**Proposal to Center Racial Justice and Equity at the School of Social Work**

**Phase Two: November 2022 to June 2023**

**Context**

This proposal responds to the recommendations from Nico Chin following her analysis of the University of Maine School of Social Work’s (SSW) dynamics of racial justice and equity within our programs, culture, and practices (Phase One). In this proposal for Phase Two, we outline action steps we will take during the remainder of this academic year (November 2022 through June 2023). These are first steps in an ongoing journey to increase equity at the SSW. [Nico’s *SSW: Next Steps for Equity and Racial Justice*](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qSowTixPFKq_tYm7PSYE--ADtLfaLupwo-ccbljSHW8/edit?usp=sharing) has been reviewed by the nine-member Equity Stewardship Team (EST) and disseminated to the SSW’s stakeholders (students, staff, full- and part-time faculty, field instructors, and alumni), and the EST shared [a response](https://docs.google.com/document/d/19i_TNzl8RAeEvaL0-njnAmkcFyMqdS9hL9Bm8v2UlE8/edit) to Nico’s memo with the SSW community. We held four listening sessions with the SSW community to hear feedback and reactions to Nico’s recommendations. That feedback has been incorporated into this proposal.

**Roles in Phase Two (November - June 2022-2023)**

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| EST | Lead development of practices, present recommendations to and secure input from faculty/staff and students, convene faculty votes as necessary, continuously work towards implementation and accountability |
| Faculty and Staff | Provide input and vote on adoption of EST recommendations, participate in training, implement EST recommendations |
| Students | Provide input to EST and other faculty/staff through open sessions, electronic feedback form and other mechanisms |
| Alumni and Community Partners (including Field Instructors and Agencies) | Provide input to EST and other faculty/staff through open sessions, school advisory committee, and social media |

**Decision Making**

* During Phase Two, the EST will develop practices and policies using a consensus model. By consensus we mean that decisions are made by agreement rather than majority vote.
* Practices and policies will be presented to faculty, students and staff (generally at monthly faculty/staff meetings at which students will be invited, though the vote will be by faculty/staff) for discussion and vote. Additional meetings will be scheduled if further discussion is necessary.
* Consensus will be the goal, but a two-thirds vote in favor will be adequate to proceed with implementation.
* In this phase, students will provide input. Although the EST and faculty/staff are ultimately responsible for decision-making around the outcomes described below, we remain committed to transparency in this process and offering ongoing opportunities to shape the process and provide feedback as part of our accountability to students and our broader community.

**Communication throughout the process of Phase Two**

We will hold monthly open meetings to report on progress and receive feedback and input from the greater SSW community over the next seven months (November through June); these meetings will sometimes be our faculty/staff meetings to which students will be invited. We will also solicit and receive feedback through an ongoing anonymous survey, individual conversations with EST members, and Curriculum Committee meetings. Planning will include ongoing analysis for how to be inclusive of student feedback on process and progress.

**Phase Two Purpose**

This year, we will take several steps to realign our daily practice in the SSW, working to center racial justice, equity, diversity and inclusion. Our focus over the next eight months will be to realign our daily practice in the SSW with our mission and values.

**Phase Two Outcomes**

We will use your feedback and Nico's recommendations to prioritize the following outcomes for the next eight months (Phase Two):

* Establish a set of community practices and shared core definitions of major concepts related to anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion (ADEI) work to increase faculty implementation of our equity values and increase alignment on decision-making that honors these values
* Revise mission, policies and procedures in the areas of equity, diversity, inclusion, and racial justice, leading to greater transparency around power and hierarchical structures within the School of Social Work
* Form new and strengthened alliances and relationships with other ADEI entities on campus and in the community
* Establish faculty time and allocated resources, decision-making processes, and infrastructure for Phase Three activities to be taken up in 2023-2024 academic year

***Expected preliminary outcomes for Phase Three (2023-2024)***

These outcomes are established for Phase Three because of the significant level of time and resources needed to complete the work. We have heard you say, and agree, that a lack of resources can often be as used as a delay tactic in strategic change. We want to reiterate our commitment to do the work and gather the resources, establish the processes, and create the infrastructure needed to fully address this phase.

* Updated standards for course syllabi
* Increased content on diversity throughout curriculum
* Increased accessibility and inclusivity of courses and course materials
* Training and support opportunities for teaching ADEI content for faculty

Ultimately, we hope these action steps will result in greater transparency around power and hierarchy within the SSW. We understand that this represents beginning work toward a long-term goal of increased racial justice and equity at the SSW. The EST will assess our progress in summer 2023 and refine and propose next steps for Phase Three for the 2023-2024 academic year by September 2023.

**Process**

Below, we describe the processes and steps we will use to achieve each outcome:

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| **Outcome** | **Who initiates & what** | **When** | **How much time** |
| **Establish set of community practices and shared core definitions** |  |  |  |
|  | EST develops list (open to faculty, staff and students/community partners) to attend and contribute) | November/December | 6 hours |
|  | Training with Nico-Faculty and Staff; community partners regarding using community practices-3 part training | During Curriculum Committee meetings: 2/17-10:00 am-12:30 pm; 3/10-10:00 am -noon; 4/7-10:00-11:30 am | 6 hours over three months |
|  | Public Comment Period | 4/7 to 4/14 | 1 week |
|  | EST presents to faculty, students and staff and community partners; faculty/staff initial vote on adoption (does not need to be unanimous, but two-thirds approval required) | April Faculty/Staff Meeting (4/28) | Faculty meetings will be extended to 11:50 this year; use first 60 minutes on this discussion |
|  | If necessary, EST revises community practices and shared definitions based on feedback from faculty/staff/students/community partners and submits for electronic vote | 4/29-5/16 | 2 hours |
|  | EST develops methods of accountability (open to faculty, staff and students & community partners to attend and contribute) | 4/14-4/28 | 4 hours |
|  | Public Comment Period | 4/28-5/5 | 1 week |
|  | EST presents methods to Faculty/Staff/Students; faculty/staff for initial vote on adoption (does not need to be unanimous but requires two thirds approval) | May 19-Faculty meeting  EST presents methods of accountability at Faculty/Staff meeting | 1 hour |
|  | If necessary, EST revises mechanisms based on feedback from faculty/staff and submits for electronic vote | 5/19-6/3 | 2 hours |
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| **Revise mission, policies and procedures in the areas of equity, diversity, inclusion, and racial justice** |  |  |  |
| 1. **Revised mission statement, goals of SSW, and goals of BSW/MSW program, with attention to micro, mezzo, macro levels** | EST revises mission statement, goals of School and programs (open to faculty, staff and students/community partners to attend and contribute) | February | 6 hours |
|  | Public comment period | Via document distribution and comment gathering | 1 week in late February |
|  | EST presents to faculty, students and staff/community partners; faculty/staff initial vote on adoption (does not need to be unanimous but requires two thirds approval) | March 3 Faculty/Staff meeting | 1 hour |
|  | If necessary, EST revises mission and goals based on feedback from students, faculty and staff/community partners and submits for electronic vote | April | 2 hours |
| 1. **Establish mechanisms for students to report concerns and issues of equity that is responsive and welcoming** | EST develops mechanisms (open to faculty, staff and students/community partners to attend and contribute) | February | 2 hours |
|  | Public comment period | Late February document distribution and comments gathered | 1 week |
|  | EST presents to faculty, students and staff community partners; faculty/staff initial vote on adoption (does not need to be unanimous but requires two thirds approval) | March 3 Faculty/Staff meeting | 1 hour |
|  | If necessary, EST revises mechanism based on feedback from students, faculty and staff/community partners and submits for electronic vote | April | 1 hour |
| 1. **Review academic and professional review processes (including field placement) to assure principles of equity and inclusion** |  |  |  |
|  | EST reviews and revises academic and professional review processes (open to faculty, staff and students/community partners to attend and contribute) | March and April | 4 hours |
|  | Public comment period | Mid-April document distributed and comments gathered | 1 week |
|  | EST presents to faculty, students and staff/community partners; faculty/staff initial vote on adoption (does not need to be unanimous, but two-thirds approval required) | April 28  Faculty/Staff meeting | 1 hour |
|  | If necessary, EST revises processes based on feedback from faculty/staff/students/community partners and submits for electronic vote | May | 1 hour |
| 1. **Ensure performance reviews are completed annually for all classified and professional staff and consider efforts related to ADEI** | Sandy and Leah | January/February Sandy reviews Ann  November/December-Sandy reviews Leah  January-Sandy will aim to review Sasha and Lynne  Leah will review Robin W. and Elaine according to her established schedule | From 3 to 5 hours including preparation and writing job descriptions when they don’t exist |
| 1. **Develop a process for selecting and evaluating adjunct and professional faculty that consider efforts related to ADEI** | EST discussion  Sandy to do research on UM guidelines (if there are any) | April/May | 4 hours |
|  | Public comment period (if we are ready) | Mid-May document distributed and comments gathered | 1 week |
|  | EST presents to faculty, students and staff/community partners; faculty/staff initial vote on adoption (does not need to be unanimous, but two-thirds approval required) | May 19 faculty meeting (if we are ready) | 1 hour |
|  | If necessary, EST revises process based on feedback from faculty/staff/students/community partners and submits for electronic vote | June | 2 hours |
| 1. **Clarify decision making and implementation processes in committees and faculty meetings** | EST discussion | April/May | 2 hours |
|  | Public comment period | Mid-May-document distributed and comments gathered |  |
|  | EST presents to faculty, students and staff/community partners; faculty/staff initial vote on adoption (does not need to be unanimous, but two-thirds approval required) | May 19 faculty/staff meeting | 1 hour |
|  | If necessary, EST revises based on feedback from students, faculty/staff/community partners and submits for electronic vote | June | 2 hours |
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| **New and strengthened alliances and relationships with other DEI entities on campus and in the community** | EST representatives will meet with and/or join the following entities to both inform regarding our efforts within the School of Social Work and seek support for continued work |  |  |
| 1. **Office of Diversity and Inclusion** | Sandy & Ann | November or December (as convenient for Anila K.) | 1 to 2 hours |
| 1. **Faculty Senate DEI committee** | Elizabeth | October 2022-May 2023 | 4.5 hours/month |
| 1. **President’s Council on DEI** | Len | September, 2022 - May, 2023 | 2 hours/quarterly or as scheduled |
| 1. **Bennita Bannis, College’s DEI consultant** | Elizabeth and Sandy | September  November  Later in Winter | 2 hours each time (more or less) |
| 1. **Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning** | Ann (with Sandy as makes sense)  Community of Practice focused on Racial Equity and Liberatory Teaching with Karen Pelletreau and Ann facilitating for adjunct and full time faculty | Planning and recruitment October - December, 2022  COP will run January - April, 2023 | October - December, 2022: 6 hours monthly  COP Jan-April, 2023: approx 6 hours per participant monthly |
| **f. NSFA Staff Advisory Council** | Robin Arnold, Leah Maxwell | Ongoing | 1 hour monthly |
| **g. Coordinate a training for students, faculty, community, field instructors, etc. on racial equity and inclusion** | Field Team, EST | April | 3-4 hour training |
| **Establish faculty time and allocated resources, decision-making processes, and infrastructure for Phase Three activities to be taken up in 2023-2024 academic year** |  |  |  |
| 1. create a resource needs map (looking at funding and time) | EST | January | 6 hours |
| 1. gather resources [increasing funding sources; advocacy within College and University; reallocating time] | EST | April/May/June | 10-20 hours a month |
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