

## Implementation Report on the 2017-2018 Cyclical Review of the Faculty of Social Work Programs

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**Date:** July 5, 2021

### INTRODUCTION

This is the first implementation report for the Faculty of Social Work (BSW, MSW, PhD) cyclical review that took place in 2017-2018. For each recommendation, the full language from the External Reviewers’ Report has been included, along with the corresponding information about implementation from the Final Assessment Report. For each recommendation, the unit has provided an update on the progress or action made toward the implementation of that recommendation, followed by comments from the relevant dean(s) and the Program Review Sub-Committee. Taking into account the updates provided by the unit and the comments from the dean(s), the Program Review Sub-Committee will review the report and determine if all recommendations have been implemented satisfactorily or if a subsequent report will be required.

### RECOMMENDATIONS PRIORITIZED FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

<b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers’ Report: Recommendation #1:</b> It is unclear how the administrators, faculty members, and staff of each FSW program are aligned with the overall University mission statement and strategic academic plan. FSW should host a yearly retreat to review how each program is striving to implement the University mission, values, and goals.			
Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Anticipated Completion Date	Additional Notes
Recommendation #1: It is unclear how the administrators, faculty members, and staff of each FSW program are aligned with the overall University mission statement and	Dean’s Office	May, 2021	The FSW will hold several faculty/staff retreats in the upcoming months and years, to discuss various

<p>strategic academic plan. FSW should host a yearly retreat to review how each program is striving to implement the University mission, values, and goals.</p>			<p>topics of a strategic nature.</p>
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**Unit Update:** Throughout each academic year, Faculty & Coordinators and Divisional Council meetings are held regularly and involve discussion of key university initiatives, such as the strategic academic plan and Laurier Strategy. Further, at the program level, other stakeholders (e.g., CTF, students) meet to engage in program planning and quality improvement, which are faculty, staff, and conducted within the context of the University’s mission and strategic academic plan.

Moreover, the Dean’s Advisory Group, comprised of the dean, associate deans, SAO, and field managers meet regularly to ensure program alignment with the strategic academic plan and Laurier Strategy and address other university initiatives. During the pandemic, we also held monthly, and often bi-weekly, Faculty & Coordinators meetings. These meetings allowed for FSW input into the university’s Strategic Research Plan and ongoing planning related to remote delivery due to the pandemic. This group consults faculty, staff, and students, as needed.

Prior to the pandemic, the FSW began planning for the development of a FSW plan to implement the University’s Strategic Plan (Laurier Strategy 2019-2024). This development process has been put on hold due to the pandemic and working remotely. We look forward to reviving the planning process to identify initiatives to further operationalize the University’s mission, values, and goals and strategic directions in the Fall 2021. The process, which will be engaged in by all academic and shared services units, is referred to as Integrated Planning. It involves identifying initiatives to implement the Laurier Strategy, resource needs to realize them, and projected budget implications.

In the meantime, the FSW has intentionally engaged with principles of EDI and Indigeneity to the best of the collective ability, even though there are not set directives from the broader University. While the responsibility for centrally supporting EDI and Indigeneity goals rests in the offices of AVP: EDI and VPA, the FSW has taken initiative on its own behalf to engage this work on these pillars of the Laurier Strategy. In 2021, the dean participated in a professional learning course called “Bravely Confronting Racism in Higher Education,” through the Harvard Graduate School of Education. This course was attended by 14 senior leaders from Laurier, and will further build capacity toward Faculty and University EDI goals.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** Since the cyclical review took place in 2017-2018, there have been many initiatives put in place, some of which have been described above, to implement this recommendation and better align the activities of the Faculty of Social Work with the broader university mission and strategic goals. I appreciate the detail that the Associate Deans have provided about some of these initiatives, and while this type of work obviously represents an ongoing task for FSW to be pursuing, I consider it completed for reporting purposes.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The committee appreciates the very thorough comments provided by the Faculty of Social Work of examples of ways that the intent of this recommendation has been implemented since the cyclical review in 2017-2018. Based on the comments provided by the Unit, and the Dean of FSW, no further reporting is required.

Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report: Recommendation #2: To ease student concerns about fulfilling program requirements (especially MSW), FSW should provide communication to the students in an effective and timely manner. This would help students navigate programs and related systems in a more efficient manner.				
Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Anticipated Completion Date	Responsibility for Resourcing	Additional Notes
Recommendation #2: To ease student concerns about fulfilling program requirements (especially MSW), FSW should provide communication to the students in an effective and timely manner. This would help students navigate programs and related systems in a more efficient manner.	Associate Deans for the PhD, MSW, IFS and BSW programs	May 2020	FSW Dean's Office will provide administrative support for newsletter and other communications efforts, and also funding to support the Online Coordinator position.	The Faculty has initiated a monthly newsletter for MSW students. A communication strategy for the online program is under development with a planned implementation date of Sept. 2019. We are also designating an online coordinator (faculty) to ensure student communications are addressed.

### Unit Updates

**BSW Program:** The BSW Academic Program Administrator works closely with Academic Advising on the Brantford campus to ensure that annual reviews of student progression in the program are completed. Students contact the Administrator who can then view all student records to evaluate and advise students. The Administrator can also initiate contact with the Associate Dean: BSW Program to identify progression problems and solutions. Ahead of registration, the Administrator distributes a registration guide for each year-level in consultation with Academic Advising.

The BSW Field office staff regularly post information regarding field opportunities and invite students for individual appointments to plan for placements. This has become a necessary operation for smooth progression from class to field.

In April 2020, the BSW program launched its Instagram @laurierbsw. We post weekly reminders for Field Seminars, share important academic dates, create campaigns to promote awareness around social work issues and offer the opportunity to share feedback and ask questions about the program and field placement process. We use the Instagram to promote events across the campus as well to keep students informed year-round.

**MSW Program:** The MSW Curriculum, Admissions, Field Education and Student Affairs Committee (CAFSAC) is dedicated to ensuring MSW students have a high-quality experience in the program. Student representatives from all MSW program cohorts (Regular Track and Advanced Standing, part-time and full-time) are included in this committee. The Community of Practice for the Online Program specifically exists to meet the needs of online students. Improving communications with students has been a priority across the MSW Program. In 2019, a Coordinator position (filled by a faculty member) for the MSW Online Program was established to support the program's effective implementation, including dealing with student concerns and issues. As of 2020, the (newly appointed) Associate Dean accepted responsibility for both of these roles, which increases the cohesiveness of faculty and student support and communications. The MSW Online Field and Program Coordinator, in tandem with the Associate Dean, a representative of the Field office and the Student Experience and Outreach Coordinator (a new position) have developed an online and in-person (remote) series of information sessions that provides students with critical information about program expectations. Due to the increasing demands for student communication and coordination, we have added a second Student Experience and Outreach Coordinator in 2021. The two Coordinators have significantly enhanced communication processes with prospective and current students.

Starting in 2019, the Associate Dean: MSW Program implemented a comprehensive communication strategy. This included a monthly MSW newsletter featuring, among other content, FSW and program news and updates from the field office. In 2020, the newsletter became a shared platform with student interests. Also in September 2020, the FSW partnered with the GSA on a shared Instagram account which is used to circulate information to all MSW students.

With the pandemic and remote delivery of the on-campus program and changes to the field placement requirements (e.g., decreased total hours, completing some remote placements), regular online information sessions and community meetings were held for students to support their transition to remote learning and placements. To support on-campus students who started the program in September 2020, townhall meetings were hosted by the Associate Dean throughout the fall 2020 term. Field office staff also hosted regular information sessions.

**Indigenous Field of Study MSW Program:** As a practice, the students in the IFS Program have been provided with a calendar of dates, both in calendar format and in bullet-point format that is sent out in advance of each term via email. Under normal circumstances, this calendar is also posted on the bulletin notice board outside the Circle Room FSW-320, for ease of access.

Additionally, there are seats on the IFS Program Management Committee (standing committee of DC) for student representatives from each cohort that are intended to keep communication open between students and the IFS Team.

Initiated as a response to the pandemic, and resultant remote delivery model, the IFS Associate Dean and respective Program Elders have engaged in bi-weekly check-ins with the three distinct cohorts of MSW students. The primary focus of these check-ins has been wholistic wellness; however, there are administrative reminders within the check-ins based on the timing of the meetings.

**PhD Program:** New doctoral students are mentored by the Associate Dean: PhD Program until they identify a supervisor. However, the Associate Dean regularly advises students, including those with supervisors, on program requirements and progression. The annual progress report plays a critical role in ensuring students are meeting

program milestones. Since September 2021, the Associate Dean has been hosting online drop-in office hours for students in addition to holding meetings upon request.

To support the effective implementation of the revised PhD Program curriculum, which significantly changed the comprehensive examination requirements, the PhD Admissions, Curriculum and Student Affairs Committee (PhD Program Committee) developed guidelines for the comprehensive examination. These guidelines are available on the program website and were distributed specifically to students about to start the comprehensive examination stage; the Associate Dean also met with this cohort. First-year students review and become familiar with the guidelines in SK820: Doctoral Seminar. The guidelines were also distributed to all faculty members. The PhD Program Committee also developed a grade reassessment policy, which was distributed to all students and faculty, and is available on the program website. Currently, the policies and information related to support for students presenting their research at conferences and their dissertation research are being reviewed and updated. All policies are available on the program website.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** As with the previous recommendation, this recommendation represents an ongoing effort of the FSW and each of its programs to ensure that students have access to information relevant to their programs in a clear and timely manner. The detailed responses provided by the programs above all outline examples of new and existing initiatives to do so. I am pleased with the changes that have been made in response to this recommendation since the cyclical review, and do not require any further updates to be made on this recommendation.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** FSW describes several initiatives that comprehensively address the Recommendation. For the MSW, these include initially establishing a Coordinator and then more efficiently incorporating these responsibilities within the mandate of the Associate Dean, establishing two Student Experience and Outreach Coordinators, collectively providing information sessions, issuing a monthly newsletter, and communicating through Instagram. For the MSW (Indigenous Field of Study), students are provided with a calendar of dates prior to each term, bi-weekly check-ins, and opportunity to attend meetings of the Program Management Committee. In the early stages of their program, PhD students are mentored directly by the Associate Dean and major revisions to program milestones have been communicated by several means.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The committee agrees with both deans that the comprehensive comments provided by the Unit have addressed the concerns inherent in the original recommendation. No further reporting on this recommendation is required.

<b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report:</b> Recommendation #3: Given the special demands of on-line teaching, the new on-line or distance education MSW program should be evaluated after year three of operation.				
<b>Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)</b>	<b>Responsibility for Implementation</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Responsibility for Resourcing</b>	<b>Additional Notes</b>
Recommendation #3: Given the special demands of on-line teaching, the new on-	MSW Online Coordinator	May 2021	Dean's Office and FGPS	Student surveys and some opportunities for online students to

line or distance education MSW program should be evaluated after year three of operation.				participate in focus groups (via Zoom) will be created and the results analyzed.
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**Unit Update: Action:** The FSW is engaging in ongoing process evaluation of the MSW Online Program given it is an emerging program. Identifying implementation concerns and addressing them in a timely fashion is central to program success. The evaluation process includes monthly meetings with all online instructors (MSW Online Community of Practice), monthly meetings with student representatives (MSW Student Online Community of Practice), and townhall meetings with online students (held each term). There is a continuous identification of areas for improvement, development and implementation of appropriate actions, and communication with stakeholders via the groups noted above.

With the addition of the Student Experience Coordinators, a Community Builders Strategy aiming to enhance the MSW student experience (including online students) through a variety of means, including student surveys, is underway. Survey data are reviewed, priorities identified, and action plans established and implemented. For example, when online students were polled, one of the outcomes noted the need to specifically target supportive programming for students who are parents and caregivers. The Associate Dean hosted several meetings for this group of students to share experiences and support one another during the pandemic.

Overall, the ongoing evaluation strategy involves working closely with students, staff, and faculty, as well as library resources, Accessible Learning, Career Services, the Wellness Centre, the GSA, and Teaching and Learning. This strategy allows us to be aware of the strengths and challenges of all MSW programs and to ensure their alignment.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** This recommendation speaks to ongoing efforts to evaluate the successes and challenges of implementing the part-time Online MSW program, so that regular and meaningful improvements can be made. The detailed responses provided by the programs above all outline examples of how the online program has been evaluated so far. I am pleased with these efforts and the changes that have been made in response to information collected. It would be useful to conduct a more comprehensive evaluation of student experiences, instructor feedback, and program outcomes at the five-year mark. This program implementation milestone will be reached in 2023-24, so planning for it might begin in 2022-23. An updated implementation report would be appropriate in 2024-25, to summarize the results of that evaluation. Incidentally, given the many unique features of this program within the Canadian Social Work Education context, a nice publication could result from this evaluation.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** FSW describes mechanisms that have been established to evaluate on-line delivery including regular internal discussions among faculty members and soliciting feedback from students. FSW is using this information to identify areas for improvement and development, and to implement appropriate actions. One example is provided. While it would be helpful to learn of other examples, efforts are being made to address this recommendation and FSW is active in seeking expertise from other student support services who are contributing to evaluation and improvements.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The committee appreciates the examples provided by the Unit of the ways in which the MSW is engaged in ongoing evaluation of its innovative online program. In addition to

the mechanisms described by both the Unit and the deans, the Faculty of Social Work will have an opportunity to engage in a robust evaluation of the online version of the MSW program in its next cyclical review in a few years time. From the comments provided, the committee is confident that the program will continue to collect feedback from students and other stakeholders on the effectiveness of this mode of delivery for the program, and adjust the program curriculum as needed. No further reporting is required.

<b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report:</b> Recommendation #4: There is a need to develop mechanisms to enhance contact between faculty members who can supervise doctoral students.			
<b>Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)</b>	<b>Responsibility for Implementation</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Additional Notes</b>
Recommendation #4: There is a need to develop mechanisms to enhance contact between faculty members who can supervise doctoral students.	PhD Associate Dean	May 2020	Faculty mentoring is being established across both campuses for new and untenured faculty – opportunities to learn about supervision and to get to know doctoral students will be included in that initiative.

**Unit Update:** There have been several longstanding activities that have connected students with faculty who can supervise students. These include faculty attending new student orientation and a faculty-student research meet-and-greet held late fall, which provides an opportunity for students to share their research interests with faculty members. Additionally, when advising first-year students the Associate Dean: PhD Program would often suggest potential supervisors and committee members to each student given the student's interests.

In 2020-21, three new initiatives were implemented to build connections between doctoral students and faculty. First, new student orientation was expanded to include faculty and student panels on scholarship applications and being a graduate teaching assistant. Second, faculty panels with first-year students were organized throughout the first semester. These provide students with the opportunity to meet faculty across Kitchener and Brantford campuses and to learn about their research interests and approaches to student supervision. Finally, the PhD Program Learning Series was implemented to foster students' competencies in a range of areas, such as academic job searching. Several of the sessions involved faculty members. All sessions were open to any interested doctoral student. It is anticipated that these three initiatives will continue in the upcoming academic years.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** This recommendation will enhance contact opportunities between doctoral students and faculty, increasing the potential for successful advising and research supervision. The programmatic responses provided by the PhD program faculty and the Associate Dean: PhD Program are excellent examples of new and existing initiatives to realize this goal. I am pleased with the changes that have been made in response to this recommendation since the cyclical review, and do not require any further updates to be made on this recommendation.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** The new initiatives effectively build on existing activities and are undoubtedly generating more interaction between PhD students and potential supervisors. I suspect that the faculty panels are crucial for PhD students to learn not only about the research interests of faculty members and approaches to student supervision, but also where research opportunities exist for the PhD students and how they can follow-up to have further discussion with faculty members.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** It is clear from the comments provided that the PhD program has taken concrete steps to implement this recommendation, which will surely improve the doctoral student experience. No further reporting on this recommendation is required.

<b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report:</b> Recommendation #5: During the next set of faculty hires, the FSW should strive to hire faculty members who are in the position to supervise doctoral students.			
<b>Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)</b>	<b>Responsibility for Implementation</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Additional Notes</b>
Recommendation #5: During the next set of faculty hires, the FSW should strive to hire faculty members who are in the position to supervise doctoral students.	Dean's Office	TBD (as budget permits new hires to replace recent retirements)	

**Unit Update:** Since 2018, two PhD tenure-track faculty positions were posted for the Kitchener campus of the FSW. Both would have the capacity to supervise doctoral research. One of these was a search for Indigenous scholar to fill the Hallman Chair in Child and Family Welfare at either the associate professor level or full professor level, but the position was not filled as there were no applicants. This position will be revised and posted in 2021-22, seeking a colleague at the associate or full professor level. A tenured Associate Professor filled the other position. This individual is well prepared to supervise doctoral students.

Supplementing these positions, junior (Assistant Professor level) tenure-track faculty members are serving on doctoral committees, thereby gaining first-hand experience in student supervision and mentoring and the requirements for the comprehensive examination and dissertation.

The university has announced a commitment to hire 6 new Indigenous faculty members and 6 new Black faculty members over the next several years. In our response to an upcoming call for expressions of interest we will be requesting at least one of each of these hires be allocated to the FSW. It is anticipated that these new hires would be in a position to supervise doctoral research. This is especially important since we have a current Indigenous PhD cohort and plan to renew this admission strategy again in the near future. Given our current complement of tenured Indigenous faculty, our supervisory capacity is spread very thin.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** The recommendation regarding hiring faculty who are in a position to supervise doctoral research is an important one. To the extent that our budget realities enable us to hire full-time continuing faculty members, all of our hires will have this capacity. This year we again had a failed search in seeking a mid-career Indigenous scholar to fill a tenure track position at the Associate level and also the Hallman Chair in Child and Family Welfare. We are currently considering an internal appointment for the Hallman Chair, in concert with a posting for an Indigenous tenure track faculty member at the Assistant Professor rank. I am pleased with the efforts made by our Appointments and Promotion Committee and the University to ensure that these hiring challenges are met successfully. I do not require any further updates to be made on this recommendation.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** FSW is striving to hire faculty with interests and ability to supervise PhD students, as budgets and opportunities permit. And they are actively engaging early stage faculty in doctoral committees to obtain important mentoring experience. Perhaps a next step would be to encourage early stage faculty members to supervise PhD students. Co-supervision could also be considered in various contexts, including pairing lesser experienced faculty members with those of greater experience, and to broaden the training and expertise that is provided to PhD students.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** Since the cyclical review took place in 2017-2018, it is clear that additional faculty members hired by the FSW have the appropriate expertise to supervise doctoral students, thus satisfying the intent of this recommendation. Additionally, the Dean of FSW has committed that any future hires will also be made with the ability to supervise doctoral students in mind. The committee is pleased with the progress made in implementing this recommendation, and requires no further reporting on it.

<b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report:</b> Recommendation #6: There needs to be an increased presence of full-time faculty members on the Kitchener Campus to be available to MSW and PhD students and full-time faculty should teach at least one course in each program.			
<b>Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)</b>	<b>Responsibility for Implementation</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Additional Notes</b>
Recommendation #6: There needs to be an increased presence of full-time faculty members on the Kitchener Campus to be available to MSW and PhD students and full-time faculty should teach at least one course in each program.	Dean's Office		MSW and PhD faculty members will be encouraged to be present on the Kitchener campus as much as feasible, and to post their office hours consistently. Teaching courses in both programs is common currently.

**Unit Update:** Faculty members avail themselves through a variety of ways to MSW and PhD students, including hosting office hours and making themselves available for other meetings, when requested. To support MSW

students in the on-campus program during the pandemic as they engaged in remote learning, a Faculty Mentoring Program was piloted in the 2020-21 academic year. Full-time faculty at the Kitchener site mentored approximately 10-14 students, connecting with students via Zoom and email. This program facilitated connections among students and with faculty and offered students instrumental and informal support in dealing with stress and anxiety provoked by the pandemic. This initiative will likely continue in the 2021-22 academic year.

All faculty members are invited to indicate interest in teaching courses at the MSW and PhD levels. Given retirements and changes in the PhD program curriculum, opportunities for faculty who have not yet taught in the PhD program have developed. For instance, in the 2020-21 academic year, two faculty members taught their first doctoral courses. The doctoral program aims to increase and diversify the faculty teaching in the program. While it is our wish that all full-time faculty should teach at least one program in each graduate level program, individual preferences and interests are considered when assigning teaching workload. There are also some more senior faculty members who have course releases due to administrative and research activities, limiting the number of courses they can be assigned.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** There have been ongoing efforts at the FSW to create and facilitate opportunities for faculty to teach across program areas. In addition, particularly during the pandemic, issues of geographical separation caused by faculty living outside the community or region where they are teaching have been much less apparent. Attendance at meetings and creative participation in remote teaching and learning have been strong contributors to the sense of community among students, faculty, and staff. It is anticipated that some of these increased participation rates and course offerings that combine remote and in-person instruction will remain, even once face-to-face interactions are permitted. I am pleased with the positive response of the faculty and staff to the restrictions imposed by the public health requirements due to COVID-19. At this time, I do not see a need for further updates to be made on this recommendation.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** In light of the pandemic, FSW has made efforts to ensure faculty are available to MSW and PhD students. I commend FSW for proactively developing a Faculty Mentoring Program to ensure all students have the support of faculty, and to develop community. Recommendation to have full-time faculty teach at least one course in each program is being addressed to the degree possible given other factors.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The constraints on in-person teaching resulting from the pandemic have understandably altered the nature of this recommendation. It is clear, however, from the comments provided by the Unit and deans, that the faculty in the FSW graduate programs have taken this recommendation seriously and found innovative ways to create a presence for students. Hopefully, some of these effective communication practices with students can be retained going forward, in either in-person or virtual formats. No further reporting on this recommendation is required.

<b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report:</b> Recommendation #10: FSW administrators need to 'workshop' their organizational structure to all programs, so that all program faculty and staff are better informed of institutional structures as a university and a program.			
<b>Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)</b>	<b>Responsibility for Implementation</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Additional Notes</b>

<p>Recommendation #10: FSW administrators need to ‘workshop’ their organizational structure to all programs, so that all program faculty and staff are better informed of institutional structures as a university and a program.</p>	<p>Dean’s Office</p>	<p>May 2020</p>	<p>Faculty/staff meetings are planned for the 2019-20 academic year that will allow for in-depth discussion of topics identified by the group as important issues. FSW and Laurier organizational structure will be included in these discussions.</p>
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**Unit Update:** As outlined in the response for recommendation #1, administrators have multiple avenues to “workshop” the organizational structures to faculty and staff. Additionally, these structures, including FSW committees, are discussed as part of staff and faculty orientation and onboarding.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** As indicated in the above responses, there are currently numerous opportunities for faculty and staff to learn about and stay up to date regarding the Faculty and University organizational structures. I do not require any further updates to be made on this recommendation.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** This recommendation appears to have been largely addressed in response to Recommendation #1.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** There is consensus among the responses provided that this recommendation is related to #1, and that it has been achieved through the strategies used in response to that recommendation. No further reporting is required.

<p><b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers’ Report:</b> Recommendation #11: FSW needs to ensure that appropriate resources and support are provided for delivery of the MSW program through distance education (on-line). It is strongly recommended that training workshops be held for those faculty teaching in the distance education program. There will be a need to hire technical support to assist distance education faculty.</p>				
<p>Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)</p>	<p>Responsibility for Implementation</p>	<p>Anticipated Completion Date</p>	<p>Responsibility for Resourcing</p>	<p>Additional Notes</p>
<p>Recommendation #11: FSW needs to ensure that appropriate resources and support are provided for delivery of the MSW program through distance education (on-line). It is strongly</p>	<p>Dean’s Office</p>	<p>May 2021</p>	<p>Dean’s Office</p>	<p>A faculty member is to serve as Online Coordinator and this position will be responsible for training online instructors. The academic and</p>

recommended that training workshops be held for those faculty teaching in the distance education program. There will be a need to hire technical support to assist distance education faculty.				administrative supports for the program will be included in upcoming strategic and communication plans.
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**Unit Update:** Several key positions, including the Associate Dean: MSW, Online MSW Program Coordinator, Admissions Coordinator, and Admission Specialist, support the online MSW program. There is an excellent synergy between these positions to ensure that students and instructors receive the support they need. New instructors teaching in the online program are provided training to the online system and teaching pedagogy as well as ongoing supports.

The newly developed Student Experience Coordinators and the Online MSW Coordinator directly support students and the Associate Dean: MSW Programs and other FSW colleagues support instructors.

The need for technical support for the online program remains and has increased given the expansion of the program. For instance, with increasing cohort sizes additional technical support is high. Given the size and nature of the online program, considerable technical support is required.

Supports for online teaching and course development, as well as technical supports are provided by the university's central Teaching & Learning unit. Since the pivot to remote instruction took place in March 2020, these supports have been enhanced and the FSW has been able to provide Faculty-specific teaching supports with funding from Teaching & Learning.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** This recommendation concerns an important area of support for the relatively new online MSW program. Since the cyclical review, and especially during the pandemic, the technical support provided by ICT and Teaching & Learning has been increased substantially. These supports have included extensive training and troubleshooting support for instructors who have been developing remote course offerings, delivering instruction through Zoom, providing access to library resources, etc. As a result, online technical supports and resources have also been increased. I believe the FSW is now well-positioned to continue teaching and learning activities that involve in-person, remote and online delivery. I do not require any further updates to be made on this recommendation.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** FSW describes a team including the Associate Dean: MSW, Online MSW Program Coordinator, Admissions Coordinator, Admission Specialist and Student Experience Coordinators, all of whom support the online MSW program. FSW describes active engagement with Teaching & Learning to aid in the support of on-line delivery, and the Decanal Comments from FSW indicate that involvement of ICT has also increased with expansion of the program. Ongoing interactions with these areas of university support will be critical to maintaining success of the program.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** When the cyclical review of the FSW programs took place in 2017-2018, the online MSW was in its infancy, and it is understandable that effective supports for both students

and faculty would be a concern as the program began. The comments provided by the Unit describe a robust support structure that has evolved to meet the needs of students and faculty as they adjust to this new program modality. The committee foresees that an evaluation of these support structures will accompany any program level assessment undertaken, such as those initiative described in response to Recommendation #3. An opportunity to collect feedback on the online MSW program and reflect upon it will also occur during the Faculty’s next scheduled cyclical review. All of the respondents seem satisfied by the support structures currently in place; therefore, no further reporting on this recommendation is required.

<b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers’ Report:</b> Recommendation #12: FSW needs to address the need for some courses to be taught by full-time faculty in the first year of the 2-year MSW program and to meet more regularly with their MSW students.			
<b>Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)</b>	<b>Responsibility for Implementation</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Additional Notes</b>
Recommendation #12: FSW needs to address the need for some courses to be taught by full-time faculty in the first year of the 2-year MSW program and to meet more regularly with their MSW students.	MSW Associate Dean	May 2021	

**Unit Update:** During the faculty workload planning process, full-time faculty specify the courses they wish to teach each academic year and the dean assigns workload. Faculty can choose from on-campus and online MSW courses and courses in the BSW and PhD programs. With expanded course offerings across the MSW program and fewer full-time faculty members relative to past years (three recently retired faculty have not been replaced), the FSW relies heavily on part-time faculty to teach in the MSW program. Nonetheless, the dean aims to ensure that a full-time faculty member teaches at least one section of multiple section courses and/or acts as course coordinator for such courses when assigning faculty workload.

As discussed above, the MSW Mentoring Program launched in 2020-21 will likely continue in 2021-22 and hopefully beyond.

It would improve our programs if we had more full-time faculty positions to teach in the first year of the two-year program. An Indigenous scholar and a micro-level practice faculty member, hired for Kitchener in 2019 and 2021 respectively, have strengthened our full-time faculty complement. However, we remain under-resourced relative to past student-faculty ratios and program expansion. We have received approval to hire a replacement for a Kitchener faculty member’s retirement in December 2020.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** The Faculty response to this recommendation has accurately summarized the context within which we are addressing this area, and the regulatory, financial and administrative constraints

within which we operate. As we enhance our recruiting efforts and move toward development of new program streams and credential innovation that will generate revenue, we will continue to request more full-time faculty positions in the near future. These goals should be addressed and fleshed out in the Integrated Planning process in which the Faculty engages over the next year or two. In my view, there should be a reassessment of the faculty complement and their teaching roles in the MSW program in 2022-23.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** FSW is responding to this recommendation as far as various constraints and factors allow. As I mention above in response to Recommendation #6, the MSW Faculty Mentoring Program appears to be an excellent initiative. It may be useful for FSW to canvas the MSW students that have been in this program for feedback about how the program may be improved or enhanced.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The comments provided by the Unit and deans help to contextualize this recommendation and the constraints associated with its implementation. The committee supports the suggestion made by the Dean of FSW that the MSW faculty complement and teaching roles be assessed internally in 2022-2023, but feels that this can be done outside of the scope of cyclical review reporting. The committee does not require any further updates on this recommendation.

<b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report:</b> Recommendation #15: Pursue funding opportunities to attract more international PhD students.			
<b>Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)</b>	<b>Responsibility for Implementation</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Additional Notes</b>
Recommendation #15: Pursue funding opportunities to attract more international PhD students.	Dean's Office, FGPS, Development Office	May 2021	

**Unit Update:** The 2020-21 PhD student cohort includes an international student funded through FGPS. It is anticipated that FGPS will offer such funding each 5-6 years. Post-pandemic the Associate Dean: PhD Program and the Dean will collaborate with interested faculty to identify funding opportunities to support an international PhD student on a regular basis, such as bi-annually.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** I appreciate the direction taken in the Unit response to this recommendation. Since we are still in the midst of the pandemic, fundraising activities and also international applications to the PhD program are not moving forward in ways that would be expected. I see this as an area that should remain in view for the next couple of years, as international student participation in our programs can be given more attention. I recommend a further review in 2022-23.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** Deriving sufficient funds to support international PhD students can be challenging. FSW is encouraged to consider scholarships that are available to top-ranked international PhD students and perhaps utilize as a recruiting tool, including those offered by the OGS, Vanier, Trudeau and Mitacs programs.

More information is available on our website: <https://students.wlu.ca/registration-and-finances/graduate-funding-and-awards/external-funding.html>

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The committee recognizes that the implementation of this recommendation is not straight forward, and is pleased to hear that the PhD program was able to fund an international student in 2020-2021. The committee encourages the program to continue to work with FGPS on ways in which opportunities may be sought to fund more international students to diversify the cohort and support the institutional goal of internationalization. The committee supports the Dean of FSW's suggestion that this recommendation be attended to on an ongoing basis, but does not require further reporting on it.

<b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report:</b> Recommendation #16: At the Brantford Campus there is an urgent need to address teaching space for the BSW program. In the effort to produce outstanding social work professionals, it is highly recommended that interview rooms and classrooms be provided, where small group activities can be conducted that will contribute to the quality of the program's graduates.			
Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Anticipated Completion Date	Additional Notes
Recommendation #16: At the Brantford Campus there is an urgent need to address teaching space for the BSW program. In the effort to produce outstanding social work professionals, it is highly recommended that interview rooms and classrooms be provided, where small group activities can be conducted that will contribute to the quality of the program's graduates.	Dean's Office, FAM	Fall 2019 Fall 2022	We are scheduled to move into our new space for September 2019. There will be meeting space for students; however, classroom space may not be addressed until the University completes renovations at One Market.

**Unit Update:** The BSW program moved into its new location at 97 Dalhousie in September 2019. There is a research office and conference room on the main floor. Classroom space may not be addressed until the University completes renovations at One Market.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** The focus on spaces for faculty, staff and students to work together effectively has been on hold since the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown in March 2020. We had only occupied 97 Dalhousie St. for a few months at that time and it may be that the potential uses for space in that building had not yet been fully explored. In the meantime, the redevelopment of One Market has continued and plans for academic use of that space have evolved. One part of that has been to identify One Market as the home for the Wilfrid Laurier

International College (in partnership with Navitas). The Faculty of Social Work may be in a position to negotiate the use of some spaces within One Market for future small group and social work practice activities (e.g., including simulation skills training spaces) to take place. If and when the FSW signs on as a partner with Navitas/WLIC to enable a BSW pathway, there could be additional opportunities to access One Market space. I consider this recommendation as one more that should remain in view for the next couple of years, as discussions and development of academic space proceeds among the Faculty, WLIC, and One Market. I recommend a further review in 2022-23.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The committee is pleased to hear that the BSW program was able to transition into a new space in 2019, following the cyclical review. The committee also recognizes that obtaining access to additional teaching and learning spaces is not fully within the program’s control. The committee encourages the BSW program to continue to work with the Dean of FSW to advocate for appropriate spaces for the program’s activities, but does not see a benefit to continued reporting on this recommendation.

<b>Full Recommendation from External Reviewers’ Report:</b> Recommendation #17: There is a need at the Brantford Campus for more space for research assistants for faculty members who are in the research stream.			
<b>Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)</b>	<b>Responsibility for Implementation</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Additional Notes</b>
Recommendation #17: There is a need at the Brantford Campus for more space for research assistants for faculty members who are in the research stream.	Dean’s Office, FAM	Fall 2019	

**Unit Update:** The BSW program relocated to 97 Dalhousie Street in September 2019; we now have a designated Research Office on the first floor. This space is open to student Research Assistant students to book and request access from Academic Program Administrator.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** I appreciate the Unit response to this recommendation, and consider it completed for reporting purposes.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The committee congratulates the BSW program on the acquisition of a new Research Office in the 97 Dalhousie Street building that provides space for student research assistants in the research stream of the program. This recommendation is considered completed.

Full Recommendation from External Reviewers' Report: Recommendation #18: There is a need to ensure that FSW faculty members who are in the teaching stream receive reliable and sustained teaching support, primarily in the form of teaching assistants and/or graders.			
Recommendation to be Implemented (from Final Assessment Report)	Responsibility for Implementation	Anticipated Completion Date	Additional Notes
Recommendation #18: There is a need to ensure that FSW faculty members who are in the teaching stream receive reliable and sustained teaching support, primarily in the form of teaching assistants and/or graders.	Dean's Office	Fall 2021	

**Unit Update:** Full-time doctoral students in receipt of Minimum Guaranteed Funding are offered graduate teaching assistantships (GTA) as part of their funding package; some students decline their GTA positions. GTAs provide teaching support to faculty teaching in the BSW and MSW programs. Prior to 2020-21, GTAs identified courses of interest to them, and matches were made. This practice prioritized students' interests over faculty's teaching support needs and created inequities between the BSW and MSW programs.

We have now changed our approach to this process. In 2020-21, the FSW consulted faculty to identify courses requiring GTAs, those courses were advertised among GTAs who selected their top-three choices and matches were made. Currently, the FSW is waiting to learn about the GTA appointment procedures under the GTA union contract being negotiated.

In 2020-21, the FSW also recruited instructional assistants (the majority at the PhD level) to provide teaching support to faculty across the BSW and MSW programs during the pandemic. These positions were funded through the GTA funds (some excess funds are available when an eligible GTA declines their position) and the Ministry-supported Work-Learn Experience Program (WLEP). WLEP covered 70% of the instructional assistant's salary. At this point in time, due to limited funding, the FSW is unsure if it will be feasible to continue to hire instructional assistants in the future. Nonetheless, we have been able to provide teaching assistance to all BSW faculty who have requested it over the past two years, and anticipate that the Faculty will continue to provide this support.

**FSW Decanal Comments:** I appreciate the detail that the Associate Deans and FSW staff have provided about these efforts and initiatives. I consider the area of instructional supports, especially for faculty in Professional Teaching Positions, to have been addressed comprehensively at this time, and consider our response completed for reporting purposes.

**FGPS Decanal Comments:** FSW has made constructive changes to the allocation of GTAs by prioritizing faculty teaching needs, but the new procedure still allows GTAs to make requests based on their interests and expertise.

Notably, all BSW faculty that have requested teaching assistance during the past two years have received this support. FGPS commends FSW for effectively responding to this Recommendation.

**Program Review Sub-Committee Comments:** The committee appreciates the detailed explanation of the ways in which FSW has worked to implement this recommendation successfully. No further reporting is required.

## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

**FSW Dean:** I appreciate the efforts made by our Associate Deans and staff to address these recommendations. They have not only reported fully on the activities and initiatives related to each recommendation, but have enhanced our programming, services, student experience, and educational environment through many thoughtful and intentional changes and improvements. While some of these efforts are ongoing within the FSW, I believe that excellent progress has been made in all areas of activity.

**FGPS Dean:** I agree with the comments of the FSW Dean. Faculty and staff in FSW should be commended for their strong efforts in thoughtfully and effectively responding to the recommendations. Many improvements to the graduate program are relayed in detail in this report, and graduate students are already reaping the benefits of the changes.

**Program Review Sub-Committee:** The committee wishes to thank the Associated Deans who contributed to this report for its thoroughness and for the thoughtful responses provided. The committee concurs with the deans that the Faculty of Social Work should be commended for their attentive implementation of the recommendations prioritized in the 2017-2018 cyclical review. The progress made on all recommendations is especially notable given the additional challenges of academic operations during the pandemic. Throughout the report, the deans have noted where recommendations represent areas that require ongoing attention, but the committee considers the recommendations to be completed for reporting purposes, and no further Implementation Reports will be required in advance of the Faculty's next scheduled cyclical review in 2024-2025.

**Subsequent Report Required: No**

**Next Cyclical Review: 2024-2025**