

**The Board of Registration for Social Workers in British Columbia  
In the matter of the *Social Workers Act*  
and a hearing concerning**



**Decision of the Hearing Panel**

**Hearing date:** September 15, 2007

**Panel:** James Campbell RSW  
Sharon Coates, RN, public member  
Deborah Jones, RSW  
Chi-Ying Wong, RSW  
Sherry Baker, MA, public member  
Brigitte Wagner-Yates, RSW

**Applicant:** 

**Registration Committee:** Sheila Begg, RSW, Deputy Registrar, on behalf of the  
Registration Committee

**Background**

1. The applicant applied for registration on June 8, 2006. The application was reviewed by the Deputy Registrar and forwarded to the Registration Committee. After reviewing the application, transcripts and written materials, the Registration Committee was left with concerns about whether or not the applicant satisfied the requirements for registration.
2. This hearing was held pursuant to the *Social Workers Act* and rule 25(b) of the Rules of the Board of Registration for Social Workers.
3. The purpose of the hearing is to determine if the applicant has satisfied the requirements for registration in accordance with Rule 35(2). Section 35 states:

(1) For the purposes of section 4 of the *Act*, the requirements for full registration are

(a) graduation from an academic program approved by the board.

(i) has been granted a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in social work, and provided such degree is granted by a university, college or other educational institution that is acceptable to the board; or

(ii) has been granted a degree or certificate deemed by the board to be equivalent to an undergraduate or postgraduate bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in social work, and provided such a degree or certificate is granted by a university, college, or other educational institution that is acceptable to the board; or

(iii) has been granted status as a "registered social worker" or "professional social worker" in another jurisdiction, provided that the standards for registration of such status in that jurisdiction are not less than the minimum standards prescribed in the rule.

- (b) successful completion of the examinations required by the registration committee.
- (c) a minimum of 700 hours of social work experience through a combination of practica, internship, and work experience supervised by a social worker satisfactory to the board.
- (d) evidence satisfactory to the board of the good character of the person consistent with the responsibilities of a registrant and the standards expected of a registrant, and

(e) receipt by the registrar of

- (i) a signed application for full registration in a form approved by the registration committee,
- (ii) the application fee approved by the board,
- (iii) a notarized copy, or evidence satisfactory to the board of her or her degree or evidence that he or she is the person named therein,
- (iv) a statutory declaration in Form 1,
- (v) required fees for registration,
- (vi) a signed criminal record check authorization form and other criminal record checks acceptable to the board.

(2) An applicant who does not meet the requirements established in subrule (1) may be granted full registration by the board where the applicant

- (a) has a minimum of a baccalaureate degree in a related field and a combination of knowledge, skills and abilities which are, in the opinion of the registration committee, substantially equivalent to the requirements established in subrules (1)(a) and (c),
- (b) has successfully completed the examinations and any upgrading programs required by the registration committee, and
- (c) meets the requirements set out in subrules (1)(d) and (e).

4. The Board must, in the hearing, decide whether the applicant:

- a. Holds a minimum of a baccalaureate degree in a related field,
- b. Has a combination of knowledge, skills and abilities which are substantially equivalent to the requirements set out in section 35(1)(a) and (c) (which relate to education, testing and experience)
- c. Is of good character consistent with the responsibilities of a registrant and the standards expected of him or her.

### **Preliminary matters agreed to**

The Board of Registration for Social Workers in British Columbia and the Applicant agreed to the following matters:

1. The hearing regarding the applicant's application was scheduled for September 15, 2007 and proceeded this date.
2. The applicant chose to proceed without legal counsel.
3. The applicant acknowledged the supportive role by the Deputy Registrar and the Registration Committee during the registration process.
4. Exhibit one contains correspondence and documentary information submitted by the applicant to the Registration Committee and the Board concerning [REDACTED] application, and was entered into evidence for the hearing.
5. Exhibit two contains additional information regarding content on courses that was submitted by the applicant to the Board at the time of the hearing, and was entered into evidence for the hearing.

### **Position of the Registration Committee of the Board of Registration for Social Workers in British Columbia**

The Registration Committee of the Board of Registration for Social Workers in British Columbia (BRSW) position was stated that:

1. The Registration Committee of the Board, in their review, found the applicant has demonstrated [REDACTED] completed a minimum of 700 hours of social work experience through a combination of practica, internship and work experience supervised by a social worker satisfactory to the board as required in Rule 35 (1) (c).
2. The Registration Committee of the Board, in their review, found that the applicant's B.A. degree constitutes a degree in a related field as per Rule 35 (2) (a).
3. The Registration Committee of the Board was concerned about the applicant's knowledge in the core competency areas of Social Policy, Social Welfare, Social Work Theory, Social Work Practice, and Social Research as per Rule 35 (2) (a). The committee recognized the applicant has taken courses at an introductory level, but not at the third and fourth year levels.

### **Position of the Applicant**

1. The applicant's position is that [REDACTED] "education and work experience reveals a consistent work ethic and competency reflective and worthy of the profession of social work"(Exhibit two).
2. The applicant's reply to the concern about not having upper level knowledge in the course core competencies was that [REDACTED] has done readings in these areas that were related to [REDACTED] work experience.

3. The applicant's information regarding these areas was provided in Exhibit two, which included examples of texts [REDACTED] had read and work experience that could be related to the content of the core courses.
4. The applicant also raised the question of the requirements for registration in 1980 compared to 2007, and asked the Board to make the registration decision based on 1980 requirements rather than present requirements (Exhibit one).
5. The applicant explained [REDACTED] has worked in a variety of social work and social service positions as defined by [REDACTED] employers since 1981.
6. The applicant confirmed that [REDACTED] has never previously applied for registration as a social worker in British Columbia, nor in any other Province in which [REDACTED] has been employed in a social service role since 1981.

### **Analysis**

1. The hearing panel evaluates if a degree in a related field is based on significant overlap in the curriculum in the formal coursework completed by an applicant with the core curriculum items in a Bachelor of Social Work degree as established by the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work.
2. The hearing panel evaluates substantial equivalency based on an evaluation of an applicant's knowledge, skills and abilities that is equal to the core curriculum items in a Bachelor of Social Work degree as established by the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work.
3. The hearing panel considered testimony and documentary evidence to determine whether the applicant has substantial knowledge in the core competency course areas.
4. The hearing panel noted the applicant's transcript of her Bachelor of Arts Degree states it is a Social Service Major from [REDACTED]. An e-mail from the Registrar of this university states the program has never been accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)(Exhibit one).
5. The applicant recently completed an introductory course in Social Welfare, and previously completed courses at the introductory level for [REDACTED] Human Service Worker Diploma from Fraser Valley University College.
6. The hearing panel determined the applicant's work experience and completed coursework does not include significant core curriculum at the third and fourth year levels in the areas of Social Policy, Social Welfare, Social Work Theory, Social Work Practice, and Social Research equivalent to the core curriculum in a Bachelor of Social Work Degree as established by the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work as per Rule 35 (1) (a).
7. The applicant's professional post degree work experience and supervised practicum meet the minimum of 700 hours of social work experience through work experience supervised by a social worker satisfactory to the Board as required in Rule 35 (1) (c).
8. The applicant's skills and abilities requirement is evidenced by the Registered Social Worker who completed the assessment form on the applicant's practice experience.

9. Based on the references submitted, the Board was satisfied the applicant is of good character that would be consistent with the responsibilities and standards expected of a registrant.
10. The Board concluded it cannot determine whether the applicant would have met the requirements for registration as a social worker in the 1980's, and can only consider this application based on current rules and requirements for registration.

### **Conclusion**

As per Rule 35 (2) (a) the Board found the degree the applicant obtained constitutes a degree in a related field, but lacks core competency courses required for the knowledge requirement. The Board recognized the applicant's work experience would acknowledge ■ skills and abilities requirement; however this does not take the place of core knowledge courses. The applicant has taken courses at the introductory level, but the Board could not find evidence of completed social work core competency courses at the third and fourth year levels. After considering the evidence, the Board concluded the applicant's knowledge in the core competency areas of Social Policy, Social Welfare, Social Work Theory, Social Work Practice, and Social Research are not sufficient to be substantially equivalent to courses completed as the core curriculum in a Bachelor of Social Work Degree as established by the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work as per the requirements established in Rule 35 (1) (a). Based on the references, the Board was satisfied the applicant is of good character that would be consistent with the responsibilities and standards expected of a registrant.



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Jim Campbell, MSW, RSW-Clinical  
Chair  
Board of Registration for Social Workers  
October 11, 2007