



**DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION**

**University of Michigan School of Social Work**

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report and Strategic Plan**



SCHOOL OF  
**SOCIAL WORK**  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Beginning in September 2015, the School of Social Work (SSW) engaged in a seven-month planning activity to improve diversity, equity and inclusion at the School of Social Work in the context of the School's vision, mission and goals. The social work profession mandates and the code of ethics focus the profession and the UM School of Social Work (SSW) on working for justice and reducing the inequities of poverty, exclusion, exploitation, violence, powerlessness, and the dominance of particular cultural norms and values. Thus, the SSW has attended to issues of diversity, equity and inclusion over time. Because the mission of Social Work and its emphasis on field experience (the social work "signature pedagogy") involves intensive involvement in communities outside UM, students and faculty undertake research and training on many issues, communities and constituencies outside the SSW, as well as an examination of our own institutional practices. In this plan, we identify areas where we need to consolidate and maintain, as well as key priorities for intensive work towards new or renewed goals related to diversity, equity and inclusion.

### I. PLANNING PROCESS

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A 19-person planning team was constituted that represented most roles and ranks within the SSW, as well as diverse positionalities (characteristics associated with exclusion and inequities). The committee met biweekly, with subcommittees working on specific goals and tasks. These tasks included:

1. **Work with secondary and administrative data.** In conjunction with appropriate administrative offices, the committee identified all data available, gaps in desired data, and important questions for future monitoring. The committee specifically analyzed the following: 2013 climate surveys conducted by ADVANCE; a 2014 study of micro-aggressions experienced by African-Americans in the SSW; admissions data for MSW and PhD. students, and 2015 course evaluations.
2. **Student, Staff and Faculty-led School Events.** The committee gathered information from events conducted by various groups, including, in addition to our own faculty and students, the National Association of Social Workers - Michigan, addressing important topics for DE&I (e.g., Black Lives Matter, police violence, TLGBQIA+ health, student activism in higher education, uses of media for change).

3. **Work by Multicultural and Gender Affairs (MGA) Committee.** The mission of this standing committee overlaps with the charge for DE&I. This group (comprised of faculty, students, staff and alums) collaborated in the development of the DE&I plan.
4. **Retreat focused on Research Development.** This day-long event was part of overall SSW strategic planning, with a particular emphasis on the development of an aspirational social work research agenda.

The next four sources of input to the plan were interactive events with multiple constituencies that provided ongoing opportunities to add and comment to this plan as it developed.

5. **Strategic Information Gathering with Faculty**—SSW faculty identified what was going well, gaps in our focus on DEI, new transformative goals, and ideas for achieving these.
6. **Strategic Information Gathering with Staff**—SSW staff identified what was going well, gaps in our focus on DEI, new transformative goals, and ideas for achieving these.
7. **Student Online Surveys**—All students were invited to respond with examples, goals, and ideas for change. Students responded individually, and as groups.
8. **Two School-wide Meetings**— World Café methods allowed faculty, students and staff to comment on and develop seven themes that had emerged in earlier assessments that were important among all of the School's constituencies.
  - In session one, participants generated a wide range of ideas in cross-constituency small groups, with every group contributing to each theme.
  - In session two, single constituency groups set priorities for their group within each of the themes, and then cross constituency groups began to work on early action steps for each theme.

## II. DATA AND ANALYSIS: KEY FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

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Overall, this report is organized according to the four planning domains specified in the DE&I guidelines, noting relevant constituencies. During the planning, however, the DE&I committee identified a number of cross-cutting themes that recurred across all four constituencies. We first define and discuss each of these, followed by findings and conclusions in the four specified domains.

### A. Overarching Themes and Goals:

1. **Accountability in commitment to DE&I goals and behaviors to enact these goals.** School constituencies understood accountability in many different ways, and perceived gaps in incentives and mechanisms for ensuring accountability in a number of areas. The SSW needs mechanisms to ensure accountability—incentives, resources, support, consequences, monitoring mechanisms, follow through, and procedures that can be

used when accountability does not occur (e.g., action teams, restorative justice procedures).

2. **A Shift in Culture and Climate.** There was general agreement that the School's current climate does not consistently support inclusive participation and learning for justice. Older and newer language and approaches co-exist, which many members of the SSW community find confusing. Students, faculty and staff are limited talking about power and its consequences, as they try avoid discomfort and conflict. Too much effort is spent censoring oneself and monitoring others for transgressive behaviors. We need more focus on collective learning and collaborations for inclusive teaching, learning and change, within and outside of classrooms.
3. **Everyone (especially the faculty) has strong interpersonal, group and classroom process and facilitation skills.** Assessments identified the power of transformative conversations, inclusive participation, learning from issues outside the School, and building on discomforts, conflicts and differences. They also identified examples of poor facilitation, avoidance of learning opportunities, and interactions experienced as harmful.
4. **Professional Development for Everyone.** Although many elements of professional development are available, they are unevenly implemented, with some marked gaps.
5. **Much Stronger and More Linkages and Engagement outside the SSW with**
  - Multiple communities outside the SSW (for education, scholarship)
  - Current events, policy questions, and advocacy outside the SSW
6. **The need for coordination, resource development, facilitation, and monitoring.** Locus of responsibility needs to remain with implementing units, but options and impacts will be greater with assistance and coordination.

## **B. Planning Domain 1: Education and Scholarship**

The SSW has made many curricular changes to focus on topics relevant for equity, inclusion and diversity, including a required first term course in the MSW program implemented in fall, 2015, and a set of 25 courses and a portion of the professional practicum implemented earlier. These are designed to “intensively focus” on content and skills for engaging with privilege, oppression, diversity and social justice. This work needs to be continued and strengthened through attention both to learning objectives and to effective teaching methods.

Course evaluations need to be developed to provide a more sophisticated assessment of the success of our educational endeavors related to DE&I. Course evaluations in the SSW for the most part reflect a faculty fully dedicated to creating a better learning experience for the students, and the regularly administered end-of-term student course survey contains many items about particular types of populations and injustices. They provide uneven results with regard to DE&I related foci and learning. As noted, too many students have expressed concerns

about the failures by some faculty to acknowledge and properly address the racism and structural forces that impact minority communities (e.g., Flint water situation) and the inability of some instructors to create a positive classroom learning experience, among others.

In the scholarship area, we need to more systematically compile the many foci related to DE&I that are already the research focus for faculty and doctoral students. The committee also identified some priority areas for more collective attention, e.g., some topic areas (e.g., incarceration, health disparities) and methodologies (approaches to intersectionality, participatory action methods, and public scholarship).

### **C. Planning Domain 2: Recruitment, Retention and Development [School Composition and Ensuring the Success of Those Already Involved with SSW]**

The committee divided this domain into two goal areas—one focused on ensuring diversity of composition, and the other on how well we were providing support and development for those already connected with the SSW. Although many strengths were identified, every assessment also identified difficulties within the SSW with inclusive participation, experiences of micro aggressions and/or isolation, and a range of challenges faced by diverse community members. Some of these were shared across constituencies, but others more specific for particular groups. Student groups and programs, and support services assist with these for many students, but are not adequate or systematically available to all. As a result, the committee suggests that we emphasize improving climate, culture, and student support that are accessible and useful to the range of students that are currently at the school while we are developing priorities for new recruitment.

### **D. Planning Domain 3: Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community.**

The school needs a clear vision of an equitable and inclusive community, made more visible through key activities, symbols, and discussions. The SSW needs common times for events that all faculty, students and staff can attend, including opportunities for scholarly conversations, discussion of current events, and joint work on skill and goal development. The SSW needs to make stronger interconnections between classroom work, SSW activities outside the classroom and communities, organizations, and issues located outside the SSW.

We need a supportive climate for those in the SSW who are in the program for shorter periods of time (3-4 terms for most MSW students, several years for doctoral students). Faculty and staff are instrumental in creating and sustaining on-going organizational culture, but we also need more ways to quickly develop a climate for inclusive learning among students.

Students also struggle to find others who share aspirations and struggles, and we need to do more to make more dimensions of diversity known, and to help students create support systems for themselves. In Fall 2015, the SSW instituted some new activities during MSW student orientation and earlier classes, intended to build community, and this experience should be

more explicitly focused on DE&I climate building and to introduce them to existing resources and resources that should be developed.

#### **E. Planning Domain 4: Service**

The SSW provides many resources to support students, staff and faculty and addresses barriers to their success, but many do not know about them, or feel comfortable accessing them. The committee also identified some gaps in what was available, and problems with advising and coordinating support over time. We need to use programs such as our undergraduate minor, our continuing education program, our work on global social work, and the Curtis Center-Program Evaluation group to support our relationships with a range of communities and constituencies.

### **III. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, MEASURES OF SUCCESS AND ACTION PLANS**

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All of the School of Social Work's strategic objectives and related actions will be pursued in accordance with the law and University policy. This plan focuses on the MSW and PhD students, staff, and faculty (both governing and LEO), field instructors, educational, research, and service activities, and relationships and engagement with diverse communities and issues outside the SSW. Measures of progress and challenges will be tracked over time.

During spring/summer, 2016, we will work to strengthen the new Justice and Diversity course, and infuse DE&I into orientation activities, develop the structure for the proposed new DE&I related office, outline new approaches to recruitment priorities, and establish some basic metrics for measuring our progress towards the goals outlined here.

In year one (2016-17), we will make operational a new office, and an advisory/steering committee for that office, new approaches to course evaluation, new recruitment and retention strategies, new community wide events and activities, and new metrics for measuring our progress.

In year two (2017-2018), we will complete launch or pilot of all remaining aspects of plan. The remaining three years we will engage in evaluation, refinement, and institutionalization of these new efforts.

# STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT

## FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, MEASURES, & FY17 ACTIONS

### I. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION STRATEGIC PLAN: OVERVIEW

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Beginning in September 2015, the University of Michigan School of Social Work (SSW) engaged in a seven month-long planning activity to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) within the School in the context of its vision, mission, and goals. This report outlines the results of this planning process and presents a 5-year plan. The report begins with an overview of the SSW's vision, mission, and goals and the social work profession's goals and ethics. This is followed by an overview of our plan for working towards greater diversity, equity, and inclusion. The report concludes with a detailed list of strategic objectives, measures, and timeline.

Social work professional values and the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) serve as guides to the profession and the School of Social Work on working for justice and change by reducing the inequities of poverty, exclusion, exploitation, violence, oppression, powerlessness, and the dominance of particular cultural norms and values. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) outlines competencies and practice behaviors for masters-level curricula that are directly related to working for justice and engaging with diverse populations. In this strategic plan, we identify areas we want to consolidate and maintain, and key priorities for intensive work to move to new phases. In undertaking this plan, we define justice broadly, including social, economic, cultural, environmental, restorative, and other foci.

**The School of Social Work (SSW) vision is:**

*A Better Society Through Individual and Social Change*

**The SSW mission statement is:**

*Advancing the social work profession's vision and values, the University of Michigan School of Social Work seeks to develop a more equitable, caring, and socially just society. Such a society meets basic human needs, eliminates social and economic inequities, and empowers individuals, their communities, and institutions to reach their aspirations and potential. Drawing on an interdisciplinary faculty within a public university seated in a region of enormous need and promise, the School is dedicated to education, research, and service that fosters progressive change at local, national, and global levels.*

**SSW's goals are:**

- ❖ The School will provide an excellent education to students and practitioners in the knowledge and skills needed for contemporary and evolving social work practice.
- ❖ The School will create and disseminate knowledge about individual, community, and organizational concerns; social issues; social policy; and practice interventions, within a tradition of multi-disciplinary and multi-professional research.
- ❖ The School will engage in service to the community, the profession, and society through collaboration and leadership.

The above vision, mission, and goals are consistent with the social work profession's purpose, as defined by CSWE, as well as the NASW Code of Ethics.

**The Purpose of Social Work Practice and Education according to CSWE:**

*The purpose of the social work profession is to promote human and community well-being. Guided by a person-in-environment framework, a global perspective, respect for human diversity, and knowledge based on scientific inquiry, the purpose of social work is actualized through its quest for social and economic justice, the prevention of conditions that limit human rights, the elimination of poverty, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all persons, locally and globally.*

**The NASW Code of Ethics states that:**

*The primary mission of social work is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty... Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living... Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients... Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice.*

In response to these vision, mission, goals, and ethics statements, the SSW works with communities, both internally and externally to further justice and remove barriers limiting human potential and healthy development. CSWE, the social work accrediting agency, defines field-based education as the “signature pedagogy” for social work, and the SSW partners with 400+ organizations external to the SSW, and 600+ field-based instructors who supervise field education for MSW students. Also, the Society for Social Work Research (SSWR) has defined multiple “grand challenges” for social work, all of which require active engagement in working for societal change. Thus, any plan focused on DE&I must not only focus within the SSW, but also must embrace community-based agendas and multiple external constituencies and issues.

**We understand Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as a process to:**

- Evolve over time, and is developed and sustained by the efforts of administrators, staff, faculty, students, and many collaborators and constituencies external to the SSW.
- Require a shared working definition and understanding of DE&I as the basis for collaboration and community support (students, faculty, staff, field instructors, and community members within and outside the SSW) to work together towards social justice and change.
- Employ a bottom-up, community-engaged, approach to developing DE&I in our School and with the various communities external to the SSW.
- Emphasize the creation of a just, challenging, and supportive environment for education for people with multiple positionalities in society. Race and ethnicity are important positionalities, but we also include age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, physical appearance, height, weight, veteran status, political ideology, national origin, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation and/or identity, socioeconomic status, tribal sovereign status, and others important in particular contexts and environments.
- Incorporate the examination of causes and consequences of inequities and mechanisms that sustain inequity, including exclusion, and deep knowledge of oneself as a practitioner, including one's own worldviews, implicit and explicit biases, knowledge, skills, and interaction styles.

Our plan is based on the need for the physical, psychological, social, moral, fiscal, and academic health of *all* involved, regardless of what our activities might be (e.g., teaching, learning, research, work to change society).

**Our beginning assumptions include the following:**

1. DE&I is an educational imperative. Multiple kinds of diversity increase learning and are required to conduct effective social work practice with social justice goals. The UM produced substantial research about the educational benefits of diversity on a great many dimensions. This diversity must exist among students, faculty, administrators, staff, and collaborators.
2. DE&I is required for social work practice and for citizenship in an increasingly diverse and unjust world.
3. DE&I is also an ethical issue, since historically the sociopolitical structure of the SSW and University may have had the effect of excluding or making it difficult for certain groups to have access to knowledge and learning.
4. DE&I is a fiscal issue. Empirical evidence suggests that DE&I may attract more talent into the University and thus help increase the talent base of the University, attract different types of research and research funding, and improve the quality of teaching with diverse didactic techniques.

**Principles underlying our plan include the following:**

5. DE&I issues affect, and need to improve across all constituencies: administrators, staff, faculty, and students.
6. DE&I will only improve when structural barriers, unearned privilege, racism, homophobia, xenophobia, and other forms of fear and oppression are addressed in their multiple manifestations.
7. DE&I needs to be studied and addressed from “insider” and “outsider” perspectives.
8. DE&I needs to integrate diverse ways of thinking in order to incorporate different definitions of talent, progress, and excellence. Development: Who defines “talent” and are different definitions allowed and valued once DE&I is achieved.
9. DE&I efforts need to include all constituencies of the University (administrators, staff, faculty, and students) in order to develop a workplace and educational climate that feels and is demonstrably equitable and inclusive of *all*. It also requires strong relationships and commitments to communities outside the UM; field instructors, community members, and those affected by injustice.

## **II. PLANNING PROCESS**

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**DE&I Steering Committee:** The School of Social Work’s DE&I committee was formed in early Fall 2015 and includes 19 individuals that represent Masters of Social Work (MSW) and PhD students; staff; LEO faculty, clinical, tenure track and tenured faculty; alum; racially/culturally underrepresented students, staff, and faculty, non-traditional students, disability advocates; males/men and females/women; people of varying ages, sexual identities, and gender expressions.

**Committee members are listed below:**

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Jorge Delva (co-chair)      | Katie E. Richards-Schuster |
| Beth Glover Reed (co-chair) | LaMar Thompson-Hightower   |
| Addie Weaver                | Madinah Luqmaan            |
| Anthony M. Provenzano       | Melissa Perez              |
| Babe Kawaii-Bogue           | Nyshourn D. Price          |
| Beth A. Sherman             | Rachel Dietrich            |
| Carolyn L. Grawi            | Raúl Vargas                |
| Diane Back                  | Rogério Meireles Pinto     |
| Kathleen Lopez              | Shari Robinson-Lynk        |
|                             | Tynishia Walker            |

### **Planning Process Summary**

Since its inception, the Committee began meeting on a biweekly basis. Sub-committees were created, and the process of conducting a data inventory and analysis began.

## **Data Sources & Analysis**

### **1. Secondary & Administrative Data**

Subcommittee members proceeded to contact offices in the School to identify data that could inform our plan's development. *Appendix A* comprehensively lists the data sources that were identified as well as gaps in desired data, and important questions for future monitoring. It is organized according to the 4 planning domains recommended by the Office of the Vice Provost for Equity, Inclusion, and Academic Affairs:

- Education and Scholarship
- Recruitment, Retention, and Development
- Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community
- Service

Of all data sources, the Committee emphasized work with the following data:

- Results of the 2013 climate surveys conducted with the MSW & PhD students, staff, LEO, and governing faculty
- Results of the 2014 study of microaggressions experienced by African Americans in the School of Social Work
- Admissions data for MSW and PhD students
- Faculty course evaluations for Winter and Fall 2015

### **2. Student, Staff, and Faculty-led School Events**

Committee members participated in many student and faculty-led events on social justice. For example, the People of Color Collective, a student organization, organized several meetings to discuss racism in our society. Faculty, staff and students collaborated with the Michigan Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers on a statewide forum to discuss solutions to the problem of police brutality against minorities and other vulnerable populations such as transgender individuals. These events served as fora for the gathering of information concerning gaps in our educational and research activities that need to be addressed to further strengthen our School's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

### **3. Multicultural and Gender Affairs (MGA) Committee**

This standing committee of the SSW has an on-going mission that overlaps with the charge for the DE&I Committee, and we included four members of the MGA Committee on the DE&I Committee. The MGA Committee concentrated on analysis and plan development in two key arenas in the DE&I charge: Creating and Sustaining an Inclusive Climate, and Education and Scholarship. Specifically, the MGA Committee focused on climate (how members of an organization experience the culture of an organization) and culture (shared assumptions, values, beliefs, and practices that govern how people behave in organizations), and especially focused on the teaching and learning environment, including curriculum.

#### **4. Retreat Focused on Development and Infrastructure for Research**

A faculty and staff retreat was sponsored by the SSW Research Office and the Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group to focus on developing research agendas for the SSW and identifying infrastructure and supports needed to achieve these agendas.

**Note:** The next four data sources were interactive events with multiple constituencies. Information was gathered, transcribed, clustered, and made electronically available to participants. Stakeholders continued to add to and comment on evolving categories and examples, and help to identify priorities.

#### **5. DE&I Intensive Faculty Meeting**

During the Fall 2015 term, an entire 2-hour faculty meeting was dedicated to discussing and generating ideas regarding DE&I areas in which the School is doing well. We worked to ensure that we identify strengths as well as areas for improvement with an intentional focus on being aspirational about the future. The information generated from this event was transcribed and made available electronically to the DE&I Committee and all faculty for review and comment.

#### **6. DE&I Intensive Staff meeting**

In February 2016, a 1.5-hour meeting was held with the School's staff with a similar approach and goals as the aforementioned faculty meeting. The information generated from this event was transcribed and made available electronically to the DE&I Committee and all staff for review and comment.

#### **7. Student Online Surveys**

In order to acquire participation from a large number of the student body, the Committee created *The Call for Ideas* tabling event in January 2016. The event encouraged students to submit ideas not just as individuals, but also as groups. Through this experience, students from the School of Social Work community submitted comments and suggestions to the Committee via an online form. This information, combined, with the previously mentioned Fall events, informed the agenda for an all-school townhall meeting on February 24<sup>th</sup> and would later influence the structure for the March 16<sup>th</sup> townhall meeting

#### **8. School-wide Townhall Meetings**

On February 24<sup>th</sup>, over 80 students, staff, and faculty participated in a school-wide event that invited all constituencies from the School to come together and generate specific ideas to accomplish the goals of DE&I. Using a "World Café" format, a highly experiential, dynamic, activity, participants divided into small groups comprised of members from all constituencies.

Participants generated suggested approaches for accomplishing the 4 planning domains, each of which was complimented by 1-2 topics for discussion.

**The 7 Topical World Café Stations (1-7) chosen to gather information regarding the 4 Planning Domains (a-d):**

- a) *To explore how to implement key goals in the Retention, Recruitment and Development DE&I goal area.*
  - 1. Strengthen its commitment to recruitment of diverse populations across all constituencies – students, staff, LEO, and governing faculty.
  - 2. Support those already connected with the SSW to enhance their success and well-being.
  
- b) *To explore emerging goals for the Inclusive Climate goal area (with some attention to Education).*
  - 3. Welcome conflict and discomfort as opportunities for learning, growth, and change
  - 4. Strengthen the School’s culture for inclusive participation
  
- c) *To implement and strengthen key values of the social work profession.*
  - 5. Engage with current events, social issues, and important policy questions including the School taking positions against social injustices (within the constraints placed on use of university resources).
  - 6. Build stronger linkages with communities internally and external to the SSW.
  
- d) *To develop an infrastructure that will catalyze and provide accountability for implementing DE&I goals.*
  - 7. Identify the responsibilities and qualifications for a new office that would provide resources, coordination, and accountability for DE&I goals.

The information generated from this event was transcribed and made available electronically to the entire School community for review. The following week the Committee created another online form to receive more feedback not just for those who were unable to make the school-wide meeting, but also for individuals who missed the Call for Ideas event, as well as those who attended but had additional thoughts. Responses from this form were used to further complement the information generated by the prior events. The Committee used the information generated from the February 24<sup>th</sup> event to identify subthemes or clusters of activities/items for each of the planning domains and overarching themes/goals.

Finally, on March 16<sup>th</sup>, we held a second school-wide event. We followed the same format as the prior all-school event, World Café, except in the initial round, participants were divided by constituency (3 groups of students, 2 groups of staff, and 2 groups of faculty). Participants were asked to stratify and prioritize the goals and subgoals from their perspectives. For over an hour, these groups worked on prioritizing the objectives identified for each of the goals. In a second

stage, participants representing multiple constituency groups were asked to develop implementation steps, with early, middle, and later stages.

**Note:** Goals that focused explicitly on curriculum, other aspects of climate and culture, and scholarship were being covered elsewhere so were not included explicitly in these School-wide meetings (although elements related to these did arise).

### III. DATA & ANALYSIS: KEY FINDINGS

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#### **Summary of Data: Key Findings, Themes, & Recommendations**

##### **Identification of Goals for SSW DE&I Plan**

This summary is organized according to the 4 planning domains specified in the DE&I planning guidelines, noting relevant constituencies. During the planning phases, however, the DE&I Committee identified a number of cross-cutting themes that recurred across all four domains. Thus, we first define and discuss each overarching themes/goals, followed by findings and conclusions in the four specified domains.

##### **A. Overarching Themes and Goals:**

- 1. Accountability in commitment to DE&I goals and behaviors to enact these goals.** School constituencies understood accountability in many different ways, and perceived gaps in incentives and mechanisms for ensuring accountability in a number of areas. The SSW needs mechanisms to ensure accountability – incentives, resources, support, consequences, monitoring mechanisms, follow through, and procedures that can be used when accountability does not occur (e.g., action teams, restorative justice procedures).
- 2. A shift in culture and climate.** There was general agreement that the School's current climate does not consistently support inclusive participation and learning for justice. Older and emerging language and approaches co-exist, which many members of the SSW community find confusing. Students, faculty, and staff are limited in conversation about power and its consequences, as they attempt avoid discomfort and conflict. Too much effort is spent censoring oneself and monitoring others for transgressive language and behaviors. We need more focus on collective learning and collaborations for inclusive teaching, learning, and change, within and outside of classroom environments.
- 3. Everyone (especially the faculty) has strong interpersonal, group, and classroom process and facilitation skills.** Assessments identified the power of transformative conversations, inclusive participation, learning from current event issues outside the School, and building on discomforts, conflicts, and differences. Stakeholders also

identified examples of poor facilitation, avoidance of learning opportunities, and interactions experienced as harmful.

4. **Professional development for everyone.** Although many elements of professional development are available, they are unevenly implemented, and feature gaps.
5. **Much stronger and more linkages and engagement outside the SSW.**
  - With multiple communities outside the SSW (for education, scholarship).
  - With current events, policy questions, and advocacy outside the SSW.
6. **The need for coordination, resource development, facilitation, and monitoring.** Locus of responsibility needs to remain with the implementing units, however options and impacts will be greater with assistance and coordination.

## **B. Planning Domain 1: Education and Scholarship**

The SSW has made many curricular changes to focus on topics relevant for equity, inclusion and diversity. This includes a required first term course in the MSW program focused on Justice and Diversity (SW 504), implemented in fall, 2015, and earlier changes to 25 pre-existing courses. These changes are designed to “intensively focus” on content and skills for engaging with privilege, oppression, diversity, and social justice.

Our review of various sources of data suggests that our conceptualization of this content and skill development in the curricula is adequate for now, but more work on implementation is required. In particular, there is considerable variation in the content and pedagogy of these courses. We need to: a) to improve implementation of curriculum requirements, and b) continue to learn from these efforts. There is considerable support for extending this curriculum mandate to all courses, yet we believe we need to begin with subsets of faculty and courses to move towards a comprehensive course and teaching transformation process.

A majority of course evaluations in the SSW reflect that faculty are fully dedicated to creating a better learning experience for the students, and the regularly administered end-of-term student course surveys contain multiple items regarding content related to particular types of populations and injustice. The overall assessment of teaching, however, over-relies on this instrument, and our current understanding of DE&I suggests that this instrument also should be revised to present a more holistic picture of the teaching/learning environment. There is a great need for more varied ways of evaluating teaching and learning that rely less on end-of-term student ratings.

Existing teaching evaluations suggest very uneven results with regard to DE&I related foci and learning. For some faculty and courses, examples exist of sexism, racism, homophobia, and classism, among others “isms”. As noted, too many students have expressed concerns about the failure by some faculty to acknowledge and properly address the racism and structural

forces that impact minority communities (e.g., Flint water situation), and also the inability of some instructors to create a positive and strengths-based classroom learning experience.

In the scholarship area, most social work scholarship focuses on issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, but we identified several areas in which we can further this emphasis across scholarly activities in the SSW. One identified area involves developing theory and methodologies for articulating what justice is, and how to identify key components. We also need to understand and develop ways to study different types of power, and how oppression and privilege operate across different intersecting positionalities. Most methods study categories associated with power as single variables, and may look at interactions across some of these, but we have inadequate theory and methods for understanding complex co-constructions across positionalities and the impacts of contexts, or how consequences differ for a variety of combinations. Other key areas are a) strengthening skills for and acceptance of participatory action scholarly methods, and especially those embedded in interactions with and within various communities; and b) public scholarship, intended to inform action and public opinion. We need to inventory more closely the many foci related to DE&I that are already being studied by faculty and doctoral students.

### **C. Planning Domain 2: Recruitment, Retention, and Development**

*(School Composition and Ensuring the Success of Those Already Involved with SSW)*

The Committee divided this domain into two goal areas – one focused on ensuring diversity of composition, and the other on how well we were providing support and development for those already connected with the SSW. Although there were many strengths identified, every assessment also identified difficulties within the SSW with inclusive participation, experiences of microaggressions and/or isolation, and a range of challenges faced in the educational environment. Some of these were shared across constituencies, but others more specific for particular groups. Student groups and programs and support services mediate these concerns for many students, but are not adequate or systematically available to all. As a result, the Committee suggests that we emphasize improving climate, culture, and support for members of varying constituencies while we are developing priorities for recruitment.

Data about composition, recruitment, and selection strategies for different constituencies are included in the full plan. Some areas will need to be addressed in year one (e.g., faculty recruitment). Other priorities should be identified early, but implementation should wait until we have developed more mechanisms to support those students already at the SSW.

#### **MSW Students**

The percent of racial and ethnic minority students enrolled in our MSW program over the last two years has been 31%. The percent of female students for these years has been somewhat steady at around 86%.

The school is engaged in a number of recruitment efforts in the State of Michigan reaching out to communities with large numbers of underrepresented minorities such as Ypsilanti, Detroit, and Grand Rapids. The School also participates in many recruitment events in several cities such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, New York, and Washington D.C. Despite a large percent of our students receiving scholarships, the high cost of attending the University of Michigan, means that students graduate with large sums of debt.

### **PhD Students**

The percent of racial and ethnic minority students (does not include international students) enrolled in our PhD program this past year was 35%. The percent of female students was 67%. Just as the MSW program, doctoral students are recruited from a variety of locations that are racially and ethnically diverse. Doctoral students are offered a funding package that guarantees tuition, monthly stipends, and grad care for up to 5 ½ years.

### **Faculty**

Among the tenure/tenure track faculty, approximately 35% are racial and ethnic minorities and approximately 63% are females. Among the LEO lecturer faculty, 22% were racial and ethnic minorities last year. Diversity of educational and professional backgrounds, experiences and approaches to scholarship are important criteria in recruiting and assessing prospective faculty, although concerns have been expressed about how well these have worked in recent searches.

### **Staff**

Among staff, approximately 27% are racially and ethnically diverse. Search and hiring practices for staff are heavily influenced by University wide policies, and types of diversity differs substantially among staff who serve different functions within the School.

### **Issues in supporting those already connected with the SSW to enhance their success and well-being:**

Although this report outlines a number of goals related to recruitment for an even more diverse composition in all areas of the School, the DE&I Committee believes that ***we need to focus first on increasing a positive climate and culture for equity and inclusion to support those already engaged with the SSW, while we are planning ways to develop new recruitment efforts.*** Goals in this area are outlined in other areas of this plan and include:

- Assisting students to identify others with similar backgrounds and interests more quickly.
- Help to surface less visible categories/dimensions of diversity.
- Introduce DE&I issues, very early (pre-orientation and at orientation) including skills and principles for engaging with these in ways that facilitate learning and support, with follow-up over students' progression through the curriculum.
- Create opportunities for all-school events and discussions to build community and facilitate and support classroom and field based learning.

A high priority in this areas is increasing faculty's skills related to **facilitating transformative conversations** as a key contribution to increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion at our School. Transformative Conversations are defined as the discussion of topics that may elicit strong emotions including but not limited to anger, fear, surprise, and shame based on beliefs, identities, values, and experiences. These conversations are often related to privilege, oppression, diversity, and social justice and are in reference to historically, systematically, and traditionally marginalized peoples and communities. Excellent facilitation skills are needed to promote transformative conversations in classrooms. These conversations may be student to student, student to faculty, and faculty to student, may take place regardless of specific course content, and may challenge students' and faculty's' values and beliefs. The focus of this recommendation is that faculty will increase their facilitation skills to recognize and effectively engage in opportunities for transformative conversations that recognize and celebrate differences, increase the creative exchange of ideas, and increase opportunities for meaningful and transformative dialogue. The purpose of these conversations is to increase our ability to practice in a culturally responsive manner as codified in the NASW Code of Ethics. This recommendation is reflected in several of the objectives presented next.

**Some specific issues for different constituencies follow:**

**Students**

Data gathered from various sources identified a number of strengths and problem areas that need to be addressed while at the same time a number of areas that need to remain and be strengthened. In fact, the seven themes explored in the all-School events reflect the areas that we plan to address. For example, although having an MSW student body that consists of nearly 30% minority is an important accomplishment, a large proportion of these students have had negative experiences. Some of these include experiencing a number of micro-aggressions while others involve feeling extremely isolated because it is not uncommon for classes to have only one African American or 1 Latinx student. Many student groups provide some support for particular categories of students, and the SSW has some on-going programming that educates and works on climate issues affecting particular groups. As we described earlier, the SSW curriculum now more consistently surfaces issues related to defining justice, identifying and engaging with different types of power and differences, and working to illuminate mechanisms of privilege and oppression. Thus, we are surfacing all these issues, but clearly need to continue to develop new ways to support various constituencies within the SSW to navigate and learn from all of dynamics that are arising both within and outside of classrooms related to these topics.

**Faculty**

Faculty have expressed concern about their need for support and additional skills in addressing difficult conversations in their classroom and in bringing public events into their curriculum. In the climate survey, faculty of color indicated they experienced feelings of isolation, and difficulties confronting micro-aggressions both in the classroom and in the School and

University. They also experienced pressure to undertake additional service and teaching tasks related to their ability to help both individuals and the School and University undertake new efforts in the arena of diversity.

LEO instructors' concerns reflect their more uncertain employment status. And while being unionized has mostly been a positive experience for LEO faculty, there still remains considerable concerns about lower wages for equivalent work compared to governing faculty, feelings of insecurity about job security, and isolation.

### **Staff**

Staff in general report feeling supported, although sometimes report episodes of disrespect from students and faculty. They would also appreciate more participation in events that teach them about the School and involve them in school-wide efforts, including those around diversity. These concerns were also brought forward in our various interactive meetings. Staff wished for more involvement in all-school activities and opportunities for learning, more opportunities for career advancement within the SSW, and increased flexibility in how holidays and days off are handled, for those who do not celebrate dominant Christian holidays. A recurring request was for an annual staff retreat, in which staff could learn more about DE&I and engage in collaborative planning.

## **D. Planning Domain 3: Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community**

The provision of more support for growth and retention of all constituencies in the School requires changes in the overall School climate. As we noted in our introductory principles, Social Work's mission focuses strongly on issues related to injustice and exclusion, so this has always been a part of the mission of the SSW. We have been working to make justice, privilege, oppression, and diversity primary themes within the School and its curriculum. Although this effort is still a work in progress, the language and foci within the SSW has changed substantially, so that all these issues are consciously raised in many ways. Now we need to succeed transforming the climate and culture so that interactions and experiences become opportunities for learning and growth. In the many settings where micro-aggressions occur, students and faculty monitor each other to point out and challenge what is perceived as insensitive or uninformed perspectives and behaviors, and many censor themselves to as not to offend or trigger others. Tensions, discomfort and conflicts are often avoided or handled in ways that participants experience as not productive, and even harmful.

Conflict and discomfort are opportunities for growth and change when there is support and skills for navigating them. Thus, we need to work towards transforming how these are perceived and addressed, with a climate and culture that supports this, with knowledge and skill development, and well facilitated opportunities to practice participation in change-making interactions.

In addition to new frames and skills for difficult conversations and interactions, we need to make visible are commitments through key symbols, presentations of the School, and other means as

presented by the visible artwork in the SSW building. The SSW needs to seek out additional ways to incorporate issues of diversity in the material presentation of the SSW.

We also need to strengthen interconnections among classrooms, activities in the SSW, and communities, organizations and issues located outside the SSW. Many groups, activities and events in the SSW focus on issues related to inclusion, equity and diversity, but the SSW has no common time without classes or faculty meetings scheduled in which everyone can attend events, or work together across constituencies. The SSW needs some collective space and time, for scholarly conversations, addressing societal events, and working together on skill and goal development. Ideas were also generated for activities and themes that occur outside of classes, but can also be incorporated into classes. These could include theme semesters, or everyone reading and discussing the same book.

A major goal is to more quickly develop a supportive climate for those who are in the SSW for shorter periods of time (3-4 terms for most MSW students, several years for doctoral students). Faculty and staff are instrumental in creating and sustaining on-going organizational culture, but we also need more ways to quickly develop a climate for inclusive learning among students. Students need assistance to find others who share aspirations and struggles, and we need to do more to make more dimensions of diversity known, and to help students create support systems for themselves. In fall, 2015, the SSW instituted some new activities during MSW student orientation and earlier classes, intended to build community, and we wish this experience to be more explicitly focused on DE&I climate building. Members of all constituencies, but especially students, need to know about resources to help them to navigate situations they experience as inequitable or overwhelming.

#### **E. Planning Domain 4: Service**

Because Social Work's mission and pedagogy are so strongly embedded in community-based scholarship and education, we have placed much of what other Schools might define as service in other categories. We have included here two major arenas in which the School does provide significant amounts of service, to our students, both to provide on-going support for wellness and well-being, and for those who need assistance to cope with a variety of needs in order to accomplish their educational goals.

SSW resources to support students, staff and faculty and address barriers to their success include special emergency financial assistance, writing and career development support, and the handbook for being "out" in field placements for LGBTQIA+ students and their field instructors. Also, more townhall type of meetings where all students have a chance to come together to discuss concerns and jointly identify solutions, for example, for international students not feeling connected or to provide a more accessible learning environment for students with disabilities. s. More is needed in all these arenas.

One unit that provides considerable service to the larger community external to the SSW is the Curtis Center-Program Evaluation Group. This unit also provides considerable education for

students in conducting program evaluations, and some projects contribute to scholarship, but the unit is also filling a large gap in expertise and resources greatly needed by various community-based and governmental organizations. We need to build on these activities to strengthen our relationships with various communities and to further goals within the School, in particular goals related to community engagement.

We need to use programs such as our undergraduate minor CASC program, our continuing education program, our work on global social work, and the Curtis Center-Program Evaluation group to support our relationships with a range of communities and constituencies. Each of these programs creates relationships between the School of Social Work and important additional constituencies. Work in developing these programs needs to proceed through a DE&I approach.

## **IV. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, MEASURES OF SUCCESS & ACTION PLANS**

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All of the School of Social Work's strategic objectives and related actions will be pursued in accordance with the law and University policy. This plan focuses on the MSW and PhD students, staff, and faculty (both governing and LEO), field instructors, educational, research, and service activities, and relationships and engagement with diverse communities and issues outside the SSW. Measures of progress and challenges will be tracked over time. Most of the cross-cutting themes (Area A) apply to all constituencies, as do many of those in Planning Domain Three, Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community. Planning Domain One: Education and Scholarship mostly affects students and faculty, and Planning Domain Two, Recruitment, Retention and Development has particular elements for each constituency. Each of these strategic objectives is accompanied by success measures that will be tracked over time, as well as descriptions of single and multiple year actions we will take to accomplish those objectives. Section VI provides additional detail on assignments, timelines and accountabilities, see Section VI.

### **INTRODUCTION OF 1<sup>ST</sup> YEAR ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES**

In terms of sequencing, during spring/summer, 2016, we will work to strengthen the new Justice and Diversity course, and infuse DE&I into orientation activities. In year one (2016-17), we will establish planning and coordinating mechanisms (developing a new office, and an advisory/steering committee for that office). We will initiate some new community wide events and activities using a new block of time in which no courses are scheduled. A major goal is to develop specific plans for sequencing steps towards other goals in conjunction with other offices and functions within the SSW, including new recruitment priorities, and developing a data monitoring system. In 2017-18, we will undertake focused planning for new community-based initiatives with DE&I goals.

The outline that follows provides a blue print for activities and steps to be taken in implementing the goals that have been outlined so far. This first outline includes activities that can be launched in the 2016-2017 academic year, although the nature of this work requires the continuation of these efforts throughout the five-year period of the plan. That will be more fully developed in the second outline that follows and is organized by constituency.

- **Create a new office to coordinate DE&I activities**
  1. The new office is to be catalytic, to assist other offices and groups within and outside the School. It should provide strong facilitation, planning, and participatory action skills, and institutionalize strong measures of accountability.
  
- **Education and Scholarship**
  1. Conduct an evaluation of the new course on justice and diversity, to learn from the various ways it was implemented in its first iteration and strengthen its ability to establish a core knowledge and climate for these issues for entering MSW students. New CRLT grant, with follow up. Already underway.
  2. Develop a phased process to systematically implement curricular attention to privilege oppression, diversity and social justice, within intersectionality frameworks. This would include curricular development, course transformation, faculty development and support for expanded pedagogical approaches.
  3. Institute new trainings for faculty, increased incentives for accountability, and possibilities for collaborative faculty teams to learn together.
  4. Systematic attention to a wider range of teaching evaluations that do not rely just on student feedback at end of term, and that all include attention to facilitation by faculty and to PODS agenda.
  5. Train peer facilitators, who can work with faculty to enhance classroom climate. Can also be available to assist individuals and groups to navigate differences and conflict.
  6. All-school events, including new forms of orientation that focus on skills in intersectionality, navigating differences, and embracing conflict as opportunities for change and growth.
  7. Pursuit of scholarly projects that create knowledge and methods for learning about issues related to DE&I.
  8. Engage SSW special purpose offices to pursue some topics and methodologies especially related to DE&I. Develop and support new collaborative growth.
  
- **Recruitment and Retention**
  1. Strengthen its commitment to recruitment of diverse populations across all constituencies – students, staff, LEO, and governing faculty.
  2. Support those already connected with the SSW to enhance their success and well-being. These two goals are mutually necessary as we need a transformed climate in order to support an even more diverse community.

- **Develop stronger support mechanisms for all constituencies currently affiliated with the SSW**
  1. Mechanisms for identifying intersectionality dimensions among students and assisting them to find others with similar backgrounds and interests.
  2. More support for student groups. This includes systematically helping them figure out how to engage in activism, form student groups, conduct events, etc. Sponsoring independent studies, ensuring they do not need to spend their own money before they are reimbursed, etc. Provide training and leadership skill development.

In the more detailed outline that follows, we move more deeply into our objectives, according to specific constituencies, and include metrics for success as well as objectives.

### DETAILED OUTLINE OF FIVE YEAR PLAN

#### Students

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 1:** Increase the diversity of students from underrepresented groups, including racial and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and diverse sexual identities, and gender expressions (LGBTQIA+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and others not included in the acronym).

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 1)*

1. Increased numbers of students from underrepresented groups.
2. Demonstrated effort to increase diversity in every aspect of student recruitment.

*FY17 Actions:*

1. Increase number of diverse locations for recruitment.
2. Create preferred admissions status with Flint & Dearborn undergrad social work programs.
3. Office of Student Services staff to increase its presence in Detroit.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Increase Diversity

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 2:** Assure consistent support for a successful learning experiences.

*Measures of Success (for Objective 2):*

1. Decrease the number of students with large debts.
2. Increased positive learning experience through course evaluations and new evaluation formats the SSW will begin implementing.

*FY17 Actions:*

1. Increase the overall amount of financial assistance.
2. Increase the number of students who receive financial assistance.
3. Increase the number of programs available to support all students academically and psychologically.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Diversity

*Other applicable domain:* Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community

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**Staff**

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 3:** Increase the diversity of staff from underrepresented groups, including racial and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and diverse sexual identities, and gender expressions (LGBTQIA+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and others not included in the acronym).

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 3)*

1. Increased numbers of staff from underrepresented groups.
2. Demonstrated effort to increase diversity in every aspect of staff recruitment.

*FY17 Actions:*

1. Increased transparency in hiring & recruitment by, for example, posting all new staff positions on a page on the School of Social Work website.
2. Human Resource Administrators will provide quarterly reports to the School's leadership on:
  - a) Number and location of positions posted
  - b) Number of internal and external applicants
  - c) Number of internal and external interviews
  - d) Number of hires or promotions
  - e) Number of internal applicants that did not receive the position but instead received career counseling

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Increase Diversity

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 4:** Assure consistent support for supportive career development and professionally rewarding work experiences.

*Measures of Success (for Objective 4):*

1. Annual reports by supervisors.
2. Increased satisfaction as measured by School climate survey (or other instruments).

*FY17 Actions:*

1. Identify additional ways of communication to inform all staff of career development opportunities.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Diversity

*Other applicable domain:* Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 5:** Increase DE&I focus of offices dealing with outside communities, including:

- Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group
- Office of Global Activities
- Continuing Education Program
- Community Action and Social Change (social work minor)

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**Governing Faculty**

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 6:** Increase the diversity of faculty from underrepresented groups, including racial and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and diverse sexual identities, and gender expressions (LGBTQIA+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and others not included in the acronym).

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 6)*

1. Increased numbers of faculty from underrepresented groups.
2. Demonstrated effort to increase diversity in every aspect of faculty recruitment.

*FY17 Actions:*

1. The Executive Committee will identify specific efforts to increase diversity that will be included in every faculty search or new appointment. These specific efforts will be distributed in writing to every faculty member, but specifically to members of the Search Committee.
2. Require all new faculty searches to include documentation of efforts to reach diverse candidates as part of the search process.
3. Designate a member of the search committee as a diversity champion on each faculty search committee who is empowered to and responsible for encouraging outreach and awareness of diversity, equity and inclusion issues in the search process.
4. Identify professional associations, networks, and individuals who may include or reach underrepresented scholars and assure that they receive any new faculty posting.
5. All members of the search committee should participate in ADVANCE training for faculty search committee members.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Increase Diversity

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 7:** Assure consistent support for career development of all junior faculty.

*Measures of Success (for Objective 7):*

1. Successful promotion of junior faculty to associate level.
2. Increased satisfaction levels as reported in climate survey or other instrument.

*FY18 Actions:*

1. Strengthen mentoring program(s) presently in existence for all junior faculty.
  2. Continue to develop faculty understanding of tenure and promotion system.
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### **LEO Faculty**

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 8:** Increase the diversity of LEO faculty from underrepresented groups, including racial and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and diverse sexual identities, and gender expressions (LGBTQIA+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and others not included in the acronym).

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 8)*

1. Increased numbers of LEO faculty from underrepresented groups
2. Demonstrated effort to increase diversity in every aspect of LEO faculty recruitment

*FY17 Actions:*

1. The Associate Dean for Educational Program will identify professional networks to alert more diverse groups to job opportunities and diversify applicant pools.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Increase Diversity

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### **LEO and Governing Faculty**

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 9:** Improve upon hiring and promotion practices to attract, retain, reward, and inspire faculty to continually hone their ability to facilitate learning via transformational conversations.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 9):*

1. Annual report to Office of Diversity and Equity and the Schools Executive Committee.

*FY18 Actions:*

1. During hiring searches, prioritize facilitation of transformative conversations skills.
2. Develop, deliver, and measure outcomes of professional development on effectively facilitating transformative conversations.
3. Include “facilitating transformative conversations” question in all course evaluations.

4. Add facilitating transformative conversations to faculty handbook teaching criteria for annual, 3rd year, promotions and tenure reviews for LEO, Clinical, and Tenure Track and Tenured Faculty.
5. Provide schedule of Professional/Faculty Development topics at beginning of year (with opportunity for suggestions to be added on rolling basis).
6. Provide ongoing training for faculty above and beyond onboarding orientation to effectively model engaging and transformative conversations.
7. Provide incentives for undertaking training that matter to Faculty.

*Primary DE&I Goal: Diversity*

### **Increase Climate for Inclusivity**

- More all-School activities, to build climate.
- More visible commitments, in terms of honoring alums and social justice icons.
- Build stronger linkages with communities inside and outside the SSW.
- Engage with current events, social issues, and important policy options.
- Systematically transform the visible climate of the school, with new imagery about social justice champions and actions.
- Welcome conflict and discomfort as opportunities for learning, growth, and change.
- Strengthen the School's culture on inclusive participation.
- Enhance the support the School provides for those already connected with School to further their success and well-being.

### **Students**

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 16:** Students will gain greater skill and ability to participate, lead and respond in transformational conversations.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 16)*

1. Increased number of students who in course evaluations and other evaluative venues (i.e., focus groups) indicate they and their instructors were engaged in transformational conversations and that students, gained skills and insights.

*FY17 Actions:*

1. Increase the number of formalized procedures for students to address concerns with an emphasis on the identification of solutions.
2. Increase student opportunities to share their voices/concerns with faculty at faculty meetings.
3. Continue to ensure that SEED (part of our student orientation) activities help students and faculty strengthen their skills at holding transformational conversations.

*Primary DE&I Goal: Inclusion*

*Other applicable domain: Diversity*

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 17:** Provide more “holistic support”.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 17)*

1. Exit and climate surveys will show that more students indicate they have received a variety of support.

*FY18 Actions:*

2. More emergency funding is made available.
3. Support for caregivers such as child care is provided.
4. Create a resource similar to the roommate finder where students can collaborate with other students interested in ride-sharing, childcare-sharing, etc.
5. More innovative ways of teaching will be developed via digital learning or with resources.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Inclusion

*Other applicable domain:* Diversity

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**Staff**

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 18:** Staff will have expanded opportunities to participate and engage in career development activities in general and particularly in discussions about Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice (PODS) to understand the application and implications of PODS within the school and the curriculum.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 18)*

1. Increased number of staff who in climate surveys indicate they have a greater understanding of PODS in the curriculum and the school’s operation.
2. Increased number of staff who in climate surveys indicate they feel they are more integrated in school activities.

*FY18 Actions:*

1. There will be regular, accessible, structured opportunities to engage outside of the classroom around current events that staff have uniform access to.
2. There will be clarity in the types of events that staff are invited to and if they have permission to attend if the events, or discussion groups, happen during the work day.
3. Have an annual all-staff retreat.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Inclusion

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## Faculty

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 19:** Faculty will acquire greater skill and ability to participate, lead and respond in transformational conversations.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 19)*

1. Increased number of students who in course evaluations and other evaluative venues (i.e., focus groups) indicate they and their instructors were engaged in transformational conversations and that they gained skills on the subject.

*FY17 Actions:*

1. Maintain or increase the number of faculty development activities devoted to acquiring transformational conversations skills.
2. Provide rewards that are part of annual review process that are tangible and of value to Faculty, i.e.: “Excellence in Facilitating Transformative Conversations Award”.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Inclusion

*Other applicable domain:* Diversity

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 20:** Advisors or mentor will conduct regular check-ins with students and clarify the role of the faculty advisor and provide them with more specific training so that the faculty as a whole can be more consistent.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 20)*

1. Increased number of students who in exit and climate surveys indicate they have met with their advisors at least once in each semester.
2. Increased number of students who in exit and climate surveys indicate they indicate they found their advisors to care about them and to be helpful.

*FY17 Actions:*

1. Increased number of faculty who meet with their advisees at least 1x.semester.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Inclusion

*Other applicable domain:* Diversity

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 21:** Create accountability Mechanisms that support inclusive participation.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 21)*

1. Increased availability of data to be used in monitoring.
2. Sophisticated assessment of school climate.
3. Ongoing assessment of curriculum followed by evidence-based innovation.

*FY17 Actions:*

1. Create a “Bias Response Team” or other mechanism in SSW to address expressions of bias.
2. Increase awareness of what the SSW Student Union Ombudsperson does, what that role entails.
3. Implement a Restorative Practice approach and train individual point people.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Inclusion

*Other applicable domain:* Diversity

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**Students**

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 22:** Greater skill and ability to participate, lead and respond in transformational conversations.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 22)*

1. Student surveys to determine their readiness to have transformative conversations and if faculty modeled how to do this.

*FY17 Actions:*

1. Continue to require all incoming MSW students to take the diversity and social justice course (SW 504) with no exceptions to be able to opt out.
2. Examine the 504 Focus Group Report to create refinements to the course.
3. Add Question about Transformative Conversations and/or related issues on course evaluations.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Inclusion

*Other applicable domain:* Diversity

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 23:** Students will learn more about current events, process these events in a meaningful way, and then learn how to apply relevant social work skills to actions related to the event.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 23)*

1. More students will indicate they participated in events and were engaged in advocacy activities.

*FY17 Actions:*

1. More faculty will create opportunities for students to learn to write policy briefs and for Students to engage in advocacy-related work.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Inclusion

*Other applicable domain:* Diversity

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## Faculty

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 24:** Faculty will engage in more purposeful and organized engagement related to populations that are currently, and have historically, been shut off from opportunities. SSW will make public an informed social work discourse related to current events and social justice matters seemed important and part of our responsibility as a school of social work.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 24)*

1. More faculty will participate and lead public events related to issues of social justice affecting society.

*FY18 Actions:*

1. Faculty will more actively create dedicated, regular, accessible (via Skype, streaming etc.) space to gather and discuss current events particularly in a social justice context. Having this space may reduce tension when “something happens” because there is a well-known and regular format where we come together as a community to discuss and work together on important, relevant social work matters.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Inclusion

*Other applicable domain:* Diversity

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 25:** Increase cultural humility regarding community knowledge and involvement and increase faculty involvement in community activities/partnerships and with social work-related organizations.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 25)*

1. Increase in the number and quality of partnerships with community organizations.
2. Increase in learning activities concerning community involvement/communication.

*FY18 Actions:*

- I. There needs to be a thorough inventory of all the community-based partnerships with SSW involvement to identify partnerships that could be strengthened and to avoid duplication or repetition.
2. More community members will be invited to participate in events and discussions.
3. Incentives will be developed for more faculty to be involved in community partnerships.
4. More classes held in agency contexts.
5. Increase the number of assignments, including independent studies that involve connecting with communities.
6. Increase the number of community members who are guest speakers but ensure there is compensation.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Inclusion

*Other applicable domain:* Diversity

**Five-Year Strategic Objective 26:** Identify ways by which more financial integration can occur with external community. There is a need to identify funding streams and aim towards sustainability.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 26)*

1. Seek sustainable funding to support partnerships with communities.

*FY18 Actions:*

1. Pursue funding to support field instructors, community members, for community based-participatory research.
2. Connect with high school students.
3. Invite community members to participate in conferences.
4. Increasingly become a source of information for community resources.
5. Facilitate community access to UM resources.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Inclusion

*Other applicable domain:* Diversity

## **V. GOAL-RELATED METRICS – SCHOOL, COLLEGE, OR UNIT MEASURES TRACKED OVER TIME**

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### **Diversity**

- Changes in the diversity of SSW students, staff, and faculty.
- Course evaluations reflective of increased faculty facilitation skills.

### **Equity**

- Demographics of successful student graduates.
- Equitable distribution of financial assistance.
- Demographics of employee promotions.
- Demographic composition of faculty at all ranks.

### **Inclusion**

- Number of participants in skill and training opportunities.
- Results of climate and exit surveys.
- Course evaluations.

## VI. ACTION PLANNING TABLES WITH DETAILS AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

The previous discussion outlines every objective, including measures of success and detailed actions. The charts below summarize the key objectives among them.

### A. Recruitment, Retention and Development

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/ persons accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)
<b>Student</b>	Increase student diversity	Increase in student diversity	Recruit from diverse settings Increased relationships with networks and institutions aligned with diversity	OSS Dean's Office Development Office	Increased scholarship assistance
<b>Student Faculty Staff</b>	Develop more inclusive school climate	Increase in positive response to climate survey	Coordinating office (ODEI) to work on school climate Examination and development of curriculum related to DE&I Skill development for all constituencies.	OSS ODEI Curriculum Committee Dean's Office	Support for Diversity Office
<b>Student</b>	Equip students to work in diverse arenas	Self-Reports and Field Reports of culturally	Increased emphasis in formal curriculum	Curriculum Committee	Regular support from SSW for evaluation

		appropriate interactions	Use of orientation and other special events to improve knowledge and skills		
<b>Faculty and LEO Faculty</b>	Increase faculty diversity	Increase in faculty diversity	Training for Search Committee Extensive publicity around job openings Concentration on research topics related to DE&I	Executive Committee Search Committee Dean's Office	Regular support for training and advertising
<b>Faculty and LEO Faculty</b>	Increase skill in curriculum related to DE&I and in facilitating difficult discussions	Recognition of learned skills by students Improvements in school climate	Faculty development activities Assessment in course evaluation Report of increased knowledge by students Assessments by field faculty supervising students	Curriculum Committee Executive Committee	Support for faculty development activities
<b>Staff</b>	Increase staff diversity	Increase in staff diversity	Recruit from diverse settings Increased relationships with networks and institutions aligned with diversity	Business Office Dean's Office	

**Note: The complex of activities will all be coordinated by the new DE&I Office.**

## B. Education and Scholarship

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/ persons accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)
<b>Students and Faculty</b>	Inclusive Climate for Learning	Changes in climate survey response Increased attendance and proliferation of successful difficult conversations	Further development of orientation innovations Development of supports for faculty and students engaging in transformational conversations and discussion of difficult public events	OSS Curriculum Committee Associate Dean for Educational Programs Field Office	Support for training for students and faculty
<b>Students</b>	Formal Curriculum Development	Improvement in student competency measures Improvement in course evaluation scores	Measures of student competencies improve Course evaluation scores improve New more complex course evaluation methods are introduced and show increased and successful attention to difficult topics.	Curriculum Committee Executive Committee Dean's Office Field Office	

<p><b>Students</b></p>	<p>Inclusion in community-based research</p>	<p>Increase in number of student-based labs. Increase in student reports of competence in research. Increase in research in community based evaluation</p>	<p>Student research involvement increases. Measures of student research competencies improve. Student community activities increasingly include participation in joint School-community research projects</p>	<p>Associate Dean for Research Curriculum Committee Field Office</p>	<p>Seed money for research projects</p>
<p><b>Faculty</b></p>	<p>Research that engages students as research team members</p>	<p>Increase in number of student-based labs. Increase in student reports of competence in research. Increase in research in community based evaluation</p>	<p>Incentives and support for student-based labs. Develop system for recruiting students into research roles. Work with evaluation unit to extend training function.</p>	<p>Associate Dean for Research Executive Committee Dean's Office</p>	
<p><b>Faculty</b></p>	<p>Research oriented to DE&amp;I issues</p>	<p>Increase in volume and focus of research. Increase in community-participatory research</p>	<p>Incentives and support for increased research volume in this area. Opportunities for exposure of the research. Opportunities for training in undertaking public scholarship.</p>	<p>Associate Dean for Research Executive Committee Dean's Office</p>	<p>Seed money for research projects</p>

**Note: The complex of activities will all be coordinated by the new DE&I Office.**

### C. Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/ persons accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)
<b>Students</b>	Increased sense of community Increased shared vision of social work's mission	Improved climate survey skills Improved retention of students Increased diversity of student body	More elaborated orientation activities More community-based discussions More focus on identify as social worker	OSS Curriculum Committee Dean's Office	Support for ongoing outside-of-class activities
<b>Faculty and Students</b>	Ability to engage in transformational conversations	Similar to above	Explicit training in this area Improvement of faculty facilitation skills Incorporation into student evaluation	Curriculum Committee Executive Committee	
<b>Faculty</b>	Develop new incentives and accountability measures on inclusiveness issues	Similar to above	Identify goals and steps towards them	Executive Committee and Governing Faculty	
<b>Faculty</b>	Increased collaboration in both teaching and research	Increased number of community-based collaborations Efforts are evaluated highly	Faculty development and discussion around such research ventures. Increase in proposals developed for such work.	Research Office Curtis Center Curriculum Committee Dean's Office	

			Increase in number of successful projects.		
<b>Faculty</b>	Increased involvement through service and research with community organizations	Increase in number and quality of community-based projects	Same as above.	Research Office Curtis Center Curriculum Committee Dean's Office	Seed money for projects
<b>Staff</b>	Increased sense of community	Increased participation in school events Improved response on climate survey	Increased number of events that include faculty, staff and students together. Training for staff on key aspects of DE&I	Business Office OSS Dean's Office	Support for training

**Note: The complex of activities will all be coordinated by the new DE&I Office.**

**Note: The previous two charts include activities that should also contribute to promoting an equitable and inclusive community. This chart includes objectives in addition to those already mentioned.**

#### D. Service

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/ persons accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)
<b>Students</b>	Increased student activity with communities	Increase in research in community based evaluation Increased in student participation in service activities	Provide resources for student-faculty research teams. Provide support for Program Evaluation Group to engage in more robust student training	Curtis Center Research Office Curriculum Committee	Support for projects. Support for Program Evaluation Group
<b>Faculty</b>	Increased faculty activity with communities	Engagement in community-based activities increases	Provide resources for faculty community engagement Provide coordination between faculty and community agencies	Curtis Center Research Office Field Office	Seed money for projects
<b>Faculty</b>	Increased participation in public scholarship	Increase in evidence of public scholarship in writing, presentation, and community-based work.	Provide faculty development in public scholarship Recognize instances of faculty engagement	Research Office Curtis Center Dean's Office	Support for faculty development activities

**Note: Note: The complex of activities will all be coordinated by the new DE&I Office.**

**Note: The previous three charts include activities that should also contribute to promoting an equitable and inclusive community. This chart includes objectives in addition to those already mentioned.**

## **Implementation Steps**

### **2016-2017**

Almost all activities will be launched at least as pilots in the first year and a half. The extra term is in recognition of the substantial changes in personnel occurring at the School of Social Work over the next eight months. We will welcome a new dean. We will be engaging in extensive faculty hiring, as eight senior faculty members (out of a total of 50 faculty) retire in the next 18 months.

### **2017-2018**

We will complete the launching of the all aspects of the plan, begin the refinement of pilots, and begin to institutionalize those elements which are found to be successful according to our evaluations.

### **2018-2021**

We will continue with on-going development, refinement, assessment and institutionalizing of all elements of this plan.

## **VII. PLANS FOR SUPPORTING, TRACKING & UPDATING THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

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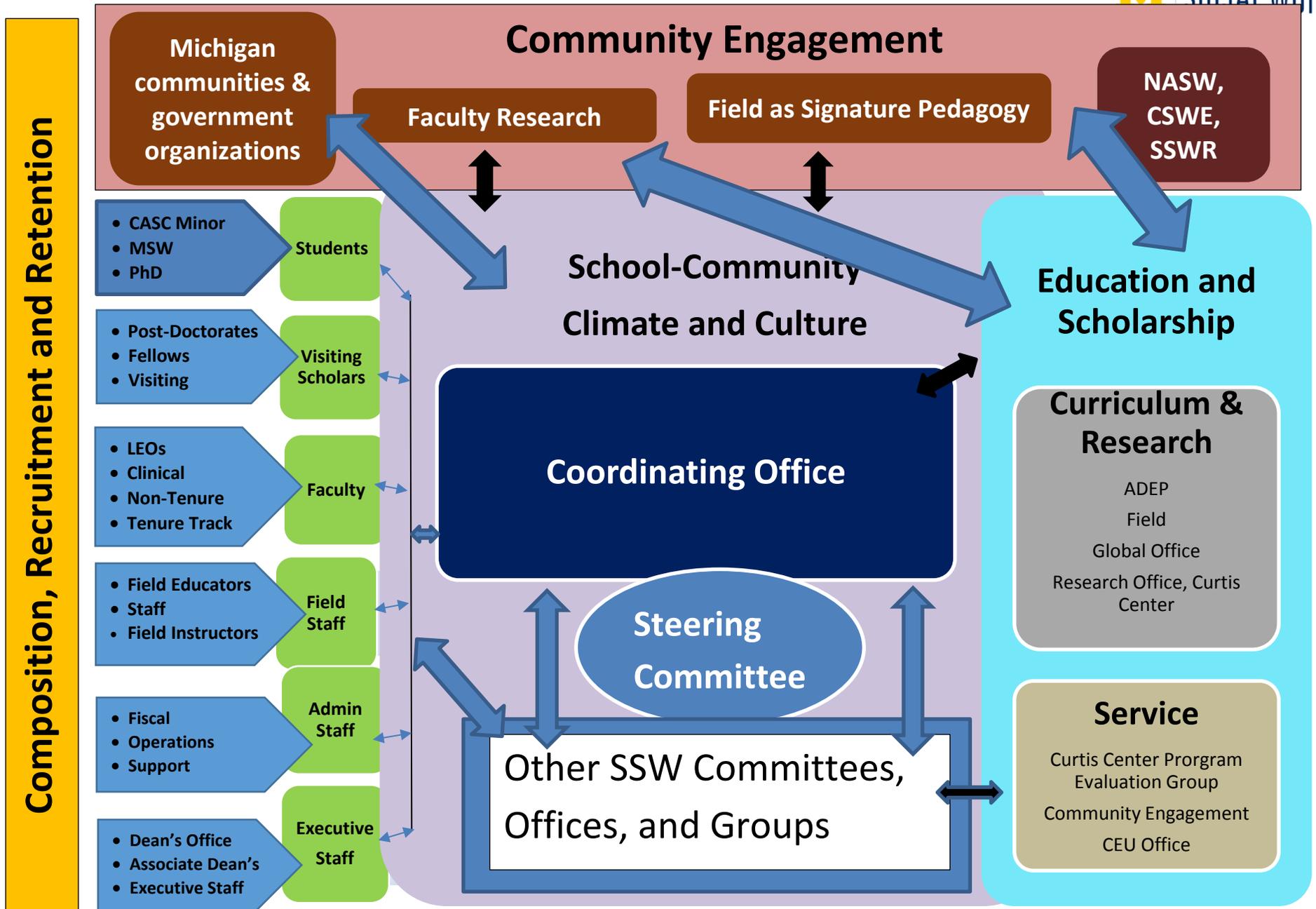
Here is where the description of the Office of Diversity and Community Engagement should be written, potentially with a graphical representation of how its functions are integrally connected with those of the other offices in the School

**The School of Social Work DE&I Committee seeks to establish a DE&I Office that will have the following purpose:**

- Conduct School-Wide Climate Assessments, Evaluations and Monitoring of DE&I overarching goals and objectives delineated in this plan.
- Identify DEI Captains across constitutes to address current issues in the school and globally as point persons for the community.
- Develop process to support the needs of SSW's Affiliate Community organization and Field Instructors.

- Develop a Leadership Model and Peer Facilitation Skills integration into the school community and course instruction to:
  - Create a brave space and mentorship roles for current students by current issue and shared aspirations and struggles.
  - Operates a co-teaching peer facilitator model
  - Institutes the DEI train the trainer/instructor model
  - Assesses the structural barriers to DEI related student concerns, student/group/class/community interrelationships
  - Faculty-Student-Staff communication, and the effects of peer facilitated DEI learning (e.g. a learning environment that creates leadership model for critical consciousness and empowerment of the social interaction of the School community
  - Builds a supportive climate and naturally accepting environment in training
  
- Well-resourced and financed Action-oriented, socially aware and community engaged DEI Office and Staff Support to:
  - Establish and support the operation of a community-wide representative DEI Advisory Committee responsible for guiding the development, implementation, and to guide policy decisions for sustainability
  - Ensure DEI office is transparent and accountable for its action-oriented, community focused roles and responsibilities to support a DEI friendly learning environment and accepting culture
  - Address SSW Administration / Community members structural and power dynamics, antiquated / egregious policies and processes procedures to facilitate a DEI community for all constituents
  - Review and make recommendation to improve the tenure review process to incentivize DEI teaching and community environment
  - Develop incident reporting claims process and meditation services to SSW community
  - Transparent in its operations and support of the DEI Advisory Committee
  
- Office Structure and Interfaces with Central Administration and Faculty to:
  - Create an Action Oriented-Role (Proactive versus Reactive)
  - Create transparency – clear communication and inclusive process to office operations
  - Provide a brave space for dialogue among SSW Community Members
  - Institute Professional Development and Training
  - PODS for staff and DEI Staff training
  - Offer Support Services
  - Link students to resources

- Develop stronger relationships with diverse communities through research partnerships, developing relationships with potential students, training, and support for practitioners.
- Ensures DEI Office has authority and fits within the School's organization structure to enhance current DEI type functions and support the development of new mechanisms to integrate a DE&I perspective into the review of student support services, particularly for their effectiveness across all groups of students.
  - Provide brave place for dialogue
  - Review Faculty Annual Review process for DEI related issues
  - DEI Professional Development and Training for Faculty including LEOs



# APPENDIX A

## FY 2017 Request for Funding SSW DE&I Office

## **FY 2017 Request for Funding for a SSW DE&I Office**

### **Summary Information**

**Priority Number:** 1

**Short Description:** The School of Social Work requests funding to support the point office for continuing extensive work on our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiative.

**Base or One-Time (include number of years if one time):** This is a request for base funding, since we anticipate the need for this support to be on-going.

**Unit Contribution:** The SSW plans to take on half of the costs of this office.

### **Narrative Detail**

#### **Detailed Description of Request:**

The School of Social Work requires additional support to enact our plan for increasing diversity, equity and inclusion. This office will undertake four tasks:

- Leadership in establishing assessment and accountability in achieving goals. The work entailed in this endeavor will touch all offices and activities of the School. Each unit needs to engage in goal-setting, assessment of efforts, and accountability for achieving goals. This office will work with individual offices on appropriate actions in each of these areas, and also coordinate with the Provost's Office and other University resources to ensure that our SSW has engaged with the best practices across our activities, including their assessment.
- Coherent and coordinated program planning. Even during this past year of visioning and strategic planning, multiple offices, faculty, and student groups engaged in a range of programs, discussions, and forums. We need to make sure that these ventures are scheduled, planned and recorded in ways that contribute to our larger goal and minimize duplication of efforts. This new office will undertake this planning and coordination, as well as identification of missed issues for discussion and opportunities.
- Place to report and undertake initial discussion of issues and problems that arise. As the diversity of our School increases, we have found that the range of problems identified and frequency of discussion of related concerns both increase. This office will be a recipient of reports of arising problems, issues, and needs for discussion and make sure that the appropriate offices are engaged in responding, and that necessary programming is developed in response.

-- Training and faculty development. As new issues arise, and the SSW is engaged in this effort, our faculty members anticipate the increased need for ongoing faculty development in addressing classroom climate, the management of difficult discussions (with which social work is rife), approaches and techniques for recruitment and retention across faculty, student, and staff groups, the development of increased opportunities to include relevant issues and information in our classroom curriculum and extra-curricular activities. This office will undertake the discovery of best practices and resources for these endeavors and assist in the scheduling of specific training and educational opportunities for faculty and staff.

Our estimate on the needs for this office come from two sources. First, we have looked at the effort required to pursue the planning and visioning for this effort in the past year, and the work expectations entailed in our plan moving forward. Second, we have examined the support structures for other offices aimed at changing key elements of the SSW's operations, outreach, or activities, such as our Office of Global Activities and our Office of Continuing Education (these offices tend to be income-generating sources as well as costs, unlike the proposed new office).

The office support will require:

- Two course buy-outs for a faculty lead.
- One full-time staff person.
- Resources for office management.
- Resources for travel, event hosting, and educational programming.

### **Alternatives and/or Risks:**

Alternatives to the proposed approach include:

- a) A dispersed model with different offices each taking on a piece of the proposed activities. This dispersal model would lack coordination, a problem we have already faced in the past year. It would leave no one with responsibility for accumulating expertise and best practices across domains of activity. It would leave members of our increasingly diverse SSW community with no central place for voicing concerns and receiving a response.
- b) This effort remains seated in the Office of the Associate Dean for Educational Programs (the office housing our planning effort this past year). This assignment was clearly difficult for the ADEP office. It made it difficult for us to simultaneously undertake additional changes in curriculum and school climate with appropriate planning, assessment and revision. The ADEP may not always be the best person to develop ongoing expertise in all of the areas required by our planned ongoing DEI effort.

**Additional Comments, as required:**

This request is an important part of our long-term DEI strategy. Our five-year budget forecast indicates that we are slowly spending down our reserves through development of new school programs, responsibility for increased space, and faculty transitions. We expect to be expending further resources on recruitment, retention and other DEI activities. These will escalate under the plan, with many of these activities occurring in other offices of the SSW, which will also be funded by the SSW to support these. Sharing the support of the coordinating and “point” office for this effort sustains the SSW, encourages our expenditure on supporting activities, and creates a shared investment with the University.