

# Crossing Borders: Social Work in the Age of Mobility

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Moving Forward: Social Work in the Age of Mobility  
2016 Education Conference

# Learning Objectives:

- 1) Attendees will develop a deeper understanding about how licensure and the topic of social workers' mobility impact our lives as individual professional social workers;
- 2) Supervisors will respond more effectively, knowledgeably, sensitively and skillfully to issues of social workers' mobility and licensure.

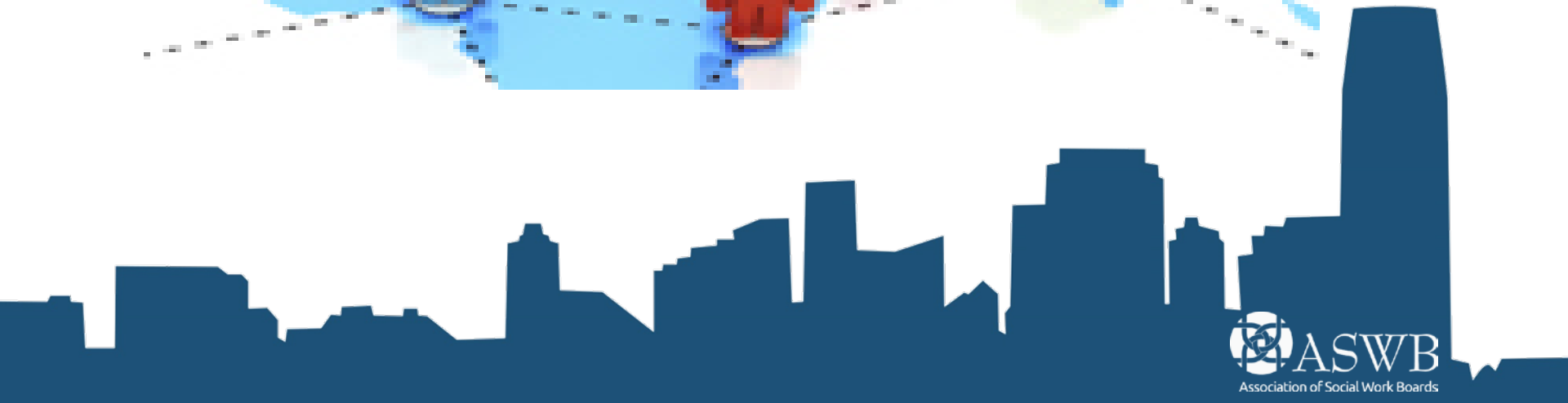
# DEFINITIONS OF TERMINOLOGY

# Foci of Social Work Practice:

- **Macro Practice** : Social work practice “aimed at bringing about improvement and changes in the general society. (Barker, 2013, p. 253)
- **Mezzo Practice** : Refers to “Social work practice primarily with families and small groups. (Barker, 2013, p. 269)
- **Micro Practice** : The term used by social workers to identify professional activities that are designed to help solve the problems faced primarily by individuals, families and small groups. Usually micro practice focuses on direct intervention on a case-by- case basis or in a clinical setting”(Barker 2013, p. 269).

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# WHAT IS MOBILITY ?



Mobility (or portability) is a focus of many licensees of social work and other mental health regulatory boards. Mobility allows licensees to easily work in other states, which is helpful in a variety of ways. For clients, it can help increase the number of practitioners who can provide much-needed services. For licensees, it creates opportunities to work where they most want to live, and move where others are moving.

**(Mobility Among Social Workers — Thoughts From a Regulator**

By Brian Carnahan)

“While mobility is exciting, it also introduces uncertainties. Cooperation can conquer those uncertainties nationally and state by state: being open to changes that protect the public while ensuring a vibrant social work profession.”

— **Brian Carnahan, executive director, the State of Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, & Marriage and Family Therapist Board**

Hi Professor Bailey,

I am emailing to follow up on a conversation we had about international social work. Do you have any colleagues or contacts that you could direct me toward in terms of pursuing international social work after graduation? I would like to do social work in the Caribbean, specifically Barbados. I am looking for a paid opportunity ranging from 6 months to a year. I know you do not involve yourself in international employment; therefore, I am looking for an inroad or introduction.

I thank you in advance for taking the time to think about this and offering your support.

XYZ



# About licensing and regulation:



The purpose of licensing and certification in social work is to assist the public through identification of standards for the safe professional practice of social work. Each jurisdiction defines by law what is required for each level of social work licensure.

<https://www.aswb.org/licensees/about-licensing-and-regulation/>

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**Bachelors:** Baccalaureate social work degree upon graduation

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**Masters:** Master's degree in social work (MSW) with no post-degree experience

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**Advanced Generalist:** MSW with two years post-master's supervised experience

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**Clinical:** MSW with two years post-master's direct clinical social work experience

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<https://www.aswb.org/licensees/about-licensing-and-regulation/>

‘Social work regulatory boards generally require that social work degrees must be obtained from programs of social work that are accredited by the [Council on Social Work Education](#) (CSWE), [Canadian Association for Social Work Education](#)(CASWE), or other nationally recognized accrediting agencies. Degrees earned outside the U.S. and Canada must be determined to be equivalent. One widely used equivalency service is the CSWE International Social Work Degree Recognition and Equivalency Service ([iswdres@cswe.org](mailto:iswdres@cswe.org)).”

# A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE...



In 2004 the General Assemblies of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), meeting in Adelaide, Australia, adopted a statement of 'Global Standards for the Education and Training of the Social Work Profession'. This was part of a general debate about 'international' or 'global' social work

Global social work: crossing borders, blurring boundaries (Nobel, Strauss & Litchfield, 2014)  
(European Journal of Social Work, Anderson, 2015)

Although the International Association of Schools of Social Work(IASSW) and International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) jointly agreed to a statement concerning Global Standards in Social Work Education, recognition of foreign qualifications still largely rests with national regulatory bodies.

(<http://www.ifsw.org/en/p38000255.html>)

# International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service

- The Office of Social Work Accreditation (OSWA), part of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as the sole accrediting agency for social work education in the United States.
- The office's International Social Work Degree Recognition and Evaluation Service (ISWDRES) recognizes academic credentials in social work that are comparable to accredited baccalaureate and master's degrees in social work in the United States. Recognition is necessary to establish qualifications for employment, graduate school admission, membership in the National Association of Social Workers, state licensing, and/or certification.
- Recognition is based on the **general comparability of the program objectives** (as stated in the program catalogue or program's official memorandum) and level of the applicant's social work education to social work education in the United States.



# Why do Social Workers 'Cross Borders' ?



War and natural disasters, causing the destitution or displacement of large numbers of people, have always provoked a response from the international community, and organizations such as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Médecins Sans Frontières, UNICEF, Save the Children, Amnesty International, and many others have created what amounts to big businesses to respond to need.

**Those working in such organizations do not always see themselves as social workers, and a current move to provide separate registration and training for them is one of the factors motivating social work educators to enlarge their own brief to encompass them.**

Global social work: crossing borders, blurring boundaries (Nobel, Strauss & Litchfield, 2014) (European Journal of Social Work, Anderson, 2015)

IASSW and IFSW recognized that current social work training does not adequately address the problems of working across different cultures, let alone working in a foreign country; that migration has produced a growing number of families which are split between nations; that the recruitment of foreign social workers is expanding; that political or economic refugees present special needs; and that social work training remains stubbornly culture-bound.

Global social work: crossing borders, blurring boundaries (Nobel, Strauss & Litchfield, 2014) (European Journal of Social Work, Anderson, 2015)

This applies not only to 'international' social work (between two nations) and 'global' social work (involving many nations) but to social work within a single nation. It is suggested that issues such as unemployment, family problems, or alcoholism could better be understood in a worldwide context, where economic influences, differing family structures, global marketing, and other factors were taken into account. Seen in this way, not all international activity has a transnational dimension. NGOs working in a foreign country are subject to local laws and mores, and are often trapped in a national dimension

## Opportunities and challenges for social workers crossing borders.(White , 2006)

*The inspiration for this article partly derives from the author's experiences as a social work student, practitioner, researcher and teacher who has studied, researched and practiced social welfare in Canada, Belgium, the USA, Jamaica, Belize, the UK and Uganda.*

“ It can also be assumed that social workers cross borders for the same reasons that other people do: to seek educational or employment opportunities (sometimes in international organizations) or because of the employment of their partners or the wish to pursue a different lifestyle and – in some cases – to escape war or persecution. So, although their stories may be lost among discussions of illegal immigration or the migration of technology workers, social workers are also part of the transnational student and labor force.”

- Because social work is on the list of NAFTA-approved occupations, social workers can move between the USA and Canada with relative ease (as already indicated). To get a one-year renewable work permit (which gives them TN status), citizens of either country must 'present evidence of citizenship, a letter of employment in professional status, evidence that he or she is in possession of said status, and appropriate evidence of compliance with state licensure requirements'  
(US Department of State, 2006)



# Social Work, Mobility and Membership

*Bill Jordan<sup>[1]</sup>, University of Huddersfield (2003)*

- “...One major shift is that the new social institutions promote mobility between organizations, between communities, and often between countries. Membership of such associations therefore becomes more instrumental; it is for the sake of specific economic advantages, rather than because of shared values or cultural commitments. Social work itself is influenced by this change, and social workers are among a growing body of professionals who migrate between states, in search of more advantageous employment.”

- “... the collective life of societies is currently experiencing a fundamental shift, and that this has important implications for the practice of social work. The process known as ‘globalization’ entails a transformation of social institutions, with a growing importance and strength of economic organizations, such as corporations, banks, financial intermediaries, insurance companies and pension funds (Jordan and Düvell 2003, ch.4), which are international in their reach, and a corresponding decline in the power and influence of nation states (except for the global hegemon, the USA, which has largely driven this transformation).
- Through international agencies, such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, the programme for the new World Order promotes forms of collective life based on competition in global markets, at the expense of forms based on political authority, on informal self-organisation, or on communal sharing. This is changing the ways individuals live, their identities, their affiliations to others, and their strategies for improving their situations”



# Globalization, contemporary challenges and social work practice (Domenelli,2010)

- Globalization has produced winners and losers as it has spread its tentacles across the world. Its benefits are hotly disputed, but enjoyed by people living in the West and elites in the global South. At the same time, it has created considerable problems that social workers are asked to resolve. These include internationalized social problems that bring the global to the local and raise the local to the global arena. They are helped in their tasks through the development of theories, practice and research that can cross borders while still recognizing the significance of local inputs into social problems that have local and/or global dimensions.

- Challenges and/or Opportunities ...?

# MOOCs

MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) can be seen as a term or word related to the scalability of open and online education.

## **Proposed definition:**

- MOOCs are courses designed for large numbers of participants, that can be accessed by anyone anywhere as long as they have an internet connection, are open to everyone without entry qualifications, and offer a full/complete course experience online for free.

[http://www.openuped.eu/images/docs/Definition\\_Massive\\_Open\\_Online\\_Courses.pdf](http://www.openuped.eu/images/docs/Definition_Massive_Open_Online_Courses.pdf)



ONLINE EDUCATION

96%

of traditional universities offer online coursework.

4 MILLION

Students enrolled in online courses in 2012.

31%

of all higher education students now take at least one course online.

# Online and Distance Education Offerings by Accredited Programs

- The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) currently does not keep information about online and distance education offerings in the database of accredited programs.
- Baccalaureate Level : 8 Programs
- Masters Level : 43 Programs
- The list of programs offering online or distance education we have compiled is not intended to be exhaustive.
- <http://www.cswe.org/cms/39516.aspx>

- NEXT STEPS ?
- WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE ?



Shift our perspective ...become more inclusive.....  
AND more kaleidoscopic !



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