Mahalo to the committee for its work in assessing the School’s programs and making recommendations. The School’s dean, faculty and staff all agree with the committee’s assessment that there is a “very strong need” for programs, scholarship, and service in the areas of social work and public health. We have been successfully expanding to meet the needs in Hawai‘i, with strong support and partnerships with the Hawai‘i State Department of Health and numerous health care and social services organizations. One piece of evidence of this success is the significant increase in externally funded projects over the past two years.

With the State and the country now faced with a pandemic and social unrest and injustice, we agree that the School needs to find ways to scale up. We are working on a number of potential new programs and innovative ways of funding them. With respect to the specific recommendations of the committee, we offer the following responses:

**Recommendation 1: Stop-out admissions to the PhD in Social Welfare**

In response to the June 2019 Program Review report, and as note in the June 2020 one-year follow-up report, the School has successfully worked to improve the recruiting of students and the success of students in the program. Most notably have been the increase in Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island students, the 100% pass rate on qualifying exams, and growth in the program. Not reflected in the committee’s numbers are the successful graduation of 8 students in past three years and steady admission since AY 2017-18, with an average of 3.5 new students per year. The 5 new students in Fall 2020 represents the largest incoming cohort to date. The total number of students in the program now stands at 13, above the 10-student threshold for small programs.

The School continues to work to expand the program, but feels it would be premature to stop-out admissions at this time.
Recommendation 2: Stop-out admission to the MS in Public Health

The MS in Public Health functions as an important option within the epidemiology specialization of the Masters of Public Health program. The final part of the MPH requires a practicum. For epidemiology students who have aspirations for a career in academia, the MS allows them to instead choose to do a thesis, a more relevant deliverable for students aspiring to apply to doctoral programs. Accordingly, while the number of students choosing to do so is small, as the thesis work is not an onload teaching assignment, eliminating the option would not free up any resources. Furthermore, the PhD in Epidemiology program recruits graduates from the MS program, expertise that is urgently needed at this time. We do not see a reason to eliminate this option for students.

Recommendation 3: Monitor enrollment and retention in the online (5-week) BSW program

While only in its third cohort, the online BSW program has been very successful. There is a continuing problem with the awarding of financial aid for students in programs with 5-week courses, which has adversely impacted students. The School is very committed to this program and is working with the financial aid office, Outreach College, and the Office of the VP for Academic Planning and Policy to find a solution.

Recommendation 4: Regularly assess learning outcomes for the online and campus BSW programs to ensure both continue to meet CSWE accreditation standards

The School has a history of successful reaccreditation and, like all professional schools, take accreditation very seriously. We do whatever is necessary to meet all accreditation standards. The BSW program is fully accredited through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) for the maximum allowable period through 2026, and the launching of BSW online option was approved as a substantive change by the CSWE in 2018. We assess student learning outcomes, anchored in the 10 social work competencies, in all courses and field practicum every semester for both the online and campus BSW programs, and regularly provide program-level assessment reports to the CSWE, and the Manoa Assessment Office.