the university and community, and teaching effectiveness. While these are universal attributes across all institutions of higher education, the interpretation and weighting of each attribute is a moving target within and among institutions. When I started my graduate education I knew that my MSW was accepted as the terminal or highest degree in the field. While some faculty members held doctorates, they were the

exception rather than the norm. Therefore, even though I had never thought about teaching or about doctoral studies, I was offered an academic position.

I quickly learned however, that to advance in academia one needed to have a doctorate. Today, the completion of the doctorate in addition to the MSW is a prerequisite for a faculty position in most accredited bachelor and all master social work programs. When I began my academic career, I had two articles accepted and in press. By the time I completed my doctorate, those two articles had been published, and a third article had been accepted. I also had published a book chapter, and a CSWE monograph. By the time I was promoted to full professor in 1981 my publication record included eight articles (single author), three book chapters, two monographs, and three research reports. By today's standards, I probably would not have been promoted or granted tenure. In the early years of my deanship, I was able to facilitate the promotion/tenure of several faculty members whose teaching and occasional publications clearly enhanced the education of our students. As time went by and expectations changed, it became increasingly more difficult or impossible to promote and retain similar contributing faculty. Providing an opportunity for a faculty member to mature over time is no longer an option.

Today, newly minted doctoral graduates applying for entry level faculty positions in top tier social work programs are expected to have an established record (six or more) published articles in top tier journals as well as a number of research grant submissions. They are expected to hit the ground running. While my early scholarly submissions appeared in top quality journals, the bulk of my scholarly contributions did not occur until well after I had been promoted and granted tenure at Penn State. During my first ten years as a graduate school dean, I published more than twenty articles and ten book chapters a well as my first co-authored book with Arthur Frankel. Over the course of my academic career, I have had more than 100 articles and book chapters published in addition to three editions of my co-authored book on case management. I have been the sole author of more than half of those publications. My professional writing has included research and writing collaborations with numerous professional colleagues and almost two dozen were with my late colleague Margaret Gibelman. My point is that scholarship develops at different rates for different people and is informed and must be guided by solid practice experience. While a record of publication achieved during doctoral studies may be an indicator of future productivity, it is not the only indicator. Being well published is also not an indicator of teaching effectiveness. Similarly, the ability to successfully compete for grants and contracts are important expectations for a faculty member, but access and success may depend on whether a social work program is under public or private auspices, the faculty member's teaching load, the presence of institutional infrastructure to support grant submission, funding cycles, and funding sources. Many outstanding grant submissions never get funded because of reduced research budgets and/or political trends which limit funding. Future full time tenured faculty will be a unique group.

Service (Institutional/Community)

Service expectations, while important, have never been clearly defined for faculty and too much or too little service can limit academic advancement. While not as important as scholarship and successful grant experience, excessive committee work and university service can interfere with or limit time for research and writing. Community service can also have a limiting effect unless the service activities lead to expanded research opportunities and scholarship. During my second decade as an academic, I conducted numerous one or two day continuing education or in-service workshops, off campus, for agencies and their employees on topics ranging from confidentiality and record keeping to risk management and agency liability. The topics were directly related to my research interests and are reflected in many of my publications. Many of those workshops were conducted in collaboration with Richard Levine, Esq., Director of The Pennsylvania Child Advocate Program. Community service activities reflect a faculty member's commitment to the profession of social work and are critical in maintaining current knowledge of practice and developments in the field. However, community service that does not benefit a faculty member in more than a monetary way does not make academic sense given current expectations and demands.

Professional Development

Involvement with professional associations has been an integral part of my growth as an academic and my career in academia. In addition to my participation in CSWE on educational policy, the accreditation process, and board service, I also co-chaired three Annual Program Meetings (APMs), served on the Commissions of Program Information Management and Research and Conferences & Faculty Development, the Committee on Spirituality, and the Committee that developed the Code of Responsible Research Behavior for Social Workers (CSWE, 2008). I have served on local, state, and national committees of NASW including the New York City Latino Task Force, and as Secretary/Treasurer of the American Association on Mental Retardation (AAMR), now the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). I have also served and held office with the National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work (NADD) and the New York State Association of Social Work Schools of Social Work. I am still active with the Middle States Association for Colleges and Schools and serve on the National Board of Case Management (NBCM). None of these activities would have been possible without the financial support and released time provided by Penn State and Yeshiva University. Given what I have said previously about the current state of academic funding, support for such involvement may no longer be possible for many faculty members trying to build their academic careers. Travel, especially international travel, which such involvement often requires, has become an academic luxury, not a necessity. As academic programs expand their reliance on adjunct faculty, to reduce personnel costs and eliminate the benefits associated with employing full time faculty, participation in professional associations and conferences will suffer, further limiting academic advancement for promising faculty.

Professional Affiliations: A Double-Edged Sword

The decision to identify and affiliate with a professional association is a personal one. While NASW and CSWE are the largest and most well known of the social work professional associations, there have always been specialized associations that represented various practice settings (i.e., hospitals, public health settings, schools, child guidance, disabilities, corrections, family services). When NASW was created in 1957, it was out of a coalition of such associations. The goals were consolidation and strength in numbers. Yet the specialized groups continued to exist and additional specialized associations have emerged. This phenomenon exists within practice settings (i.e., oncology, transplant, dialysis, mental health) and within the context of social work education. Undergraduate social work educators identify with The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Directors (BPD); social work researchers with SSWR, the Society for Social Work Research; group workers with AASWG, now the International Association for Social Work with Groups (IASWG); community workers with ACOSA, the Association for Community Organization and Social Administration; doctoral social work directors with GADE, the Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Social Work Education; and social work deans in research intensive institutions with the St Louis Group. There are even associations for social work admissions officers, field work directors, and development officers. While these associations clearly address issues of concern for their members, they effectively limit membership in both NASW and CSWE. There exists no single organization with sufficient membership to advocate effectively for the social work profession.

Life Long Learning

I need to point out that the completion of the doctoral degree has never been the end of learning for a faculty member. Knowledge is constantly evolving and new technology facilitates and enhances teaching and the educational process. Attending conferences and workshops as well as presenting papers at professional meetings are integral to a faculty member's growth. Having those opportunities available and having the time and financial resources to participate are essential. As mentioned, given the uncertainties in academic funding, it will be more difficult for faculty to participate in structured development activities. As departmental resources for professional development become less available to faculty, expectations for promotion and tenure will undoubtedly become more daunting, and for some, virtually unattainable.

Knowledge continues to evolve as does the need to remain current with the rapid changes taking place within both practice and academic arenas. In a research class during my MSW education, I learned how to wire a "mother board" that facilitated the sorting of data that was punched on cards. The cards had been coded to represent the answers to questions from a questionnaire and were processed on a mainframe computer. PC's did not exist, there was no Internet, and the cell phone was merely a fantasy in the imagination of people like Steve Jobs. Students and faculty actually had to enter a library to access information. With the proliferation of our body of validated research, together with the emergence of new theories, revised conceptual frameworks, a better

understanding of how racism, cultural competence, genetics, and spirituality affect human development, and changing accreditation standards impact what educators and practitioners have to know. The need for continuing education has never been greater. The amount of knowledge required of students continues to expand exponentially, while the opportunities and resources available to master that knowledge has continued to erode.

It is incumbent on every faculty member to know what they don't know and to act affirmatively to acquire new knowledge and maintain the currency and relevance of their knowledge and skills. I previously shared that during my doctoral studies I worked with attorneys involved in class action litigation. When I returned to full time teaching after completing my doctoral degree, I continued those legal collaborations in my policy research in the areas of disabilities and community reintegration. While I was familiar with legal language and process, I was never fully comfortable with the level of my understanding of the law. Therefore I applied to and was accepted into a unique master degree program at Yale University Law School for my 1977/78 sabbatical year. Not only did I fill the gaps in my knowledge and understanding of the law, but I completed the program with five papers that were later published as articles. The added knowledge enhanced my research skills, prepared me to better prepare testimony for legislative hearings, and to serve as an expert in more than a dozen legal proceedings.

Advancement in Academia

In 1990 I was offered the position of dean and professor at the Wurzweiler School of Social Work of Yeshiva University in New York City. My new school had a history of issues with CSWE dating back to its initial accreditation in 1959. The school was founded in 1957 as a school for training social group workers; required courses in ethics, religious philosophy and spirituality; stressed experiential learning; and generally avoided adhering to the requirements of a scripted curriculum. The charge given to me by the University's President and Provost was to "fix" the schools relationship with CSWE and raise the school's reputation. Provided with both financial resources and administrative support, and a willing faculty of outstanding teachers, those goals were achieved. My serving a three year term on the CSWE Board of Directors, followed by a three year term on the Commission on Accreditation helped in anticipating and responding to emerging curricular and accreditation issues.

The accreditation process has evolved over my academic career, becoming more complex. Maintaining program accreditation is an ongoing process that today must involve all program faculty and administrators. The program's structure and its relationship with both the university and the community must be identified and clearly articulated. Learning objectives must be operationally defined and practice competencies identified. The program must also demonstrate how the identified practice competencies are measured.

Syllabi must be updated regularly and reflect not only course content and readings, but the relationship of specific assignments to desired learning outcomes. Grading criteria, attendance expectations, statements regarding citations and plagiarism,

accommodations for disabilities, HIPAA requirements, appeal procedures, and the estimated cost of course materials must be included. This is totally different from my first syllabus that was two pages long including: the course description, a list of topics, the assigned text book, and several suggested readings. My success in meeting university expectations and developing a highly respected program led to additional unanticipated administrative responsibilities. What started out as a 13 month assignment turned into twelve years in the Office of the Provost changing my academic focus. While my scholarly research and writing continued, my presence in the classroom disappeared. Where you are, what you do, and where your career goes is rarely planned, and often out of your personal control. My career has been guided and facilitated by an endless cast of mentors who showed interest in me as a person and developing social work professional. If it was not for their advice and counsel, I would have never entered or progressed in academia. My interpersonal skills and the relationships that resulted, along with my willingness to learn and risk were only possible in an environment in which face to face contact and opportunities for interaction were possible. While technology certainly provided new kinds of learning opportunities, many of the most meaningful opportunities that were open to me, unfortunately may no longer be available to our new generation of academics.

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Author note

Address correspondence to: Dr. Sheldon R. Gelman, Yeshiva University - Wurzweiler School of Social Work, 2495 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10033. Email: srgelman@yu.edu

Dr. Sheldon R. Gelman, Dean Emeritus, is a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers and a Fellow of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) and the New York Academy of Medicine (NYAM). He has held office and served on national commissions of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), including the board of directors and Commission on Accreditation, the National Association of Social Work Deans (NADD), the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). The author of more than 100 professional articles and book chapters, he has served as a consultant to many social welfare organizations, presented testimony before legislative bodies and served as an expert witness in more than a dozen cases. He was named a "Social Work Pioneer" by NASW in 2009.