

October 2, 2020

Dear Mary Kurfess, MSSW:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Site Visit Report. And thank you to Dr. Tebb and Dr. Vakalahi for taking the time to visit the University of Maryland, School of Social Work and prepare this report. Our faculty, staff, and students appreciated the opportunity to discuss the SSW's progress in meeting Accreditation Standards 3.0.1, 3.0.2, and 3.0.3.

The Site Visit Report summarizes much of the work that the SSW has accomplished since the original complaint was submitted in 2017 and provides some recommendations for the School to continue this work. Drs. Vakalahi and Tebb listed eight suggestions, all of which we agree are critical to not only meeting the Accreditation Standards to provide an inclusive learning environment that affirms, supports, and respects diversity and differences, but also to move us towards the goal of becoming an anti-oppressive and anti-racist institution.

In this response, we would like to share with CSWE some of the ways we will address the recommendations in the Site Visit Report.

<p>Address inconsistency among faculty in incorporating content and discussion of anti-racism, anti-oppression, and anti-stigma</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to develop and offer trainings to faculty and staff on diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-oppression • Offering trainings at multiple times to make it easier for all faculty (full-time and adjunct) to attend • Developing more online trainings, including asynchronous trainings (three trainings are scheduled for this fall) • Incorporate more trainings into All School Meetings and monthly Faculty Meetings
<p>Increase transparency about diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-oppression efforts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revamping the <i>Commitment to Diversity and Anti-Oppression Excellence</i> website, including adding a timeline and summary of anti-oppression efforts • Creating more spaces (virtual and eventually in-person) for all members of the SSW community to share their work related to anti-oppression (e.g., academic publications, op-eds, presentations, podcasts, etc)
<p>Enhance two-way communication with students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling a series of meet and greets, Q&As, and town halls between MSW students and administrators (particularly with Dean; Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion;

	<p>Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; and Associate Dean for Student Affairs).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating more spaces for students, staff, and faculty to interact and share, including the new Social Work Affinity Space Initiative
Enhance two-way communication with staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the Staff Council (which has its inaugural meeting scheduled for October) • Including representatives from the Staff Council in SSW Leadership meetings and other key committees (e.g., Diversity and Anti-Oppression Committee) • Posting minutes from faculty and Staff Council meetings on the website to be accessible to staff, students, and community members
Strengthen DEI and anti-oppression content in the BSW and MSW curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a syllabus for the foundation field seminar • Revising course evaluations to address bias and include more questions about DEI and anti-oppression content • Conducting an evaluation of the new MSW course <i>Structural Oppression and Its Implications for Social Work</i>

In addition, we will continue the long-term work of bringing about culture change across the SSW. We are excited about strengthening our programs related to diversity, equity, and inclusion and appreciate joining with CSWE on these important topics. We look forward to hearing soon from the CSWE Board about our efforts. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Judy L. Postmus, Ph.D., ACSW
 Professor & Dean
 University of Maryland, School of Social Work