INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

STRATEGIC PLAN

2020 - 2025

An accessible version is located at socialwork.iu.edu/strategic-plan
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN
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I am so very pleased to introduce the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan of the Indiana University School of Social Work. We began our strategic planning process in fall 2018, during my first academic year as dean. Through conversations, brainstorming, surveys, and ongoing dialogue across multiple groups of stakeholders, we spent the entire academic year honing in on understanding and defining who we desire to be as a School of Social Work.

Over the ensuing months, our Strategic Planning Group analyzed the information gathered, drafted mission and vision statements, and proposed a detailed structure for our plan. We were almost there... and then came the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racial injustice... national and global public health crises abruptly shifting our attention to more urgent matters. Nevertheless, we ultimately persevered and completed our written plan, while forging ahead with some of our planned actions.

Words cannot adequately express my gratitude to the members of our School community who diligently worked together to bring about our strategic plan. I especially want to thank members of the Strategic Planning Group. Their exceptional level of commitment to our process and development of this final plan extended beyond anything I could have imagined.

The School’s experience this past year underscored just how important it is for us to be nimble, ready to respond to the ever-changing needs of our environment. Hence, we created a living plan which allows us to remain present for today and ready to pivot tomorrow, yet stay focused on core values and strategic priorities relevant to our future regardless of circumstance.

We invite you to join us on our journey over the next few years as we focus on four central inward and outward-facing pillars for progress. Our efforts aim to Ensure a Diverse and Inclusive Environment, Enhance Teaching and Learning, Strengthen School Infrastructure, and Increase Community and Global Engagement. We are energized and inspired by all of you who believe in the legacy and future of the Indiana University School of Social Work. Thank you for your continued support.

Photo by: Alexander Kumar, Indiana University.
SUMMARY

Upon the appointment of a new dean in July 2018, the Indiana University School of Social Work engaged in a two-year process to develop a new comprehensive and executable strategic plan. The inclusive process sought to recognize the School’s history and culture and invited broad participation of stakeholders to articulate, prioritize, and develop a clear vision and solid plan to guide the School for the next three to five years. The resulting strategic plan reflects a new vision, mission, and value statements, complemented by specific actions to build on past success and create the next chapter of social work education at Indiana University.

In fall 2018, the School began working with external consultant Concept Systems, Inc., an internal IUSSW Strategic Planning Group, and additional School stakeholders to develop a strategic plan framework. Our planning process utilized a series of methodologies, including an on-line survey, a World Café event, and Group Concept Mapping (GCM). The overall effort gathered, aggregated, and integrated the knowledge and opinions of IUSSW stakeholders, comprised of administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community agency partners. All of the participants’ information served as the foundation for determining our vision, priorities, and strategies embedded in the plan. Groups of faculty and staff worked together using the collected data to map out specific goals, objectives, plans for implementation, and strategies to monitor and measure success.
VISION

Guided by an authentic commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, the Indiana University School of Social Work is nationally and internationally recognized for educating leaders of tomorrow through community-engaged practice, research, and partnerships to positively impact individuals and society.

MISSION

The Indiana University School of Social Work, across its multiple campuses and online communities, provides a rich array of quality, accessible, and affordable educational opportunities to prepare graduates for practice and research in an increasingly diverse world. The School contributes to creating a fair, just, and equitable society by educating competent and ethical professionals to address complex social, environmental, and economic challenges on local, state, national, and global levels. Establishing dynamic partnerships, the School enhances the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, leading innovative and translational solutions through community-engaged practice, advocacy, policy, research, and service.
STATEMENT OF VALUES

A Statement of Values articulates how we will conduct ourselves. It answers the question, How do we want to treat others, and how do we want to be treated?

A list of School of Social Work “value statements” was compiled from faculty and staff during the spring 2019 School Assembly/Retreat. The Strategic Planning Group considered these value statements for alignment with our profession’s values and ethics, as well as with expectations from our accrediting body, the Council on Social Work Education. They then aligned each specific statement to a higher-level value and produced a set of six value areas. Within each value area are statements describing the values when in practice: “We live this value by...” illustrating a dynamic commitment to each value in IUSSW.

The following value statements, listed in no particular order, articulate the School’s primary values and examples of how the School lives them.
WE VALUE

Academic excellence and quality in our practices.
WE LIVE THIS VALUE BY:
• Leading in progressive curriculum development and standards-based education to strengthen effective teaching and learning.
• Ensuring curriculum quality through rigorous evaluation.
• Creating a culture of academic and research excellence that supports systematic, transferable knowledge and skills.
• Providing educational experiences that equip our students to promote well-being for individuals, families, communities, and organizations.

Our profession and its ideals.
WE LIVE THIS VALUE BY:
• Ensuring the ideals of the profession are apparent in all of our interactions with one another and the community.
• Engaging meaningfully with our alumni throughout their professional careers.
• Adhering to the profession’s Code of Ethics and Standards of Technology in social work education and practice.
• Maintaining the standards of professional practice, including but not limited to, licensure requirements, continuing education, certifications, and professional development.
• Developing dynamic partnerships and innovative solutions with the community at large.

Our dynamic and diverse community, founded on ethics, inclusivity, transparency, respect, and collaboration.
WE LIVE THIS VALUE BY:
• Demonstrating equity and inclusion through ethical practice to ensure that all voices are heard, respected, and considered.
• Practicing collaborative and transparent decision making that engages and responds to all individuals regardless of rank or status.
• Emphasizing diversity as a critical value in implementing collaborative community-wide system initiatives.
• Providing educational experiences that equip our students to promote well-being for individuals, families, communities, and organizations.

Engaged, inclusive leadership committed to supporting IUSSW now and in the future.
WE LIVE THIS VALUE BY:
• Modeling formal and informal leadership through education, scholarship, and service.
• Fostering engagement and communications within and across our systems with transparency, collaboration, and strong interpersonal relationships.
• Being stewards of a well-defined and transparent infrastructure to support students and all constituents.
• Providing educational experiences that equip our students to promote well-being for individuals, families, communities and organizations.

All faculty and staff and appreciate their contributions to our programs, culture, and community.
WE LIVE THIS VALUE BY:
• Supporting faculty and staff by creating multiple pathways for success, recognition, compensation, and opportunities to contribute and grow.
• Demonstrating a commitment to clear, fair, and effective hiring and retention practices.
• Supporting continued professional development for all faculty and staff.

Our students
WE LIVE THIS VALUE BY:
• Demonstrating integrity in the admissions process by welcoming students who are committed to advocating for social justice.
• Providing quality education that inspires future social work practitioners to be curious lifelong learners that seek best and evidence-based practices for a diverse world.
• Providing our students with consistent, high-quality, principle-based education responsive to emerging social, environmental, and economic needs.
• Employing an experiential and affective learning platform in class and field education.
• Seeking and supporting an inclusive and diverse student body by providing fair, transparent, consistent, and efficient recruitment, admissions, and retention processes.
• Relying on rigorous academic standards, a supportive environment to enhance student wellbeing, and incorporation of student voices throughout their time at IUSSW.
The last phase of data collection brought together the action ideas gathered throughout the process and culminated in the form of a Concept Map. The map configuration below reflects how participants classified the individual ideas for action into meaningful groupings. These groupings provided the framework for identifying specific areas of action for our strategic plan. In sum, the map’s eight groupings (or clusters) helped to organize the actions we need to take in order for us to become the School of Social Work we desire to be.

After reviewing the full data report and considering the overarching themes expressed through the data, the Strategic Planning Group settled on four strategic pillars to frame our strategic plan. The Concept Map below denotes these pillars in bold print, followed by the names of thematic areas (or clusters from the map), reflecting the supportive action ideas. The Strategic Planning Group included two additional thematic areas determined necessary to better correspond with the emphasis given in the data. Lastly, four additional thematic areas reflect university and community imperatives to which the School must respond.

**PILLAR 1. ENSURE A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT**

1. Raising our visibility and presence
2. Showing evidence of community impact*

**PILLAR 2. ENHANCE TEACHING & LEARNING**

3. Engaging and supporting quality students
4. Strengthening curriculum and assessment
5. Supporting and enhancing academic quality

**PILLAR 3. STRENGTHEN THE SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE**

6. Collaborating as a system school
7. Strengthening organizational systems to support Faculty and Staff
8. Establishing Faculty Research supports*

9. Enhancing School Communications*

**PILLAR 4. INCREASE COMMUNITY AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT**

1. Affirming culture and community
2. Activating our voices
3. Addressing societal inequities*

*Additional strategic focus areas reflect university and community imperatives to which the School must respond.
PILLARS & FOCUS AREAS

PILLAR 1. ENSURE A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

The IU School of Social Work seeks to Ensure a Diverse and Inclusive Environment for its students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Central to strengthening our internal environment and advancing external efforts, this pillar rose to the top of all stakeholders’ strategic priorities identified for the next three to five years.

Three specific focal areas will guide our work in this strategic area: Affirming Culture and Community, Activating our Voices, Addressing Societal Inequities.

AFFIRMING CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Items emphasize the critical role of respect and demonstrating social work values within the School’s environment; ensuring that diversity is not only reflected but honored for every group; giving voice to all campuses; importance of assessing the School’s climate and culture; ensuring diversity at all levels of School.

ACTIVATING OUR VOICES

Voice here means both effective communication and access to power and voice across the School, seeking and including people from diverse backgrounds to both lead and support the institution, as well as actively seeking feedback and addressing concerns.

ADDRESSING SOCIETAL INEQUITIES

This focal area aims to contribute to anti-oppressive, decolonizing, and anti-racist efforts that challenge longstanding systems of inequity and representation in the School’s broader community contexts.
The School recognizes that culture, diversity, and community are complex issues, shaped by context and structural conditions that may carry disparate meanings among members of our School community. This subtheme emphasizes the critical role of respect and demonstrating social work values within the School’s culture; making certain that diversity is both reflected and honored in every aspect of the School; and continually assessing the School’s climate and culture to hold itself accountable to its plan.

ENSURE A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

AFFIRMING CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Taking stock of the School’s current cultural climate in a constructive and safe manner and developing a process for ongoing assessment will help us to monitor our progress toward the diversity, equity, and inclusion we seek across our system. Our plan recognizes multiple forms of individual diversity, including life experiences, hidden identities, and intersectionality, and sets responsive and holistic goals inclusive of varied social identities. As culture and diversity are dynamic constructs, fostering a stance of cultural humility is critical to maintaining an inclusive community that honors diversity. Actionable strategies to exercise cultural humility at the individual, group, and institutional levels provide metrics to hold ourselves accountable to the foundational values on which the profession of social work is built.

FOUR STRATEGIC GOALS WILL GUIDE OUR WORK IN THIS FOCUS AREA:

1. Create an inclusive culture within IUSSW that celebrates complex diversity that recognizes intersectionality, invisible identities, life experiences, and acknowledges the context.

2. Operationalize, then embody IUSSW’s definition of diversity, equity and inclusivity.

3. Promote dialogue to address adverse interpersonal situations that compromise functioning in our diverse and inclusive cultural environment.

4. Ensure each campus’ input is valued equally and responded to in transparent ways.
Our aim for this focal area is to move beyond the rhetoric of diversity to concrete, workable actions that can transform the culture of the school and help both Social Work and Labor Studies maintain their positions as cutting-edge leaders in their respective fields. Activating Our Voices creates a new environment for the School in which ALL voices are heard and participate as full partners in the planning and execution of our day-to-day operations.

Three strategic goals will guide our work in areas including Recruitment and Retention of employees, Curriculum, and School and University Culture. The goals and objectives in this strategic area lean heavily on the Diversity Plan established and approved in 2018.

THREE STRATEGIC GOALS WILL GUIDE OUR WORK IN THIS FOCUS AREA:

1. Increase the number of Black/African-American, Latinx, Indigenous and other underrepresented minoritized people employed at IUSSW.

2. Curriculum: We seek a multicultural education approach incorporating communication models to enhance teaching with non-oppressive practices while actively preventing passing of oppressive historical traumas.

3. University and School Culture: Activating Our Voices and Actions needs to be part of a complete culture of diversity to ensure that all voices are heard, and that all stakeholders have opportunities for full participation.

A straight-forward set of activities and metrics will guide Recruitment and Retention to achieve the goal of increasing the number of African-American, Latinx, Indigenous, and other underrepresented minoritized persons employed at the IUSSW, as well as the promotion of the same to positions of leadership. The Curriculum area focuses on activities and metrics to achieve the goal of a non-oppressive multi-cultural set of education practices while actively dismantling the legacies of coloniality and racism that persist in our implicit and explicit daily practices. The term “activating our voices” includes the full participation of all stakeholders in the daily operation of the school. We will strive to eliminate, through training and exercises, patterns of implicit and explicit bias, and to promote team-building, respect, and humility. Activating Our Voices through concrete actions will change the culture of the school from the inside out.

It is imperative to not only implement plans to strengthen our solidarity and build the school we want to be, but to also ensure in and through our daily actions that we do more than “welcome” diverse voices, or “tolerate” difference. We must take the next steps beyond the catch-phrase diversity that permeates so many well-meaning institutional manifests. Instead, we will move toward an environment where activating and honoring all voices means unity and strength will come through radical solidarity, mutual respect, and attentive leadership. Work in this focal area invites our faculty, staff, and students to do the uncomfortable, rather than the routine, to take the path less travelled, and be fearless in the implementation plans that serve to change the culture of our school, and, indeed, ourselves.
Recent events in the external environment call our attention to the broader structural conditions that surround the IU School of Social Work, which require longer-term strategies to achieve positive change. An affirming culture and community within our institution cannot be fully achieved without attending to structural inequities in the social work profession and society at large.

ONE STRATEGIC GOAL WILL GUIDE OUR WORK IN THIS FOCUS AREA:

The School meaningfully contributes to anti-oppressive, decolonizing, and anti-racist efforts that challenge longstanding systems of inequity and representation in the broader community context.

Over the next three to five years, the School will partner with our local communities to identify and implement strategies to actively engage in anti-oppressive, decolonizing, and anti-racist community efforts. We will build on the strengths of our faculty, alumni, staff, and students to engage in collaborative research and service to support organizational and broader community efforts in bringing about social change.

PILLAR 2. ENHANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING

STRENGTHENING CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

Items describe interest and concrete ideas in assessing and advancing students’ skills and capacity; reassessing and supporting curriculum and course development with strong pedagogy; and ensuring that students have the necessary curriculum for their interests.

SUPPORTING AND ENHANCING ACADEMIC QUALITY

Items suggest faculty and staff professional development; faculty innovation; expectations and support for quality teaching and research; collaboration and quality improvement needed to support a culture of academic quality; advancing efforts around distance education; investing in resources to support research activity.

ENGAGING AND SUPPORTING QUALITY STUDENTS

Items represent student quality and performance: ways in which the School can support students via scholarships and services; changes to the admissions process; and ensuring that students are integrated into the School and University contexts.
The Strengthening Curriculum and Assessment subtheme focuses on supporting curriculum and course development using best practices for teaching and learning, ensuring students have relevant curriculum for their interests while meeting community needs and enhancing the assessment activities of the IUSSW to ensure we are achieving desired goals with our curriculum.

**ONE STRATEGIC GOAL WILL GUIDE OUR WORK IN THIS FOCUS AREA:**

1. **Promote consistency, quality, and relevance of curriculum.**

This goal builds on items identified as priorities during data collection. The IUSSW aims to implement a curriculum focused on developing effective social work practitioners employing evidence-based practices to meet pressing needs of client vulnerability and community justice. Another critical area of need is coordinating all of the School’s online courses. Online or hybrid courses across all campuses and programs must reflect a consistent scope of content and quality. An intentional coordinated effort will track them, help to standardize the courses with a consistent look and interface, and ensure they meet online course quality standards.

High-impact pedagogical practices and required course structures will be identified and integrated within curricular design, both for enactment in the classroom and through consistency in the online learning management system. The School will provide faculty responsible for developing or updating these courses with resources (e.g., e-learning, instructional design, time) to do so in ways that honor both face-to-face and online educational methods. It is important that the infrastructure for curriculum development and maintenance remains amenable to regular updates and flexibility for faculty influence.

Doing these things effectively requires clearly articulating the attitudes, knowledge, and skills students are required to master at educationally appropriate levels. It also requires ensuring curricular content builds on itself in a way that honors effective pedagogy and the needs of diverse learners and the social work profession. We will explore program enhancements for students to further improve their developing social work practice, skills, values, and knowledge in ways that simulate real life through relevant facilities, spaces, and course-embedded experiences. The IUSSW will improve mechanisms to manage syllabi, ensure core curriculum consistency, and effectively use our learning management system to maximize students’ learning. For example, identified lead faculty experts will develop and continually revise model syllabi and Canvas sites to ensure consistency in course content, provide support to faculty teaching the course, and ensure consistency of required course components while also allowing for individual faculty personalization.

With this goal, educational assessment activities of the IUSSW will also be enhanced to ensure we are maintaining a quality curriculum that results in desired outcomes for our students. To support expanded and integrated data-driven assessment activities, the Office of Educational Assessment will undertake some reconceptualization, beginning with the development of a permanent, inclusive, cross-curriculum, and cross-campus Assessment Advisory Committee. In conjunction with the School’s Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and curriculum committees, the Assessment Advisory Committee will conduct an initial review of all current assessment activities and generate a report with recommendations to strengthen and coordinate the School’s assessment processes and procedures to meet the needs of the university, the goals of our School, and the requirements of CSWE accreditation.
The central focus of these efforts is to maintain a culture of teaching and learning among faculty and to assist them with further developing their teaching skills and knowledge of best practices. Regular programming and opportunities for faculty to come together around issues related to teaching will provide synergies for innovation and shared learning. Faculty will be supported in the improvement of both their online and in-person teaching skills.

ONE STRATEGIC GOAL WILL GUIDE OUR WORK IN THIS FOCUS AREA:

Enhance academic quality by supporting faculty development and strengthening teaching skills.

Faculty may choose to set annual individual goals and provide evidence of their related professional development, and these efforts will be guided by the School’s Director of Faculty Development. The School is fortunate to have three Faculty Academy on Excellence in Teaching (FACET) members who can also assist with planning teaching-related workshops and supportive services.

All efforts will intentionally include part-time faculty as well as full-time faculty of the School to ensure that all faculty are able to improve and develop their teaching-related knowledge and skills. Moreover, recognition and support will be provided for our field instructors (many of whom are our alumni), who, in partnership with our faculty, are responsible for Social Work’s signature pedagogy. Such efforts will honor their commitment to the profession and to advancing the learning of our students.

McNair et al. (2016) identified that 51% of college students are first generation students – 51% identify as being in the low to moderate income levels, 26% are working full-time, and 42% are from communities of color. The World Health Organization (2018) surveyed nearly 14,000 first-year college students and discovered that 35% of surveyed students struggled with mental health issues. We know that 21st century students face complex barriers and have complex needs while working on their college education. The IUSSW, along with higher education institutions in general, is looking at ways to support and incentivize students to degree completion.

ONE STRATEGIC GOAL WILL GUIDE OUR WORK IN THIS FOCUS AREA:

Increase opportunities, resources, and supports to enhance student learning, achievement, and success.

To ensure equal opportunities for IUSSW students across programs and campuses, and to increase student retention, completion, and successful attainment of their goals, the IUSSW seeks to examine potential disparities in demographic groups of students and explore the need for additional supportive services. For example, we will explore the potential need for campus collaborations, community collaborations, mentorship programs, incentives and/or scholarships, student services programs, and/or mental health services and supports. We will rely on alumni as a resource and voice on the ground to help identify potential avenues of engagement. Likewise, we will focus more intentionally on development efforts that support the educational advancement of our students and offer innovative opportunities.

We also seek to create additional opportunities for students to further increase their practice knowledge and skill sets as well as their overall academic performance. These opportunities aim to better prepare students for academic success in our programs as well as success in both field and post-graduation practice.
PILLAR 3. STRENGTHEN THE SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

Through the strategic planning data collection discussions, faculty and staff identified a need to strengthen the School's infrastructure on multiple levels. Most actions necessary to achieve the goals in this pillar are centered internally. With our programs available across campuses, the School of Social Work is one of only two remaining academic units within Indiana University that function as a “system” school across most campuses. Accordingly, we must maintain centralized functional areas to ensure equitable supports for faculty and staff on every campus.

COLLABORATING AS A SYSTEM SCHOOL

Key elements in this cluster include the value of connecting across campuses and streamlining processes; developing ways to integrate research, teaching, and service as a School; and using all available tools and technologies to advance the School as a system.

ESTABLISHING FACULTY RESEARCH SUPPORTS

This added area relates to the need to establish formalized leadership to advance the School’s and faculty research efforts, including human resources, infrastructure, faculty workload, and expectations.

ENHANCING SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

This added area reflects the extent of data collected that identify internal and external communications as a critical, central function to support the School as a system and to support successful implementation of our strategic plan.

STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT FACULTY & STAFF

Items emphasize systems to raise capacity and support for all faculty and staff, including clarity on responsibility and authority, using annual reviews, and ensuring policies and structures are clear and effective. Cluster includes concrete issues related to workload, salary, advancement opportunities, annual reviews, position descriptions, and school structure.
In 1858, in Springfield Illinois, Abraham Lincoln gave a famous speech that began, “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” Another common phrase is that, in some cases, the sum is greater than its parts, and, in another, “There is safety in numbers.” A major political campaign in the past decade adopted the slogan, “Stronger together.” As a system school, the IUSSW is perhaps the most structurally complex school of social work in the United States. Indiana University has no plan to disaggregate our system; doing so would be expensive to the university and to individual campuses.

Collaborating as a System School

Each individual campus program strives to promote excellence in research and scholarship, teaching, and service. We must maximize the potential strength of a unified, respectful and collaborative joining together of the resources present on each campus. This plan aims to maximize the strengths of a system school that embraces the uniqueness of each campus and harnesses the diverse strengths present across the system.

Key elements of the overarching goal include the value of connecting across campuses; developing ways to integrate research, teaching, and service as a school; and using all available tools and technology to advance the IUSSW as a system. School constituencies prioritize the elements in this particular subtheme differently depending on their day-to-day role in the School. Based on the perspectives offered in our data collection process, administrators and staff view collaborating as a systems school as more critical and believe we have more capacity to address this strategic area than is thought by faculty and students. This is not surprising in that administrators and staff most often work in roles that involve processes and policies that affect the entire IUSSW system, while faculty and students may have more affinity for their individual campuses and be less oriented to the systems-nature of IUSSW. Indeed, the faculty and student perceptions actually suggest the need for increased focus on this area, as we are a system school and not an unrelated set of programs.

Over the next three to five years we will work to strengthen the systems-character and day-to-day functioning of the IUSSW. Strengthening collaboration within the system will focus on issues of equity and access across all campuses, as well as attention to building school collegiality and relationships which are foundational to healthy and productive work environments. The objectives and planned efforts reflect a need for both relational and technological platforms to bring teaching, research, and school policy into a common space that is understood and accessible by all relevant parties.

One Strategic Goal Will Guide Our Work in This Focus Area:

Create connections across campuses to foster relationships, provide equal access to resources and information, and to explore curricular approaches that lead to consistent student learning outcomes.
Nationally, the trend in funding of public higher education has involved a reduction in public funding, higher tuition, and a need for higher education programs to generate external funding (Pew, 2019). Such external funding supports the creation and dissemination of knowledge, goals that are fundamental to scholarly work. External funding also generates revenue to support salaries and free up other funds for use in strengthening educational and service missions. The level of external funding also affects the reputation and ranking of higher education programs.

A faculty research supports committee convened to develop strategies to address this need and established two broad aims. The first aim is to develop a system-wide infrastructure to increase and maintain research funding. Central to this aim is establishing an office for research support and hiring people who can help facilitate the grant writing process. Personnel should include operational and editorial support; post-award support, such as project and grants managers; and statistical support. Increased physical space for research activities, including space for research assistants and staff, are vital to cohesive operations.

The infrastructure will establish a committee of faculty to meet regularly to help all faculty pursuing grant applications. Ideally, faculty would submit a draft of their grant application to this committee for review, and the committee would provide verbal and written feedback to faculty. This aim requires faculty to take ownership of the School’s grant activities and recognize faculty with expertise in writing grants across the school system. Faculty must also be made aware of research funding opportunities by providing ongoing education and communications around different forms of funding, such as types of federal funding mechanisms, as well as state, foundation, and private sources of research funding. While aspirational, the infrastructure would support mechanisms to pay faculty summer funding for writing grants. Negotiated with the dean, and contingent on faculty submitting a grant writing activity plan, such support increases faculty capacity to write grant applications over the summer. The research infrastructure and supports must be accessible to faculty across all campuses. One metric to demonstrate success of the infrastructure and related activities is an increase in the number of grant applications submitted and the number of research awards obtained.

The second aim is the development of content focused research groups. Faculty across the School share research interests; however, not all faculty are aware of overlapping research interests. Initially, we will determine those areas of shared research interest, such as mental health, school social work, child welfare, etc. Once established, these groups would meet regularly. Creating online communities could facilitate connection of group members and ensure all campuses are included. One activity for these groups would include writing manuscripts and grants together. Not only would these groups help to connect faculty with similar interests, they would help to develop research relationships across the state. The primary metrics to demonstrate success would include an increase in the number of manuscripts and grants generated from the research group partnerships. Further evidence of the research groups’ success would be an increase in the number of community research partners.

**ENHANCING SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS**

Swift and clear communication is a necessary tool to move the IUSSW forward and strengthen all aspects of the School. Emerging from the strategic planning data, this subtheme emphasizes the essentiality of strong communications both within the IU School of Social Work, with our Alumni, and with external entities.

**ONE STRATEGIC GOAL WILL GUIDE OUR WORK IN THIS FOCUS AREA:**

- **Strengthen internal and external communications through the use of technology and leverage existing IU communication systems.**

An internal focus will ensure communications reach our entire school community in today’s digital and mobile world by identifying the most effective tools to connect people across our school how and when members prefer. Efforts include establishing formal processes to guide workflow and expedite the sharing of information, as well as enhancing the School’s presence and capacity around the use of social media to increase the number of people engaged in our social media platforms.

This goal also aims to strengthen the use of technology in School communications. A key effort is to better utilize digital communication channels along with an integrated approach that merges progressive technologies with time-tested tactics. Enhancing the school’s website and its respective infrastructure will provide a relevant face for the School in today’s communications and marketing environment. We will maximize the technological capacity of the School to increase our data collection and use of data analytics in decision making. Building on past efforts, an enhanced intranet for faculty and staff promises to improve internal operations and communications across our School system.

The School of Social Work also plans to leverage and increase its participation with existing IU Communications Systems. Salesforce, a communications management system, offers tremendous opportunities for us to develop a centralized system for more efficient communications within the School and with external constituencies. Increased use by faculty and staff of Collaboratory, a centralized system to enhance our capacity to externally communicate the extent and impact of our community and global engagement and impact. Similarly, engaging faculty in the use of IU’s Research Funding and Communication system would serve to inform others of their research interests and successes, while identifying grants and potential funders with interest in the great work of our faculty.

**STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT FACULTY & STAFF**

Clarify responsibility and authority and use of annual reviews, and ensure School policies and structures are clear and effective. Concrete issues related to workload, salary, advancement opportunities, and position descriptions.

**ONE STRATEGIC GOAL WILL GUIDE OUR WORK IN THIS FOCUS AREA:**

- **Ensure overall operational structure supports faculty and staff by providing meaningful mentorships and creating an organizational structure that supports workloads for work-life balance.**

One strategic action for this goal is to provide meaningful mentoring and support for new faculty and staff. We recognize the importance of supporting the professional growth and development of all employed members of the School community. Planned efforts include assessing current mentoring processes in place as well as the needs for faculty and staff across campuses. These assessments will inform recommendations for organizational structure and any changes needed for effective mentoring of faculty and staff.

Another strategic action is to create an organizational structure that supports balanced workloads and a healthy work-life balance for staff and faculty. Specifically, advancing communications from across the School system about workload experiences and needs will serve to inform areas to be addressed by administration. The key aim in this focal area is to ensure equitable workloads across faculty and staff.

Ensuring the School’s overall operational structure supports faculty and staff retention and job satisfaction is also important to strengthening the organizational structure. Conducting a review of the School’s organizational structure will identify areas where improvements are needed to address faculty and staff job satisfaction, advancement, and encourage optimal and creative performance. We desire to create a structure which provides opportunities for staff as well as faculty advancement.
PILLAR 4. INCREASE COMMUNITY AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

IUSSW is committed to excellence in community and global collaborative education, research, and service for advancing social and economic justice, empowerment, and human well-being in a changing global landscape. To realize this vision, we will engage in implementable strategies to raise our visibility and presence across IU campuses in the IUSSW system, as well as local, state, national, and international arenas. We seek to ensure our communications include diverse perspectives and that we are visible in diverse communities.

RAISING OUR VISIBILITY AND PRESENCE

Items suggest needs and mechanisms to activate outreach marketing and recognize the environment in which the School is competing: increase partnerships and purposeful recruitment of students of color; strengthen IUSSW’s presence in University and community.

SHOWING EVIDENCE OF COMMUNITY IMPACT

This area aims to address ways in which the School can measure and track levels of community engagement and the impact of our efforts on the communities and stakeholders we serve.

INCREASE COMMUNITY AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

RAISING OUR VISIBILITY AND PRESENCE

TWO STRATEGIC GOALS WILL GUIDE OUR WORK IN THIS FOCUS AREA:

1. IUSSW is committed to excellence in community and global-based collaborative education, research, and service for advancing social and economic justice, empowerment, and human well-being in a changing global landscape.

2. The IUSSW implements strategies that raise our visibility and presence at various IU campuses, local, state, national, and international arenas.

Research, including Market Research, will allow us to determine the degree of IUSSW’s presence in communities, how our presence is perceived, the impact of our presence, and the best practice approaches for strengthening community and global-based collaborations. We aim to maximize the mutual benefits associated with community and global engagement education, scholarship, and research.

Our plan seeks to identify and strategically engage opportunities and resources to strengthen our existing and ongoing partnerships, both within and outside of the University. We also aim to attract additional opportunities and resources for taking on new and innovative community and global initiatives, such as expanding the behavioral health academy model, and developing partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, to remain competitive in an increasingly dynamic world.
In an effort to demonstrate the impact of our community and global engagement efforts, we will develop and institutionalize internal mechanisms to gather, report, and utilize relevant data. The ability to monitor our impact increases our capacity to sustain, encourage, and increase IUSSW faculty, staff, and students’ motivation for community and globally engaged education, scholarship, research, and service. Celebrating our progress and applying the results of our assessments will continue to inform IUSSW’s ongoing planning.

The IUSSW will identify and apply different assessment and dissemination tools to show the impact of our community-based collaborations and to ensure continuous evaluation of our community and globally engaged impacts. We aim to highlight IUSSW’s community and global engagement efforts through the use of diverse data collection strategies, reporting, and dissemination mechanisms. Outlets such as social media, media, quarterly newsletters, testimonies, and our website can serve to engage a diverse stakeholder audience and ensure that content is inclusive of all campuses and programs of both Social Work and Labor Studies.

CONCLUSION

As the Indiana University School of Social Work sets its course over the next three to five years, we understand now better than ever that events out of our control may alter our immediate and future directions. Social Work is a profession that demands flexibility and real-time response if we are to meet the needs of communities and the educational needs of the students we prepare to serve in our communities.

Our strategic plan is the culmination of a year-long data collection effort and planning process involving multiple groups of stakeholders contributing their ideas to a shared vision of the IU School of Social Work. While ambitious, our plan includes four strategic pillars to guide actionable steps in concert with our newly revised mission. We seek an inclusive environment for all stakeholders, an enhanced educational experience for our students, an improved infrastructure to support our people and operations, and increased local and global engagement with communities. To achieve such gains, we must align our investments and actions with our goals. Our faculty, students, staff, alumni, and community partners are ready to engage in the work of today to build a better tomorrow.

The IU School of Social Work aims to uphold its rich 109-year history as Indiana’s premier public educator of social workers. We welcome you to join us in Giving Hope and Changing Lives as we journey together with courage, humility, and perseverance in service and leadership in fulfillment of our newly established mission.
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**STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUPS**

**PILLAR 1. ENSURE A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT**

**AFFIRMING CULTURE AND COMMUNITY**

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# Pillar 2. Enhance Teaching and Learning

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# Pillar 3. Strengthen School Infrastructure

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## Strengthening Organizational Systems to Support Faculty and Staff

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PILLAR 4. INCREASE COMMUNITY AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

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RAISING OUR VISIBILITY AND PRESENCE

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SHOWING EVIDENCE OF COMMUNITY IMPACT

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