

September 9, 2024

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the start of a new academic year! As always, I hope your summer was rejuvenating and enjoyable. This summer I was forced to reflect upon and recalibrate personal and professional goals, accomplishments, and future aspirations. Some of my proudest accomplishments involve you and the wonderful ways we are collectively moving the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice forward. I am excited to begin the 2023 – 2025 academic year with the launch of our first strategic plan. Each of you were invaluable contributors to the creation of the plan and I want to thank you for your participation over the last two years. Our fall retreat will center our three strategic priorities and identified objectives for each. Included in this letter is a copy of the plan for your review.

### New Hire and Search Updates

At the beginning of summer, we welcomed Diana Bracket as our new Program Coordinator. Many of you have met her as she is our go-to for reimbursements and assisting Terri with budgets and operations. I look forward to officially welcoming her at our all-school retreat. We have made an offer to an outstanding candidate for the Admissions Manager and Recruiter position. I want to thank Terri, Ryan, Jill, and Claudia for serving on the search committee. We still have one additional position to search and hire, Assistant to the Dean and Programs, but I am pleased with our progress to fill the established open staff positions. In addition, I am working with Chris, Nancy, and Megan to create a temporary, part-time Program Coordinator position to support our Field Program. At the end of spring, we were informed that we can search for one social work Associate Professor or Professor. My deepest appreciation goes to Claudia, Michelle, Whitney, Anindita, and Grant who agreed to serve on the search committee. We were also approved to hire a new Teaching Associate and Program Coordinator for our CWTAP program. A special thank you to Rick and the CWTAP faculty who will be heading those two searches.

### Enrollment Update

In 2023, the Leadership Team began addressing on-going concerns about enrollment declines. An enrollment management tool was used to ask three basic but important questions regarding recruitment, persistent trends, and retention. The team created a 15-page comprehensive document for analysis of SSWCJ enrollment recruitment and retention strategies. I had several discussions with members of the team and we collaboratively adjusted our strategies. I am happy to report that we have begun to reverse our steady decrease in undergraduate applications. In winter and spring of 2023, we implemented strategies that resulted in two years of exceeding pre-COVID graduate enrollment. In spring and summer 2024, we increased undergraduate applications, which is showing fall 2024 enrollment that is beginning to approach pre-COVID enrollment. Below are the 5-year fall application and enrollment data.

Program	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	App.	Enroll.	App.	Enroll.	App.	Enroll.	App.	Enroll.	App.	Enroll.
<b>BACJ Total</b>	–	<b>84</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>59</b>
Campus	–	51	32	31	38	24	21	21	60	25*
Online	–	33	34	32	31	26	26	21	53	34
<b>BASW Total</b>	–	<b>57</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>MSW Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>71</b>
3-Year	86	43	92	41	69	31	72	51	83	49
Adv. Standing	26	17	37	18	34	18	33	27	36	22†

\*The CJ campus option admissions are ongoing and may go up a little.

†The MSW advanced standing option applications and admissions are still open

Please note students may begin the application process and not complete for a variety of reasons. In spring and summer, we will prioritize assisting students if they encounter barriers so that they meet deadlines.

## **Budget Update**

I am relieved to say that this is my last year to write about enhanced monitoring. Enhanced monitoring has created much angst. The SSWCJ has felt the budget situation a bit less than most units. I hope my efforts to maintain salary savings for redistribution, retain most faculty and staff lines, and focus on structural, personnel, and fiscal wellness reduced the potential full impact. As I have said in previous communications, I won, lost, and continue to fight battles. The increase in campus enrollments has made the enhanced monitoring situation a bit better for UWT overall. The SSWCJ has, in part, contributed to improved confidence in our budget outlook. In fact, there are discussions about if we show increased enrollments, the last round of enhanced monitoring cuts will be less. One factor EVCAA Harris is considering is enrollment projections. It is my hope that our increases in applications and this year's enrollment growth will provide greater confidence in SSWCJ's enrollment trajectory.

Neither faculty nor staff professional development funds will decrease this academic year. However, if we must reduce next year's budget, I am likely to adjust professional development funds effective 2025 – 2026 academic year.

## **Use of Professional Development and Travel Funds**

There continues to be misunderstandings about professional development use. I will provide a policy on professional development via email at the start of fall term. The document will be easily accessible on the SSWCJ intranet. Similar to pre-travel authorization, professional development fund uses (e.g., continuing education not associated with pre-authorized conference travel, trainings, books, office supplies) must be pre-approved. Requests for reimbursements post-purchase will not be approved. Some previously approved reimbursements (e.g., licensure fees, non-academic membership fees) will no longer be approved as they do not fall within the scope of academic professional development. To accurately track and appropriately file reimbursements, it is required that all reimbursements receipts are submitted through the SSWCJ intranet portal. Receipts and other purchase documentation attached to emails will not be processed. The staff has created a relatively easy process through the SSWCJ intranet but if you require additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact either Diana or Terri. Thank you in advance for helping us streamline processes and reduce staff workload.

## **Important Upcoming Retreat, Orientation, and Welcoming Events**

### Social Work Curriculum Retreat

September 17<sup>th</sup>  
8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (breakfast 8:30 – 9:00 a.m.)  
MLG 110

### Social Work Student Orientation

September 18<sup>th</sup>  
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.  
KEY 102 (Carwein Auditorium)

### All-School Retreat

September 19<sup>th</sup>  
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (breakfast 8:30 – 9:00 a.m.)  
MLG 110

### Criminal Justice Student Welcome

October 2<sup>nd</sup>  
12:30 p.m. – 1:20 p.m.  
JOY 114

A few weeks ago, I bragged to my fellow dean colleagues and vice chancellors across campus about the amazing faculty, staff, and students in our school. I am energized and encouraged by our individual and collective accomplishments throughout my three-year tenure in the SSWCJ. Thank you for your commitment and dedication. You continue to amaze me, and I am honored to work alongside you.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K".



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**THE SCHOOL OF  
SOCIAL WORK AND  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
STRATEGIC PLAN**

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# THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE LEADERSHIP TEAM

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Dean

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Director of Field Education

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**Terri Simonsen**  
Director of Academic Services, Finance and Operations

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Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice Program Chair

**Barb Toews**  
Criminal Justice Internship Coordinator

## Land Acknowledgment

We recognize that all of us at UW Tacoma learn, live, and work on or near the ancestral homeland of the Coast Salish people. In particular, our campus is situated on the traditional territory of the Puyallup. And, since we're gathered virtually, we also want to acknowledge the lands of the Muckleshoot, Nisqually, Suquamish, Duwamish, and all other traditional lands we may be on. As people on these occupied territories, we have a responsibility to acknowledge the land, the ancestors who have cared for this land since time immemorial, and all our Indigenous connections today. We also have the responsibility to acknowledge the histories of dispossession and forced removal that have allowed for the growth and survival of this nation and institution. In light of this history, let us take active efforts to partner with our Indigenous community members and neighbors to seek justice as we continue our work together as a community of learners, leaders, and educators.



## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

It is an honor to share the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice Strategic Plan. I am proud of our innovative, multidisciplinary school and its deep commitment to social justice and change. Through the integration of our criminal justice and social work values and critical thought, we aim to foster a collective and sustained impact on students, disciplines, and communities. The strategic plan is intended to be a living document that guides commitments and drives aspirations to lead in education, practice, research, and community engagement. We intend to continuously evaluate progress as we pursue three strategic priorities and modify identified objectives when appropriate.

My appreciation extends to all who participated in the creation of this document. Talented and dedicated students, staff, faculty, and community partners worked countless hours to create a roadmap that builds upon our impactful work and guides us through new pursuits of excellence. I invite you to please join us as we fulfill our vision, advance our mission, pursue our priorities, and achieve our objectives.



*Keva Miller*

Keva Miller, Ph.D., M.S.S.W.  
Dean & Professor



# THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN

is our commitment to our students, disciplines, and communities and is intended to meet the University of Washington Tacoma campus mission and goals.



## PLANNING PROCESS

Faculty and staff began strategic planning Fall 2022 with a focus on future visioning in the context of contemporary higher education, specific to social work and criminal justice education and practices. Following the future visioning, a strategic planning committee was constituted with a makeup of community partners, staff, and faculty. Using artifacts of the future visioning process, the Strategic Planning Committee led special meetings throughout the 2022-2023 academic year with student, staff, and faculty constituents. The Strategic Planning Committee continued its work into the 2023-2024 academic year and created the School's vision, mission, values, priorities, and strategic objectives.

## VISION

As a leader in multi- and interdisciplinary education and research, the School of Social Work and Criminal Justice at the University of Washington Tacoma will use inclusive, liberatory, and equitable practices to dismantle systemic inequities and foster a sense of belonging.

## MISSION

Our mission is to advance social justice through transformative education and practice, innovative research, and meaningful community engagement as we prepare dynamic and diverse leaders to build a more just and equitable society.

## GUIDING VALUES

Our school is guided by six primary values:

- Dedication to Students
- Social Justice & Anti-Oppression
- Faculty Excellence
- Community Engagement
- Shared Identity
- Innovative Spirit



OUR SCHOOL'S THREE  
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES ARE:

## TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION AND PRACTICE

## INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

## MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Each strategic priority encompasses several faculty- and staff-led initiatives that support and advance our progress. Realization of these priorities require investments and active participation by our faculty and staff to meet strategic objectives.



## TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION AND PRACTICE

### OBJECTIVES:

Empower students to become change agents in their respective communities.

Foster excellence in pedagogy, practice, and interpersonal communication.

Cultivate ethical professional practices grounded in social justice values.

Center the lived experiences of students in the learning process.

Connect knowledge in the classroom to relevant multi-dimensional community practice.

Implement high-impact teaching practices.

Engage community partners in education and practice.

Promote ongoing professional development of faculty and staff.



# INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

## OBJECTIVES:

Advance and highlight faculty research excellence.

Embrace multiple forms of knowledge and dissemination.

Promote student engagement in research.

Advance social justice research and anti-oppressive frameworks.

Connect research to community needs.

Engage communities and systems as partners in research.



# MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## OBJECTIVES:

Cultivate meaningful connections between the school community and community partners.

Approach community relationships with integrity and humility.

Promote belonging as a welcoming and inclusive resource to the community.

Engage in reciprocal sharing of knowledge and expertise.

Center lived experiences and honor multiple forms of knowledge.

• Counterculture –  
valued at odds with  
dominant culture







## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

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Chief Executive Officer-Deputy Director  
YWCA PIERCE COUNTY





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