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### Title III Professional Development Blog Post

Thanks to the support of the Title III Professional Development funds from Lincoln University of Missouri, I was able to attend and present at the Society for Social Work and Research 2020 Annual Conference. The conference was hosted at the Marriott Marquis in Washington, DC on January 15 – 19 and the theme was Reducing Racial and Economic Inequality. Several types of presentations occurred at the conference; specifically, there were oral paper presentations, poster presentations, symposia, roundtables and workshops that focused on addressing racial and economic inequalities. I participated in a roundtable organized by Drs. Cassandra Simon and Josephine Pryce of University of Alabama, Dr. Dana Harmon of Auburn University, Montgomery, and Dr. James Martin of New York University.

The title of the roundtable was Social Justice Education Framework: Examination of an Integrated Model for Teaching and Evaluating Social Justice Education through Historical Injustices. This roundtable was a lively discussion between the roundtable participants and attendees about how to implement social justice into social work education. The discussion started with how the construct of social justice is situated in social work practice, research, and education. Specifically, the construct, social justice first explicitly appeared in the 1979 Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers and remains one of the formal ethics of the profession; however, it is unclear to what extent and how social justice is emphasized in teaching and learning.

I was primarily responsible for providing the background of the Social Justice Education Perspective (SJEP) written by Heather Hackman and published in 2005. In this article, Hackman (2005) posits that inequities are transmitted through education and actively examines the systems that lead to inequality. The SJEP accepts that inequities are transmitted through education, particularly in school's curriculum structures and pedagogies. Specifically, this perspective suggests that unless schools actively examine education, they perpetuate social inequalities and prejudices because schools are transmitters of the dominant culture. Furthermore, social justice education theorists contend that social justice is a goal and a

process that require action. Although, SJEP scholars have mostly focused on elementary and secondary schools' curriculum design the perspective can be applied to teaching and learning in social work education classrooms. The following are the essential, interrelated components in the SJEP:

1. Content mastery,
2. Tools for critical analysis,
3. Tools for action and social change,
4. Tools for personal reflection, and
5. An awareness of multicultural group dynamics.

After explaining the framework, we expanded the discussion to how counter-narratives and historical injustices impact the implementation of social justice in teaching and learning. This portion of the roundtable led to the discussion of the implications of textbooks used in social work education courses and involved individuals who were at various stages of their academic careers – ranging from assistant and associate professors, deans, doctoral students, full-time and part-time social work practitioners. At the end of the roundtable, the participants and many of the attendees joined a working group to continue to work on the issues highlighted in the roundtable.

My attendance and participation at this roundtable is beneficial to my position at Lincoln University because it increased the information that I can use to improve my teaching. Additionally, there was limited representation of individuals from Minority Serving Institutions, therefore, my voice being added to the discussion provided diversity of thought and will impact others in the field. Furthermore, attending the conference exposed me to the research actively happening in the academic discipline and professional practice of social work which makes me a better scholar and teacher.

Conference Abstract Link <https://sswr.confex.com/sswr/2020/webprogram/Session10731.html>

#### Reference

Hackman, H. W. (2005). Five Essential Components for Social Justice Education. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 38(2), 103–109. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665680590935034>

