

**School of Social Work
Illinois State University
Strategic Plan
2016-2020 ¹**

In accord with the University's strategic plan, *Educating Illinois*, and the strategic plan of the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Social Work is guided by the following mission, values, and strategic directions.

Mission Statement

The mission of the School of Social Work is to promote social and economic justice, progressive social change, human dignity and personal freedom in a pluralistic society undergoing rapid technological and social change. To this end, the School provides education for excellence in generalist (BSW), specialized (MSW), post-graduate practice, and continuing education programs; conducts applied research; provides service to the academic and professional community; and promotes civic engagement with support from public and private partnerships. The School of Social Work advances the mission of the university and the social work profession with a particular commitment to the vulnerable, the economically disadvantaged, the marginalized, and the disenfranchised.

Values

The foundation of the teaching, research, and service of the School is the social work profession's core values:

Service to others above self-interest.

Social Justice, particularly for the vulnerable and the oppressed.

Dignity and worth of the person.

Importance of human relationships as the vehicle for individual and social change.

Integrity, to practice in a manner consistent with the profession's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards

Competence for practice across diverse populations and a commitment to lifelong professional development.

In addition to the values of our profession, the operation of our School is guided by a commitment to:

- Participatory decision making that uses the talents of faculty, staff, students, and community advisors.
- Open communication.
- Academic freedom.
- Civility, respect for a wide range of viewpoints and a positive work climate.

¹ Faculty voted on September 24, 2019 to extend the strategic plan from 2019 to 2020 to allow for the incoming Director of the School to have a role in formulating the next plan.

- An open, welcoming, and inclusive learning environment that affirms and supports diverse identities.
- A transformative educational experience that promotes the unique potential of each student.
- Collaboration in teaching, research, and service both within the School and across disciplines.

Strategic Directions

Strategy One: Promote development of ethical, competent social workers who are responsive to the rapidly changing practice environment.

Action A: Develop recruitment plans to maintain and enhance the quality of students.

Action step 1: Identify applicants for recruitment who are reflective of diverse populations

Action step 2: Implement strategies for marketing the School's programs

Action step 3: Identify and maintain recruitment strategies that serve Students' interests and protect the integrity of the BSW and MSW programs and the profession of social work

Action B: Continue and enhance holistic review of applicants for admission to yield students with high potential, readiness, and goodness of fit for the profession of social work

Action step 1: Admit students who are reflective of diverse populations

Action step 2: Identify and maintain admission strategies that serve students' interests and protect the integrity of the BSW and MSW programs and the profession of social work

Action C: Continue and enhance efforts to retain students

Action step 1: Continue to provide a forum for faculty to discuss student concerns for proactive retention efforts and student success

Action step 2: Continue to use the dispositional concerns policy for proactive retention efforts and student success

Action step 3: Continue to support Directors of Student Services to facilitate student success

Action step 4: Continue plans for retention of culturally diverse students

Action D: Provide academic excellence through the BSW program that prepares graduates for social work practice or graduate studies

Action step 1: Complete and implement the revision of the competency-based program evaluation plan

Action step 2: Increase the scholarly distinction of BSW students by promoting honors enrollment

Action step 3: Review and update theories that guide BSW education

Action E: Provide academic excellence through the MSW program that prepares graduates for social work practice

Action step 1: Complete and implement the revision of the competency-based evaluation plan

Action step 2: Review and update theories that guide MSW education

Action step 3: Review and increase trauma-informed content in curriculum

Action F: Develop individualized educational opportunities that promote faculty/student relationships.

Action step 1: Continue to promote the development of collegial professional relationships between faculty and students through activities of the social work student organizations

Action step 2: Promote educational opportunities that enhance faculty/student relationships through special projects (research, civic engagement, independent studies, co-authorship, mentoring, etc.) among students.

Action G: Continue to explore and develop curricular content (elective courses) that provides for specialized skill or certification to enhance marketability and employability of students

Action step 1: Continue partnership with Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to provide foundation curriculum and opportunity to take employment exams

Action step 2: Assess continuation of mediation course

Action step 3: Assess continuation of sexual assault course for ICASA certification

Action step 4: Develop curricular content for integrated behavioral health care certification

Action step 5: Continue to offer the licensing review course

Action step 6: Remain open to other opportunities that are beneficial for student development

Strategy Two: Promote the School's distinction in the production and dissemination of knowledge relevant to the profession.

Action A: Promote faculty research and scholarship.

Action step 1: Support faculty research that contributes to the profession and the mission of the School

Action step 2: Support faculty pursuit of external funding through grants and contracts

Action step 3: Support faculty research through students' independent study and honors projects

Action B: Promote student research and scholarship.

Action step 1: Continue to facilitate undergraduate students' development of

program/practice evaluation research projects that provide valuable data for field agencies

Action step 2: Continue to facilitate graduate students' development of program/practice evaluation research projects that provide valuable data for field agencies

Action step 3: Support students' opportunities for research through independent study and honors projects.

Strategy Three: Promote the School's role in civic engagement and leadership in the academy, profession, and community.

Action A: Establish new and support ongoing partnerships with community agencies and state, regional, and national organizations.

Action step 1: Engage the Advisory Board as an active partner of the School of Social Work

Action step 2: Engage in collaborative efforts with community partners

Action step 3: Develop formal methods to acknowledge the contributions of field instructors

Action B: Reinforce the School's mission to further social justice through social change.

Action step 1: Involve students in social justice activities

Action step 2: Require participation in NASW Advocacy Day for students in BSW and MSW programs

Action step 3: Require participation in the Social Work Day conference for students in BSW and MSW programs

Action step 4: Report service efforts on the School website

Action step 5: Enhance the leadership distinction of BSW students through increased participation in ISU Leads.

Strategy Four: Promote and enrich programs and opportunities for the continued development of cultural competency of students, faculty, and staff.

Action A: Continue to provide opportunities for discussions as a regular item on the faculty-staff meeting agenda

Action B: Develop a plan to engage faculty, staff, and students in opportunities to examine their understanding of diversity and their cultural biases

Action C: Review and update curricula to assure that BSW and MSW programs promote knowledge and skills to serve culturally diverse populations.

Action D: Implement strategies that promote recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and staff

Strategy Five: Promote organizational sustainability and strength of the School of Social Work

Action A: Provide professional development opportunities to alumni and community partners through the Continuing Education Program.

Action B: Develop relationships with alumni and other potential donors.

Action C: Continue efforts to nurture and retain faculty

Action D: Provide departmental review of progress on the strategic plan in faculty-staff meeting discussion at the end of each semester.