



June 6, 2019

MEMORANDUM

To: Noreen Mokuau, Dean of the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work

From: Michael Bruno, Provost *Michael Bruno*
Krystyna Aune, Dean of Graduate Division *Krystyna Aune*

Subject: Program Review of the PhD in Social Welfare – Response (Revised)

Thank you for your detailed response to the April 2, 2019 program review report. To recap, the recommendations from the review committee included the following:

1. Seek increased support for extramural grant preparation from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research at UHM.
2. Social Work faculty are highly encouraged to seek financial support for GA positions through increased extramural grant application activity.
3. Explore external partnerships for increased exposure and possible funding sources.
4. Provide mentorship for junior faculty and course release in employment years 2 and 3.
5. At a minimum, continue with the current policy of two-year Chair terms (unlimited) for the PhD Program Director. This would provide consistency in management and allow the individual to build expertise and skill.
6. Increase and expand efforts for student recruitment and retention and implement a smoother transition of first year students into the Program.

In your response, you summarize the actions taken in each of these areas. A main theme is the need for more support for faculty members in their efforts to secure extramural funding and build their research portfolio. Success in these areas would naturally support the PhD students and program. Faculty development and research infrastructure can be supported within the school as well as centrally. Efforts to build capacity are underway within the OVCR. In the meantime, we applaud your efforts at fostering internal and interdisciplinary faculty collaborations/mentoring as well as the partnerships with external entities. We hope that your efforts to incentivize grant preparation and submission to the extent possible with professional development opportunities and course-load reductions is fruitful. The term for graduate chairs for most programs is 3 years, renewable. We concur that anything less than 2 years would not be advisable and hope that the transition between graduate program chairs is aided with a Social Welfare graduate chair handbook.

A second theme focuses on graduate student recruitment and retention. The detailed list of initiatives to be undertaken, spearheaded by a Student Recruitment Taskforce are all sound. We

look forward to seeing these efforts come to fruition and the results of assessment of those initiatives in the one-year follow up report. In particular, the program website needs attention to better capture the interest and attention of prospective students. It is also important that the web site also communicate program requirements. As mentioned by the program review committee, it should be made clear that the PhD program is about creating new knowledge. As such, you must ensure that students are aware of, and prepared for, the quantitative and qualitative research methods coursework. Relatedly, we encourage you to implement the review committee's recommendations of including videos, student testimonials, successful projects, etc. on the updated website. The home page for the MBTSSW currently highlights graduates of the BSW and MSW programs, but lacks any visuals of the PhD students. In terms of the application process itself, we encourage you to utilize the Graduate Application Supplemental Documents system that is integrated with the online application. Separate processes can be an irritant and even a deterrent to prospective graduate students. Given the urgent need to increase enrollment in the program, the implementation of these recommendations should be underway immediately.

We look forward to continued collaborations as you evolve and improve this important graduate program. The interim report should describe the progress and outcomes of the curricular review and modification efforts as well as the recruitment progress. The one-year follow-up report will be due May 15, 2020.