

## **Program Progress Report**

# Institutional Quality Assurance Program (IQAP) Review

# Bachelor of Social Work Master of Social Work

# **Graduate Diploma**

in Community-Engaged Research and Evaluation

Graduate Diploma

in Critical Leadership in Social Services and Communities

#### PhD in Social Work

Date of Site Visit: April 5 and 6, 2021

## **Progress Report Prepared by:**

Saara Greene, Director and Tammy Maikawa, Academic Department Manager. In consultation with members of the Director's Advisory Committee:

- Jennie Vengris, UG Chair
- Ameil Joseph, Grad Chair
- Janice Chaplin, Field Education Coordinator

Please outline below how recommendations from the initial program review have been addressed. [Please fill in one table for each recommendation from the original Final Assessment Report]

# Recommendation:

Continue to focus on goals of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI).

- 1. Prioritize equity goals in upcoming faculty hire (and continue to integrate EDI 'inclusive excellence' process in all hiring)
- 2. Through the Social Work Practice Learning Platform, curate and develop curriculum resources that attend to equity and identity (especially in micro practice).

Responsibility for Implementation:

- 1. Director
- 2. UG Chair

# Anticipated Timeline for Completion:

- 1. This is ongoing process that we do not anticipate will result in 'completion'. While we have been able to priotize and meet our EDI goals, we are committed to reviewing and exceeding these targets as is reflected in the School's mission statement, teaching, field education opportunities and research.
- 2. 3-year horizon

Additional Notes/Commentary:



priority was to reflect the broader commitment of the University's Black cohort hiring. We did not receive a position for the cohort, and thus made this a focus of our own process. UG Chair, J. Vengris, in collaboration with the Director and Graduate Chair, A. Joseph, prioritized hiring sessional faculty (while maintaining CUPE policies) from racialized and equity deserving communities. Progress (check one) X Completed ☐ In Progress ☐ Other (please explain) Department's Comments: 1. In July 1, 2021, Arij Elmi was hired. The focus of the hire was on specialization in direct social work practice using one or some of the following approaches: critical race, anti-racist, anti-Black racist, decolonizing, land-based, environmental justice and/or harm reduction. Furthermore, in 2022 we advocated for and received approval to hire Laurie Sherry as an Indigenous Pre-Doctoral fellow to be converted to a tenure-track position upon completion of her PhD. This appointment reflects our commitment to Indigenous scholarship and providing excellence in Indigenous focused social work education, practice and research. Laurie is a valued member of our School and has recently taken the role of Chair of the Circle of Indigenous Social Work Action (CISWA) where she is working to enliven student membership and support. Although we have completed the activities and commitments we set out to achieve, we continue to remain focused on our EDI commitments as they weave throughout all aspects of the School. 2. Social Work Practice Learning Platform – We had a group of graduate students working on th that was orchestrated by the UG chair at the time Sandy Preston in collaboration with our Field Coordinator, Janice Chaplin. We don't currently utilize this, but we are currently in discussion of how to recreate the platform for in person learning. Dean's Comments: In addition to the hires identified above, the School hired a new teaching stream faculty member from a racialized group, Dr. Rochelle Maurice, effective July 1, 2024. The School is fully committed to advancing EDI in all aspects of its programming. QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee): QAC reviewed this report and had no further comments or concerns.

The School's Director, S. Greene was the Chair of the Tenure Track Hiring Committee 2020/21. The



#### Recommendation:

Continue to review the Field Education program to ensure there are adequate supports and that the School continues to respond to the rapidly changing and complex needs of the communities, placements, and students.

 Building on the review initiated through this self-study, consult colleagues in the field regarding the needs of communities, goals for placement-based learning, and factors in student success. Present results of the review, resource implications recommendations to the Dean.

Responsibility for Implementation:
Director and Field Education Coordinator
Anticipated Timeline for Completion:
Summer 2021
Additional Notes/Commentary:
Progress (check one)
X Completed
☐ In Progress
☐ Other (please explain)
Donart mont's Commonts:

#### Department's Comments:

New staff position received: Field and Alumni Relations Manager. This person works closely with the Field Education team to enhance and further systematize the School's current practices for recruiting and retaining field instructors and supporting placement students through field program requirements including supplemental supervision. A key component of the position involves identifying field opportunities from an equity focus.

New Teaching Track (Rochelle Maurice): We sought out candidates whose work would expand the School's commitment to understanding and challenging various forms and dynamics of inequity in a changing social world, and take leadership within the School in strengthening critical and justice-focused field education curriculum and pedagogy in collaboration with the field team. Specifically, we sought candidates with social work practice and teaching expertise with racialized groups and communities. **Completed.** 

#### Dean's Comments:

As noted, the Dean approved both new staff resources and the new faculty to address the needs of the field education program.

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):



See above.			

Recommendation:
Continue to review recruitment strategies for attracting undergraduate and graduate students.  • Review and strengthen approaches to recruitment and support for Indigenous students
Responsibility for Implementation:
Chair, Circle for Indigenous Social Work Action (CISWA) supported by Administrator and Director
Anticipated Timeline for Completion:
Summer 2021 & upcoming recruitment cycle
Additional Notes/Commentary:
Progress (check one)
☐ Completed
X In Progress
☐ Other (please explain)
Department's Comments:

Admission policy updated re: letter from a community member to make it less of a barrier for applicants – as recommended by the Circle of Indigenous Social Work Action (CISWA):

Given the colonial legacy of forced disconnection and dislocation from community, we do not require applicants to have an historical or current connection with Indigenous community. We seek the letter writer's comments on the applicant's Indigenous identity as they understand it, and their current and future intentions with respect to engagement with Indigenous communities.

Connection to Indigenous Student Services (ISS) strengthened – Chair, CISWA, connecting with students and to ISS at the start of the program. Resources shared and communicated to students.

Academic Department Manager making connections with ISS support staff who support students.

As always, recruitment and outreach to increase applications from Indigenous students in both the BSW and graduate programs, is an ongoing process. We remain committed to building on what has worked and deeply thinking about additional recruitment activities and our admissions process. One challenge has been that Bonnie Freeman has gone from a full appointment to a cross appointment with Indigenous Studies. This has resulted in a decrease in resources; It is anticipated that Laurie



Sherry will be a fully appointed assistant professor in the School effective July 1, 2025. In her role as the Chair of CISWA, she will be working in collaboration with the leadership to meet our goals.

#### Dean's Comments:

The School has taken concrete actions to improve the recruitment of Indigenous students and to the support provided Indigenous students (e.g., through a stronger collaboration with Indigenous Student Services). The addition of a third Indigenous faculty member (Laurie Sherry) to the School (in addition to Dr. Bonnie Freeman and Dr. Randall Jackson) will expand the capacity of the School to undertake this work.

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above.

# Recommendation:

Continue to review/strengthen BSW, MSW, and graduate diploma curricula.

- 1. 1. Review curricula of BSW and MSW for attention to Indigenous knowledge, methodologies and histories draw on the forthcoming Indigenous Education Primer
- 2. Pilot a co-teaching model in SW 2BB3 (2022/ 23 year) as one approach to addressing decolonization, equity, and diversity
- 3. Initiate discussion with Experiential Education and MacPherson Institute colleagues, and Associate Dean, about an emerging partnership with Mission Services and the potential to develop a community-based teaching site with multiple placement opportunities
- 4. In consultation with the Associate Dean, develop a proposal to sustain the Preparing for Critical Practice in Child Welfare Pathway (including formal designation and required resources), for presentation to FSS Undergraduate Curriculum committee & Dean.
- 5. Further develop the Social Work Practice Learning Platform (including: consider curriculum development in areas identified in review: 'on the ground' advocacy/ change skills, documentation skills, death and bereavement, post-colonial social work practice)

# Responsibility for Implementation:

- 1. UG and Grad Chairs in consultation with Chair of CISWA
- 2. Director (proposal to Dean for teaching resources
- 3. Director
- 4. Director
- 5. UG and Grad Chair and Field Education Coordinator

Anticipated Timeline for Completion:

1. 3-year horizon



Om	VCISI	
	2.	Late fall 2021
	3.	Summer 2021
	4.	Summer 2022
	5.	Ongoing
Ad	ditio	nal Notes/Commentary:
Pro	ogre	ss (check one)
	Co	mpleted
Χ.	In I	Progress
	Otl	ner (please explain)
De	part	ment's Comments:
	1.	In Progress – much time and attention has focused on ensuring that Indigenous knowledge, methodologies and histories are incorporated throughout the entire curriculum. Specifically courses that lend themselves well to drawing on Indigenous perspectives include 2BB3, 4J03, 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> year practice seminars and Indigenous specific courses. We worked toward developing a new course, 3ID3, which focuses exclusively on Indigenous approaches to practice and research and will be offered in 25/26. Indigenous knowledges are more fulsomely incorporated into graduate courses as well, specifically, 770, 771, 721 and Soc Sci 708.
	2.	In 2022 we hired Jennifer Ma, a teaching-track faculty member who took over SW 2BB3. Jennifer's strength in practice, research and teaching across a number of areas (child welfare, social policy, community practice, theory and methods), grounded in critical race and anticolonial frameworks made her a wonderful candidate to re-design this course and therefore we did not pursue the co-teaching model. It has been a few years that she has taught this course now and we are moving toward a co-teaching design for 25/26.
	3.	J. Vengris has mobilized this work during her research leave in Winter 2024. During this time she focused her leave on this research toward working on developing the model. The subsequent steps are to secure a community partner and then reach out to other professional programs on campus as well as EE, OCE and MacPherson. In progress.
	4.	The informal pathway became a formal Concurrent Certificate in 23/24 so that students who complete the PCPCW will now receive a Concurrent Certificate in Critical Practice in Child Welfare alongside their BSW degree. 46 students have completed the full Pathway. We saw dips in enrollment in 21/22 and 23/24, but numbers are increasing, with six more expected to complete it by 2025. With donor funding from Sally Palmer we have been able to sustain an increase in curriculum units needed for the certificate.
	5.	Having secured the teaching track position effective July 1, 2024, Rochelle Maurice (with 3 units for course release for field) will be working with the field education team to re-imagine how the platform will be mobilized post-covid (the initial intention was to ensure students were receiving additional practice opportunities during Covid and this was effective during that time).
De	an's	Comments:



As documented by the School, it is making excellent progress addressing all of the elements identified by the review, and completed multiple of them. I have no concerns regarding the commitment of the School to complete this work.
QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):
See above.

#### Recommendation:

Continue to promote student wellness

- 1. Further develop analysis of and approaches to self-care in BSW curriculum
- 2. Discussion about students' mental health (especially in pandemic) as regular agenda item at faculty meetings.

# Responsibility for Implementation:

- 1. UG Chair
- 2. Director

## Anticipated Timeline for Completion:

- 1. 2-year horizon
- 2. Upcoming academic year

Additional Notes/Commentary:

Progress (check one)

X Completed

☐ In Progress

☐ Other (please explain)

Department's Comments:

The School created the position of PhD Caucus Group Facilitator to bring student caucus groups back to life – more opportunities for connection and community, specifically among equity deserving students in our program. We created a fellowship/scholarship to develop this position as a way to support and recognize the work of a PhD student who'se studies include addressing issues of racism and other forms of marginality. We are in our second year of this role, and we are starting to see our caucus groups connecting regularly, including our Social Work Student Collective, United in Colour, Disability Action Group, Social Work Queer Trans. Students are receiving peer support but are also in communication with faculty and staff when students needs arise. The faculty and staff have been exceptionally responsive to the students.

Bi-annual check ins with sessional faculty and also teaching check ins where instructors can share what they're experiencing. The Academic Department Manager (ADM) is a contact for instructors



when students aren't attending classes or submitting work, and feel that students can use support. ADM will reach out to check in on students and with other instructors to see if students are struggling in multiple classes, to connect with supports and resources on and off campus. Student resources are circulated to instructors at the start of term.

As part of the admissions orientation, students are encouraged to take courses and the program at a pace that is going to work for them – movement from full to part time is allowed and encouraged. Students are informed of their ability to take a leave from the program without penalty, and all of this is explained fully at the start of the program. Throughout the program students have program support and advising from the ADM.

The School has strengthend tied with Student Support and Case Management (SSCM) to work toward supporting students who are in need. The ADM has developed relationships with their Case Managers who provide crisis support for students in difficulty as well as support for students with complex needs/juggling multiple demands. SSCM reps have been invited to faculty meetings to talk about the supports they offer and the referral process, to increase the institutional knowledge for faculty in the School around how students can benefit from their office.

Instructors continue to be accommodating in classes, for students with or without formal accommodations. Instructors and TAs work with students in need to offer alternative assignments, extensions.

Again, while we have met our initial goals, this work is in progress and ongoing.

#### Dean's Comments:

The core work is essentially completed. Mulitple approaches are in place to identify students in need and to be able to support them better. As the School notes, because of its commitment to its students, the School will continue to monitor this aspect of it programs and implement mechanisms to support students.

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above.

#### Recommendation:

Expand and refine supports for students with diverse accessibility and (dis)ability learning needs

- 1. Confirm capacity and process for the *Faculty of Social Sciences Liaison to Student Accessibility Services* to support BSW & MSW placement accommodations.
- 2. Support instructors to take up recommendations in the FlexForward guide for accessibility in the remote teaching & pandemic context.

Responsibility for Implementation:

1. Director in consultation with FSS Liasion and Dean



#### 2. Director

# Anticipated Timeline for Completion:

- 1. Summer 2021
- 2. Upcoming academic year

# Additional Notes/Commentary:

Initial conversation with Michelle Alway, the Faculty of Social Science Accessibility and Accommodation Officer was helpful but did not meet the diverse of needs for students with more complex needs. This is a priority and a skillset among the faculty who teach in the School (inclusive of sessional faculty). The field team has fostered connections with McMaster's Student Accessibilty Services (SAS) to ensure that SAS program coordinators have familiarity with our program toward more effectively supporting our students' accommodation needs.

Pro	Progress (check one)				
	Completed				
Χ	In Progress				
	Other (please explain)				

#### Department's Comments:

- 1. Regular communication with SAS re: program and placement required accommodations. Field team liaises with SAS and placement sites to work with students with accommodation needs.
- 2. In May 2023 at our Faculty Retreat, we focused our meeting on what we learned during the pandemic regarding social work pedogogy what worked, what didn't and how to move forward post pandemic. We agreed that all practice courses needed to be in person (confirmed by our community partners/field educators). However, recognizing that students will sometimes continue to face challenges attending class, we recommend that all instructors use Echo 360 recording whenever possible for lectures. We also identified courses that could be taught virtually without compromising skill development. For example Dr. M. Carranza worked with MacPherson to develop a virtual approach to teaching a course on Trauma Informed Approaches to Social Work. As a result we have a good balance of in person and virtual synchronous courses on offer. We continue to assess.

#### Dean's Comments:

The School is working on this conscientiously, making progress, and continuing it work in this area. I am confident that it will continue to address these issues.

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above.

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Continue to refine MSW programs, examining in particular issues related to curriculum design, scheduling, and recruitment.

- 1. Review MSW programs for opportunities for online and blended teaching and learning
- 2. Review recruitment: consider an approach that recognizes strength of applicant pool for MSW CL, and challenges in MSW CA
- 3. Seek out leadership placement opportunities in clinical contexts

Responsibility for Implementation:

- 1. Grad Chair
- 2. Grad Chair
- 3. MSW Field Education Coordinator

Anticipated Timeline for Completion:

Two-year horizon

Additional Notes/Commentary:

Progress (check one)

- X Completed
- ☐ In Progress
- ☐ Other (please explain)

# Department's Comments:

- 1. We recognize that our graduate students continue to face challenges attending class due to multiple responsibilities (ie. Family, work, etc). We recommend that all instsructors use Echo 360 recording whenever possible for lectures in the event a student must miss class. We also identified courses that could be taught virtually without compromising graduate level learning. Virtual synchronous courses include courses from both the MSW CL and MSW CA programs. We made the GDip CERE a fully virtual synchronous diploma, recognizing that these students are working full time. As a result we have a good balance of in person and virtual synchronous courses on offer. We continue to assess.
- 2. Recognition of the work of faculty workload as well as the importance of associated work, through teaching release units provided to faculty members who take on the administration and evaluation of graduate programs as well as community based research platforms. More recently, we requested and received a 1.5 course release to support the program evaluation, recruitment, and application process for the MSW CL.
- 3. As field coordinator for the MSW CL program, J. Vengris continues to seek out excellent leadership placement opportunities in our community for MSW CL students.

# Dean's Comments:

The School has responded effectively to each component of this recommendation, with the support of the Faculty (e.g., in providing teaching release to address elements of it).



QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):
See above.
Recommendation: Review and refine the positioning and structure of Graduate Diplomas within the School's graduate programs.
Building on the self-study, undertake a review of the Graduate Diplomas: purposes, current audiences, opportunities presented by remote learning, new delivery arrangements and structures (e.g. micro-credentials that ladder to MSW), funding models (especially in light of new corridor funding arrangements), resources required for sustainability.
Responsibility for Implementation: Director, in consultation with Graduate Chair, GDip CERE program facilitator& Associate Dean Grad Studies & Research
Anticipated Timeline for Completion: Summer 2022
Additional Notes/Commentary:
Progress (check one)  X Completed  ☐ In Progress  ☐ Other (please explain)
Department's Comments: Upon review we decided to phase out the Graduate Diploma in Critical Leadership in Social Services and Communities due to low enrolment. We have not accepted students to this program for the last 3 years and the formal program closure is effective September 2025.
The School transitioned Graduate Diploma in Community Engaged Research and Evaluation (G.DIP CERE) to fully on-line program in Winter 2023.  Work continues to be done with the G.DIP CERE re: recruitment and programming and has been made possible with the work of Dr. Mary Vaccaro, a contractual faculty appointment (CLA).
Dean's Comments:
The School wrestled with how to best address thes issues, and following considerable deliberation, settled on a path forward that it implemented, with continued adjustment as appropriate



QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):
See above.
Recommendation:
Continue to review PhD student experience
Review attrition and times to completion to determine if program changes to support student success are merited
Responsibility for Implementation:
Director, with Graduate Chair
Anticipated Timeline for Completion: Summer 2021
Additional Notes/Commentary:
Progress (check one)
X Completed
☐ In Progress ☐ Other (please explain)
Department's Comments:
A PhD in social work attracts a diverse group of students, not all of whom have an academic career as their motivation. They come with years of practice or policy experience and are mature students who have multiple responsibilities. We continue to work with our students to identify ways to ensure they can move through the program in a timely manner and have provided avenues for seeking out support. One major concern is the cost of doing a PhD – including housing costs for students who do not live in Hamilton. Students are also concerned about the consequences of giving up all of their salary if they do not have a scholarship. We have increased the support provided regarding SSHRC applications and have been developing internal scholarships to financially support students as well. This in an ongoing process.
Dean's Comments:
As the School response notes, more than many of our programs the types of students and their goals are more diverse for SW than for other programs. The School, along with other programs in the

through their doctoral studies in a timely manner that reflects their career goals.

Faculty, has worked to better support students financially and otherwise, and to help them proceed



	QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):
	See above.
ĺ	Recommendation:
	Continue to be proactive regarding faculty and staff wellness
	As part of CASWE self-study, initiate formal conversation with faculty and staff to assess well-being as program growth and increasing complexity make their roles more demanding.
	In CASWE review, identify steps to protect well-being and balance demands and identify required adjustments to faculty and staff numbers.
	Decree 4.40 feet also also a testa a
	Responsibility for Implementation: Director and Adminstrator
	Anticipated Timeline for Completion:
	CASWE self-study this summer and fall; external review Spring 2022
	Additional Notes/Commentary:
	Progress (check one)
	Completed
	X In Progress
ŀ	Other (please explain)
	Department's Comments:
	UG Chair organizes teaching check ins throughout the term to stay connected with faculty, to see how things are going, strategize when issues arise and create a community of care with sessional and regular faculty.
	With funding from the Faculty, the School created a new staff role: Field and Alumni Relations Manager – supporting field team and taking field supervision and initiating new programming (ex. Webinars, alumni network to come) and new field opportunities.
	The School continues to support a part time graduate support staff (based on recommendation from CASWE reaccreditation report) that has provided graduate programs with additional staff support and also provided some graduate field related support (ex. Health and safety tracking and administration, webinar organization). Staff continue to be very busy with many commitments and we have focused on more connection and support of one another through information sharing in a formalized way

Revised: February 29, 2024

(staff meetings, vacation planning, training and back up within positions (primarily graduate, etc.)



Hybrid work environment has provided staff with flexibility and time and continues to be a positive influence on staff well-being. Staff are encouraged to support each other and to disconnect from work outside of work hours.

Saying all of this, Faculty and staff workloads continue to be high. Fiscal pressures experienced by the University and Faculty have meant that faculty retirements and pending staff retirements put the School at risk losing resources, which is a continued worry.

#### Dean's Comments:

The Faculty has invested considerably in both staff and faculty resources for the School to help it meet the increasing demands and challenges that it faces. Issues of staff wellness are not limited to Social Work. Staff in the Dean's Office, Academic Department Managers, and other leaders are all conscious of the need to support staff in a working environment that changed considerably following COVID. The School offers a caring, supportive environment for staff (faculty and students).

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above.

## Recommendation:

Encourage the inclusion of student voices by fostering student caucus participation within governance and decision-making structures .

Review processes for seeking student input into governance and decision-making; consider designated spots for members of caucus groups.

Responsibility for Implementation:

**UG** Chair

Anticipated Timeline for Completion:

Two-year horizon

Additional Notes/Commentary:

Progress (check one)

X Completed

☐ In Progress



# □ Other (please explain)

#### Department's Comments:

Creation of PhD Caucus Group Facilitator to bring student caucus groups back to life – more opportunities for connection and community, specifically among equity deserving students in our program. We created a fellowship/scholarship to develop this position as a way to support and recognize the work of a PhD student whose studies include addressing issues of racism and other forms of marginality. We are in our second year of this role, and we are starting to see our caucus groups connecting regularly, including our Social Work Student Collective, United in Colour, Disability Action Group, Social Work Queer Trans. Students are receiving peer support but are also in communication with faculty and staff when students needs arise. The faculty and staff have been exceptionally responsive to the students.

Students from the caucus groups communicate directly with students on our School Committees (UG, Grad, Field Instruction) to ensure their experiences and needs are represented. The Caucus group facilitator also has regular meetings with the UG chair and Director to share information as is necessary. In addition, the facilitator is working with the caucuses and one of the MSW CL students to host a town hall that will provide important information to the School's leadership regarding ongoing challenges and needs within the undergrad and grad programs.

Most recently United in Colour has been actively rejuvenated and the School provided support for the United and Colour symposium held in 2024.

## Dean's Comments:

This process is on-going, but the School has put the institutional mechanisms in place to continue to advance work in this area.

QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):

See above.

#### Recommendation:

As a School, review the University's commitment to Internationalization and explore stronger action to be better aligned with this particular direction reflected in the institution's strategic plan.

Consult with faculty members with interest/ expertise in internationalization; consider alignment with the University's Internationalization commitments, and any actions to foster greater alignment

Responsibility for Implementation:

Director

Anticipated Timeline for Completion:

Two-year horizon



Additional Notes/Commentary:
Progress (check one)
□ Completed
☐ In Progress
X Other (please explain)
Department's Comments:
This has been an ongoing challenge for us given the students who are typically attracted to and
appropriate for our programs. One faculty member, M. Carranza has a strong internationally-focused
program of research, however, this has not resulted in bringing students from Central America into
our programs. Having said that, we have had applications submitted to the BIRMAC fund in both years with some success.
years with some success.
Dean's Comments:
Attracting international students is a challenge for a program like Social Work, whose mandate is to
train students to enter social work practice in Canada (e.g., its curriculum is designed to meet the
standard of the Canadian accreditation process. As noted, faculty do undertake research and other
publicly facing activities that have an international focus. The School is open to integrating further
international elements consistent with its primary mandate.
QAC Comments (to be filled in by Quality Assurance Committee):
See above.