

UTQAP Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan

1. Review Summary

Programs Reviewed:	<p>Social Work, PhD Master of Social Work, MSW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSW Fields: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children and Their Families ○ Gerontology ○ Health and Mental Health ○ Human Services Management and Leadership ○ Indigenous Trauma and Resiliency ○ Social Justice and Diversity • Delivery options: All MSW fields except for Indigenous Trauma and Resiliency offer an advanced-standing option
Division Reviewed:	Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work
Commissioning Officer:	Vice-President & Provost
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Devaney, Centenary Chair of Social Work and Professor, School of Social and Political Science; University of Edinburgh • Jacquie Green, Director and Associate Professor, School of Social Work; University of Victoria • Lynn Videka, Dean and Carol T. Mowbray Collegiate Professor of Social Work; University of Michigan
Date of Review Visit:	December 6-10, 2021 (conducted remotely)
Date Reported to AP&P:	February 16, 2023

Previous UTQAP Review

Date: October 8-10, 2014

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Significant Program Strengths

- National and international reputation for strength and focus of programs
- Unique clinical emphasis of M.S.W. program
- North American leader in development and evaluation of innovative M.S.W. student assessment methods
- Very talented, competitive student body
- Graduates of doctoral program make lifelong contributions to social work
- Faculty undertake landmark research and widely disseminate knowledge

Opportunities for Program Enhancement

- Continuing to monitor quality of instruction in multi-section M.S.W. courses
- Continuing to prioritize enhanced diversity among students and faculty
- Identifying ways to meet needs for M.S.W. student placements
- Increasing career counselling and communication about funding opportunities to doctoral students
- Proceeding with plans to close the diploma program and incorporating components into the continuing education program
- Continuing to mentor junior faculty and support their development of leadership skills
- Strengthening the Faculty's impact on social work policy and practice

Current Review: Documentation and Consultation

Documentation Provided to Reviewers

- Review Terms of Reference
- Site Visit Schedule
- Self-study and appendices including access to course descriptions and faculty CVs
- Previous review report including administrative response
- Towards 2030: The View from 2012 - An Assessment of the University of Toronto's Progress Since Towards 2030

Consultation Process

- Vice President and Provost
- Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
- Dean, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work
- Incoming Interim Dean, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work

- Associate Dean, Academic
- Associate Dean, Research
- PhD Program Director
- MSW Program Director
- Professional Association Leaders (Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers; Ontario Association of Social Workers)
- Research Staff
- Full-time MSW Students
- Alumni Representatives
- Assistant Dean, Student Services & Registrar
- Assistant Dean, Field Education
- Chief Administrative Officer
- Senior Communications Strategist
- Director of Advancement
- FIFSW Librarians
- Administrative staff
- Dean, Dalla Lana School of Public Health
- Dean, Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy
- Dean, Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing
- Vice-Dean Research and Program Innovation, School of Graduate Studies
- PhD Students
- Junior Faculty Members
- Senior Faculty Members
- Field Supervisors
- Curriculum Innovations Committee

Current Review: Findings and Recommendations

1. Undergraduate Program(s) n/a

2. Graduate Program(s)

Unless otherwise noted, all bulleted comments apply to all programs reviewed.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Reviewers note high of quality applicants and enrolled students, strong student completion rates, and quality of graduates as particular FIFSW strengths
 - ▶ Clear evidence of mechanisms to ensure ongoing quality assurance of programs
 - ▶ MSW is well-rounded, offering six fields of study
- Objectives
 - ▶ FIFSW goals and objectives are consistent with those of the University

- ▶ Program requirements and learning outcomes are clear, appropriate and align with relevant undergraduate and/or graduate degree level expectations
- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ FIFSW has increased enrolments in recent years
 - ▶ Admission requirements yield a motivated and increasingly diverse student body
 - ▶ Students indicate satisfaction with the admissions process
 - ▶ PhD admission criteria similar to other highly regarded social work doctoral programs; program attracts a highly capable set of students
- Curriculum and program delivery
 - ▶ MSW curriculum complies with CASWE learning outcomes
 - ▶ Careful consideration has been given to the integration of the two MSW practicums, and to preparing students for these experiences
 - ▶ MSW option for existing BSW holders to have advanced standing appears successful
 - ▶ Required PhD courses provide very sound preparation for training as independent researchers, and students enjoy ample opportunities to take electives
 - ▶ Design of various programs and pathways have been carefully developed, with clear alignment between overall program objectives, learning outcomes for individual courses, and specific assessment approaches
 - ▶ Positive use of research-informed teaching approaches; senior academics involved in teaching of students at MSW and PhD levels
- Innovation
 - ▶ FIFSW an international leader in simulation-based learning
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Increased number of international and BIPOC students “a significant and important development”
 - ▶ Development of Indigenous Trauma and Resiliency MSW field is an “innovative and important offering” and a highlight of the program; opportunities are noted to implement approaches from the field to the broader MSW program
 - ▶ Curriculum now includes Human Services Management and Leadership, and Social Justice and Diversity fields of study, which reviewers note as a positive step
 - ▶ Curriculum Innovation Committee working to better incorporate Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the school
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Elective opportunities that align with student-chosen specialisms noted as positive
 - ▶ Students report excellent support overall from supervisors and other faculty
 - ▶ Students welcome being taught by national and international thought leaders, and appreciate FIFSW’s intellectually stimulating environment
 - ▶ MSW students report finding program requirements relevant and valuable
 - ▶ ‘Introduction to Social Work’ conference at outset of MSW program highlighted as innovative and useful for new students
 - ▶ PhD students are positive about the teaching they receive and learning opportunities they are afforded
 - ▶ Course option on publication and grant writing is useful for PhD students who plan on pursuing academic positions

- Quality indicators – graduate students
 - ▶ Faculty and staff are pleased with the student body and know that the program attracts excellent students
 - ▶ Field Education Supervisors noted that students hired from U of T are the most prepared for Field Practice, compared to those from other Ontario institutions
 - ▶ MSW program highly selective, admitting approximately 30% of applicants
 - ▶ Applicants to the MSW and PhD have strong academic backgrounds, and often have substantial paid and voluntary work experiences
 - ▶ Doctoral time to completion is comparable to averages within Division II social sciences, and the wider university
- Quality indicators – alumni
 - ▶ Alumni indicate that the program prepared them for their professions
- Student funding
 - ▶ Proportion of students with a Fellowship or Scholarship is nearly twice the rate of the wider Division II social sciences

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Admissions requirements
 - ▶ MSW program enrolment is capped based on amount of provincial funds it receives for students
- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Curriculum and program procedures and policies do not adequately reflect international and/or BIPOC epistemologies, pedagogies and experiences
 - ▶ “Students described the curriculum as Euro-centric and wanted more diverse faculty members. Several stated that they wish the FIFSW would work harder to de-center the curriculum’s fundamentally colonial lens.”
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Ensuring sufficient numbers of high-quality placements to meet needs of individual students noted as a challenge (as at other institutions)
 - ▶ Some students express concern at a lack of transparency in the placement identification/allocation process, and some international students feel that potential placements that would better meet their needs were not supported
 - ▶ Students express concerns that FIFSW communications are frequently inadequate, and procedures and mechanisms to resolve problems and questions are unclear
 - ▶ U of T social work graduates have tended to score FIFSW lower on the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey compared to other U15 (social work) institutions

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Accessibility and diversity
 - ▶ Work of Curriculum Innovations Committee around curriculum change and faculty development related to EDI issues is promising, but should be accelerated

- ▶ Ensure that students from different cultural and educational contexts are supported to adapt to systems and processes within FIFSW; FIFSW should be proactive in identifying and responding to these needs
- ▶ Need identified for enhanced support for students and partner agencies in instances where English is not the student's first language
- ▶ Ongoing need noted to enhance curriculum, policies and procedures to reflect international, Indigenous and BIPOC knowledge
- ▶ "The new, more diverse student body, which is close to 50% BIPOC and international students, want more diversity content in the curriculum and they want more diverse curriculum choices"
- Student engagement, experience and program support services
 - ▶ Some more experienced students note that certain classes are too elementary, and indicate desire that the program focus less on academic performance, with more weight put on social service experience
 - ▶ It could be useful to explore the experiences of current international students with the process for identifying and allocating placements, to better support future students
 - ▶ Students indicate desire for better preparation for advanced practice, additional skills-based training, and further opportunities for in-class practice and simulation
 - ▶ Students express desire for enhanced focus on policy and community practice
 - ▶ "FIFSW may wish to reflect upon these lower student and graduate evaluations, and the comments in other parts of this report about students feeling their views are not heard or acted upon"
 - ▶ FIFSW should review student feedback on obstacles to academic progress, in order to address factors impacting some students
- Student funding
 - ▶ FIFSW students are eligible for \$500 once every academic year for attending and presenting at social work and Social Work-related conferences; reviewers note this appears to be a very low amount and should be reviewed

3. Faculty/Research

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Overall quality
 - ▶ Faculty are highly respected by students and faculty colleagues
 - ▶ Senior faculty members are national and international leaders in their fields and in the wider discipline
 - ▶ Junior faculty are on good career trajectories and would also be strong candidates for appointment at other major institutions
- Research
 - ▶ Quantity and quality of faculty research activity is high, with members pursuing topics that are in line with University priorities
 - ▶ FIFSW has strong track record with SSHRC funding

- ▶ “The FIFSW and the university hold an international standard for research productivity and impact”
- ▶ Faculty publications are increasing steadily, as are collaborations with faculty from other divisions
- ▶ “The average h-index of FIFSW faculty is an astounding 25. Eight faculty have been awarded major national or international awards.”
- ▶ Future FIFSW research goals include expanding funding, enhancing recognition for senior faculty successes, building stronger resources for junior faculty to succeed, and focusing on the next generation of faculty and EDI in the MSW and PhD student bodies

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Research
 - ▶ Some teaching-stream faculty express desire to conduct research, however their workload does not support sufficient time to pursue this
- Faculty
 - ▶ Discrepancies noted across various levels of faculty in terms of roles and expectations, support available (depending on which stream they belong to), and ability for mentorship and research opportunities
 - ▶ Junior tenure track faculty appear to carry most of the curriculum service positions

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Faculty
 - ▶ Reviewers note possible need to amend FIFSW procedures and policies to reflect EDI concerns in assessing faculty applications for tenure and promotion

4. Administration

Note: Issues that are addressed through specific University processes and therefore considered out of scope for UTQAP reviews (e.g., individual Human Resources issues, specific health and safety concerns) are routed to proper University offices to be addressed, and are therefore not included in the Review Summary component of the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan.

The reviewers observed the following **strengths**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ FIFSW faculty, students and staff share significant pride in the reputation and quality of the program, the research that FIFSW conducts with PhD student engagement, the high-quality instruction, the excellence of the doctoral program, and in the quality of MSW preparation for practice, including the high-quality field instruction
 - ▶ FIFSW is respected by and collaborative with many units and divisions at U of T

- ▶ Outgoing Dean noted for having helped the University make significant changes in how the institution thinks about diversity, and addresses systemic and racialized practices
- ▶ Faculty are very satisfied with and feel supported by FIFSW's research administration
- ▶ "FIFSW is vibrant member of the global social work education and research communities"
- ▶ Faculty are highly respected and admired by alumni and community practitioners, and engaged in the community via research, field education, and providing expertise to community agencies
- ▶ Faculty's strong regional reputation enables excellent field practicum learning opportunities for FIFSW students
- ▶ "FIFSW has managed remarkably well during the disruptions of the COVID pandemic"
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Reintroduction of a MSW program director appears to have supported the Associate Dean, Academic in increasing focus on strategic issues
 - ▶ Structure and communications of field education, administration of PhD program, and research administration are areas of administrative strength
 - ▶ FIFSW appears to be on sound financial footing, with surplus typically generated each year
 - ▶ Greater number of international MSW students has increased income
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ FIFSW performing at a high standard relative to other parts of the University and comparator Schools of Social Work
 - ▶ "[T]he University offers academic space for the FIFSW to enhance and broaden the scope of social work scholarship, community partnerships and diverse, equitable and decolonial education"
 - ▶ Reviewers commend FIFSW's high percentage of successful research applications and quality of scholarship, strong graduate and PhD completions, and excellent national and international reputation of faculty
 - ▶ High demand for the MSW program, especially from international students, meaning the program has the potential to grow significantly
- International comparators
 - ▶ FIFSW an internationally regarded school of social work, with strong cohorts of students, staff and faculty
 - ▶ The Faculty enjoys a long standing and well-deserved international reputation as a global leader in Social Work education and research
 - ▶ Content of programs is comparable with what would be expected and delivered at other highly-regarded institutions

The reviewers identified the following **areas of concern**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Morale of faculty, students and staff noted as “a bit uneven” (though current external environmental and political conditions acknowledged as contributing factors)
 - ▶ A number of issues relating to faculty morale are noted:
 - Untenured faculty appear to bear disproportionate responsibility for curriculum leadership and, possibly a heavier overall service load
 - Teaching-stream faculty have research aspirations and are frustrated by workload they feel is not supportive of research activity
 - Faculty at all levels note gender, hierarchy and status, type of research, and workload for junior faculty as issues that require attention
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Recent high turnover of administrative staff noted, with related implications for program delivery
 - ▶ Some lack of clarity reported regarding who is responsible for some student services, and for addressing student questions and problems
 - ▶ Faculty note lack of clear administrative procedures for implementing policies for students, and for faculty personnel matters
 - ▶ FIFSW has smaller administration compared to many other divisions on campus
 - ▶ While balance of FIFSW resources appears appropriate, government grants have been significantly reduced in recent years
- Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ If a choice is made to grow the MSW program, it would then face a lack of public funding for students
 - ▶ Given strains that international students report around the increasingly diverse and global student body and FIFSW’s largely domestic-focused curriculum, some tensions are noted around enrolment choices and the relevance of the curriculum for the current body of students

The reviewers made the following **recommendations**:

- Relationships
 - ▶ Conduct an assessment of and create a plan to improve faculty climate within FIFSW
- Organizational and financial structure
 - ▶ Strengthen the administrative management of FIFSW through an assessment of the size of the support staff, and creation and communication of clear procedures and responsibilities for administrative functions decision making
 - ▶ Develop a communication plan to increase clarity regarding who to contact with specific questions
 - ▶ Strengthen procedures and increase clarity around administrative policies and decision-making processes related to faculty matters
 - ▶ “The FIFSW may want to consider where its own administration is viewed as strong by students and faculty, or learning more about the best administratively organized

- academic units on campus or in other top Schools of social work to bring better internal communication and transparency of administrative functions to the school.”
- ▶ Need identified for a dedicated FIFSW IT staff member
 - ▶ Increasing the proportion of academic support staff noted as a potential area for investment of the Faculty’s reserves
 - Long-range planning and overall assessment
 - ▶ Continue and intensify FIFSW’s commitment to and efforts towards equity, diversity and inclusion for faculty, staff, student body and programs
 - ▶ Implementing anti-racism and decolonization work will require “transparent and collective visioning, and strategizing, inclusive of faculty, staff and students”
 - ▶ “[D]evelop a full and explicit enrollment management plan that lays out enrollment goals and strategies including an explicit analysis of the recruitment of international students, and increased emphasis on the implications of international enrollments for curriculum and student services”
 - ▶ “As the FIFSW consolidates a more diverse international student body it would be worth considering the diversity of the faculty, while also balancing the need to ensure that students are prepared for practise in Canada”
 - ▶ Maintain awareness of disciplinary practices beyond North America, such as the focus on community development, and on social institutions rather than the individual
 - ▶ FIFSW encouraged to reflect on how it might enhance the international focus of the Faculty’s research, and develop collaborations with colleagues worldwide

2. Administrative Response and Implementation Plan



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

FACTOR-INWENTASH
FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK

Office of the Dean

January 16, 2023

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
Simcoe Hall
27 King's College Circle
Toronto, ON M5S 1A2

Administrative Response to the External Review Report for the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work.

Professor McCahan:

Thank you for providing us with the summary of the external review report and the opportunity to respond to the findings. The report has facilitated important discussions in our Faculty and will contribute to the upcoming development of a new strategic plan.

We appreciate the report's attention to areas of strength in curriculum, research, collaborative relationships, quality of students and faculty, and efforts/outcomes toward accessibility, equity, diversity, and inclusion. These are areas in which we intend to continually improve.

The areas identified by the reviewers as requiring attention were largely known, and you will note in this response that they are already topics of discussion and action. Having recently returned from conferences where I met with academic leaders across North America, I can add that the challenges faced by our school are faced by all the schools of social work, reflecting ongoing recovery from pandemic disruptions, and needed transformations to address contemporary issues in the discipline and the health and social service sectors. We look forward to taking these issues into strategic planning to develop clear objectives and measures of success.

Reviewer Recommendations and Responses

The reviewers recommended the development of a full and explicit enrolment management plan laying out enrolment goals and strategies, with consideration of the implications of international enrolments for recruitment, curriculum, and student services.

The reviewers are mistaken in thinking we have doubled our student enrolment by recruiting international students. The growth of the MSW program happened over several years and the increased enrolment of international students began in 2020, adding 25 students to a cohort that would have otherwise been approximately 400 FTEs. We have maintained a target of enrolling up to 30 international students each year since. We review enrolment goals and strategies annually, and enrolment goals are considered in light of our capacity to ensure top quality classroom and field-based education.

We are committed to creating resources and supports to promote the success of international students and support their learning goals.

Short-term Actions

The Faculty has developed international students support over the past year. We have designated a faculty member to serve as the international student advisor and we are using ISEF funding to implement co-curricular programming designed to meet the needs of international students. Examples include a series of international student orientations, group mentoring, seminars on the Canadian social policy context, and social events to build community. Furthermore, our plan to increase staffing in the Field Education office includes the goal of recruiting someone to provide specialized support for international students.

Medium-term Actions

We will be reviewing the MSW and PhD curriculum to identify opportunities to enhance its responsiveness to the needs of BIPOC and International students (via the Curriculum Innovation Committee). We will consult and collaborate with central services (e.g., School of Graduate Studies, Centre for International Experience, GradLife) to leverage opportunities for further supporting our international students.

Long-term Actions

We anticipate adding faculty members in upcoming years and recruiting scholars that will build our capacity to address issues of international and global social work, including forms of social work practice outside Global North contexts. This plan is aligned with our broader internationalization goals for the Faculty.

Leads: Dean, Associate Dean's Office, MSW and PhD Program Directors.

Students expressed a desire for additional skills-based training and preparation for advanced practice, as well as “macro” social work specialization options, including organizational change and management, community development practice, social policy analysis and practice.

Excellent, innovative education is an important component of our Faculty identity and reputation. Our world-recognized Toronto Simulation Model is the foundation for ongoing expansion of experiential learning in the Faculty, extending into more areas of practice every year.

Short-term Actions

We will continue resourcing the expansion of simulation-based learning across the curriculum. Recent innovations in AI-based and virtual simulation will further diversify experiential learning opportunities available to students.

Medium-term Actions

The curriculum review will explore opportunities to develop a coherent strategy for experiential learning activities, better integrating field and classroom education.

Long-term Actions

We will support and enhance our capacity in the Teaching Stream to accomplish leading-edge educational innovation in all of the identified areas. We will recruit to fill a vacated teaching-stream position and a vacated tenure-track position focused on educational innovation to further build capacity for experiential curriculum development and scholarship.

Leads: Dean, Associate Dean Academic, MSW Program Director

The reviewers noted challenges around ensuring sufficient numbers of high-quality fieldwork placements, as well as student concerns regarding the transparency of the field placement process.

Securing high-quality field placements is a challenge facing all schools of social work in Canada and the US, made worse by pandemic stressors in health, social service, and policy sectors. The FIFSW is further challenged by the local presence of other Ontario social work programs seeking placements for their students in the GTA area.

Short-term Actions

We recognized that communications about the practicum process needed updating and improvement. Our Communications Strategist is in process with a major revision of informational materials. We have also invested in a new digital management system to facilitate better information transfer and navigation of the field placement process for students and field instructors. We will be launching the new communications and digital system later this year.

Medium-term Actions

We believe that student perceptions of opaqueness in the field placement process may reflect, in part, low capacity in the Field Education Office to provide proactive individualized support. We will be increasing the staff complement with additional practicum coordinators in the Field Education Office to increase capacity for individualized support to students. We are testing a revised set of responsibilities for current and new practicum coordinators that will increase their contact with students from application to completion of practicum placements. The practicum coordinators will also increase contact with field education sites and instructors to sustain and strengthen relationships and generate more placement opportunities.

Long-term Actions

We will evaluate the outcomes from increasing the number of practicum coordinators to refine how they are best deployed to increase student support and increase high quality field education opportunities. Another long-term strategy is to increase the number of our graduates who take on field instruction roles. This will be achieved through embedding preparation for field instruction in the curriculum (this is also recently mandated as part of accreditation standards) and developing new support and incentive strategies to engage more alumni as field instructors.

Leads: Dean, Associate Dean Academic, Assistant Dean Field Education, MSW Program Director, Communications Strategist.

The reviewers noted student and faculty concerns regarding the lack of clear communications from the Faculty, in particular, regarding procedures for addressing student questions and problems; students commented on their experiences with “limited and rather weak” student advising.

The review coincided with a period of significant disruption and under-staffing in the administrative complement for the Faculty. As well, Faculty members and students were not onsite, reducing opportunities for informal connections between students and advisors.

Short-term Actions

We are rebuilding our staff complement. The recent hiring of an Assistant Dean, Student Services and Registrar has launched a review of the structure in that portfolio. We intend to recruit people into permanent positions in a structure that is accessible and comprehensible to all stakeholders.

Medium-term Actions

With consistency in the administrative staffing, we will develop stronger coordination between academic advising by Faculty members and other advising provided by student services and registrarial staff.

Long-term Actions

The current student services structure is a partial implementation of recommendations from a review of registrarial and student services conducted almost five years ago. We will evaluate the effectiveness of the structure to inform evidence-based decisions about its effectiveness in meeting student and Faculty needs. We will also consult with other academic units to explore options and innovation.

Leads: Assistant Dean Student Services and Registrar, with Associate Dean Academic, MSW and PhD Program Directors.

The reviewers recommended that FIFSW should continue and intensify its efforts in support of equity, diversity and inclusion of its faculty, staff, student body and programs. Specifics: curriculum changes to reflect increased international and BIPOC student enrolments; diffusion of anti-colonial and community-based approaches from the ITR field of study; and EDI considerations in faculty applications for tenure and promotion.

Equity, diversity, inclusion and truth and reconciliation are priorities in our Faculty and all faculty and staff members recognize they have roles in upholding our commitments and growing

our efforts. As indicated, we continue the EDI integration activities that were launched by the Curriculum Innovation Committee in 2019.

Short-term Actions

We will continue evaluating EDI effectiveness in course evaluations and all student experience surveys. We are reviewing questions to ensure they are addressing contemporary current student and Faculty EDI goals. We will update the EDI training that currently serves as an admission condition to better integrate social work EDI issues and an anti-colonial focus and process.

Medium-term Actions

We will recruit an EDI strategist to provide expert EDI leadership in the curriculum review, enhanced co-curricular programming, student and faculty recruitment, and faculty and staff development.

Long-term Actions

We will prioritize high-level EDI competency in new hires for faculty and staff and will seek opportunities to continue increasing the diversity in our FIFSW community and our network of collaborators. We will increase the number of bursaries and scholarships available to decrease barriers for prospective students from equity-seeking groups. We will fundraise for and recruit the Endowed Community-Service Chairs listed in our campaign priorities to further build our EDI capacity (e.g., Endowed Chair in Community-Driven Service Partnerships).

Leads: Dean, Associate Dean Academic, MSW and PhD Program Directors, Director of Advancement.

The reviewers expressed concern that untenured faculty members hold a disproportionate responsibility for curriculum leadership and recommend providing stronger and more meaningful mentoring for junior faculty members; they also noted concerns from faculty members regarding fairness in workload and the need for procedural clarity of faculty review, tenure and promotion processes.

The balance of pre-tenure, teaching stream, and tenured faculty acting as course coordinators varies based on availability of faculty. Junior faculty are given course coordinator roles as a first step toward developing a trajectory of leadership in the Faculty, and to create clear indicators of pedagogical leadership that are a useful for teaching portfolios presented in promotion and tenure processes. Course coordination by junior faculty members also introduces new perspectives into core curriculum. It's possible this strategy has not been made clear to the junior faculty members.

Short-term Actions

Concerns about workload and transparency of faculty review, tenure, and promotion processes have been largely addressed by enhancing communications in the past year. Posting of workload assignments on a SharePoint site accessible to all Faculty members has clarified the distribution of workload. In the past year, we have increased knowledge sharing about PTR and promotion and tenure procedures through written communications and meetings with faculty members. This will continue to demystify strategies behind workload and other assignments.

Medium-term Actions

We will develop a more comprehensive on-boarding process for Faculty members with multiple touchpoints to provide needed information on these procedures at relevant career stages. We will review the mentoring system put in place by the previous Dean and explore opportunities to enhance its effectiveness.

Long-term Actions

As above.

Lead: Dean, Associate Dean Research, Associate Dean Academic

The reviewers observed that the Faculty's administrative management needs strengthening, with recommendations to assess the size of the support staff complement to

comparable University divisions or other top schools of Social Work, and to create clear procedures and responsibilities for administrative decision making in the MSW program.

Short-term Action

We are in process of consulting with other faculties and central offices to develop a plan for enhancing our administrative complement. We are developing a communication strategy (i.e., website communications, SharePoint posting) to ensure stakeholder knowledge of developments as we increase and stabilize the administrative staff complement.

Medium-term Actions

We will further consult with other schools of Social Work and comparable University divisions learn from effective staff configurations in other settings, as we are all adapting to a changing disciplinary and professional landscape that is creating new demands for classroom (online and in-person) and field-based education.

Long-term Actions

As above.

Leads: Dean, Chief Administrative Officer, Assistant Dean Field Education, Assistant Dean Student Services and Registrar.

The reviewers recommended an assess of the climate and morale in the Faculty, noting significant organizational/leadership changes and recent staff turnover.

The significant turnover in staff, unexpected departure of the previous Dean, high needs of students through the pandemic and beyond, and reduced engagement with colleagues during public health restrictions and hybrid work arrangements have had an impact on staff and faculty members. We are aware of the need to rebuild our relationships and attend to the high demand environment while maintaining work/life balance.

Short-term Actions

All managers have been tasked with monitoring team morale and implementing team-building activities. We will make climate and morale ongoing priorities in all discussions of faculty strategies and priorities.

Medium-term Actions

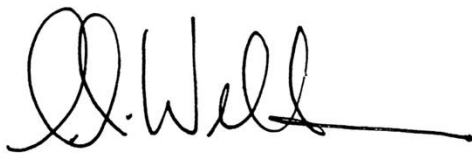
We will consult with other University leaders about strategies to address climate within the Faculty, considering issues like a possible climate survey, working out a strategy for onsite/remote/hybrid work arrangements, staff and faculty team-building activities.

Long-term Actions

A recruited EDI strategist would be key to a plan to continue anti-racism and equity training for staff and faculty that was initiated before the pandemic. In the past, this joint activity surfaced issues of climate/collegiality and new training and dialogues on these issues would now serve to build faculty culture that includes all of the new colleagues.

Leads: Dean, Associate Dean Academic, Assistant Dean Field Education, Assistant Dean Student Services and Registrar, Chief Administrative Officer.

All of the proposed initiatives will be planned with evaluation integrated to facilitate reporting on progress and outcomes.



Charmaine C. Williams, PhD
Dean & Professor
Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work
University of Toronto

2020-21 UTQAP Review of the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work - Review Recommendations

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Dean's Response
The reviewers recommended the development of a full and explicit enrollment management plan laying out enrollment goals and strategies, with consideration of the implications of international enrollments for recruitment, curriculum and student services.	1	"The FIFSW should develop a full and explicit enrollment management plan that lays out enrollment goals and strategies including an explicit analysis of the recruitment of international students, and increased emphasis on the implications of international enrollments for curriculum and student services."	<p>Short-term Actions: The Faculty has developed international students support over the past year. We have designated a faculty member to serve as the international student advisor and we are using ISEF funding to implement co-curricular programming designed to meet the needs of international students. Examples include a series of international student orientations, group mentoring, seminars on the Canadian social policy context, and social events to build community. Furthermore, our plan to increase staffing in the Field Education office includes the goal of recruiting someone to provide specialized support for international students.</p> <p>Medium-term Actions: We will be reviewing the MSW and PhD curriculum to identify opportunities to enhance its responsiveness to the needs of BIPOC and International students (via the Curriculum Innovation Committee). We will consult and collaborate with central services (e.g., School of Graduate Studies, Centre for International Experience, GradLife) to leverage opportunities for further supporting our international students.</p> <p>Long-term Actions: We anticipate adding faculty members in upcoming years and recruiting scholars that will build our capacity to address issues of international and global social work, including forms of social work practice outside Global North contexts. This plan is aligned with our broader internationalization goals for the Faculty.</p> <p>Leads: Dean, Associate Dean's Office, MSW and PhD Program Directors.</p>
Students expressed a desire for additional skills-based training and preparation for advanced practice, as well as "macro" social work specialization options, including organizational change and management, community development practice, and social policy analysis and practice.	2	"The student survey... shows that students want better preparation for advanced practice, more skills-based training, and even more opportunities for practice and simulation in class."	<p>Short-term Actions: We will continue resourcing the expansion of simulation-based learning across the curriculum. Recent innovations in AI-based and virtual simulation will further diversify experiential learning opportunities available to students.</p> <p>Medium-term Actions: The curriculum review will explore opportunities to develop a coherent strategy for experiential learning activities, better integrating field and classroom education.</p> <p>Long-term Actions: We will support and enhance our capacity in the Teaching Stream to accomplish leading-edge educational innovation in all of the identified areas. We will recruit to fill a vacated teaching-stream position and a vacated tenure-track position</p>
	3	The new, more diverse student body, which is close to 50% BIPOC and international students, want more diversity content in the curriculum and they want more diverse curriculum choices, particularly more "macro" social work speciality options such as organizational	

		change and management, community development practice, and social policy analysis and practice.”	<p>focused on educational innovation to further build capacity for experiential curriculum development and scholarship.</p> <p>Leads: Dean, Associate Dean Academic, MSW Program Director</p>
The reviewers noted challenges around ensuring sufficient numbers of high-quality fieldwork placements, as well as student concerns regarding the transparency of the field placements process.	4	“Similar to other institutions, the challenge is to ensure sufficient numbers of high quality placements to meet the needs of individual students and the wider program.”	<p>Short-term Actions: We recognized that communications about the practicum process needed updating and improvement. Our Communications Strategist is in process with a major revision of informational materials. We have also invested in a new digital management system to facilitate better information transfer and navigation of the field placement process for students and field instructors. We will be launching the new communications and digital system later this year.</p> <p>Medium-term Actions: We believe that student perceptions of opaqueness in the field placement process may reflect, in part, low capacity in the Field Education Office to provide proactive individualized support. We will be increasing the staff complement with additional practicum coordinators in the Field Education Office to increase capacity for individualized support to students. We are testing a revised set of responsibilities for current and new practicum coordinators that will increase their contact with students from application to completion of practicum placements. The practicum coordinators will also increase contact with field education sites and instructors to sustain and strengthen relationships and generate more placement opportunities.</p> <p>Long-term Actions: We will evaluate the outcomes from increasing the number of practicum coordinators to refine how they are best deployed to increase student support and increase high quality field education opportunities. Another long-term strategy is to increase the number of our graduates who take on field instruction roles. This will be achieved through embedding preparation for field instruction in the curriculum (this is also recently mandated as part of accreditation standards) and developing new support and incentive strategies to engage more alumni as field instructors.</p> <p>Leads: Dean, Associate Dean Academic, Assistant Dean Field Education, MSW Program Director, Communications Strategist.</p>
	5	“Some students though expressed concern that the process of identifying/being allocated a placement was not transparent”	
The reviewers noted student and faculty concerns regarding the lack of clear communications from the Faculty, in particular regarding procedures for	6	“ Faculty and students alike noted the lack of clear communication and understanding of who is responsible for some student services and assistance for solving student questions and problems.”	<p>Short-term Actions: We are rebuilding our staff complement. The recent hiring of an Assistant Dean, Student Services and Registrar has launched a review of the structure in that portfolio. We intend to recruit people into permanent positions in a structure that is accessible and comprehensible to all stakeholders.</p>

<p>addressing student questions and problems; students commented on their experiences with “limited and rather weak” student advising.</p>	7	<p>“Students also rated the advisement system as limited and rather weak in that advisors do not know answers to questions or do not take action that students feel is needed.”</p>	<p>Medium-term Actions: With consistency in the administrative staffing, we will develop stronger coordination between academic advising by Faculty members and other advising provided by student services and registrarial staff.</p> <p>Long-term Actions: The current student services structure is a partial implementation of recommendations from a review of registrarial and student services conducted almost five years ago. We will evaluate the effectiveness of the structure to inform evidence-based decisions about its effectiveness in meeting student and Faculty needs. We will also consult with other academic units to explore options and innovation.</p> <p>Leads: Assistant Dean Student Services and Registrar, with Associate Dean Academic, MSW and PhD Program Directors.</p>
<p>The reviewers recommended that FIFSW should continue and intensify its efforts in support of equity, diversity and inclusion of its faculty, staff, student body, and programs. In responding you may wish to refer to the following specific reviewer observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noting recent increases in international and BIPOC student enrolments, they commented that the curriculum and program procedures/policies often reflect the program’s Euro-centric foundations and do not adequately reflect the experiences and backgrounds of the increasingly diverse student body They observed that the anti-colonial and community-based participatory approaches taken in the ITR field could 	8	<p>“The FIFSW should continue, but also importantly, intensify its commitment and efforts to equity, diversity and inclusion of its faculty, staff, student body and programs.”</p>	<p>Short-term Actions: We will continue evaluating EDI effectiveness in course evaluations and all student experience surveys. We are reviewing questions to ensure they are addressing contemporary current student and Faculty EDI goals. We will update the EDI training that currently serves as an admission condition to better integrate social work EDI issues and an anti-colonial focus and process.</p>
	9	<p>“Students described the curriculum as Euro-centric... Several stated that they wish the FIFSW would work harder to de-center the curriculum’s fundamentally colonial lens. These are areas that the FIFSW has begun to address, and needs to continue to focus on.”</p>	<p>Medium-term Actions: We will recruit an EDI strategist to provide expert EDI leadership in the curriculum review, enhanced co-curricular programming, student and faculty recruitment, and faculty and staff development.</p>
	10	<p>“The FIFSW could benefit from better integration of the ITR field’s approach and curriculum delivery. The ITR anti-colonizing and community based participatory approach can be highly relevant to the current efforts of the FIFSW’s Curriculum Innovation Committee.”</p>	<p>Long-term Actions: We will prioritize high-level EDI competency in new hires for faculty and staff and will seek opportunities to continue increasing the diversity in our FIFSW community and our network of collaborators. We will increase the number of bursaries and scholarships available to decrease barriers for prospective students from equity-seeking groups. We will fundraise for and recruit the Endowed Community-Service Chairs listed in our campaign priorities to further build our EDI capacity (e.g., Endowed Chair in Community-Driven Service Partnerships).</p>

<p>provide a model for enhancements to the MSW program overall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They noted that policies and procedures for addressing faculty applications for tenure and promotion should be updated to reflect EDI considerations. 	11	<p>“...there was discussion that suggested a need to transform FIFSW procedures and policies to reflect Equity, Diversity and Inclusion not only for curriculum, procedures and policies, but also for assessing application for tenure and promotion.”</p>	<p>Leads: Dean, Associate Dean Academic, MSW and PhD Program Directors, Director of Advancement.</p>
<p>The reviewers expressed concern that untenured faculty members hold a disproportionate responsibility for curriculum leadership, and recommended providing stronger and more meaningful mentoring for junior faculty members; they also noted concerns from faculty members regarding fairness in workload and the need for procedural clarity of faculty review, tenure and promotion processes.</p>	12	<p>“The untenured faculty appear to have a disproportionate responsibility for curriculum leadership and, perhaps, a heavier service load overall.”</p>	<p>Short-term Actions: Concerns about workload and transparency of faculty review, tenure, and promotion processes have been largely addressed by enhancing communications in the past year. Posting of workload assignments on a SharePoint site accessible to all Faculty members has clarified the distribution of workload. In the past year, we have increased knowledge sharing about PTR and promotion and tenure procedures through written communications and meetings with faculty members. This will continue to demystify strategies behind workload and other assignments.</p> <p>Medium-term Actions: We will develop a more comprehensive on-boarding process for Faculty members with multiple touchpoints to provide needed information on these procedures at relevant career stages. We will review the mentoring system put in place by the previous Dean and explore opportunities to enhance its effectiveness.</p> <p>Long-term Actions: As above.</p> <p>Leads: Dean, Associate Dean Research, Associate Dean Academic</p>
	13	<p>“...the incoming Dean should consider decision making processes within the School, and the role of senior colleagues in providing stronger and more meaningful mentoring of junior colleagues who feel that the processes currently in place are not sufficiently strong and developmental.”</p>	
	14	<p>“Questions that were raised during the visit included the lack (or lack of understanding) of fairness policies in workload and rank; decision-making processes and implementation in the FIFSW; the need to specify and strengthen administrative policies, including workload and unrecognized service in curriculum and EDI; clearer and more planful approaches to timeliness, and procedural clarity of faculty personnel matters including review and promotion and tenure practices.”</p>	
<p>The reviewers observed that the Faculty’s administrative management needs strengthening, with recommendations to assess the size of the support staff complement relative to comparable University divisions or other top schools of</p>	15	<p>“Administrative management of the FIFSW should be strengthened with an assessment of the size of the support staff, and the creation of clear procedures and responsibilities for administrative decision making in the MSW program.”</p>	<p>Short-term Action: We are in process of consulting with other faculties and central offices to develop a plan for enhancing our administrative complement. We are developing a communication strategy (i.e., website communications, SharePoint posting) to ensure stakeholder knowledge of developments as we increase and stabilize the administrative staff complement.</p>

<p>Social Work, and to create clear procedures and responsibilities for administrative decision making in the MSW program.</p>			<p>Medium-term Actions: We will further consult with other schools of Social Work and comparable University divisions learn from effective staff configurations in other settings, as we are all adapting to a changing disciplinary and professional landscape that is creating new demands for classroom (online and in-person) and field-based education.</p> <p>Long-term Actions: As above.</p> <p>Leads: Dean, Chief Administrative Officer, Assistant Dean Field Education, Assistant Dean Student Services and Registrar.</p>
<p>The reviewers recommended an assessment of the climate and morale in the Faculty, noting significant organizational/leadership changes and recent staff turnover.</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>“We recommend that the school conduct an assessment of its climate and create a plan to improve climate at all levels within the FIFSW.”</p>	<p>Short-term Actions: All managers have been tasked with monitoring team morale and implementing team-building activities. We will make climate and morale ongoing priorities in all discussions of faculty strategies and priorities.</p> <p>Medium-term Actions: We will consult with other University leaders about strategies to address climate within the Faculty, considering issues like a possible climate survey, working out a strategy for onsite/remote/hybrid work arrangements, staff and faculty team-building activities.</p> <p>Long-term Actions: A recruited EDI strategist would be key to a plan to continue anti-racism and equity training for staff and faculty that was initiated before the pandemic. In the past, this joint activity surfaced issues of climate/collegiality and new training and dialogues on these issues would now serve to build faculty culture that includes all of the new colleagues.</p> <p>Leads: Dean, Associate Dean Academic, Assistant Dean Field Education, Assistant Dean Student Services and Registrar, Chief Administrative Officer.</p>

3. Committee on Academic Policy & Programs (AP&P) Findings

The spokesperson for the reading group found the review to be overall positive. The spokesperson reported that the reviewers' comments on centralized decision making could have been presented more specifically in the summary, in light of concerns raised around decision-making processes, and/or faculty members' perception about decision-making becoming more centralised. The group sought additional clarification on several areas of the administrative response, including structural issues; decision-making processes; Teaching Stream faculty workload; faculty concerns about administrative workload; the observation that students who have professional experience find some courses too elementary; and the lack of diversity in the curriculum.

Professor Charmaine Williams, Dean, provided responses on the following:

- The Faculty recognized that diversity in the curriculum is an area of growth; Social work has done a lot of recruitment to increase the diversity of the student body, and acknowledged that the curriculum needs to evolve to meet the needs of those students.
- EDI noted as a key priority with several initiatives undertaken to address concerns, including orientation, staffing hires and curriculum committee discussions.
- Additional funds were secured to support course release.
- Previous diverse experience was a direct admission requirement into the program, and there are no plans to offer a second stream.
- Increased transparency and expectations around teaching stream roles with a plan to recruit more teachers and faculty.
- Improved communication, collaboration and engagement in the decision-making processes.

In response to a question raised by the reading group, Professor Williams noted:

A focus on local concerns is common to Canadian MSW programs because they are accredited nationally. However, it is a priority for the Faculty to ensure that the curriculum is global, which will align with institutional and divisional priorities and be a distinguishing factor of U of T's MSW program.

A one-year follow-up report was requested on two areas:

1. The progress on curriculum renewal diversification and internationalization.
2. Progress on addressing concerns related to Faculty climate, including faculty workload and administrative roles, support staff, and decision making processes.

4. Institutional Executive Summary

The reviewers praised the Faculty's long-standing and well-deserved reputation for excellence in social work education and research, noting their international leadership in simulation-based learning. They observed that students appreciate the intellectually stimulating environment,

and that faculty, students and staff share pride in the reputation and quality of the programs. The review team applauded the careful design of FIFSW program curricula and the mechanisms to ensure ongoing program quality, noting clear alignment between program objectives, course learning outcomes, and assessment methods. They noted that faculty are highly respected and admired by alumni and community practitioners, with a strong track record of success in securing tri-council funding. Finally, they praised the important work that has been done towards broadening diversity of the student body, and the collegial and collaborative relationships with many other units and divisions at the University.

The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: developing a full and explicit enrollment management plan, with consideration of the implications of international enrollments; addressing student desire for additional skills-based training and preparation for advanced practice, as well as “macro” social work specialization options; exploring ways to ensure sufficient numbers of high-quality fieldwork placements, and addressing student concerns regarding the transparency of the field placements process; enhancing communications to students and faculty, in particular regarding procedures for addressing student questions and problems; continuing and intensifying FIFSW efforts in support of equity, diversity and inclusion of its faculty, staff, student body, and programs; addressing concerns that untenured faculty members hold a disproportionate responsibility for curriculum leadership, and enhancing mentorship for junior faculty members; addressing faculty concerns regarding fairness in workload and the need for procedural clarity of faculty review, tenure and promotion processes; strengthening the Faculty’s administrative management and creating clear procedures and responsibilities for administrative decision making in the MSW program; and assessing the climate and morale in the Faculty, following significant organizational/leadership changes and recent staff turnover. The Dean’s Administrative Response describes the Faculty’s responses to the reviewers’ recommendations, including an implementation plan for any changes necessary as a result.

5. Monitoring and Date of Next Review

The Dean will provide an interim report to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs on the status of the implementation plans, due midway between the year of the last and next site visits.

The next review will be commissioned for a site visit to take place no later than eight years from December 2021.

6. Distribution

On June 30, 2023, the Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan was posted to the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs website and the link provided by email to the Dean of the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, the Secretaries of AP&P, Academic Board and Governing Council, and the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance.