

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW (PPR)

Bachelor of Social Work

Social Work

Faculty of Community Services

In accordance with the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response and assessments of the undergraduate Social Work. This report identifies the strengths of the program, together with opportunities for program improvements and enhancements, and it sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

This report also includes an Implementation Plan that identifies who will be responsible for approving the recommendations set out in the final assessment report; who will be responsible for providing any resources entailed by those recommendations; any changes in organization, policy, or governance that will be necessary to meet the recommendations, who will be responsible for leading those recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of those recommendations

SUMMARY OF THE PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW OF SOCIAL WORK

Degree: Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)

The BSW program prepares its students for critically engaged social work practice focusing on anti-oppression and structural perspectives that will position students and graduates to work effectively with diverse individuals, families, groups, and communities, particularly those marginalized as a result of oppression. The TMU School of Social Work has garnered an international reputation as a school focused on anti-oppression practice in research, service and teaching. We strive to keep abreast of recent developments in anti-oppressive practice. As a result, our dynamic and nuanced focus has shifted toward a more profound acknowledgement of anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism and an emphasis on decolonizing approaches to practice.

The program is currently offered through the School in four streams: Full-time, Advanced Standing in the Second Year, Advanced Standing in the Third Year, and the First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI) Collaborative Program. The first stream consists of a four-year BSW program for recent high school graduates and mature students; the advanced streams comprise three years of full-time study or two years of part-time study leading to a BSW for students with a completed related post-secondary diploma or degree and relevant professional experience. Although not offered on-campus at TMU, a fourth stream is provided through a partnership with FNTI. This advanced standing program aims to facilitate access to university studies for Indigenous students by integrating culturally relevant components and being offered off-campus in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory in Ontario in physical proximity to the enrolled students.

DATE OF LAST PPR:

The previous periodic program review (PPR) for the BSW program was conducted during the 2010/11 academic year.

ACCREDITATION INFORMATION:

Toronto Metropolitan University's (TMU) Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree program is accredited by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education.

This document comprises the Faculty of Community Services' (FCS) Dean's response to the Peer Review Team (PRT) Report and the School's response, in accordance with the directions of the 2020 Periodic Program Review (PPR) Manual and with Section 8.2 of Senate Policy 126, Periodic Program Review of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs. The site visit by the external PRT for the Periodic Program Review was carried out August 2, 2022. The School of Social Work submitted a list of potential Peer Review Team (PRT) candidates to the Office of the Dean who then selected

Dr. Mirna Carranza, Professor, Social Work, McMaster University

Dr. Sulaimon Giwa, Associate Professor, School of Social Work, Memorial University

The PRT report highlights several strengths within the program, specifically its leadership in anti-oppression, anti-colonial, and intersectionality approaches, research and community collaborations, incorporation of Indigenous perspectives into curriculum and a diverse and highly engaged student body. However, there is a need to build greater supports for students, in particular with regard to field placements and experiential learning opportunities. Additionally, the review team raised concerns about the program's reliance on sessional instructors to teach the majority of undergraduate students. Hiring additional tenure-track faculty and strengthening connections between the school and sessional instructors were identified as necessary next steps.

The PRT Report offered the following nine critical recommendations, and the School has responded thoughtfully to each to generate their Implementation Plan. The Dean's Office is in full support of the School's responses to the PRT recommendations.

The program submitted its response to the PRT report to the Dean of the Faculty of Community Services to which the Dean responded on May 24, 2023.

The Academic Standards Committee completed its assessment of the Bachelor of Social Work on Jan 25, 2024. The Committee indicated that a thorough, analytical and self-critical program review was conducted. The program provided a detailed plan for future growth and support for development.

The Academic Standards Committee recommends that the program continue, as well as provide a one-year follow-up report, as follows:

1. The mandated One-Year Follow-up Report be submitted by June 30, 2025 to include:
 - a. An update on all curricular changes as indicated in the Implementation Plan
 - b. A plan outlining how the program intends to ensure leadership and curriculum oversight over the next few years

- c. A hiring plan and staffing report
- d. An update on the development of student surveying and feedback sessions.

Presented to Senate for Approval: **March 5, 2024**

Start date of next Periodic Program Review: **2025-26**

SUMMARY OF THE REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATIONS WITH THE PROGRAM'S AND DEAN'S RESPONSES

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Balance the number of part-time instructors who teach the majority of undergraduate courses with tenure and tenure-track faculty.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The School of Social Work is also concerned about the high percentage (70%) of contract lecturers teaching core curriculum courses and 50% of the electives in the BSW program. The Reaffirmation/Reaccreditation Self-Study for the TMU BSW degree is due April 2024.

The data reflected in the Self-Study will incorporate the current statistics. The school will be flagged for non-compliance with the Canadian Association of Social Work Education (CASWE) Accreditation Standards. The TMU BSW program, the second-largest program in FCS and the largest full-time BSW in the country, could jeopardize its accreditation status until there is a balance in tenure- and tenure-track faculty relative to CUPE 1 instructors.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

As with other professional Schools, there is considerable value to having current practitioners teaching within the program. The PRT identified the outstanding breadth of expertise and diverse experiences and identities that sessional instructors bring to the program. Additionally, the passion, currency and connection to community of sessional instructors is one of the highlights and strengths of the School. Sessional instructors represent meaningful and important voices in shaping students' learning.

The Dean's Office recognizes the importance of students having contact with tenure stream faculty. The School is encouraged to distribute teaching to ensure that a proportion of core required courses are taught by TFA faculty members to ensure that students have opportunity to learn from senior and tenure-stream professors during their years of study and to bring this into balance to meet accreditation plans.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Strengthen part-time instructors' connections to the School so that they feel more included.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

CUPE I instructors are to be praised for the care and assistance they provide students. The School of Social Work (and Director) takes an active role to include CUPE I instructors in the overall community that exists within the school. For example, the Director and Associate Director, Undergraduate Program,

meet with CUPE faculty twice a semester. We have an Orientation meeting at the start of the semester to discuss upcoming challenges, opportunities, policy changes and implications. We also conduct an end-of-the-semester Debrief meeting to discuss the challenges and opportunities related to pedagogy, teaching and learning during the semester. CUPE faculty are included in emails about upcoming training, webinars, workshops, etc., our Field Education Committee meetings, and School Council and were included in the development and review of the Periodic Program Review Report. More can be done to increase their sense of inclusion and community, and we look for creative ways to make this happen and take cues from CUPE I instructors themselves.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The School acknowledges the tremendous role of CUPE instructors and have identified a number of key ways in which they are included in the overall School community. The School has noted that the Directors meet with CUPE instructors twice each semester, provide orientation at the beginning of the year to ensure CUPE have the opportunity to discuss challenges and opportunities in the school, as well as be made aware of any policy changes. End of term debrief meetings are held with CUPE instructors to address challenges and opportunities from the teaching term. Additionally, CUPE instructors are regularly invited to participate in trainings, webinars, workshops, Field Education meetings and School Council. CUPE instructors were also included in the development and review of the PPR Self-Study.

The Dean's Office supports the ongoing efforts on the part of the School to find creative and sustainable ways to support CUPE instructors' participation in the life of the School.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Increase support for the Indigenization and decolonization process in response to the Truth and Reconciliation calls to action.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

Several Indigenous faculty members (both TFA and LTF), non-Indigenous faculty, and staff have contributed greatly to Indigenization and decolonization in their responses to the Truth and Reconciliation calls to action through curriculum, pedagogy, learning and teaching, research, scholarship, and policy. This commitment is also exemplified by the school's BSW partnership and ongoing collaboration with the First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI). It is important to note that in addition to the above, more Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty are needed in the school as new hires.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The School has noted that several Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty have supported Indigenization and decolonization of curriculum, pedagogy, learning and teaching, research, scholarship and policy in the School. This commitment is further exemplified by the School's BSW partnership and ongoing collaboration with the First Nations Technical Institute. Currently, FCS is embarked on a process of exploring options for Indigenous learning and course opportunities for all FCS students. Additionally, TMU is embarked on an Indigenous learning opportunity mandate being led by the Special Advisor to the President EDID (Curricular Transformation). Both of these processes will support the efforts of the School to further address Indigeneity and decolonization in their program. The Dean's Office is in full support of these processes.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Increase support for the Field Education Team to effectively support the School and the high number

of student placements, including the hiring of a Field Education Manager and the addition of a Field Education Coordinator, to increase current complement from two to three.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The School of Work hired a Field Education Manager in August 2022 and has been approved to hire an additional Field Education Coordinator, bringing the total number to three Field Education Coordinators.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The School now has a Field Education Manager as well as three Field Education Coordinators to support the extensive field placement work required in the School.

Additionally, the Dean's Office has two new centralized positions that substantively support field education work with FCS Schools. The Director Experiential Learning, Quality Assurance and Strategic Initiatives provides oversight of experiential learning Initiatives, including providing support to School field staff, leadership counsel and advice in the creation and implementation of experiential education strategies and plans. Additionally, the Dean's Office is partnering with the Office of the General Counsel and Board Secretariat (GCBS) to hire a new position: Legal Counsel, Experiential Learning Legal Support. This position will support experiential learning at the University, including the review, negotiation and administration of new practicum and related legal agreements; the administration of experiential learning related policies and procedures; and the management and ongoing oversight and renewal of existing practicum and related legal agreements

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Increase experiential learning opportunities across the curriculum.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

We are scheduled for a Curriculum Committee meeting, which the Director chairs, in February 2023 and every three weeks after to review our overall curriculum and in detail regarding the recommendations from the PRT.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Dean's Office will support School initiatives dealing with curricular review that involve more experiential learning for students in the program.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

Improve collaboration between the liaison librarian and lecturers in SWP538 and/or SWP638 in order to teach more advanced research skills.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

The librarian, Jane Schmidt, who works closely with FCS and, more specifically, the School of Social Work, was invited to our first faculty meeting of the Fall 2022 semester to discuss how they can aid academic and student learning for the BSW curriculum core courses. Jane Schmidt and the Director, Valerie Borum, met on November 10, 2022, to discuss curriculum mapping and developmental (e.g., high school graduates/1st year, etc.) scaffolding so that students can progress toward an understanding of the scholarly communication ecosystem in research and social work assignments.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

Involving the library during the early phases of curriculum development (both course and program development) is an excellent idea. The Dean's Office recognizes and supports this commitment.

RECOMMENDATION 7:

Greater exposure of students to theoretical frameworks beyond the School's overarching framework of anti-oppression.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

We are scheduled for a Curriculum Committee meeting, which the Director chairs, in February 2023 and every three weeks after to review our overall curriculum and in detail regarding the recommendations from the PRT.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The School is committed to ongoing curricular review as part of their response to the program review. The School has a well-articulated set of theoretical frameworks which guide curriculum, in particular a central focus on anti-oppression and decolonial frameworks which prepare graduates for critically engaged social work practice, and which are hallmarks of the program. Integrating a broader range of theoretical framings, including a deepened focus on anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism, as well as attention to other areas of colonization, and including attention to other experiences of oppression is an ongoing project of the School. During its curricular review, the Dean's Office will support the School's engagement with a variety of approaches and theories with regards to the practice of Social Work and encourages the program to continue to explore a range of theoretical frameworks in addition to anti-oppression as they prepare their students for practice in the field. As the School notes, focus groups have been conducted to gain a better understanding of the School's vision and mission.

RECOMMENDATION 8:

Increased focus on anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism, the former of which may be addressed through the Special Topics course of the same name - in both cases, anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism content should be woven throughout the curriculum rather than being limited to a specific course/s or instructor/s.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

Please see the response to recommendation 7. In addition, the Director conducted focus group discussions with students, staff, CUPE 1 instructors, TFA faculty, and the Program Advisory Committee to get their input on the school's mission and vision. The data and input derived from these focus groups align with the need for addressing anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism across the curriculum as identified by the PRT.

DEAN'S RESPONSE:

Similar to the response for Recommendation #7, the Dean's Office supports the School's efforts in reviewing and assessing its curriculum (both its specific outputs and outcomes and the need for breadth and variety).

RECOMMENDATION 9:

Increase opportunities for online education in general and for creative practicum placement opportunities, similar to the Peer Led Mutual Aid Groups Project.

PROGRAM RESPONSE:

In addition to the Director’s active search for funding to support the continuation of the Peer led Mutual Groups experiential field placement project, the Director is requesting funds from the Office of the Dean to support this project.

DEAN’S RESPONSE:

With regards to the Peer Led Mutual Aid Group Project, the Director states that the School will continue with its efforts to secure support for this project. At this time, the Dean’s Office has not made any commitment.

The School is currently engaging with the pan-University Reimagining Teaching and Learning plan. For the upcoming academic year, the School will participate in the Digital Strategy Pilot program and will work closely with the CELT in managing its future curriculum needs with regards to any mode of delivery change. This will see enhanced opportunities for access, equity, and learning variety for all students in the program.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION:

Increase the number of Student Affairs Coordinators from one to two.

DEAN’S RESPONSE:

The Dean’s Office agrees that the School has grown substantially over the years and it is therefore necessary to consider adding more capacity for student affairs coordination. Unfortunately, current budget constraints have not allowed for immediate movement on this issue, however, the Dean’s Office is hopeful to be able to add student affairs capacity in the near future.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: SOCIAL WORK

<p>Priority Recommendation # 1 Curricular Review</p>
<p>Rationale: The PPR revealed that students faced gaps in coverage of key concepts, experiences, and theories that are particular to the practice of Social Work. The program would benefit from increased representation and coverage of diverse perspectives. Flexibility and transparency of offerings is also mentioned throughout the report.</p>
<p>Implementation Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curriculum Committee will workshop Learning Outcomes with Curriculum Specialist ● Curriculum Committee will re-assess existing curriculum (using the updated 2021 offering) to evaluate the new Learning Outcomes ● A curriculum taskforce will be struck to ensure that redundancies are removed from the curriculum and that learning outcomes are clearly distributed over the 4 years of the program for enhanced learning opportunities ● The taskforce will also ensure that experiential and professional learning preparedness is central to the first years of the program. ● The taskforce will include a review of the practice based approaches ● The taskforce will also review the current list of Electives to ensure that course offerings and scheduling is providing students with transparent and predictable course selection that

will also provide breadth

- **Ensure there are multiple opportunities and reinforcement to support Learning Outcomes pertaining to Social Work Practice specifically**

Timeline:

December 2023-May 2024:

Establish Curriculum Task Force

June 2024-December 2024

Workshop on Learning Outcomes

Map courses to revised learning outcomes.

January 2025-June 2026

Analysis of curriculum mapping exercise.

Review courses/curriculum in accordance with the curriculum mapping exercise.

Responsibility for

- Curriculum Committee (Lavallee, Onishenko, Pon, Poole, Silver, Wiebe, Yee, Young)
Task Force (proposed): Renee Ferguson (CELT);, Jane Schmidt (Library), Student Affairs Coordinator, Field Education Manager, Curriculum Specialist, Student and faculty representatives.

Director/Associate Director Undergraduate

Priority Recommendation # 2 Field Experience Enhancement

Rationale: The PPR revealed that students require field experiences to prepare them for the realities of Social Work. In order for the program to develop and support over 500 field placement opportunities, gaps in resourcing, staffing, student consistency, and student preparation require an enhanced and forward thinking approach.

Implementation Actions:

- Support for additional Staff positions
 - Coordinators
 - Education Manager Position a priority
 - Legal Council has been arranged through the Faculty of Community Services.
- A Field Placement Task Force to be struck (May 2024)
 - Understand and strategically engage with partnerships so that opportunities be offered with EDI and access in mind
 - The Field Placement Task Force will also engage with the Curriculum committee to focus on areas of improvement to ensure students are provided with the necessary

- professional skills and tools ahead of placements
- More Practical Skills and Application of Theory to be central to both the Field and curriculum committees.

Timeline:

November/December 2023: Hire and onboard Field Education Manager

December 2023: Establish interim Field Education Committee

January/February 2024: Hire third FEC

January 2024-May 2024 Establish Field Education Task Force

June 2024- June 2025: Working with enhanced data from new FE database program, identify opportunities for curriculum enhancement to be shared with the Curriculum Task Force.

Responsibility for

1. Director
2. FCS Director Experiential Learning
3. Field Education Manager
4. Field Education Committee
5. Faculty Field Consultants (Pon, Poole, Yee)
6. Field Education Task Force: Curriculum/EL specialist, Legal consultant, field partner representatives.

Priority Recommendation # 3 Theoretical Frames and the Mission and Values of Social Work

Rationale: Throughout the self-studies, the program and the peer-review team lauded the BSW for its engagement with critical theory including (but not limited to) power, anti-oppressive, decolonization, and social justice. Themes and lenses are integral to the program and make up its critical mandate. Students commended this as a strength. However, data in the self study also reveals that students do not feel the curriculum is clear in building up concepts and clearly scaffolding it across the 4 years of the program. Important social work tools, skills, and knowledge are sometimes perceived as missing with courses in the above mentioned areas being favoured.

Implementation Actions:

- Alongside the critical curriculum review, clearly lay out Program Learning Outcomes that speak to both critical theories and practical skills
- Ensure practical skills and knowledges are scaffolded throughout the program and its field placements
- Remove redundancies and seek opportunities for design teaching to bridge the perceived divide between practice and theory

Timeline:

December 2023-May 2024 SW Planning Meetings: Identify “expired” courses.

January 2025-June 2026

Revise and design courses to reflect findings of curriculum mapping analysis

*focus on scaffolding course concepts through the four years of the program

Responsibility for

- Course coordinators
- Curriculum Committee
Field Education Committee

Priority Recommendation # 4 Student community and communication

Rationale: The PPR revealed that students would benefit from a greater alumni community as well as clear and consistent communication.

Implementation Actions:

- Hire second student affairs coordinator to support the maintenance of student community
- Revive the alumni network
- Look for existing supports from current partners
- Create and redesign a student handbook for clear student communication
- Draft digital student handbook
- Revive student Town Halls - one per semester
- Revive the Student Union

Timeline:

January 2024-January 2025

Hire and onboard second student affairs coordinator.

Liaise with TMU Alumni relations to begin regular communication with SW alumni.

January 2024-January 2026

Draft student handbook and revive and resume student engagement workshops and drop-ins

January 2025- 2027

Develop and implement plans to engage partners (e.g. FCS, Student Union, alumni, etc.)

Responsibility for

- Student Affairs Coordinators
- Associate Director Undergraduate
Director

Priority Recommendation # 5 Increasing support for the Indigenization and decolonization process in response to the Truth and Reconciliation calls to action

Rationale: The School has noted that several Indigenous and non-Indigenous faculty have supported Indigenization and decolonization of curriculum, pedagogy, learning and teaching, research, scholarship and policy in the School. At the time of the PPR writing and review, we noted that our commitment to Indigenization and decolonization is further exemplified by the School's BSW partnership and ongoing collaboration with the First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI). However, since that time, FNTI has informed the School that they will not be continuing with the partnership after this 10th cohort. There is an Anishinaabe teaching that speaks to reflecting back in order to move forward. We recognize we need to do this work in moving forward in a good way to implement this priority. There have been two reviews of the Indigenous curriculum, most recently that which was completed by Emily Blackmoon that included several recommendations for the school. This reflection back will be part of the implementation plan ensuring we continue to move forward in a good way.

Implementation Actions:

- Consult, engage, and support the two Indigenous TFA in the School to ensure an inclusive approach and coming together in developing a cohesive and collaborative plan for the Indigenous curriculum in the program
- Broaden the consultation with all faculty in the School regarding best-practice, cohesive approaches, and collaborative planning with respect to the curriculum
- Given the sunset of the partnership with FNTI and to ensure our relationship ends in a good way, the Strategic Lead Indigenous Resurgence in FCS will work closely with the FNTI program coordinator ending the 10th Cohort, ensuring students who are out of sync are able to graduate and work with FNTI and the School in closing the partnership the way in began, in ceremony
- Engage the School faculty in the plan to support all FNTI students who are able to graduate (i.e offering courses or direct studies, etc.)
- Engage the faculty in the School on the possibility related to an Indigenous stream (particularly given the termination of the FNTI partnership)

Timeline:

2024/2025 - Engage Indigenous faculty in beginning conversations about how to move forward with the mandatory and infused Indigenous curriculum in the school. Topic for a planning day meeting in the Spring 2024

2023-2026 - FNTI 10th Cohort will be complete in the Winter of 2026. Seeing students who are out of sync may go beyond 2026.

Responsibility for

- Lynn Lavallee and Shane Young

Priority Recommendation #6: Develop Strategies to improve coordination between the liaison librarian for the instruction of more advanced research skills.

Rationale: The Peer Review Team found that research courses, such as SWP538 and SWP638, could benefit from greater interaction with the program's liaison librarian. Doing so would aid in teaching more advanced research skills, such as understanding the scholarly communication ecosystem, publishing conventions, the peer review process, and how to use discipline-specific databases for secondary research. In response to this recommendation by the Peer Review Team, the Dean's office recognized and supported the value of the library's involvement during the early phases of curriculum development.

Implementation Actions:

- During the early stages of curriculum development, instructors will consult with the liaison librarian on relevant library resources. Inviting the liaison librarian to take part in the new curriculum task force will also be a benefit.
- At the student level, the school will work to develop a plan to better communicate to students information about library-run workshops that are focused on research skills development.
- Encouraging instructors to invite the liaison librarian into their classes for workshops on research skills will also be encouraged, and the processes for doing so will be better communicated to instructors.

Timeline

Beginning January 2024 to January 2026.

Responsibility for

Course Coordinators

Research Methods faculty (George, Preston, Phillips, Silver)

Curriculum Task Force

Student Affairs Coordinator