

# Illinois State University Academic Affairs: FY22 Annual Report

Illinois State University  
School of Social Work  
March 14, 2022  
Dr. Deneca Winfrey Avant

- **Accomplishments and Productivity for FY22**

A. CAS Specific: In bullet points, succinctly highlight 3-5 FY22 accomplishments to be included in CAS's annual report.

- The School of Social Work is undergoing an extensive external accreditation with the Council on Social Work Education in which self-studies for both the BSW and the MSW programs will be submitted in April 2022 to prepare for a Commission On Accreditation review and site visits October 2022.
- The School held a Social Justice Action Forum in March 2022 to provide an engaging opportunity to understand social justice, to challenge ourselves and to work collaboratively to advance the social justice values of the School by addressing exclusionary and oppressive practices.
- The School Community Advisory Board launched its 100 for Social Work Campaign to raise funds that would support our Social Work students experiencing financial hardships. We have worked with ISU Development Office to solidify campaign details and launch our "Hatch" website.
- The School is planning for its Social Work Day 2022 food sovereignty, food justice, and food security for BIPOC populations in Central Illinois, and for sustainable, environmentally sound agricultural practices in our community.

B. List the unit's goals and how the goals support *Educate•Connect•Elevate*.

The School's goals are as follows:

- Foster students' identification and conduct as professional social workers who engage in life-long professional development.
- Prepare students for strength-based, ethical advanced practice in agencies with diverse individuals and families across the lifespan experiencing poverty, violence, mental illness, physical and developmental challenges, and substance abuse.
- Prepare students to provide leadership in advocating for social, organizational, economic, and policy change to advance human rights and create a more just society.
- Prepare students to build on foundation knowledge through critical thinking that integrates multiple sources of knowledge including theoretical and conceptual knowledge, practice wisdom, and knowledge generated through research to inform advanced best-practices.
- Prepare students to contribute to the professional knowledge base and provide accountability to clients and stakeholders by evaluating programs and practices for ethical and effective service delivery.

The School's mission is consistent with the University Vision. Our goals support *Educate•Connect•Elevate* as we provide leadership in undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education, applied research, and both academic and community service with support from public and private partnerships. This is consistent with the University statement of "We promote the highest academic standards in our teaching, scholarship, public service and the connections we build among them."

# Illinois State University Academic Affairs: FY22 Annual Report

- A. List major accomplishments for each goal. Please consider reflecting on teaching, research, and service accomplishments.

## *Teaching*

### Enrollment Numbers:

While the PRPA Reports reflect those currently enrolled at the University, it is important to highlight that all students represented in that report are not admitted into our program. The School of Social Work undergraduate program specifically enrolls juniors and seniors; the following program data is representative of our actual composition.

- BSW enrollment has remained consistent at 120 students across the last two academic years. Additionally, MSW enrollment has remained consistent at 62 students across the last two academic years.

### Degrees Awarded

- The undergraduate program awarded 60 BSW degrees for the 2020-2021 academic year and the graduate program awarded 28 MSW degrees.

### Retention Rates:

- Retention rates increased from fall 2019 at 72% to 81% in fall 2020.

### Diverse BSW Student Body

- BSW diversity consists of 33% of students representing BIPOC populations as compared to 29% within the University.

### Diverse MSW Student Body

- MSW diversity consists of 23/62 students representing BIPOC populations with nine students identifying as male.

## *Research*

- Dr. Stephens received a New Faculty Initiative Grant.
- Dr. Avant received continual grant support from Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and the National First Star Foundation to continue First Star Academy.
- Dr. Houston received continual grant support from Illinois Department of Children and Family Services for the Permanency Enhancement University Partner's Collaborative within the Center for Child Welfare and Adoption Studies.

## *Service*

Community: The School continues to maintain its leadership in service and membership in professional associations:

- DCFS Child Welfare Advisory Council, Racial Equity Subcommittee
- McLean County Community Health Needs
- John M. Scott Health Care Commission
- Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education
- McLean County Board of Supervisors Ethics Commission
- Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, Child Welfare Direct Services Employee Licensure Board

## Illinois State University Academic Affairs: FY22 Annual Report

- McLean County NAACP Health Committee member
- Children's Home + Aid Healthy Start Advisory Board
- Various Editorial Review Boards.

University: The School has faculty and staff representatives serving the University in the following capacities:

- Interdisciplinary Collaboration with Mennonite College of Nursing via the "Change Agents for the Underserved: Service Education" (CAUSE) Grant- Facilitation of Poverty Simulation
- Office of the Vice President and Provost's Task Force on Black Male Retention
- Faculty Senate Academic Freedom, Ethics and Grievance Committee
- University Hearing Panel
- Nature-Based Healing Group for students to learn about somatic, nature-based approaches to trauma
- Office of the President Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Leader Circle
- Office of the Vice President and Provost, Faculty Success Strategic Planning and Analysis Work group

B. Provide specific accomplishments related to Academic program development.

The School is continuing in the following academic program developments:

- Curricula dialogue and reviews to determine if current course offerings and graduate specializations are in line with our students' and the professional needs. In particular, each content committee is conducting an equity audit of courses to determine how each promote social justice via content, textbooks and readings, assignments, and guest speakers, etc.
- External partnership with Illinois Department of Children and Family Services University Program to offer SWK 323 and SWK 324 Child Welfare courses that support students gateway into the profession.
- External partnership with OSF Healthcare to support Field Practicums and offer the SWK 465 Integrated Behavioral Health Care elective to aide in the School curricular initiative of a desired future health specialization. This partnership supports our student gateway commitment to OSF placements with a need to schedule a follow up meeting to discuss a post graduate intern possibility.
- Exploration of a new potential future health specialization in Behavioral Health and just received approval for a new course SWK 420: Social Determinants of Health to offer this summer as a step in that direction. This course will combine social work policy and practice, for helping social workers develop strategies to address health disparities.
- Revised Program Handbooks and Grievance procedures to ensure transparency of School policies.

C. Provide specific accomplishments related to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

The School has implemented the following EDI accomplishments:

- Held its second Social Justice Action Forum in March to provide an engaging opportunity to understand social justice, to challenge ourselves and to work collaboratively to advance the social justice values of the School by addressing exclusionary and oppressive practices. In preparation of the Forum, an anonymous survey was distributed to the School (i.e., Students, Faculty, Staff, NTTs, and Community Advisory Board) to gather a pulse on current experiences related to familiarity or participation with any recent Anti-Black protests at ISU, having witnessed or experienced racial bias/discrimination at ISU or within the School of Social Work, and any suggested changes.

## Illinois State University Academic Affairs: FY22 Annual Report

- Facilitating an equity audit within our content (sequence) committees to enhance the inclusion of diverse voices and perspectives, intentional consciousness of microaggressions during classes and in the workplace, and purposeful conversations and activities to address racial disparities.
- Established an Anti-Racism statement to be published on our website as a demonstration of our commitment to social justice.

### D. Provide specific accomplishments related to Faculty Success.

The School revised its ASPT guidelines to clarify Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) efforts that directly support the university's stated value of diversity and inclusion and the profession of Social Work.

Dr. Avant served on the CAS Student Success Panel to discuss a leading the faculty and students through a process to examine the sense of community for all students and how some students feel (or did not feel) welcomed and belonging. The process included an anonymous survey, a town hall meeting, out of that an action committee and action plans.

Dr. Stephens's received the Office of the Provost scholarship support to participate in the Summer 2022 NCFDD Faculty Success Bootcamp to receive coaching and peer-supports to work towards achieving a healthy work-life balance, develop a publication portfolio would advance his trajectory toward obtaining tenure, as well as strategies that enables productivity in research, teaching, and service via additional resources, supports, potential research collaborators, and accountability.

Our faculty and staff participated in over 40 professional development trainings or workshop. Many of which were facilitated by CTLT, although others were with external organizations. Professional development provides the opportunity to enhance knowledge and skills which ultimately lead to success in the classrooms.

The School had a fall retreat which consisted of a business meeting and professional development on "Mindful Self-Compassion" facilitated by Nikki Brauer at Health Promotion and Wellness followed by "Faculty Supports and Student Success" facilitated by Drs. Yojanna Cuenca-Carlino (Assistant Vice President for Academic Administration) and Amelia Noël-Elkins (Interim Assistant Vice President for Student Success).

### E. Provide specific accomplishments related to Student Success.

The School established a new Social Work Themed Living-Learning Community (TLLC) which will begin in Hewett Residential Hall next fall. This hall will encourage community building for new potential social work students.

Student engagement opportunities were provided to enhance student success; for example, students were invited to casually stop by the School to connect with faculty and staff on a social, non-threatening level, while picking up a small treat bag. Also, a finals week connection was provided for students to receive motivational treat bags to tackle the end of the semester. The option to participate in pet therapy was also provided if students so desired.

A Social Work Student received the inaugural Deon Johnson Scholarship, which provides financial support for vulnerable students from the College of Arts and Sciences who come from families with challenges to meet the cost of higher education.

## II. Internal Reallocations and Reorganizations in FY22

- A. Describe any reallocations or reorganizations, including the movement of positions, upgrade of positions, creation of new positions, or reallocation of personnel or operating funds.

# Illinois State University Academic Affairs: FY22 Annual Report

N/A

- B. Describe how the unit used additional funds from the Provost Office to enhance accomplishments and productivity. Additional Provost Office funds could include funding sources such as: Instructional Capacity funds, Summer Session funding, Academic Enhancement Funds, or variance dollars.

Due to shortage of tenure track faculty, we hired adjunct faculty to teach 24 core classes, for which Instructional Capacity funds covered this additional cost.

- C. Describe how the unit used additional funds from College/Department/School/Unit to enhance accomplishments and productivity. Additional College/Department/School/Unit funds could include such as: external funding, Foundation funds, variance dollars (note: this does not include variance dollars from AIF), or external contracts.

We received additional tuition waiver funds from the college to support our students' financial needs.

Endowed Foundation funds (i.e., Moran, Haerr, and Berndt) provided student scholarships. In addition, there are Foundation funds established that provide student assistance for hardship and emergencies (i.e., Pratt).

### III. Major Objectives for FY23

- A. Describe the unit's most important forward-looking objectives related to academic program development, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Faculty Success, and Student Success. Outline how the objectives support the mission/goals of the Unit/Department/School, College and *Educate•Connect•Elevate*.

**OBJECTIVE #1:** Enhance the School of Social Work's strength and stability by **attracting and retaining exceptional faculty** (tenure track faculty requests have been via Formstack).

**OBJECTIVE #2:** Enhance the School of Social Work's **Field Education Practicum support and strength** by adding a new permanent administrative professional position- Field Director.

- Strategic Plan Alignment: School of Social Work Strategy 1E (MSW program that prepare grads for practice); 1F (Individualized education promoting faculty/student relationships)
- CAS Strategic Focus 1, Goals 1.2.1 (Opportunities for students to engage in high quality, high-impact educational experiences)
- Educate, Connect, Elevate Strategic Directions IIB (Advancement of knowledge generation); IVA.2 (Partnerships with organizations); IVB.3 (Promote civic engagement and service learning)

**Rationale:** The School of Social Work enrollments are approximately 200 students (BSW and MSW). All students complete a required two-semester field practicum with foundation MSW students completing an additional field practicum during the summer. Practicum placements are the signature pedagogy of our program by providing the opportunities for students to apply what they have learned in the classroom to real-life situations and gain firsthand experience as future practitioners. Practicum placements are the final step prior to fulfilling requirements for students' social work degrees. Due to the higher need for support that our students are experiencing, the current Field Director's responsibilities have majorly increased resulting in the need for an additional Field Director. The School is proposing to separate supports for both the BSW and MSW Programs (one director per program) by requesting a permanent line of a Field Director to carry out the daily tasks for students. The roles and responsibilities would include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Facilitate informative group sessions/presentations regarding the field process
- Conduct individualized planning session with all students
- Develop policies and procedures for the field education
- Ensure accurate dissemination and publication of curriculum and program information to the Social Work accrediting body, Council of Social Work Education (CSWE)

## Illinois State University Academic Affairs: FY22 Annual Report

- Co-chair the Field Content Committee and assist in the development and maintenance of the curriculum for field education
- Develop, maintain, and monitor contractual agreements with field sites
- Develop and maintain criteria for the selection and evaluation of field instructors
- Conduct orientation and ongoing training for field instructors and field liaisons
- Oversee the SONIA Field Education Database for field education documents (i.e., learning contracts)
- Oversee the required background check process for all students
- Develop and maintain policies and procedures for resolving critical issues encountered in the field placement
- Maintain contacts and relationships outside the School of Social Work to serve the interests of the School and students
- Maintain contacts and relationships inside the University to serve the interests of the School and students
- Develop and use a variety of methods to address various learning styles
- Participate in activities beyond the office which reflect a general concern for students and the University community
- May teach one course per semester

Ultimately, the field director would provide leadership in the field education program through practice experience, field instruction experience, and administrative and other relevant academic and professional activities in social work. While the current Field Director has received the support of a Graduate Assistant, multiple limitations exist due to personnel restrictions and the level of interworking knowledge with problem solving skills.

It is important to note that per CSWE, the School of Social Work must document that the Field Director is able to provide educational and administrative leadership functions of the field education program at least 25% of assigned time required at the baccalaureate level and 50% assigned time is required for master's programs. Unfortunately, the excessive additional responsibilities have posed a sufficiency concern for our current Field Director regarding our reaccreditation requirements.

### **Requested Funding: \$58,000**

**OBJECTIVE #3:** Enhance the accessibility of the School of Social Work's graduate programs by **increasing graduate assistantships.**

- Strategic Plan Alignment: School of Social Work Strategy 1A.3 (Recruitment strategies that serve students' interests); 1E (Provide academic excellence through MSW programs); 2B (Promote student scholarship)
- CAS Strategic Focus 1, Goal 1.1.2 (Enhance and support rigorous and innovative graduate programs)
- Educate, Connect, Elevate Strategic Direction 1A-4 (Accessibility of grad programs with assistantships)

**Rationale:** The School of Social Work enrolled 62 MSW students in FY22, but only has a permanent budget to fund 1.5 GA. This is a major barrier for the School's recruitment and retention efforts. Given the School of Social Work's relative proximity to other MSW programs (e.g., UIUC; UIC; SIUE), an increase in funding through graduate assistantships could help to increase the yield of admitted MSW students who would seek funding from competitor programs. An increase in MSW GAs would also support the recruitment and retention of undergraduate BSW students given that Social Work GAs work in a semi-advisory and mentoring capacity with our BSW advisor, MSW advisor, and Director of Field Education. The use of the additional GA support will allow for more personalized face-time with our undergraduate students. It is noted that this reoccurring request to increase the School of Social Work's permanent budget to fund additional GAs has been submitted and denied for the last decade.

# Illinois State University Academic Affairs: FY22 Annual Report

**Requested Funding:** \$16,200 based 3 part time GAs in FY 23

**Description:** We are requesting an increase in permanent budget from the FY22 amount of \$11,327.00 that supports 1.5 GAs, to an FY23 amount of \$27,527 to support 3 full-time GAs.

**OBJECTIVE #4:** Enhance the School of Social Work's distinction in academic excellence through **student practicum supervisory travel**

- Strategic Plan Alignment: School of Social Work Strategy 1E (MSW program that prepare grads for practice); 1F (Individualized education promoting faculty/student relationships)
- CAS Strategic Focus 1, Goals 1.2.1 (Opportunities for students to engage in high quality, high-impact educational experiences)
- Educate, Connect, Elevate Strategic Directions IIB (Advancement of knowledge generation); IVA.2 (Partnerships with organizations); IVB.3 (Promote civic engagement and service learning)

**Rationale:** All BSW senior students and advanced MSW students complete a required two-semester field practicum of 600 hours for BSWs and 700 hours for MSWs. All foundation MSW students must complete a 400-hour field practicum in the summer. The BSW and Advanced MSW placements require three in-person visits by the faculty for each student, while the MSW foundation students require one in-person visit. The School of Social Work requests \$4,600 for FY23.

**Requested Funding:** \$4,600 from permanent/temporary funding

**OBJECTIVE #5:** Enhance the School of Social Work's distinction in academic **excellence through compliance with the accreditation** standards of the Council on Social Work Education.

- Strategic Plan Alignment: School of Social Work Strategy 1D (Provide academic excellence through BSW programs) and 1E (Provide academic excellence through MSW programs)
- CAS Strategic Focus 1, Goal 1.1.2: (Enhance and support rigorous and innovative undergraduate and graduate programs)
- Educate, Connect, Elevate Strategic Direction 1D (Best practices to improve sustainability/institutional effectiveness)

**Rationale:** The School of Social Work must maintain the Council on Social Work Education accreditation standards for quality education. The School of Social Work is assessed accreditation fees each year.

**Funding:** \$8,682 from temporary funding (\$4,372 MSW program and \$4,310 BSW program for FY23)

**Progress:** We continue to maintain accreditation status and are current with fees.

IV. CAS Specific: Briefly Indicate *Tentative* SBC Amounts / Plans (Officially Due 5/2/22 in the CAS Budget System)

1. Unused Educational Diversity Enhancement Program and Startup for Nathan Stephens. \$5,313
2. Unused RERIP funds for renovation of School of Social Work. \$23,900
3. One additional part-time GA for academic year. \$5,400
4. FY22 Roll over of Indirect Cost funds. \$4393.32