GATHER & GROW

GSSW's Strategic Planning Process

2025 Strategic Plan

Through an in-depth stakeholder informed process, GSSW has imagined an ambitious future, which leverages its strengths and more deeply engages its communities. We invite you to join us as we build connections, mobilize our assets, and transform systems for greater impact.

UNIVERSITY of DENVER

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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Connect. Mobilize. Transform.

GSSW'S 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

GSSW TODAY

Established 85 years ago, the Graduate School of Social Work (GSSW) at the University of Denver has a long history of researching effective interventions and training social workers to meet the needs of people and communities within rapidly changing environments. In 1931 early social work women leaders in Denver founded GSSW to promote social justice. Through their work in the Denver public welfare departments, the Denver juvenile court and responding to the effects of the Great Depression, they believed that addressing poverty was an important means to strengthening a democratic society. This tradition of social justice has continued to the present day through GSSW's education, scholarship and service. Under the direction of Dean Catherine Alter, the faculty adopted the mission statement, "*to foster social responsibility for social and economic justice, quality of life and multicultural communities based on equality for all people*." From our response during the Depression to the Bridge Project today, GSSW has responded to community need for social and economic justice. Standing on the shoulders of those who have come before us, we continue that commitment in 2017, with our mission "*to promote social justice by advancing scholarship, education, community engagement that leads, connects, mobilizes and transforms*."

> ### "GSSW IS LEADING SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN COLORADO"
> **GSSW PARTNER**

Today we are a community of approximately 48 tenure & tenure track, clinical, and research faculty; 80 staff; 170 adjuncts; over 30 PhD students; and our more than 500 MSW students at our 3 campuses and online. We are home to five Centers and Institutes that provide research, evaluation, and engage communities in locally, nationally, and internationally. Our alumni, more than 8,000 strong with more than 4,000 in Colorado, contribute to their communities through their professional and volunteer work; our Denver alumni serve the School as adjunct faculty and field supervisors.

Our MSW curriculum is broad and flexible. We offer classes and internships in the fall, winter and spring quarters, with some students also taking classes or engaging in field work over the summer. Students take classes in ten concentration areas and can earn certificates in two additional focus areas. Our concentrations focus on practice across the life span from children and youth to older adults, in clinical, community, and international settings. We are known for infusing our Power, Privilege and Oppression (PPO) framework throughout our curriculum, rooting all of our courses in social justice. Our PhD program trains the next generation of scholars and teachers, as well as contributes to GSSW's research agenda. Our excellent education comes with a high price tag, however, impacting accessibility. Many students come to GSSW with and most leave with educational debt.

Our faculty and staff are engaged with communities – at the local, national, and global levels – as research partners, community leaders and innovators. Our understanding of community spans these many levels. There is a clear commitment among faculty and staff to advocating for the public good and creating change in the communities in which we live and work. We work across the DU campus, serving on Committees and leading initiatives to engage the University more deeply in the surrounding community.

With a new Dean, excellent rankings, and the University's adoption of Impact 2025 strategic plan, GSSW approaches strategic planning well-positioned to leverage our history and unique assets. We are focused on maintaining our excellent education, developing a more connected School community, as well as deepening our connections with our surrounding communities, locally, state-wide, nationally and internationally.

US News & World Report ranked GSSW 17th of 242 MSW programs.

OPPORTUNITES

Opportunities in Social Work

The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that Social Work will grow by 12% by 2024 (2017).

Our unique education and critical skills position us for leadership in solving social challenges that many see as intractable. Momentum is growing on the "12 Grand Challenges for Social Work" – a broad social agenda focused on addressing critical issues affecting individuals, families and society – and regionally, DU leaders are working to identify "Rocky Mountain Grand Challenges." GSSW will structure knowledge bridges to address these challenges. A GSSW education prepares scholars and professionals to bring systems thinking, analysis, and a person-in-environment perspective to sweeping challenges like homelessness, a growing older adult population, and the impact of trauma on behavioral health. Our combination of classroom instruction and field education positions graduates to meet a workforce demand for "real world" experience. Our alumni start their careers with the self-awareness and professional competencies that working in teams often requires. These opportunities are growing in all sectors.

> **"HIGHER EDUCATION MUST RETHINK OUR FUNDAMENTAL APPROACH TO TEACHING AND LEARNING, KNOWLEDGE CREATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT"**
> **CHANCELLOR REBECCA CHOPP, IMPACT 2025**

Opportunities in Higher Education

As the face of higher education is changing, so is GSSW. Students need flexibility and ongoing training and skills that keep them competitive in the workforce; however, the rising cost of post-secondary education can pose a barrier. Nonetheless students, particularly students of color, are enrolling in graduate programs in record-high numbers. GSSW's online program meets the need for adaptable, affordable, and relevant education for an increasingly diverse student population. Additionally, stackable credits, certificate programs, a part-time program, a well-funded doctoral program, and interdisciplinary studies will ensure that GSSW is open to all interested in a social work education.

Opportunities in Colorado

Colorado's population, like that of the United States, looks different today than it did 15 years ago and it will continue to change. Colorado is more racially and ethnically diverse, older, and has a higher percentage of people living in the state that were born outside of Colorado; these trends will continue. GSSW's flexible curriculum, scholarship and community partnerships prepare our graduates for work that is culturally responsive. Our scholars and practitioners will be prepared to conduct research that addresses the shifting needs of our surrounding communities.

The best paying and fastest growing industries in Colorado are outside of "traditional" social work settings. We recognize that social workers have valuable contributions to bring to fields like health care, human resources, and professional and business services. For example, Colorado health providers are implementing an integrated approach to providing care that highlights social workers' abilities to provide behavioral health services with a patient-centered approach. This integrated model is of particular importance when working with low-income populations.

Our influence goes well beyond direct practice. We can meet the needs of our nonprofit partners in Colorado who report that their workforce needs relate to management challenges – fund development, capacity building, collaboration, and board development.

PLANNING PROCESS

GSSW launched "Gather and Grow," our strategic planning process in January 2017. The planning process was guided by a Strategic Planning Committee, co-chaired by Professors Jean East and Debora Ortega, and centered on a series of stakeholder engagement efforts. Beginning with individual interviews, we surfaced information on the School's strengths, challenges, interactions within DU and the three cities in which we teach and work, and future opportunities. We built on these with a series of 15 roundtable sessions at which close to 250 interdisciplinary faculty, staff, students, alumni and community partners in Durango, Glenwood Springs, and Denver shared their views of GSSW today and hopes for GSSW in the future.

To ensure that communities with connections to GSSW had an opportunity to contribute to the plan, we surveyed all our stakeholders with questions about possible goals and strategies; more than 500 people responded. Finally, we solicited feedback from the GSSW community on draft goals and strategies through World Cafes, a creative and collaborative process for creating dialogue. Throughout, the planning process was informed by a comprehensive scan of GSSW's internal status and external environment.

The iterative process resulted in clear consensus around three transformative directions that drive the strategic plan:

1. *Connect - build meaningful connections within GSSW and its many communities*
2. *Mobilize - mobilize our unique GSSW assets to advance change*
3. *Transform - move toward greater equity and a more diverse GSSW*

Throughout the process, we grounded our planning work in the University of Denver's strategic plan, Impact 2025. Impact 2025 lays out four transformative directions:

1. *Students learning and leading in a diverse and global 21st Century*
2. *Discovery and design in an age of collaboration*
3. *Engagement and empowerment in Denver and the Rocky Mountain West; and*
4. *One DU*

Though GSSW's three transformative directions are structured differently, they address the same themes — students, research, community, and building a stronger school. Alumni, diversity and inclusion, knowledge bridges, collaboration internally and externally, financial support, professional development, and service in our field all echo the goals and strategies found in Impact 2025. The alignment between GSSW's Gather and Grow plan and Impact 2025 is highlighted in the specific goals, strategies and tactics found in Appendix 3, beginning on page 18.

PLANNING PROCESS

1. Framing
Development of the Project Plan
Formalization of the Committee
Trend Analysis
Stakeholder Identification

2. Discovery
28 Interviews (n=31)
15 Roundtables (n=234)
Stakeholder Survey (n=535)
Environmental Scan of trends in Social Work, Higher Education, & Colorado

3. Strategy
Strategy Sessions with the Executive & Planning Committees
2 World Cafes (n=90+) focused on strategies to support identified goals

4. Action
Plan Development
Dissemination Planning
Community Presentation & Roll Out

OUR VISION

Achievement of thriving sustainable communities, actualized human potential, and embodiment of equity across all communities.

OUR MISSION

GSSW promotes social justice by advancing scholarship, education and community engagement that leads, connects, mobilizes, and transforms.

1. CONNECT

Current Context

We count among our greatest strengths faculty and staff who are leaders in their respective fields, engaging in scholarship that helps address pressing issues of consequence in our communities. From our centers and institutes to longstanding partnerships between the School and state and local agencies, GSSW's presence is felt throughout the West. Our research informs practice across the US and internationally, as well as with our local partners. Our students benefit from a diverse and adaptive curriculum rooted in a social justice framework. They contribute to agencies through internships that provide them with invaluable practice experience. Our MSW graduates often make the Denver metro region their home, further entrenching GSSW in this community and expanding our cadre of influential leaders locally. Our PhD graduates secure faculty positions across the country and have an impact on higher education in social work and related fields.

> **"WE ARE ON THE VERGE OF MAXIMIZING OUR RESEARCH, FIELD EXPERIENCE, CLASSROOM LEARNING, AND STRONG NETWORK OF ALUMNI. WE CAN AND SHOULD ALIGN THAT WORK AROUND A CLEAR CALL TO ACTION."**
> **FACULTY**

Our Vision

We have an opportunity to exemplify the value of "meeting communities where they are." To do so means being more physically present with our partners, but also letting community needs and resources more fully inform our work and research. In addition to being present, we will ensure that GSSW's resources are accessible to all who wish to engage – from concept papers and policy briefs to training, evaluation, and technical assistance. We will prepare our students to become social work leaders, solving problems in a variety of industries and sectors. We also recognize that higher education is changing, and we will respond to the need for accessible credentialing and training by offering alternative models of education to those that need them.

By aligning these resources and ensuring that the work of students, staff, and faculty within communities is intentional and coordinated, we will more efficiently and effectively work towards the goals we share with communities inside and outside of the School. The result will be more effective and meaningful engagement, responsive research driven by community needs, and progress on issues that advances justice and improves lives.

1. CONNECT: CALLS TO ACTION, GOALS, & STRATEGIES

ENGAGE & RESPOND.

We will reinforce and expand the bridge to and from the community, working to respond to the most pressing issues. Through intentional engagement we will also advance knowledge that influences public policy, particularly in Colorado.

Goal 1: Reinforce and expand our bridge to and from the community
1. Build out GSSW's office of community engagement to link community partners with GSSW's capacity-building services, including evaluation, co-working space, and professional support
2. Encourage, support, and incentivize faculty, staff, and PhD and MSW students to partner with community
3. Explore opportunities for GSSW to contribute to and demonstrably advance progress on the "Social Work Grand Challenges," championed by the Academy for Social Work and Social Welfare

Goal 2: Advance training and knowledge that influence public policy
1. Generate responses to social problems and public policy initiatives with our constituencies through partnerships
2. Support the advancement of a public policy agenda rooted in social work values in Colorado, including but not isolated to research on policies, training of the public sector workforce, and development of civic skills among students

INNOVATE & IMPACT.

Building on a legacy of innovative and transformative scholarship, we will engage in research that is driven by community needs and social work values. We will convene, partner, and lead to make a lasting impact.

Goal 3: Engage in scholarship and research that is driven by communities and rooted in social justice
1. Establish long-term strategic partnerships between GSSW and distinct community partners
2. Serve as a convener, research expert, and thought leader by creating local, regional and national "Think Tanks" that bring stakeholders together who set an agenda for action
3. Cultivate opportunities for and build on current interdisciplinary scholarship across DU, with other universities, and within the community
4. Promote "multiple ways of knowing" through community-centered, practice-informed, and culturally-diverse perspectives in research

Goal 4: Continue our influential and innovative research legacy
1. Build the school's infrastructure, financial support, and policies/procedures to advance our research
2. Align & converge the work of our Institutes and Centers with the Graduate School of Social Work

LEARN & LEAD.

We will enrich and expand the GSSW student educational experience so that PhD and MSW students are prepared to learn and lead in the 21st century economy. We will explore and concentrate our educational programs on filling specific workforce needs through specialized training.

Goal 5: Create a dynamic learning experience for all members of the GSSW community
1. Create opportunities to hone an adaptive, innovative, and responsive curriculum and internship model
2. Expand community-based learning pedagogies that promote social justice across the curriculum
3. Engage PhD and MSW students in continuous career preparation during their time at GSSW and beyond
4. Ensure that all teaching faculty employ highly-effective teaching methods within and across programs

Goal 6: Meet workforce needs through specialized skill-based training
1. Identify unmet workforce needs in social services and growth industries in Colorado and integrate necessary competencies into the curriculum
2. Identify and offer alternative, accessible models of education through stackable credentials, certificates, and dual degrees that expand the reach of social work into varied sectors and career paths
3. Build the highest quality online MSW program through marketing, innovative offerings, and excellent service

2. MOBILIZE

"OUR ALUMNI NETWORK IS OUR SINGLE LARGEST UNTAPPED ASSET."
STAFF MEMBER

Current Context

Our footprint, in Denver and throughout the Rocky Mountain West and Four Corners regions, is significant. More than 4,000 alumni of our school live and work in the Denver metro region and hundreds attend our sponsored events each year. Our scholarship is used to assist numerous organizations in their efforts to create change. Students have internships in agencies across the region, giving them invaluable skills and experiences that prepare them for fulfilling careers. Our school is making a difference – across DU, in communities, and on the most salient issues that affect the lives and well-being of people in our state and beyond. This reputation for leadership is an asset, and we want to expand it.

Our Vision

We envision a GSSW that invites people in through state-of-the-art facilities open to the community, a welcoming and helpful culture, and opportunities to engage with the School over a lifetime. This is particularly true for our alumni. We will build lifelong relationships with our PhD and MSW students that begin the minute they inquire about our programs, and continue with our support of their professional development throughout their careers. Our work on behalf of our students and community partners positions us as a leader on our campus, helping to fulfill DU's mission of working for the public good and elevating social work as an impactful way to do so.

We can celebrate this success and leverage this vast network to tell our story. We will communicate our big ideas to donors and philanthropists whose support will allow us to undertake new and exciting projects. We will help the community – inside and outside the University – understand what social workers do and the difference our work makes every day. And we will invest the necessary resources to ensure that our faculty and staff are able to fully realize this vision.

"GSSW AND SOCIAL WORK OVERALL ARE IN NEED OF STRATEGIC BRANDING, WHICH DEMONSTRATES OUR IMPACT AND VALUES"
ALUMNI

2. MOBILIZE: CALLS TO ACTION, GOALS, & STRATEGIES

ENVISION & INVEST.

Leveraging our internal assets, we will engage our vast alumni network more meaningfully, promote the uniqueness of GSSW, growing our work and its reach, and elevating the discipline and profession of social work.

Goal 1: Invest in meaningful relationships with alumni
- Develop a culture that values and promotes alumni engagement with GSSW
- Engage GSSW's vast MSW and PhD alumni network in our work
- Engage current students and the alumni network in the school's philanthropy

Goal 2: Advance the uniqueness of GSSW
- Develop a marketing and communication strategy that articulates GSSW's value proposition
- Create a culture of "yes, and" that is oriented to high-quality service and relationship-building
- Cultivate a culture of "One GSSW for social justice" across all programs, campuses, and Institutes and Centers

Goal 3: Enhance GSSW's capital (financial, physical, and human)
- Establish ambitious fundraising goals and innovative approaches for stakeholder investment
- Provide and enhance current physical and virtual spaces that cultivate a deeper sense of community
- Invest in and maximize the use of operational systems that enhance our work and connections
- Develop the infrastructure necessary for data-driven decision-making
- Plan for, assemble, and activate the human capital necessary for anticipated growth
- Invest in the professional development of GSSW's staff

Goal 4: Illuminate the vast fields of social work practice and impact in the global community
- Contribute to the rebranding of the social work
- Build on GSSW's reputation as a national and global leader in social work
- Position GSSW as a leader of the University's work to advance the public good

3. TRANSFORM

Current Context

We demonstrate our commitment to diversity and inclusion through our approach to social work education, course offerings, and outreach to all communities. From our Power, Privilege, and Oppression (PPO) framework to the Latinos/as certificate, our satellite campuses, and online program, the School has prioritized conversations about diversity, improved access to a GSSW education, and prepared MSW and PhD students to work on behalf of underserved communities.

> **"WE MUST PREPARE EVERYONE FOR HARD CONVERSATIONS: STUDENTS MUST LEARN HOW TO PROCESS AND RESPOND; THE COMMUNITY MUST HAVE A VOICE AND INFORM OUR WORK; AND GSSW AT ALL LEVELS MUST BE PREPARED TO FACILITATE THESE DISCUSSIONS"**
> **ADJUNCT**

Our Vision

We recognize that advancing equity is an area in which our work truly will never be finished. We envision a GSSW in which our commitment is evident in all aspects of our operations, and we create an equitable environment for current and prospective students, faculty, and staff. The School can build on its existing work by challenging boundaries and being willing to examine current policies and practices – both internal and external – to evaluate barriers to inclusion.

We can better meet the needs of those who have traditionally been excluded from institutions like ours. Through focused strategies, we can create an environment that is not only compositionally diverse, but also where the culture is welcoming and accommodating for all students, faculty, staff, and the communities we serve, regardless of background. Our work includes:
- Reducing the cost of tuition through scholarships and other funding.
- A hiring process focused on recruiting a qualified, diverse faculty and staff, including adjunct professors and field liaisons, prepared to engage in conversations about equity.
- Rooting the curriculum and all forms of instruction in principles of universal design.

Realizing our vision will require a cultural shift. It will require taking a hard, critical look at our policies and practices, even if it means changing "the way we've always done things." Achieving our goals will mean an intentional shift in the way we recruit faculty, staff, and students. It will mean radical support for those who have historically been on the margins in our institution and others like it. We will have tough conversations, create space for those who have traditionally been excluded, and center the voices of those who do not always have privilege. And the result will be a better, more equitable, and diverse GSSW with students, faculty and staff better prepared to be leaders at DU and beyond. In this way, we will make progress on social change.

> **"OUR COMMUNITIES NEED TO SEE US FIGHTING FOR DIVERSITY, ALWAYS AND EVERYDAY"**
> **STAFF**

TRANSFORM: CALLS TO ACTION, GOALS, & STRATEGIES

DISRUPT & TRANSFORM.

By challenging and disrupting systems of oppression and more fully leveraging our diverse programs, we will increase the accessibility of social work education and make space for those often excluded.

Goal 1: Challenge and disrupt systems of oppression within and outside GSSW
1. Promote equity through the development and ongoing evaluation of inclusive practices
2. Intentionally work against exclusion of historically marginalized groups by recruiting and retaining diverse students, faculty, and staff
3. Engage in research and scholarship explicitly focused on social justice for historically marginalized groups
4. Fully integrate the School's Power, Privilege and Oppression Framework into GSSW's MSW and PhD curricula as a teaching and learning tool
5. Partner with the University in inclusive practices and engagement
6. Convene our communities more intentionally in conversations around diversity

Goal 2: Increase the accessibility of social work higher education for those who have historically been excluded
1. Award scholarship dollars to students from marginalized groups
2. Explore and provide supports for students to meet their academic and basic needs
3. Create a part-time evening and weekend program
4. Continue to build a curriculum rooted in universal design principles

Goal 3: Invest in and elevate GSSW's unique programs
1. Expand GSSW's online program, as a central tool for cultivating more diverse cohorts
2. Intentionally grow GSSW's satellite programs in Durango and Glenwood Springs
3. Reinforce the connections among all five academic programs to leverage expertise and effective practices from each

GSSW IN 2025

The GSSW of tomorrow is expansive: we are leaders in the community, leaders at DU, and national leaders in social work. Through our scholarship, teaching, partnership, and advocacy, we effect change with individuals and families, in organizations, and for communities.

We cultivate deep and lasting relationships with communities throughout the Rocky Mountain West and Four Corners region, and in communities world-wide, in which experience and insight on the ground drives our research and scholarship. We lend our expertise to influence policy and advocate for progress on social justice issues, locally, nationally and internationally.

In the face of an evolving higher education landscape, we deliver education that is innovative, accessible and meets the demand for skill-based training and credentialing. Our faculty and staff form deep and lasting relationships with our students, alumni, and the community, creating a powerful cycle of engagement. Our PhD alumni, as social work educators and scholars, carry forth our commitment to social justice in their teaching and research. Our graduates are prepared for a changing workforce and form a deeply engaged network of champions leading transformative efforts in our state and beyond.

We accept the challenge of educating the public about the breadth of social work and its expertise. We will elevate our contributions on a range of social issues, highlight the diverse and impactful work of our alumni, and demonstrate that our graduates leave GSSW well-prepared to lead in a range of sectors. Through this work, we illuminate the value that social work brings to solving difficult problems and reforming systems.

As we gather and grow, we connect more deeply with each other and our community; we mobilize our assets; and we transform systems for greater impact.

GOAL & STRATEGY CHARTS

Transformative Direction		Goals	Strategies
CONNECT VALUES: Community Impact & Scholarship	*Engage & Respond*	**Goal 1:** Reinforce and expand our bridge to and from the community	**Strategy 1.1:** Build out GSSW's office of community engagement to link community partners with GSSW's capacity-building services, including evaluation, co-working space, and professional support
			Strategy 1.2: Encourage, support, and incentivize faculty, staff, and PhD and MSW students to partner with community
			Strategy 1.3: Explore opportunities for GSSW to contribute to and demonstrably advance progress on the "Social Work Grand Challenges," championed by the Academy for Social Work and Social Welfare
		Goal 2: Advance knowledge that influences public policy	**Strategy 2.1:** Generate responses to social problems and public policy initiatives with our constituencies through partnerships
			Strategy 2.2: Support the advancement of a public policy agenda rooted in social work values in Colorado, including but not isolated to research on policies, training of the public sector workforce, and development of civic skills among students
	Impact & Innovate	**Goal 3:** Engage in scholarship and research that is driven by communities and rooted in social justice	**Strategy 3.1:** Establish long-term strategic partnerships between GSSW and community partners
			Strategy 3.2: Serve as a convener, research expert, and thought leader by creating local, regional and national "Think Tanks" that bring stakeholders together who set an agenda for action
			Strategy 3.3: Cultivate opportunities for and build on current interdisciplinary scholarship across DU, with other universities, and within the community
			Strategy 3.4: Promote "multiple ways of knowing" through community-centered, practice-informed, and culturally-diverse perspectives in research
		Goal 4: Continue our influential and innovative research legacy	**Strategy 4.1:** Build the school's infrastructure, financial support, and policies/procedures to advance faculty research
			Strategy 4.2: Align & converge the work of our Institutes and Centers with the Graduate School of Social Work
	Learn & Lead	**Goal 5:** Create a dynamic learning experience for all members of the GSSW community	**Strategy 5.1:** 1. Create opportunities to hone an adaptive, innovative, and responsive curriculum and internship model
			Strategy 5.2: Expand community-based learning pedagogies that promote social justice across the curriculum
			Strategy 5.3: Engage students in continuous career preparation during their time at GSSW and beyond
			Strategy 5.4: Ensure that all teaching faculty employ highly effective teaching methods within and across programs
		Goal 6: Meet workforce needs through specialized skill-based training	**Strategy 6.1:** Identify unmet workforce needs in social services and growth industries in Colorado and integrate necessary competencies into the curriculum
			Strategy 6.2: Identify and offer alternative, accessible models of education through stackable credentials, certificates and dual degrees that expand the reach of social work into varied sectors and career paths
			Strategy 6.3: Build the highest quality online MSW program through marketing, innovative offerings, and excellent service

Transformative Direction		Goals	Strategies
MOBILIZE VALUES: Effectiveness & Competence	*Envision & Invest*	**Goal 1:** Invest in meaningful relationships with alumni	**Strategy 1.1:** Develop a culture that values and promotes alumni engagement with GSSW
			Strategy 1.2: Engage GSSW's vast alumni network in our work
			Strategy 1.3: Engage current students and the alumni network in the School's philanthropy
		Goal 2: Advance and celebrate the uniqueness of GSSW	**Strategy 2.1:** Develop a marketing and communication strategy that articulates GSSW's value proposition
			Strategy 2.2: Create a culture of "yes, and" that is oriented to high-quality service and relationship-building
			Strategy 2.3: Cultivate a culture of "One GSSW" across all programs, campuses, and Institutes and Centers
		Goal 3: Enhance GSSW's capital (financial, physical, and human)	**Strategy 3.1:** Establish ambitious fundraising goals and innovative ways for stakeholder investments
			Strategy 3.2: Provide and enhance current physical and virtual space that cultivates a deeper sense of community
			Strategy 3.3: Invest in and maximize the use of operational systems that enhance our work and connections
			Strategy 3.4: Develop the infrastructure necessary for data-driven decision-making
			Strategy 3.5: Plan for, assemble and activate the human capital necessary for anticipated growth
			Strategy 3.6: Invest in the professional development of GSSW's staff.
		Goal 4: Illuminate the vast fields of social work practice and impact in the global community	**Strategy 4.1:** Contribute to the rebranding of social work
			Strategy 4.2: Build on GSSW's reputation as a national and global leader in social work
			Strategy 4.3: Position GSSW as a leader of the University's work to advance the public good

Transformative Direction		Goals	Strategies
TRANSFORM VALUES: Justice & Diversity	*Disrupt & Transform*	**Goal 1:** Challenge and disrupt systems of oppression within and outside GSSW	**Strategy 1.1:** Promote equity across GSSW through on-going evaluation and development of inclusive practices
			Strategy 1.2: Intentionally work against exclusion of historically marginalized groups by recruiting and retaining diverse students, faculty, and staff
			Strategy 1.3: Engage in research and scholarship explicitly focused on social justice for historically marginalized groups
			Strategy 1.4: Fully integrate the School's Power, Privilege and Oppression Framework into GSSW's MSW and PhD curriculum as a teaching and learning tool
			Strategy 1.5: Partner with the University in inclusive practices and engagement
			Strategy 1.6: Convene our communities more intentionally in conversations around diversity and inclusion
		Goal 2: Increase the accessibility of social work higher education for those who have historically been excluded.	**Strategy 2.1:** Award scholarship dollars to students from marginalized groups
			Strategy 2.2: Explore and provide support for students to meet their academic and basic needs
			Strategy 2.3: Create a part-time evening and weekend program
			Strategy 2.5: Continue to build a curriculum rooted in universal design principles
		Goal 3: Invest in and elevate GSSW's unique programs	**Strategy 3.1:** Expand GSSW's online program, as a central tool for cultivating a more diverse cohort of graduates
			Strategy 3.2: Intentionally grow GSSW's Satellite programs in Durango and Glenwood Springs
			Strategy 3.3: Reinforce the connections among all five academic programs to leverage expertise and best practices from each

APPENDIX 1: ACKNOWLEGMENTS

Future generations will thank the visionary leadership of the individuals who participated in the Gather and Grow strategic planning process for the Graduate School of Social Work (GSSW) at the University of Denver. The bold, unwavering commitment to social justice exhibited in this plan will lead to positive changes for individuals, families, organizations, communities, and policies.

The voices collected here represent faculty, staff, students, alumni, university collaborators, and community partners. They have celebrated GSSW's commitment to marginalized populations yet have pushed GSSW to do better, to be the leading edge in social work through engagement, training, and scholarship in Colorado, the Rocky Mountain West, and beyond.

This plan was made possible by the steadfast and thoughtful leadership of Professors Jean East and Debora Ortega. They worked hard to ensure that the process included voices less often heard and resulted in an authentic, ambitious, yet realistic plan. The planning process was implemented by Trish Becker-Hafnor, who ensured the process built community as it also generated ideas.

The resulting plan and the underlying planning process were skillfully stewarded by Elizabeth George, Ashley Holmes, and Jennifer Drake Fantroy of The Rome Group, Inc. They were committed to developing a product that not only validly represented the voices of GSSW's diverse stakeholders and the possibilities going forward but that also set a course for the school that would make them proud as fellow social workers.

This plan is dedicated to all those at GSSW who came before us. They laid the foundation for our current and future success.

With appreciation,

Amanda Moore McBride, PhD
Morris Endowed Dean and Professor

APPENDIX 2: STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Amanda Moore McBride, PhD
Morris Endowed Dean & Professor

Jean East, PhD, Co-Chair
Professor

Debora Ortega, PhD, Co-Chair
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Antonia Alvarez, MSW
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APPENDIX 3: DETAIL GOAL & STRATEGY CHARTS

These "Detail Tables" are meant to provide context for how goals and strategies were formulated.

- **Transformative Directions:** These directions indicate the key strategic work of GSSW between now and 2025. Build Connections. Mobilize Assets & Resources. Transform GSSW and our Communities.
- **Calls to Action:** There are 5 "calls to action" which summarize the goals and strategies within the plan, by theme. They include:
    - Community Engagement: Engage & Respond
    - Research & Faculty: Impact & Innovate
    - Student Experience: Learn & Lead
    - Infrastructure: Envision & Invest
    - Justice & Diversity: Disrupt & Transform
- **Goals:** Goals reflect high level ideas and actions for GSSW.
- **Strategies:** The strategies herein provide a broad enough sweep to allow for flexibility and innovation in plan implementation. No doubt how the strategies become operationalized will evolve overtime, therefore they are both specific and compelling with room for creative action.
- **Tactics:** We included potential tactics as a through-line from modified strategies, and to help capture important ideas and themes that came out through the stakeholder engagement process.

To help demonstrate alignment with Impact 2025, tactics are highlighted in red which closely connect to a specific transformative direction and strategic initiative in DU's plan.

Transformative Direction		Goals	Strategies	Potential Tactics
CONNECT VALUES: Service & Scholarship	**Call to Action: Respond & Engage**	**Goal 1:** Reinforce and expand our bridge to and from the community	**Strategy 1.1:** Build out GSSW's office of community engagement to link community partners with GSSW's capacity-building services, including evaluation, co-working space, and professional support	• Serve as nonprofit incubator (3-S4) • Provide a clearinghouse of current/emerging practices • Provide a portal to GSSW faculty and staff consultation, research partnerships, professional development, and more
			Strategy 1.2: Encourage, support, and incentivize faculty, staff, and PhD and MSW students to partner with community	• Reward and reinforce faculty and staff engagement with our many communities through board, committee, and community service policy analysis; and action-based dissemination (3-S2)
			Strategy 1.3: Adopt a "Social Work Grand Challenge," advanced by the Academy for Social Work and Social Welfare, which matches local community needs as well as GSSW's intellectual assets, such as "ensure healthy development for all youth" or "end homelessness" and make a demonstrable impact on it	• Develop a community driven process for defining the "social work grand challenge" which is most pressing • Contribute to Impact 2025 call to action around the Rocky Mountain Challenges (3-S1) • Convene allied professions and disciplines at DU to address Rocky Mountain Challenges
		Goal 2: Advance training and knowledge that influences public policy	**Strategy 2.1:** Generate responses to social problems and public policy initiatives with our constituencies through partnerships	• Strengthen our policy courses and concentration • Explore offering a pipeline to public service
			Strategy 2.2: Support the advancement of a public policy agenda rooted in social work values in Colorado, including but not isolated to research on policies, training of the public sector workforce, and development of civic skills among students	• Explore the potential of our location in the state capital • Connect with professional affiliation groups to identify policy and advocacy opportunities. • Leverage GSSW research to help inform policy (2-S5)
	Call to Action: Impact & Innovate	**Goal 3:** Engage in scholarship and research that is driven by communities and rooted in social justice	**Strategy 3.1:** Establish long-term and strategic partnerships between GSSW and distinct community partners	• Develop a process to define and formalize GSSW partnerships which include research initiatives, field placements, and consultation (3-S1)
			Strategy 3.2: Serve as a convener, research expert, and thought leader by creating local, regional and national "Think Tanks" that bring stakeholders together who set an agenda for action	• Advance leadership in substantive areas of relevance, e.g., inaugurate regional conferences or national symposia (2-S4)
			Strategy 3.3: Cultivate more opportunities for and build on current interdisciplinary scholarship across DU, with other universities, and within the community	• Identify key skills/competencies that can be fulfilled through cross-listed classes • Collaborate with other units to identify and create policies more conducive to interdisciplinary collaboration
			Strategy 3.4: Promote "multiple ways of knowing" through community-centered, practice-informed, and culturally-diverse perspectives in research	• Include indigenous scholarship methods in all research/community-centered classes • Engage the satellite campus in curriculum refinement in these areas
		Goal 4: Continue our influential and	**Strategy 4.1:** Build the school's infrastructure, financial support, policies, and procedures to advance faculty research	• Lead a campus wide effort to streamline grant and reporting policies and procedures (2-S1)

Call to Action: Learn & Lead		innovative research legacy	**Strategy 4.2:** Align & converge the work of our Institutes and Centers with the Graduate School of Social Work	• Create opportunities for student involvement, engagement at Centers & Institutes
		Goal 5: Create a dynamic learning experience for all members of the GSSW community	**Strategy 5.1:** Create opportunities to hone an adaptive, innovative, and responsive curriculum and internship model	• Reinforce the confluence of micro/mezzo/macro practice • Deepen the training for direct practice students • Reinforce social work practice through field education and training (1-S2)
			Strategy 5.2: Expand community-based learning pedagogies that promote social justice across the curriculum	• Develop a framework, in collaboration with community partners around standard engagement procedures
			Strategy 5.3: Engage students in continuous career preparation during their time at GSSW and beyond	• Provide students with a "map" of skill and career pathways that will support and prepare them for their chosen field (1-S5) • Offer a 2nd year orientation • Offer licensure prep for clinical students • Provide PhD and MSW students with understanding of and opportunities to connect to DU's vast student activities and career offerings
			Strategy 5.4: Ensure that all teaching faculty employ highly effective teaching methods within and across programs	• Prepare and support adjunct faculty to effectively deliver the curriculum
		Goal 6: Meet workforce needs through specialized skill-based training	**Strategy 6.1:** Identify unmet workforce needs in social services and growth industries in Colorado and integrate necessary competencies into the curriculum	• Engage community leaders in key areas: aging, education, housing & homelessness, etc.
			Strategy 6.2: Identify and offer alternative, accessible models of education through stackable credentials, certificates and dual degrees that expand the reach of social work into varied sectors and career paths	• Identify interdisciplinary opportunities at DU to better prepare students for cross-sector work • Integrate leadership and management competencies across the curriculum • Explore a diversity & management certificate (4-S4)
			Strategy 6.3: Build the highest quality online MSW program through marketing, innovative offerings, and excellent service	• Explore offering continuing education courses through 2U • Develop an online MBA/MSW degree with the Daniels College of Business

Transformative Direction		Goals	Strategies	Potential Tactics
MOBILIZE VALUES: Effectiveness & Competence	**Call to Action: Envision & *Invest***	**Goal 1:** Invest in meaningful relationships with alumni	**Strategy 1.1:** Develop a culture that values and promotes alumni engagement with GSSW	Offer meaningful and affordable engagement opportunities Articulate the benefits to alumni of their involvement with GSSW and its students Define and measure alumni engagement Build improved infrastructure to support alumni connections, like a student exit packet, student portal, and necessary staffing (4-S4) - Create new and grow engagement opportunities for those alumni who are not in the Denver region
			Strategy 1.2: Engage GSSW's vast alumni network in our work	Convene and codify the alumni association (4-S4) - Provide opportunities for alumni involvement in think tanks and centers - Cultivate opportunities for alumni and current students to engage with each other - Leverage Institutes' and Centers' alumni events
			Strategy 1.3: Engage current students and the alumni network in the school's philanthropy	Create opportunities for class giving, during and after enrollment
		Goal 2: Advance and celebrate the uniqueness of GSSW (4-S1)	**Strategy 2.1:** Develop a marketing and communication strategy which articulates GSSW's value proposition	- Define GSSW's "competitive advantage" in the Rocky Mountain West and across the country - Build communication partnerships with our partners, the University, and the media
			Strategy 2.2: Create a culture of "yes, and" that is oriented to high-quality service and relationship-building	Include engagement and service to the GSSW community in all staff and faculty reviews
			Strategy 2.3: Cultivate a culture of "One GSSW" across all programs, campuses, and Institutes and Centers	- Build collegiality through more formal and informal connections - Invest in staff and faculty professional development - Continue to invest in the Centers and Institutes to maximize their impact and integration across the school - Instill pride of school and profession in students, staff and faculty
		Goal 3: Enhance GSSW's capital (financial, physical, and human)	**Strategy 3.1:** Establish ambitious fundraising goals and innovative approaches for stakeholder investment	Raise the funds necessary for endowed scholarships and chairs (2-S1) - Support fundraising efforts of Centers and Institutes - Launch and complete a capital campaign
			Strategy 3.2: Provide and enhance current physical and virtual space that cultivates a deeper sense of community	- Improve the quality of GSSW's physical "plant" - Grow the physical footprint to accommodate growth across our programs and institutes, and allow for more co-working space alongside the community (3- SI2).
			Strategy 3.3: Invest in and maximize the use of operational systems that enhance our work and connections	Improve the quality and use of GSSW's technology

			Strategy 3.4: Develop the infrastructure necessary for data-driven decision-making	• Explore the use of integrated database systems
			Strategy 3.5: Plan for, assemble and activate the human capital necessary for anticipated growth	• Phase the hiring of faculty and staff necessary to meet the demands of the online program • Provide opportunities for the fellowship and partnership among faculty and staff
			Strategy 3.6: Invest in the professional development of GSSSW's staff	• Provide opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration
		Goal 4: Illuminate the vast fields of social work practice and impact in the global community	**Strategy 4.1:** Contribute to the rebranding of social work	• Develop a comprehensive communication strategy, which articulates the value of social work and its national and global impact by telling GSSW's stories
			Strategy 4.2: Build on GSSW's reputation as a national leader in social work	• Position ourselves as a unique provider of graduate education in the Rocky Mountain West and Four Corners regions • Maintain and grow our positive reputation and national position • Develop and promote a unified internal message re GSSW
			Strategy 4.3: Position GSSW as a leader of the University's work to advance the public good	• Increase awareness throughout the University of the breadth of GSSW's work and impact • Strategically leverage faculty and staff across University Committee and Task Forces • Elevate GSSW's impact stories across campus

Transformative Direction		Goals	Strategies	Potential Tactics
TRANSFORM VALUES: Justice & Diversity *Most apply to DU 4-S2*	**Call to Action: *Disrupt & Transform***	**Goal 1:** Challenge and disrupt systems of oppression within and outside GSSW	**Strategy 1.1:** Promote equity through the development and on-going evaluation of inclusive practices	• Develop a system for community feedback on the inclusiveness/accessibility of programs and policies at GSSW • Encourage dissenting points of view, ideas, and approaches
			Strategy 1.2: Intentionally work against exclusion of marginalized groups by recruiting and retaining diverse students, faculty, and staff	• Provide infrastructure and support for initiatives and spaces exclusively for all members of the GSSW community from underrepresented groups to organize and gather • Broadly define diversity to include non-dominant theories, research methodologies and practices
			Strategy 1.3: Engage in research and scholarship explicitly focused on social justice for historically marginalized groups	• Include a social justice statement in research proposals • Approach research with a "community-centered" perspective
			Strategy 1.3: Fully integrate the school's PPO Framework into GSSW's MSW and PhD curricula as a teaching and learning tool	• Provide continuing education for all members of the GSSW community on PPO • Offer students more opportunities to practice their PPO skills inside and outside the classroom • Recognize and lift up the many targeted identities that the PPO framework embraces
			Strategy 1.4: Partner with the University in inclusive practices and engagement	• Martial the call to action around diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence set forth by Impact 2025 (4-S2)
			Strategy 1.5: Convene our communities more intentionally in conversations around diversity	• Create a pipeline of historically marginalized students to higher education, and social work education, in partnership with our stakeholders
		Goal 2: Increase the accessibility of social work higher education for those who have historically been excluded	**Strategy 2.1:** Award scholarship dollars to marginalized students	• Increase endowed scholarships • Develop criteria for awards based on marginalized identities (1-S1)
			Strategy 2.2: Explore and provide support for students to meet their academic and basic needs	• Explore low-cost housing options for students • Provide competitive funding for PhD students
			Strategy 2.3: Create a part-time evening and weekend program	• Determine alignment with the online program • Involve prospective and targeted students in the program design
			Strategy 2.4: Continue to build a curriculum rooted in universal design principles	• Collaborate with other universities/programs who have implemented universal design (RIT)
		Goal 3: Invest in and elevate GSSW's unique programs	**Strategy 3.1:** Expand GSSW's online program, as a central tool for cultivating more diverse cohorts	• Explore a formal partnership with 2U, enabling GSSW to reach more diverse and marginalized students across the country
			Strategy 3.2: Intentionally grow GSSW's Satellite programs in Durango and Glenwood Springs	• Provide additional resources to satellite programs, including field and career services
			Strategy 3.3: Reinforce the connections among all five academic programs to leverage expertise and effective practices from each	• Create more opportunities for shared immersion classes • Provide opportunities for engagement between PhD and MSW students

APPENDIX 4: ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Environmental Scan for
The Graduate School of Social Work
University of Denver
February 2017

The Social Work Profession

Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing. The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional levels.[i]

Social workers are graduates of schools of social work (in the U.S.A. with either bachelor's, master's or doctoral degrees) who use their knowledge and skills to provide social services for clients (who may be individuals, families, groups, communities, organizations, or society in general). Social workers help people increase their capacities for problem solving and coping, and they help them obtain needed resources, facilitate interactions between individuals and between people and their environments, make organizations responsible to people, and influence social policies. Social workers may work directly with clients addressing individual, family and community issues, or they may work at a systems level on regulations and policy development, or as administrators and planners of large social service systems.[ii]

The social work profession and the people who work within it are committed to creating social change on an individual, family, group, community, organization or societal level. In 2014, there were an estimated 650,000 social workers in the United States with an expected increase of 12% over the next 10 years.[iii]   This growth is fueled by increased demand for healthcare and social services, particularly senior services, and will vary by specialty. Growth projections in some of these areas of social work include:

Table 1: Social Work Growth Projections

Social Work Specialty	Projected growth 2014 – 2024
Child, Family and School	6%
Medical and Health	19%
Mental Health and Substance Abuse	19%
All Other	4%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

The number of social work jobs is projected to grow faster than jobs in many other professions. Some other professions, however, are anticipating greater growth. Growth projections by profession are presented in Table 2.[iv]

Table 2: Growth Projections for Other Professions

Profession	Projected growth 2014 – 2024
Nurse Practitioners	31%
Biomedical Engineers	23%
Psychologists	19%

Public Health Administrators	17%
Registered Nurses	16%
Physicians and Surgeons	14%
Social Workers	**12%**
Environmental Engineers	12%
Gerontologist	8%
Civil Engineers	8%
Architects	7%
Lawyers	6%
Teachers	6%
Mechanical Engineers	5%
Chemical Engineers	2%
Electrical Engineers	0%

Social work is often broken into three areas of practice - macro, mezzo and micro practice - or sometimes discussed as direct and indirect practice. Clinical practice may be considered a subset of micro or direct practice.

Macro practice can be defined as activities social workers engage in at the agency, organization, or systems level to improve policies and practice.[v] This can include, but is not limited to social service administration, planning and program development, public policy, policy practice, community organizing, coalition building, community development, international development, and political engagement. Though the majority of social work students focus on direct or clinical practice, there is a growing movement to promote awareness of and interest in macro social work both to social work students and to the general public. The Special Commission to Advance Practice in Macro Social Work initiated by the Association for Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA) has set a goal of 20% of social work students focusing on macro social work by the year 2020,[vi] both through concentrated work and through integrating macro social work throughout social work curricula. The Bureau of Labor Statistics does not provide data on macro social workers.

Community organizing is a primary component of macro social work. Upon preliminary review, there is a dearth of leadership in community organizing in Colorado. Together Colorado is one of the few public resources for this work. Some of the state public agencies in Colorado, such as Public Health and Environment, do offer fact sheets, tool kits, and suggestions for community organizing; however, there isn't one leading coalition of scale to lead the community organizing efforts.

Typically considered one-on-one contact with people at the individual and family level, the terms micro practice and direct practice sometimes are used interchangeably. The general public typically thinks of social workers in these contexts – serving individuals and families[vii]. Direct practice uses a problem-solving process with the guiding principles of respecting social diversity and promotion of social and economic justice[viii]. This

may lead to assessing systems level causes for distress and advocating or organizing to address those underlying issues.[ix]

One subset of direct practice is clinical social work. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) defines clinical social work as a specialty practice area of social work which focuses on the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illness, emotional, and other behavioral disturbances. NASW goes on to cite individual, group and family therapy as common treatment modalities and to state that social workers who provide these services are required to be licensed or certified at the clinical level in their state of practice[x].   Though there are clinical social workers without licenses, licensure and certification are seen as an indicator of quality and often are tied to reimbursement or grant requirements.

Mezzo practice can be defined as working with small to medium sized groups, such as organizations and neighborhoods. Functions include management of organizations, change management, and community organizing (as noted above, some consider this function a macro-practice), all of which require the social worker to work both at the individual and systems level[xi].

These classifications of macro, direct and clinical (or macro, mezzo, and micro) practice are viewed by many social workers as creating false delineations between types of social work practice. The core social work principle of "person-in-environment" and the profession's systems perspective signal the integration of the three types of practice. Many social work educators are breaking down the separation between micro and macro practice. In *Social Work Today*'s 2016 article Trends in Macro Social Work Education, four professors from highly ranked schools of social work discuss the need to integrate macro practice throughout the social work curriculum in order to reinforce how integral it is to the profession and in the breadth of work that social workers do.[xii]

Social workers are well-educated, holding a minimum of a bachelor's degree and frequently requiring a master's degree and licensure for many areas of practice. Education and training, however, do not necessarily translate into higher salaries.   Salaries for social workers tend to fall significantly below those of similarly educated professionals, such as registered nurses or physician assistants.[xiii] NASW estimates that those earning a master of social work earn on average $15,000 more in annual salary than those who have completed an undergraduate degree. BLS data from 2015 offer the following average salaries for some areas of social work. It should be noted that these data include both bachelors and master's level social work positions:

Table 3: Social Work Salaries

Social Work Specialty	2015 Mean Annual Wage – US	2015 Mean Annual Wage – Colorado	2015 Mean Hourly Wage - Colorado
Child, Family and School	$42,350	$47,960	$23.06
Healthcare	$52,380	$54,660	$26.27
Mental Health and Substance Abuse	$42,170	$41,850	$20.12
All Other	$57,970	$50,610	$24.33

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook
https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/social-workers.htm#tab-7

In its comprehensive 2009 Compensation and Benefits Study, the last available study of its kind, NASW's Center for Workforce Studies reported that the median base pay for social workers is $55,000. Practice

areas with the highest pay include administration, occupational social work, school social work and political social work. Those practice areas with base pay that fell beneath the median included health, addictions, mental health, violence prevention, community development, work with adolescents, and aging.[xiv]

On the occasion of its 10th anniversary in 2011, *Social Work Today* magazine highlighted ten societal and professional trends that impacted social work practice between pre-9/11 2001 and 2011. Though now six years old, these trends have had lasting impact[xv]. The trends cited are:

- *The Impact of Trauma:* From the terrorist attacks of 9-11 through to Katrina, there is a growing appreciation of how trauma affects individuals and communities. Today's emphasis on trauma-informed practice reflects this trend.

- *Mental Health / Substance Abuse Parity:* Federal and state laws requiring insurance coverage for mental health services has resulted in more accessible and affordable services for many people. The field of mental health and substance abuse practice is ever evolving to address changing conditions such as the recent opioid addiction crisis. In addition new practice models such as integrated medical and behavioral health are significant trends for the social work profession. The rise of integrated health services may be attributable to parity.

- *Evidence-Based Practice:* Beginning with increasing efforts to build social workers' knowledge of the importance of evidence-based practice, funders' demands for accountability and growing competition for resources, the focus on evidence-based practice has evolved to implementing these practices in ways that also complement clients' experiences and adapt to community-needs.

- *Social Work with Older Adults:* As the number of older adults increases, the demand for social workers to provide services for them also has grown, particularly social workers who are able to serve specific populations of the elderly, such as immigrants or people with disabilities.

- *School Violence and Bullying:* Though violent crime in schools has decreased since the mid-1990s, the perception of violence in schools has been fueled by massacres like those at Columbine, Virginia Tech and Sandy Hook. This, in turn, has boosted public support for school social workers both to help make schools safer and to help create caring, inclusive environments. This includes making schools safe for LGBTQIA youth.

- *Children's Mental Health:* Mental health diagnoses in children have risen, as has the use of medication in treatment, calling the question of much-needed recognition of children's mental health needs or over-diagnosis. Social workers play a critical role in ensuring that the underlying family and systemic issues that influence a child's mental and behavioral health are addressed.

- *Economic Recession:* Though the economy has recovered from the recession of the late 2000s/early 2010s, unemployment and underemployment and their impact on families and communities continues to be a stressor. This is particularly true in marginalized communities where these rates remain stubbornly and disproportionately high.

- *Web-Based Social Work Education:* A growing number of MSW programs – the Council on Social Work Education reported 141 programs in 2015[xvi] - are offering some or all of their program on line with others developing online courses or programs. Online education provides flexibility and accessibility to students, particularly those who are not able to quit jobs or relocate for graduate school. While CSWE appears to be neutral on online programs, evaluating them according to the same standards as traditional programs, the Clinical Social Work Association (CSWA) has expressed concerns about them[xvii]. CSWA is particularly concerned about online formats where students and faculty don't interact in real-time, citing a loss of implicit learning and the ability for a professor to

assess the student's fit with the profession without the ability to observe "person-in-environment." CSWA also raises ethical considerations regarding looser admissions standards and the higher dropout rates of students in online programs[xviii].

- *Social Media:* Social media is being used for education about social issues, online support groups, and marketing of practitioners, social service agencies, and MSW and PhD programs. While there are many positives to the rise of social media, ethical questions regarding boundaries, privacy, and accessibility remain on the forefront.

- *Globalization:* Globalization, international environments, and global policies and practices affect social worker's clients and communities. These impacts occur, most often, when working with immigrants and refugees in the US, with US citizens whose employment is impacted by global-related policies, or in responding to international social problems. As a result, many MSW programs have added international content to their curricula.

Cast through the lens of community organizing, Jerry Don Marx, Associate Professor at the University of New Hampshire, echoes many of these trends in his description of ten emerging "communities" for social work[xix]. In addition to online, "gray" (older adults), "devastated" (communities affected by natural disasters), and international communities, Marx offers the following additional trends that are impacting the profession:

- Promotion of greener, healthier environments;
- Growing Latino communities;
- Innovation, citing social entrepreneurship, microfinance and micro franchise as examples of innovative practices;
- Increasing number of social workers holding public office;
- Use of film and visual arts for advocacy and public education; and
- Partnerships with for-profit businesses and business leaders to solve community problems.

The social work profession has a long history of tackling entrenched issues. In 2013, the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare (AASWSW) convened a committee to identify and align social work researchers and practitioners around "grand challenges," defined as a deeply significant problems widely recognized by the public whose solution is within our grasp in the next decade, given concentrated scientific and practical attention[xx]. The "12 Grand Challenges for Social Work" define a far-reaching social agenda focused on improving individual and family well-being, strengthening the social fabric, and helping create a more just society. Encompassing, among other issues, youth development, health, aging, family violence, homelessness, economic inequality, and equal opportunity and justice, the 12 challenges provide a backdrop for social work students, researchers, practitioners, faculty members, and Schools to play a part in addressing the Grand Challenges[xxi].

Historically considered a degree that leads to careers in academia, today there are growing roles for someone with a social work Ph.D. Initiatives like the "12 Grand Challenges for Social Work" call for generating and testing innovative scientific solutions[xxii]. As evidence-based practice becomes more entrenched in the profession, the research skills and scientific approach GSSW teaches in the Ph.D. program become invaluable. Research organizations like Mathematica Policy Research and consulting firms like Bridgespan can use the skills that are taught in social work Ph.D. programs as they work with clients on programmatic, organizational and societal issues. As the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) reports a loss in full-time tenured or tenure-track positions[xxiii], social workers with Ph.D.s may need to consider careers in nontraditional settings.

Implications

The profession of social work is growing with strong job opportunities projected over the next several years. Though master's degrees are required for many social work positions and though the master's degree does result in higher pay, social work salaries remain lower than salaries of other professions that require similar education levels. As a private institution, this requires GSSW to clearly articulate the School's competitive advantage or "value add" to prospective students, particularly those with low and moderate income for whom cost is a deciding factor.

Inherent in many descriptions of the social work profession is the recognition that most social workers engage in micro practice, and many in clinical practice specifically. At the same time, a key component for all social work is understanding systems and, as appropriate, advocating for systems-level integration and change. GSSW's focus on social justice, diversity and inclusion provides a backdrop for an integrated systems model of clinical and macro practice throughout the curriculum.

The Grand Challenges of Social Work provide GSSW with an opportunity to focus on key social issues that dovetail with research interests of faculty and doctoral students. As DU also is planning for the establishment of "Rocky Mountain Grand Challenges," GSSW can play a lead role in identifying and shaping the University's work. If GSSW decides to focus on one or two of the challenges, the decision on which challenge(s) may affect who GSSW for faculty positions and doctoral students.

GSSW is already addressing many of the trends impacting the profession through the School's curriculum and Centers, as demonstrated by the breadth of concentrations and certificates. The 2017 introduction of the online program is further testimony to GSSW's recognition of the need to stay current and adapt to changing needs of students. Continuing to track trends in practice – macro, clinical and direct – and refreshing the curriculum to reflect and perhaps shape those trends will add to GSSW's competitive advantage.

As GSSW prepares Ph.D. students for their careers post-dissertation, the School should expose doctoral students to positions both inside and outside of academia. Careers in government, policy institutions and think tanks, research firms and consulting firms are all viable options. GSSW's Institutes and Centers could provide laboratories for testing research careers in settings that value evidenced-based practice but may look different than the traditional college or university.

Colorado & Denver Workforce Trends

Colorado's workforce and employment needs are rapidly evolving. A number of trends are impacting the future of jobs[xxiv] overall, including:

- *Evolving Qualifications*: Job qualifications are evolving rapidly. Employers are demanding skills such as higher technical literacy (e.g., electronic medical records or patient billing) and a command for data, often demonstrated by specialized certifications. Additional training and technical skills may be necessary to stay competitive. As a result, workers must take a flexible, ongoing approach to acquiring relevant skills, seeking out necessary professional development.

- *Need to be Data Savvy*: As a result of technological advancements, the "ability to work with data and make data-based decisions will become an increasingly vital skill across many jobs" [xxv].

- *On the Job Learning*: A survey in Colorado found that approximately half of young workers feel their education did not prepare them adequately for their work, which heightens the importance of work-based learning.[xxvi]

- *Innovation and Entrepreneurship:* Colorado has a business environment that is amenable to start-ups and new businesses - available capital, talent, and networks. Colorado is ranked among the top states for entrepreneurship[xxvii].

Not only is the nature of work in Colorado changing, but so too is the workforce itself. Colorado is becoming more diverse. By 2050, it is anticipated that the State's workforce will be approximately 50% white and 50% nonwhite. This is particularly important as significant disparities remain in education levels between the non-Hispanic white population, and the Latino, black, and Native American populations[xxviii]. Also, according to the 2016 Colorado Business Economic Outlook Report, Colorado's population is highly concentrated in the 12 counties, including and surrounding Denver[xxix]. This distribution is projected to remain fairly constant as the Denver Metro area continues to see significant growth, while more rural counties have seen stagnation or population decrease. An exception may be resort communities, such as Glenwood Springs and Durango, which continue to grow and have a unique set of concerns.

While historically Colorado has had a younger population than the national average, predictions are that Colorado's age distribution will more closely align with national trends in coming years. The number of adults over 65 is projected to grow by 62% between 2010 and 2020[xxx]. Just as Colorado's population in general is becoming more racially diverse, adults over 65 will have larger percentages of Latino, black, and Native American populations.

Colorado's workforce growth is also predicted to slow in the coming years; however, Colorado's total population is projected to reach 6 million by 2020[xxxi].

As the workforce has changed in Colorado, the industries that are fastest growing have also evolved. The 2016 Colorado Business Economic Outlook Report lists the top 5 largest industries in Colorado as:

- Trade, Transportation, and Utilities,
- Government,
- Professional and Business Services,
- Educational and Health Services, and
- Leisure and Hospitality.

Many social work positions fall in the talentFound Report's "Community & Social Services" job category while others may be found in the report's Education & Social Services category (ex: mental health counselor).

talentFound classified most Community & Social Services as a "Tier 2 Occupation," defined as jobs that meet a living wage benchmark of $11.33/hour to $22.90/hour, enough for an individual only. A family living wage is defined as $22.90/ hour or more. Nonetheless, Community & Social Services positions are projected as high growth occupations with a high number of openings[xxxii].

When nonprofits were queried about their greatest future needs by the Colorado Nonprofit Association, they did not indicate direct practice, but fund development, organizational capacity building, collaboration, and board development[xxxiii]. The need for organizational capacity building – skills that can be acquired in macro social work training – is echoed in Charity Navigator's 2016 Metro Market Study, which ranks Denver 24th among the nation's 30th largest metro areas for financial health of charities[xxxiv].

Although necessary technical skills vary widely by profession, there is some agreement about the most sought after professional competencies. The most commonly posted in Colorado Job Postings included:

- Oral and written communication
- Detail oriented
- Integrity
- Customer Service Oriented
- Problem Solving

- Creativity
- Team Oriented
- Self-Starting/Self-motivated
- Work Independently
- Organizational Skills

Implications

As the employment landscape changes, so too must social work education to ensure that social workers are graduating employment-ready and competitive. GSSW may need to be adaptive to changing needs and adjust the curriculum accordingly, which may include offering students highly specialized skills, ongoing education to help them stay competitive, and ensuring students know how to collect, manage, and use data for decision making.

An inherent asset of the social work education model is that it includes both classroom and at least 900 hours of field work, often called practicum or internship.

> The intent of field education is to integrate the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting. It is a basic precept of social work education that the two interrelated components of curriculum—classroom and field—are of equal importance within the curriculum, and each contributes to the development of the requisite competencies of professional practice. Field education is systematically designed, supervised, coordinated, and evaluated based on criteria by which students demonstrate the Social Work Competencies[xxxv].

This integrated educational approach has shown "that work-based learning may have an advantage in developing certain skills, such as trustworthiness and teamwork, while school-based learning may have a comparative advantage in developing analytical thinking and the joy of learning,"[xxxvi] all skills employers are seeking. Beyond these critical "soft" skills, internships develop job specific skills and cultivate problem solving skills in a specific employment environment. GSSW can promote this range of skills to employers, as well as coach students to package their internships around skill development as opposed to tasks and functions of their work.

While the field placements provide invaluable on the job training and education, students are limited to one field internship each of the two years in the MSW program. Creating opportunities for expanded "in the field" education may require creating new and different opportunities in the curriculum, including using the summer. GSSW's Institutes and Centers could provide additional opportunities for both MSW and Ph.D. students to hone skills. Using students to as researchers, interns, or part-time staff would help integrate the Institutes and Centers more fully into the School as well as provide additional work experience for the students.

The changing workforce trends will not only affect the job market for social workers, but the client populations they serve. Meeting the needs of a more diverse, older, and geographically segregated Colorado will need to be considered in the diversity of skills and tools Social Workers acquire at GSSW.

Job opportunities within the traditional spheres of social work continue to grow, and ensuring students leave with the critical skills nonprofits, for-profits, and the public sector most desire is an important consideration. Given the largest industries in Colorado are trade, government, and business, there may be opportunities to define unique career paths that meet the needs and demands of these fields in the coming years. Luckily, the Social Work CSWE accreditation standards include mandated competencies such as:

- practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development;
- apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions;
- demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues; and
- collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action.

These, and other social work competencies, align closely with the "most sought after" skills listed above.

Community Needs

The Denver Department of Human Services conducted a community needs assessment in 2012[xxxvii], which was updated in 2014. This mixed method study identified several key community needs that were also echoed in our conversations with GSSW and other resources. Given the relevance of these needs to GSSW's work, the school may consider adopting specific strategies to address these needs in the future.

Housing:
Housing was identified as the most significant unmet need recognized by both community members and providers in the Needs Assessment[xxxviii]. Housing assistance was also cited as top concern. Identified issues or gaps include: a stigma against people who are homeless, long wait lists for subsidized housing, barriers to affordability and a lack of affordable housing, and supportive wraparound housing services.

According to a Point-In-Time (PIT) survey conducted by the Metro Homeless Initiative[xxxix], as of January 2015 there were 6,130 homeless men, women, and children counted in the seven-county Denver metro area. However, as this count is not considered a full accounting of the homeless population, the number is estimated to be significantly higher. According to a HUD-mobilized national effort to count the number of homeless people in January 2016, 10,555 people were identified as homeless across the State[xl].

Of the people who participated in the PIT survey in 2015, Denver respondents most frequently cited that their homelessness was due to being unable pay rent or their mortgage (Metro Denver Homeless Initiative, 2015).

Colorado's housing and homelessness crisis is directly related to the cost of living in the State. Denver and Grand Junction were the second and fifth most expensive U.S. cities to live in 2015[xli]. According to the Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2015 report the income needed to be economically self-sufficient varies considerably by geographic region, from $27K annually in Bent County to $64K annually in Pitkin County. "The 2015 Self Sufficiency Standard for one adult with one preschooler and one school-age child in Denver ($27.18 per hour) is comparable to Washington DC ($27.06 per hour)."[xlii] (The Colorado Center on Law and Policy, 2015)

When considering these statistics, GSSW may be mindful of the hourly mean wages reported for social workers listed in Table 2 above, all of which are below the $27.18 per hour average[xliii].

Education:
In the Denver Department of Human Services Needs Assessment, the community consistently ranked education as one of its most critical unmet needs. Identified gaps included: access to quality education, need for increased early childhood education, a lack of affordable after school programming, continuing education options for adults, and a lack of support for the transition from preschool to public school[xliv]

What is perhaps not captured in the needs assessment is the stark contrast in level of educational attainment between those Coloradoans who were born and remained and those who adopted the state as their home. Of the adults in Colorado with education beyond high school, more than 70% were not born in Colorado[xlv]. Low educational attainment by those born in Colorado can, in part, be attributed to low per-student spending on education and educational disparities between white students and students of color. [xlvi] Consequently, in Colorado 54% of whites compared to 21% of Latinos obtain college degrees. In addition, minority and low income youth are less likely to graduate from college[xlvii].

This educational difference has a significant impact on earning potential[xlviii]. For individuals with higher education levels, employment rates and earning potential tend to be higher. The following applies to students with a graduate or professional degree in Colorado:

- 72% labor force participation rate
- 2.2% unemployment rate

- $63,270 median earnings (6% less than the national median)

Students with a high school diploma, and no college are doing slightly worse overall:

- 59.5% labor force participation
- 4.2% unemployment
- $31,280 median earnings

Health:

Similar needs were identified for health in the 2014 Needs Assessment, including a lack of health services for adults and children. The community ranked health/medical assistance as an important need; in addition, 40% of providers said that the health needs of the community are not being met. This number was down significantly, from 85% in 2012, likely due to the increased coverage and access to health care attributed to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Though not reported in the Needs Assessment, Colorado is also home to a number of people who are not eligible for the Affordable Care Act, such as people who are not authorized to be in the U.S. and people in the U.S. through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy. Gaps in wraparound mental health support services, a lack of affordable healthcare options, low cost dental care, and providers who accept Medicaid were all identified issues or gaps[xlix].

As a result of these healthcare needs, some Colorado organizations are taking an integrated approach to healthcare delivery. The Colorado Health Institute defines Behavioral Health Integration[l] as

> "The care that results from a practice team of primary care and behavioral health clinicians, working together with patients and families, using a systematic and cost-effective approach to provide patient-centered care for a defined population. This care may address mental health, substance abuse conditions, health behaviors (including their contribution to chronic medical illnesses), life stressors and crises, stress-related physical symptoms and ineffective patterns or health care utilization"

According to the Colorado Health Institute 2015, there are three primary ways that integrated care is delivered:
- *Providers* might work in different locations but establish systems for referrals and communication about patients and their needs;
- *Co-locating* the physical health and behavioral health providers, making communication and coordination easier; and
- *A Care Team* shares exam rooms, medical records, scheduling and even visits with patients, which represents the most integrated approach.

This integrated model is particularly important for low income populations, as they are less likely to accept or be treated for a mental health need, and, if they do accept a referral for mental health services, they are likely to encounter barriers to care[li]. As a result, primary care physicians treat 50 to 70 percent of diagnosable mental health problems in the U.S. In Denver, cost and stigma are identified as the primary reasons for not accessing mental health care. Latinos access these services at lower rates than the overall population, which suggests a lack of culturally specific care[lii].

The benefits to vulnerable populations of an integrated model are[liii]:

- Reduced transportation logistics
- One treatment plan
- Patient-centered care
- Access to additional supportive service
- Predicted better health outcomes

Aging:

Although aging was not a key consideration for the needs assessment, the issue came up in many community conversations[liv]. The Davlyn & McKinnon report cites a dramatic shift in the population by age in the Denver region. Colorado's adults are living longer and, as a result, the older adult population is growing rapidly[lv]. Since 1990, the life expectancy among CO residents has increased from 77.2 to 80.4 years and. between 2003 and 2013, the number of people ages 65 and older living in Colorado has increased by 46.8%, the third highest growth in the nation[lvi]. Between 2008 and 2030 the Latino population aged 65 years and older is projected to increase by 224%, compared to a 65% increase for the white population aged 65 and older[lvii]. Given what we know about the barriers the Latino population face in accessing education and health care, the need for culturally responsive services for Latino older adults will be significant.

Older adults are living longer and therefore spend more time in retirement, enabling them to contribute more to the community but also requiring greater financial management and healthcare spending[lviii]. A needs assessment by the Office of Aging reported the following challenges facing Colorado and its older adult residents:

- *Cost of Long Term Care*: nearly 70% of long term care costs are paid with public dollars.
- *Housing:* 38% of households are older adults living alone and 23% of homeowners over the age of 45 are burdened by homeowner costs. Rent inflation and a lack of affordable options put added stress on older adults with fixed incomes.
- *Retirement Crisis:* baby boomers are less likely to have access to pensions and annuities, lifetime sources of income. In general, 401K savings require greater management and are less secure.
- *Aging in Place:* 90% of older adults surveyed want to remain in Denver when they retire.

Implications:

The key issues facing Denver and Colorado all have implications for GSSW.

- *Housing*: Housing is a consideration for GSSW in two ways. First, housing assistance is a primary need in the community. Continuing to cultivate a pipeline of students prepared to address the needs of individuals who are homeless or need resources to stay in their current homes is important. At the same time, the cost of living in Denver is a key concern not only for community members seeking assistance, but for students considering relocating to the area for school or staying after graduation. GSSW's recruitment efforts should address the implications of the financial accessibility of an education in Denver, and, given what we know about average earnings for master's level social workers, for graduates.

- *Education*: As GSSW plans for a more diverse cohort of students in the coming years, the School must consider the pipeline of students from Colorado. Are Colorado-born students making it to college and ultimately to graduate school? If GSSW is committed to educating a diverse student body, including reaching those from Colorado, the School will need to pay close attention to the elementary and secondary educational pipeline. GSSW, and DU as a whole, may be able to contribute scholarship and talent to helping close the resource/achievement gap in elementary and secondary education.

- *Health*: The need for integrated healthcare (mental health provided as part of overall healthcare services) is especially relevant to GSSW as the School can position students with an interest in physical, mental, or behavioral health to work in ways that recognize this trend in approach. Healthcare is both the fastest growing industry in the country and the highest paid area of social work in Colorado. There is significant progress and collaboration happening in Denver and Colorado to advance mental health and GSSW should be positioned at the forefront.

- *Aging*: As the population shifts and older adults comprise a larger proportion both locally and nationally, GSSW has opportunities to build a pipeline of students prepared to work with older adults. The intersection of areas in which social workers are found - health, housing, mental health, racial and ethnic equity, advocacy - and aging will require that GSSW students and alumni have the competencies needed to serve older adults, whether or not they are in the "Aging Services and Policy" concentration.

Given these key issues facing the state and region, there are clear career pipelines for students that would enable them to make the most significant impact on Colorado's needs. GSSW has opportunities to partner with local agencies, policy makers, and researchers to meet these needs, but also to help prepare its graduates to fill these unique niches and meet community needs upon graduation.

Interdisciplinary Strategies

There is a common understanding today that interdisciplinary approaches are necessary to resolve intractable social issues.

- The American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare has asserted that to address the previously discussed "Grand Challenges for Social Work," we must integrate our voice into larger, multi-disciplinary conversations and efforts.[lix] The AASWSW states that everyone, both those in social work and those in related fields, has a role in making the Grand Challenges succeed.
- Kania and Kramer in their seminal article, *Collective Impact*[lx] state that no single organization is responsible for any major social problem, nor can any single organization cure it. They go on to present an interdisciplinary method, collective impact, for creating change. Collective impact is defined as "the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem"[lxi].
- When looking for innovative community-based solutions to social issues, The White House Council for Community Solutions engaged a diverse group of leaders to catalyze resources from the public, private, nonprofit and philanthropic sectors to highlight what works and support effective cross-sector solutions to community problems[lxii].

Social workers have long been members of interdisciplinary teams in hospitals and health care settings, schools and education agencies, in the public child welfare sector, and working to coordinate services for people with disabilities. The profession's systems perspective and breadth of competencies that support working in partnerships are great assets to interdisciplinary teams as they analyze root causes and develop long-term solutions, not only on the individual and family level, but also with groups and communities. There are clear benefits to including social workers in interdisciplinary efforts to resolve complex community problems.

Outside the profession, however, there appears to be limited recognition of the social worker's role in interdisciplinary work. The Rothman Report[lxiii] indicates the need for the Association for Community Organization and Social Administration "to interface better so our community-based work is known and social work is not seen as simply casework". Rothman goes on to say that if social work does not establish itself as a visible player in broad areas of macro practice, other fields will replace social work.

Interdisciplinary Partnerships in Colorado

There are a number of interdisciplinary partnerships in Colorado that are working to address community needs. Two samples that may have important lessons for the GSSW are Aspen Ascend and the Colorado Workforce Development Council.

Aspen Ascend, advancing the 2Gen Approach[lxiv] launched in 2010 and is dedicated to advancing a two-generational approach (referred to as the "2Gen approach," serving parents and children together) to address poverty and inequality. This interdisciplinary effort brings together state agencies, local nonprofits, state political/governmental leadership, philanthropists, and coalitions to ensure greater service coordination and service delivery. To advance their program goals, they utilized the following strategies:

- Integration of human services delivery between state and local systems
- Cross-agency collaborations that promote 2Gen partnerships
- Data systems that captured child, adult, and family outcomes, across partners
- Braided funding streams
- Agency-wide staff training models that promote the 2Gen approach
- Utilization of strength-based and dynamic family engagement

- Accountability to clients

As a result of Aspen Ascend's work, there has been greater collaboration among agencies, more robust data captured on program outcomes, and a greater adoption of the 2Gen approach.

Colorado Workforce Development Council[lxv] builds on the call to action outlined in the Colorado Blueprint[lxvi], which serves as strategic plan for the state economy and labor market. The Colorado Workforce Development Council is advancing "Sector Strategies" for 11 key industries, none of which are classified as social services. Many would argue, however, that Health & Wellness could be included under that umbrella. The 11 industries included in the "sector strategies" are:

- Transportation & Logistics
- Tourism & Outdoor Recreation
- Technology & Information
- Infrastructure Engineering
- Health & Wellness
- Food & Agriculture
- Financial Services
- Energy & Natural Resources Electronic
- Defense & Homeland Security
- Creative Industries
- Bioscience Aerospace Advanced Manufacturing

A key objective of the State's Blueprint is to educate and train the workforce of the future. To advance each of these key industries networks, sector partnerships are developed to convene employers, government, education institutions, training, community development, and nonprofit organizations to create "career pathways" for graduates. These pathways offer a clear sequence of coursework, credentials, and advancement in the industry, with meaningful outcomes for all partners, in particular employers who get a qualified workforce and employee pipeline.

Implications:

To meet the critical community needs facing Denver or Colorado, GSSW will need to work in collaboration with other disciplines and external partners. Using the strategies from Aspen Ascend, such as braided funding and shared data, may provide sufficient incentives for GSSW to involve other University of Denver units and local service providers. Taking an interdisciplinary approach also improves the likelihood that an effort will achieve greater scale.

"Sector Strategies" seem to be garnering a tremendous amount of attention in Colorado, in particular from the business and public sectors. GSSW may be able to convene or lead the effort to include the social sector as a key industry. An alternative may be determining where in the key industries social workers fit and how training and credentialing through GSSW may align with specific research and curriculum (classroom and field) interests. For example, as many Durango students do field work in outdoor education, GSSW can help connect the skills and competencies learned through those placements to the tourism industry in the area.

Higher Education

Higher education has been described as in a state of "rapid transformation"[lxvii] or "disruptive innovation."[lxviii] Economic pressures on institutions, stagnant or lower enrollment, and increasing demand for outcomes and return-on-investment are already reshaping how higher education is being delivered. Those institutions that will survive and prosper "will clarify their vision, examine goals, assess resources and deploy them in a focused way. They will honor traditional virtues of the academy while recognizing the benefits of some new and potentially quite different curricular, pedagogical and business models."[lxix] In other words, post-secondary institutions must think differently about how they deliver education and to whom.

There are myriad factors impacting higher education. In 2013 the University of Denver (DU) convened a Strategic Issues Panel to examine the industry and the panel identified six forces driving change in higher education. These include economic forces, demographic changes, technological innovations, global trends, government policies and educational policies[lxx]. The panel drilled down further, identifying ten underlying drivers of change. Many of these are reflected in overarching trends that are echoed in other studies and articles and neatly summarized by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) in its 2014 report "Five Trends to Watch in Higher Education." BCG outlined the following five trends[lxxi] .

1. *Revenue from key sources is falling, putting many institutions at severe financial risk.* At private universities, revenue comes primarily from tuition, fees and research grants. Public institutions add state support generated through tax dollars. Enrollment, which has been flat or declining in recent years, is the primary feeder of tuition and fee revenue[lxxii]. Tuition has outpaced inflation, with increases of 5.2% annually for public institutions and 2.4% annually for private universities (inflation adjusted) between the 2002-2003 academic year and the 2012 – 2013 academic year. Many institutions discount tuition through scholarships, grants, or tuition waivers to make the increasing cost of higher education more accessible. Many institutions target these efforts on students from households with lower median family incomes which are disproportionately non-white and non-Asian households. In addition, in recent years, federal research dollars have declined and public institutions are seeing decreases in their state allocations.

    Experts predict that institutions will consolidate into two categories: high-quality, high-cost institutions; and low-cost institutions with varying (and improving) quality primarily focused on competency-based education[lxxiii]. Mid-tier private schools are particularly at risk of financial failure, though mid-tier public schools are also feeling the effect of reduced revenue[lxxiv].

    The DU Strategic Issues panel's drivers of change that are reflected in this trend include increasing prices, declining affordability, enrollment challenges, and financial pressures.

2. *Demands are rising for a greater return on investment in higher education.* Simply put, the investment required for a college education is outpacing incomes. Tuition has increased steadily at both public and private institutions, and median family income has been stagnant. Student debt loads have grown 8% annually since 2008 and student-loan default rates have climbed. Return on investment is often measured by long term earnings and employment rates, both of which are higher for college graduates and even higher for those with a master's or professional degree, such as an MSW. BCG reports that the rate at which the gap in earnings is growing suggests that students must continue their education past a four-year college degree in order to close this gap. Currently absolute unemployment levels for college graduates remain high for those recent alum without much job experience and only basic skills[lxxv].

    In an interview with *Forbes* Magazine, Rick Beyer, former President of Wheeling Jesuit University and Managing Partner of Miles Howland Education Partners, stated that "consumers are looking much

closer at value, and the return on investment for their college degrees." The result, Mr. Beyer believes, is that students will choose community colleges due to their lower prices.

The DU Strategic Issues panel's drivers of change that are reflected in this trend include increasing prices, declining affordability, demographic shifts, disruptive innovation/competency- based learning, enrollment challenges, and financial pressures.

3. *Greater transparency about student outcomes is becoming the norm.* Higher education institutions are increasingly being held accountable for student outcomes, including being able to articulate and track workplace competencies. In 2015, the U.S. Department of Education launched the College Scorecard which provides prospective students and their families' comparative data on the cost of colleges and universities, graduation rates, student loan default rates, and student borrowing levels.

The DU Strategic Issues panel's drivers of change that are reflected in this trend include demographic shifts, disruptive innovation/competency- based learning, and enrollment challenges. The panel also discusses the need to break out of the circular financial strategy of increasing amenities and other institutional expenses then discounting tuition (price) to recruit students. Instead, higher education institutions should focus on creating and articulating value.

4. *New business and delivery models are gaining traction.* Online programs, the availability of information online, "stacking" credentials from multiple institutions, advanced placement credits from high school, providing credit for work and life experience, and skill-based certificate programs that supplement an associate or bachelor's degree and competency-based learning are all examples of new delivery models or, what the DU panel has called "disruptive innovation."

The growth of online courses at the associates, bachelor's and master's level is outpacing enrollment in traditional courses. Traditional four-year institutions are partnering with delivery systems such as Coursera to provide online courses. Massive open online course, or MOOCs, are offering alternative credentialing and assessments for learning. BCG reports that MOOC completion rates remain low, however, and that the best outcomes for online programs and coursework come when combined with in-person instruction.

Certificate programs are growing in popularity as alternatives to traditional degrees. Driven by student demand, particularly non-traditional students, and employers looking for specialized skills, alternative credentialing is projected to continue to be options for students who balk at the high cost and time away from the job market that earning a traditional degree represents[lxxvi]. Some institutions are allowing students to "stack" or bundle competency-based certificates into credit towards a degree while gaining labor market value along the way. Students progress in their career with plenty of entry and exit points into an (or multiple) educational program(s)[lxxvii]. The Wisconsin Technical College System embedded existing industry and professional certifications that had demonstrated workforce value creating 70 "stackable" certifications that result in increases in skills and can count towards two- or four-year degrees, if the student wishes to continue[lxxviii].

The DU Strategic Issues panel's drivers of change that are reflected in this trend include information ubiquity, disruptive innovation, and increased competition.

5. *The globalization of education is accelerating.* As students are increasingly mobile, U.S. colleges and universities are looking to international students to maintain enrollment. Students from other countries have the added benefit of paying full tuition when they come to the United States for their education. Public institutions in particular have recruited international students in an effort to replace lost state assistance. Online programs also make courses available to students wherever they reside. The consequences

The DU Strategic Issues panel's drivers of change that are reflected in this trend include knowledge society and disruptive innovation.

Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce identified a disturbing trend in its 2013 study "Separate but Unequal: How higher education reinforces the intergenerational reproduction of white privilege." The study shows that, while more African-American and Latino students are entering post-secondary institutions, they are disproportionately entering open-access two- and four-year colleges and white students are overrepresented in the most selective four-year institutions. This holds true even for those African-American and Latino students who score well on the SAT and/or ACT exams. The consequences are far-reaching: African-American and Latino students at two- and four-year open enrollment schools have lower completion rates, lower rates of enrollment in and completion of an advanced degree, and lower life-time earnings than their counterparts (white or African-American/Latino) from selective four-year institutions[lxxix]. Thus, the higher education system is perpetuating and exacerbating racial inequalities in education and, ultimately, wealth.

The DU Strategic Issues panel also raised tenure policies as a driver of change in higher education. Tenure is nuanced, bringing with it both benefits and constraints. As a public and private good, "tenure protects intellectual inquiry and free speech, provides a means of attracting and retaining qualified faculty, and establishes a process for assessing the ability of newly hired professors."[lxxx] At the same time, tenure can protect ineffective teachers and researchers and makes it difficult to "reallocate faculty resources in response to changing market conditions." Today, nationwide the percentage of tenured and tenure-track professors has dropped to 30 percent. GSSW uses a number of alternative faculty statuses, such as clinical faculty, "professors of practice," and adjunct faculty. Eighty (80) percent of GSSW courses are taught by adjuncts.

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) in conjunction with the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Board conducts an annual survey of U.S. based institutions that were members of the Council of Graduate Schools or one of the four regional graduate school associations. In 2015, the survey was sent to 776 colleges and universities with an overall response rate of 80%. The survey is designed to provide information about applications for admission to graduate school (defined as doctoral, master's, graduate level certificate and educational specialist programs), graduate student enrollment, and graduate degrees and certificates conferred. Highlights from the survey results are presented below[lxxxi].

- At 2,178,500, applications to U.S. graduate programs surpassed two million for only the second time since the survey was initiated in 1986. The majority of applications were to public institutions with 38% applying to private schools.

- Over 500,000 graduate students enrolled for the first time in Fall 2015, a record high. Domestic students increased at a larger rate than in the past two years and comprise 78% of first-time graduate students.

- Doctoral programs are more competitive than master's degree programs, with 21.9% acceptance rates in general and dropping to 14.0% at private, research institutions with very high research (RU/VH) activity. Acceptance rates for master's or other programs was 48.2% overall and 28.8% for private RU/VH institutions.

- The increase in number of students from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups who are first-time graduate students was greater than the increase for their white counterparts. Proportionally, however, African-American, Latino, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaska Native students remain underrepresented at 22.5% of first-time graduate students.

- Women are a majority of first-time graduate students at all levels (doctoral, master's and certificate), though the differential is less for doctoral degrees. Men still hold the majority of first-time seats in

certain fields such as business, engineering, mathematics, computer sciences and physical and earth sciences.

- Minority women comprise an even higher percentage of first-time graduate students than white women. This is particularly true in business, public and administrative services, and social and behavioral sciences.

- Shares of racial and ethnic minorities in most STEM fields remain problematically low, with overall representation of women higher than men.

- While international students made up 22% of first-time graduate students, the growth in new international students was not as strong as in recent years.

- While applications and first-time enrollment grew, total graduate enrollment remained flat.

- Thirty-two percent of graduate students were enrolled at private, nonprofit institutions.

- The vast majority of graduate degrees awarded in 2014-2015 were master's degree (82.5%) with another 11.7% of degrees conferred being doctoral degrees.

The Academic Affairs Forum reports that growth in professional master's programs, such as social work, will take place outside three of the four fields that currently dominate enrollments, specifically business, law and education. Only health care is expected to grow. Growth will come, instead, from "niche" programs like cybersecurity, data analytics and health infomatics. These niche programs tend to be interdisciplinary, geographically focused, and closely tied to professional opportunities and, therefore, less dependent on brand recognition and rankings. Some institutions are "micro-targeting" niche programs to meet the needs of a specific industry or student segment in their geographic region[lxxxii].

Students entering graduate school may already be saddled with undergraduate student loans thus compounding their student debt loans at the end of their graduate education. Though the estimates vary, the average student loan debt for students who borrowed and are graduating from four-year colleges is between $20,000 and $25,000. This does not include non-governmental sources, such as credit cards, often used to support themselves and pay educational expenses. One can assume, therefore, that a number of students that enter graduate school within a few years of completing their undergraduate program will come with debt and may be borrowing additionally for their graduate education. As the average loan debt for a graduating GSSW student is approximately $63,000, the cost of a GSSW education is a critical factor in students' decisions.

Higher Education and Philanthropy

2015 was America's most generous year ever, with an estimated $373.25 billion in charitable donations[lxxxiii]. While charitable giving increased from all sources, contributions from individuals still account for the largest piece of the pie at 71%. Giving to education also remained strong, increasing 9% to reach $57.5 billion. Despite this positive growth, there are key considerations for institutions of higher education.

According to The High Stakes Development Dilemma in Higher Education, the most critical question facing college fundraising is: "How do we maintain or grow donations when alumni participation is on a 20-year decline?[lxxxiv]" Despite 2015's record setting year for charitable gifts to higher education institutions, the percentage of alumni who give remains low. This is problematic as the majority of major donors (making gifts over $25,000) start out as smaller donors and give a decade or more before their first major gift[lxxxv]. Without a pipeline of actively engaged lower level donors, universities are at risk of fundraising atrophy.

Alumni participation rates do vary by institution type. The median alumni participation rate for private schools is approximately 18% according to a BlackBaud Study in 2015[lxxxvi], versus 6% for public institutions. At approximately 3%, GSSW's annual alumni giving rate is significantly below both of these benchmarks.

Blackbaud also reports that private institutions held a median donor retention rate of 66% in 2015, with a median gift amount of $962 (a $2 increase over 2014), indicating the enduring nature of donor commitments to an alma mater. New donor acquisition is increasing at a lower rate, with only a 2.6% median increase in new donors for private schools. In 2015, median revenue per new donor to a private institution was $116, higher than in the past two years but lower than the median $144 that new donors give to public institutions. With expected annual attrition, institutions like GSSW are seeing an annual decrease of .6% in their overall donor counts[lxxxvii]. These data echo the concern expressed in the Ruffalo Noel Levitz report about sustaining a pipeline for major gifts.

To combat the lack of alumni engagement and achieve ongoing fundraising success, it is recommended that Universities take steps to increase donor participation by:

- organizing strategic outreach efforts outside of the campus;

- engaging GenX and Millennial donors more thoughtfully with data and specific calls to actions, giving days, and monthly giving programs;

- making an effort to establish affinity and reoccurring gifts earlier in a donor's career; and

- using data internally for more effective mining and strategy[lxxxviii].

Implications

Though many of the trends in higher education are discussed in terms of undergraduate education, the implications for GSSW are many.

- GSSW must be able to articulate its "value add" or competitive advantage to prospective students locally, nationally and internationally. Though the value add may be messaged differently depending on the market, the core understanding of what sets GSSW apart from other schools of social work must be consistent.

- GSSW's high tuition cost for MSW students and limited financial support for Ph.D. students may be a barrier for entry. Combining the financial barrier with flat enrollment at undergraduate institutions and increased competition from lower cost alternatives in the Denver region, GSSW must be thoughtful about other methods of reducing student costs: increased Title IV-E funds, paid practica, employer-based reimbursement, as well as increased scholarships.

- GSSW's percentage of alumni who give to the School has dropped over the past four years and, at 3.9%, is significantly lower than typically seen for private universities. High student loan debt is a significant barrier to alumni giving. In addition, high tuition costs reportedly leave alumni assuming that donations aren't necessary. This is particularly apparent for alumni who have not been engaged by GSSW since graduation. Thoughtful and consistent outreach as students are graduating and as new alumni, plus education regarding the importance of alumni giving for scholarships and other tuition offsets, should help change the alumni giving trajectory.

- At a recent meeting, Dean McBride reported that changes in standards for school rankings may be changing. There is support for rankings like U.S. News and World Report's to be tied to more quantitative measures such as employment at graduation and percentage of students accepted. This may be a result of the trends towards a focus on return on investment and transparency regarding student outcomes (graduation rates, job placement, salaries, etc). Clearly articulating the competencies gained through classroom and field experience, then ensuring that students can reiterate those competencies to prospective employers will be key to success in the job market.

- With its Centers and Institutes and a reputation for strong professional development offerings, GSSW is well-positioned to consider alternative credentialing beyond the MSW and Ph.D. The online program, once through its initial start-up phase, provides another opportunity for offering unique programming. As online programs are ubiquitous, articulating what makes GSSW's program unique will be critical to attracting and retaining students.

- GSSW currently offers three certificates as part of the MSW program; Metropolitan University of Denver currently offers five certificates through its curriculum. One consideration may be for GSSW to open its certificates to other professionals, whether or not MSWs, looking for additional credentialing.

- GSSW is aware of the continuing need to reach out to prospective students-of-color and to make the School's culture inviting and inclusive for those who are currently underrepresented. This includes ensuring that MSW and doctoral students, as well as faculty and staff, know how to engage with people who are not white, both at GSSW and in their careers. The nationwide statistics indicate that there is a growing market for students of color in master's degree programs. The commitment expressed by the Dean, faculty and staff to recruit, matriculate, retain, and graduate these students, if backed by a strong plan of action, will certainly show results.

Social Work Graduate Education

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) conducts an annual survey of accredited schools of social work in the United States. Survey participation rates are exceptional; in 2015 all 242 MSW programs, all 8 DSW (practice doctorate program) programs, and 71 of 75 (94.7%) Ph.D. programs completed the survey, though responses to particular questions may not have been as high. Below are highlights from the 2015 CSWE survey[lxxxix].

- Of the 242 MSW programs, 73% are housed in public institutions and 27% are in private schools. The percentage drops to 66% in public institutions for Ph.D. programs.

- A vast majority (87.6%) of MSW programs reporting offer a part-time MSW program.

- Full-time enrollment at the bachelor's and master's levels increased between 2011 and 2015, 5.2% and 25.7% respectively; part-time enrollment also increased over the same period. Enrollment in doctoral programs (practice and PhD) decreased by 1.4% with even more marked decreases (37.9%) in part-time programs.

- The chart below provides data on the number of online MSW and PhD course offerings.

Table 4: Availability of Online or Hybrid Courses by Program Level

Response	MSW Programs n = 233	PhD Programs n = 69
Yes, entire program is available online	17.6%	0
Yes, part of the program in online or hybrid	42.9%	13.0%
No, but online or hybrid courses will be in operation next academic year	9.0%	0
No, but online or hybrid courses are being developed	6.9%	2.9%
Other	0.4%	4.3%
No	23.2%	79.7%

- Between 2011 and 2015, the percentage of MSW students carrying student loans has remained relatively steady. In 2015 77.7% of MSW graduates had some loan debt (n=147 schools reporting). The amount of those loans, however, has increased by 16.1% to $40,815 (n=138).

- Doctoral students have fared better with 64% taking out loans (n=26) and average loans at graduation of $28,000 (n=24). This dollar amount has risen by 17% since 2011.

- In 2015 194 programs reported losing 364 faculty positions due to resignations, retirement, budget cuts, or other reasons. Of these, 60.7% were full-time tenured or tenure-track positions and 26.4% were full-time non-tenure track. The remaining 12.9% were part-time or contract faculty. Of the 138 programs who had unfilled vacancies (212 total, 77.8% tenured or tenure-track), 103 reported that they were unable to conduct a search.

- Almost all MSW programs (228 or 94%) offer at least one dual degree program. Law is the most popular with public health second.

- A vast majority (92.6%) of MSW programs offer at least one certificate with aging/gerontology and school social work leading the way.

Field Education

The field education component of social work education varies by institution. In general, graduate schools of social work require students to complete between 900 and 1,200 hours of experience working in the field, concurrent with coursework, and typically including an instructional seminar to facilitate learning and provide training to students as they navigate the workplace. A recent survey (2015) administered by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) asked Directors of Field Education about the structure and staffing of their field programs[xc]. On students' placements and the content of the programs, the directors reported the following:

- Almost three quarters (73.9%) of respondents indicated that MSW field experiences occur over the full academic year;

- 83.6% of respondents reported that less than 6% of students experienced disruptions in field placements requiring re-placement; and

- 82.7% of respondents reported that student safety is addressed in the field seminar or other seminar; only five respondents reported that student safety was not addressed by field education programs.

In terms of the structure of departments of field education, the number of core field education staff and the scope of their responsibilities varied depending on the degree and program offerings and the number and type of students served through the office:

- 64% of field directors or coordinators represented in this survey are contracted in their positions; 36% are tenure track;

- Survey respondents reported a median of 1.5 full-time field education employees and a median of 117 MSW students being placed;

- One third (33.8%) of the survey respondents estimated that fewer than 1.5 FTEs of faculty/staff are assigned to any field education functions; and

- 47.9% of respondents reported that teaching and research faculty members serve as field liaisons, assisting in monitoring students and communicating with the placement agencies and supervisors.

Participants reported on the field liaison function in their respective programs. Table 13 from the CSWE report shows the ways in which institutions that responded delineate this responsibility among faculty and staff.

Table 5. Field Liaison Models

Table 23. Field Liaison Models

Models	Number	%
Faculty liaison model: Faculty (including teaching and research faculty) monitor students and communicate with placement agency and supervisor		
Yes	128	47.9
No	102	38.2
Explanation of model provided	37	13.9
Respondents reporting	267	
Faculty liaison model: Only field faculty/staff monitor students and communicate with placement agency and supervisor		
Yes	112	42.1
No	130	48.9
Explanation of model provided	24	9.0
Respondents reporting	266	
Adjunct faculty liaison model: Adjuncts monitor students and communicate with placement agency and supervisor		
Yes	115	43.1
No	133	49.8
Explanation of model provided	19	7.1
Respondents reporting	267	
Blended faculty and adjunct liaison model		
Yes	94	35.5
No	156	58.9
Explanation of model provided	15	5.7
Respondents reporting	265	

Source: Findings from the State of Field Education Survey, CSWE, 2015.

Respondents' open-ended comments reflected frustration in what they see as diminishing resources when enrollment is increasing. Field education directors also want more time to dedicate to securing quality placements for students as well as professional development and training. Notably, nearly half of directors responding to the survey (44.6%) report that they have they have no support or administrative staff for the field office.

Implications

Social work programs continue to grow and the increase in students in BSW programs bodes well for long-term growth of MSW programs, including GSSW. The trend in higher education towards flexible program offerings, such as part-time and online programs is reflected in social work education, as well. GSSW's online program, therefore, is an important offering to stay competitive. Reaching into a natural market, undergraduate DU students, with the dual undergraduate/MSW degree program is another example of a

flexible program that GSSW currently offers. GSSW, however, is one of only a handful of MSW programs that do not offer a structured part-time program.

Summer options – for coursework and/or internships – would allow students to lighten their work load during the academic year, as well as continue to develop social work skills and competencies. As a high percentage of GSSW students work while attending school in order to pay bills, adding a summer option would allow students more flexibility.

As a private institution, the cost of a GSSW education is higher than at most public institutions and borrowing to pay for that education is to be expected. With GSSW student debt reported as "significant," however, GSSW will need to continue to find additional funds and alternative funding mechanisms for their students. This is particularly true for Ph.D. students, as GSSW is competing with programs offering larger stipends.   In addition, GSSW will need to articulate clearly its "value add," or competitive advantage, to continue to attract a high-quality, diverse student body at both the MSW and Ph.D. levels when lower cost options are available.

As dual degree and certificate programs have become almost obligatory, GSSW remains competitive offering a range of dual degrees that appeal to students.

Most GSSW graduates (58%) remain in the Denver Front Range area after completing the program, and many remain connected to the school through the field education department as liaisons, supervisors, or otherwise working within agencies that hire GSSW students as interns. Given this reach, the field office is a primary point of contact for GSSW alumni with both the school and the university as a whole. This presents an opportunity for the field office to not only be a pipeline for students into the profession, but as a way for graduates to access professional development opportunities, to strengthen the quality of adjunct faculty, and to deepen connections to GSSW community overall, which could have implications for resource and fund development.

GSSW's Competitive Marketplace

The following series of tables compares GSSW to its sister schools, first those in Colorado and then to those GSSW considers its closest competitors. This information comes from the public record, collected from school websites and, on some occasions, through phone interviews.

MSW Program Offerings

GSSW's flagship programs are its MSW and Ph.D. programs. In addition, GSSW has three programs that may be considered "flexible." The Four Corners program in Durango is targeted to reaching area residents in or near their home communities and course content is designed to meet the needs of rural and tribal communities. The Western Colorado program in Glenwood Springs is designed to build the behavioral health workforce in that area. Both programs are weekend programs, allowing students to continue to work while earning their MSW program. GSSW launched its online MSW program in January 2017 with students from throughout the U.S. and one student abroad. Students in this program will work through nine quarters to complete their MSW.

GSSW's Colorado competitors offer more structured part-time programs. Only Metropolitan State University of Denver (Metro) offers an online program. Nationally, the majority, but not all of GSSW's competitive programs offer part-time programs and online options.

Table 6: Flexible, Online and Part-Time Offerings at Select Social Work Schools

Institution	Flexible, online, or part-time offerings
University of Denver - GSSW	Online delivery option, two satellite campus, part-time option
Colorado Programs	
Metropolitan State University of Denver	Full-time, part-time, online delivery option, and mixed delivery programs
Colorado State University – Fort Collins	Part-Time Day/Evening programs and week-end options, Distance MSW – 20-30% of coursework is face-to-face; all in-person requirements apply consistent with CSWE standards
National Programs	
New York University	Weekend program, part-time option, all foundation courses offered on Fridays. Extended program, extended one-year residency and 32-month program for working professionals
Washington University	Part-time option
University of Southern California	Online MSW, Online DSW, Option to complete degree in four-, six-, or eight-semester program offerings
Boston University	Full-time and part-time MSW on-campus, off-campus weekend programs at 3 satellite campuses, and online
Boston College	Two, three, and four-year options

Case Western	On-campus, intensive weekend or online MSSA (MSW equivalent)
University of Washington	Extended degree programs (part-time option for working adults with courses offered in evenings and on weekends); 1 satellite program
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	Options for 12-, 16-, 20-month completion, a fifth term option, or extended program

Concentrations

Though GSSW's competitors in Colorado and beyond are conducting research and building expertise in specific subject areas, many of these schools are opting to educate their students as generalists. Most schools around the country offer a number of concentrations in particular areas of practice, while two programs offer only "micro" and "macro" options (with different names) and one school only offers a clinical concentration.   A full list of MSW programs and their concentrations is presented in Appendix A.

Table 7: Concentrations at Select Social Work Programs

Institution	Concentrations
University of Denver - GSSW	8 Concentrations
Colorado Programs	
Metropolitan State University of Denver	2 Concentrations
Colorado State University – Fort Collins	1 Concentration
National Programs	
New York University	1 Concentration
Washington University	8 Concentrations
University of Southern California	3 Concentrations
Boston University	2 Concentrations
Boston College	5 Concentrations
Case Western	2 Concentrations
University of Washington	6 Concentrations
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor (students choose a practice method and a practice area)	5 Concentrations

Tuition

At approximately $45,000 per year (12 credits per quarter for three quarters), GSSW's tuition is significantly higher than Metro's and Colorado State University's (CSU's) in-state tuition; however, GSSW is less expensive than CSU's nonresident tuition.

GSSW's tuition is higher than the majority of its national competitors, with the exception of the University of Southern California. Even nonresident tuition at the two public schools which GSSW considers competitors is lower than GSSWs.

Table 8: Full time tuition at Select Social Work Programs

Institution	Tuition per year for full-time MSW program (2016-2017)
University of Denver - GSSW	$45,288
Colorado Programs	
Metropolitan State University of Denver	$14,000 for residents, ~$19,000 for nonresidents
Colorado State University – Fort Collins	$30,000 for residents, ~$60,000 for nonresidents
National Programs	
New York University	$42,866
Washington University	$39,572
University of Southern California	$52,120
Boston University	$32,000
Boston College	~$37,000
Case Western	$42,570
University of Washington	$19,082 for residents and $31,748 for nonresidents
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	$25,756 for residents, $41,272 for nonresidents

Ph.D. Program Offerings

For research institutions, like DU and its national competitors, the Ph.D. program serves both to train the next generation of scholars and researchers, as well as contribute to the school's research agenda. All of GSSW's national competitors and, locally, Colorado State University offer a Ph.D. program. The majority of these programs are full-time only and only a handful offering part-time options. While the Ph.D. is a research and teaching degree, the DSW is growing in popularity as a higher level practice degree. Of GSSW's competitor schools, only 2 offer a DSW and one of them, the University of Southern California's program, is only available online. Of GSSW's competitors, none offers an online Ph.D. program.

Table 9: Doctoral Programs

Institution	Ph.D.	DSW	Part-Time
University of Denver – GSSW	Yes	No	No
Colorado Programs			
Metropolitan State University of Denver	No	No	--
Colorado State University – Fort Collins	Yes	No	Yes
National Programs			
New York University	Yes	Yes	Yes
Washington University	Yes	No	No
University of Southern California	Yes	Online	No
Boston University	Yes	No	No
Boston College	Yes + PhD International Social Welfare	No	No
Case Western	Yes	No	Yes
University of Washington	Yes	No	No
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	Yes – Joint PhD with one of 5 social sciences	No	No

Per CSWE requirements, all the Ph.D. programs researched require that a student enter with an MSW or master's degree in a complementary field. If a student does not have a master's degree, s/he will need to complete the MSW as part of or before beginning the Ph.D. program. Though the number of credit hours and courses differs by institution, full-time doctoral students generally must complete coursework in the first two years of the program, then have between 5 and 8 years (7 and 10 total) to complete the Ph.D. Most programs report that their Ph.D. students complete the degree within 4 or 5 years. The dissertation process – complete coursework, develop and present your dissertation proposal, research, pass oral exams, and defend dissertation – is basically the same within all the programs.

Table 10: Ph.D. Requirements

Institution	# Coursework Credits / Classes	# Dissertation Credits	Time to Complete
University of Denver - GSSW	75 credits (quarter)	N/A	Up to 7 years
Colorado Programs			
Metropolitan State University of Denver	--	--	--
Colorado State University – Fort Collins	45 credits (semester) 15 courses	12 credits	Up to 10 years
National Programs			
New York University	48 credits (semester) 16 courses	1 credit per semester until completed	Up to 7 years
Washington University	51 credits (semester) 17 courses	N/A	Up to 7 years
University of Southern California	45 credits (semester)	N/A	Median = 5 years
Boston University	63 credits (semester) 16 courses	N/A	Up to 7 years
Boston College	43 credits (semester) 17 courses	10 – 12 credits	Generally 4 years
Case Western	36 credits (semester) 12 courses	18 credits	Up to 7 years
University of Washington	90 credits (quarter)	27 credits over at least 3 quarters	Up to 10 years
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	Varies based on joint degree discipline	N/A	Up to 7 years

Arguably GSSW's greatest disadvantage in competing for doctoral students is the School's financial aid package.   With two to three years of financial support, GSSW falls short of the four to five years that the majority of the other programs reviewed. The exceptions are Colorado State University and University of Washington, two public universities.

Table 11: Financial Support for Full-Time Ph.D. Students

Institution	Funding for Full-Time Ph.D. Students
University of Denver - GSSW	Full tuition, stipend, health insurance for 2 years; Year 3 – fellowship & stipend; years 4+ can apply for 1 of 2 fellowships and external funds, teach as adjunct, assistantships on faculty grants
Colorado Programs	
Metropolitan State University of Denver	N/A
Colorado State University – Fort Collins	1 – 2 graduate assistantships per year through the school; provide some graduate assistantships through faculty grants
National Programs	
New York University	Full tuition, stipend, health insurance for up to 5 years
Washington University	Full tuition, stipend for 4 years; paid research & teaching assistantships, externally funded fellowships and research
University of Southern California	Full tuition, stipend for 4 years; eligible for additional fellowships, scholarships, research & teaching assistantships and loans
Boston University	No information available
Boston College	Full tuition, stipend for 4 years; years 2 & 3 include a service requirement; fellowships, teaching & research assistantships
Case Western	Full coursework tuition + up to 6 credits of dissertation tuition plus 4 year stipend; can apply for research & teaching mentorships with stipends
University of Washington	Works with student to secure funding for first 3 years through fellowships, grants, research & teaching assistantships; years 4+ can apply for teaching assistantships, external funding
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	Tuition, stipend, health insurance for 5 years; can apply for additional funding from within and externally to the University

Certificate and Interdisciplinary Programs

GSSW offers ample opportunities for students to augment a traditional MSW program with focused electives in certificate programs or interdisciplinary dual degrees. The majority of those MSW programs surveyed offer both certificates and dual degree options. For a full listing of the offerings, please see Appendix A.

Locally, Metro offers a number of certificate programs and CSU provides a MSW / Master of Public Health program. At a national level, three certificates is fewer than some schools and on par with others. Two schools offer post-graduate certificates rather than certificates that can be earned while completing an MSW. Most programs offer a range of dual degrees, with some that are relatively standard (JD/MSW, MSW/MBA, MSW/MPH) and others are specific to that particular university (ex: University of Southern California's MSW / Master of Arts – Jewish Nonprofit Management). For a full list of certificates and dual degrees, please see Appendix 1.

Table 12: Certificate and Dual Degree Offerings at Select Social Work Programs

Institution	Certificates	Dual Degree Options
University of Denver – GSSW	3 Certificate Programs	8 Dual Degree Programs
Colorado Programs		
Metropolitan State University of Denver	5 Certificate Programs	--
Colorado State University – Fort Collins	--	1 Dual Degree Program
National Programs		
New York University	9 Post-Graduate Certificate Programs	5 Dual Degree Programs
Washington University	1 Certificate Program	7 Dual Degree Programs
University of Southern California	1 Post-Graduate Certificate Program	8 Dual Degree Programs
Boston University	6 Post-Graduate Certificate Programs	4 Dual Degree Programs
Boston College	8 Certificate Programs	3 Dual Degree Programs
Case Western	5 Certificate Programs	5 Dual Degree Programs
University of Washington	3 Certificate Programs	2 Dual Degree Programs
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	3 Certificate Programs	6 Dual Degree Programs

Professional Development and Continuing Education

Among peer institutions, professional development offerings fall into a few major categories:

- Certificates designed for professionals who have already earned a graduate degree;
- Continuing education and professional development workshops either completed in-person over several hours, or online at the learner's own pace on a specific topic. Where applicable, these offerings may be counted towards CE credits; and
- Ad hoc career development and job search resources available through centers on campus (within the school of social work or institution-wide) or through schools' websites (special access may be required).

Typically, these programs and resources are made available to alumni, adjunct faculty, and field instructors at a reduced cost or, in some cases at no cost. Some social work programs own their continuing education and professional development offerings while at some universities, the continuing education and professional development curricula are administered through a university-wide program. GSSW collaborates with DU's College of Education, School of Professional Psychology and University College to present its continuing education and professional development.

Table 13: Professional Development and Continuing Education

Institution	Professional Development and Continuing Education
University of Denver	The Center for Professional Development is a collaboration of GSSW, the College of Education, the School of Professional Psychology and University College. Provides ongoing professional development speaker series and workshops, trainings, certificates, continuing education and graduate courses for credit.
Colorado Programs	
Metropolitan State University	--
Colorado State University – Fort Collins	The school's Center for Lifelong Learning and Education Outreach provides professional development and programs for degree seekers, non-degree seekers and practicing MSWs (It also administers the school's distance MSW programs). Offers certificates for students and practicing professionals in Advanced Clinical Behavioral Health, Conflict Resolution and Meditation, and School Social Work. The Center also provides training to the state department of human services and other human services agencies.
National Programs	
New York University	Post-Master's Certificate programs: Advanced Assessment and Diagnosis, Advanced Clinical Practice, Child and Family Therapy, Clinical Approaches to the Addictions, Clinical Practice with Adolescents, Clinical Supervision, Executive Leadership in the Not-for-Profit sector, Palliative and End-of-Life care, Spirituality and Social Work. Online Continuing Education offered through the Office of Global and Lifelong Learning on a variety of topics.
Washington University	Weekly professional development workshops, multi-day training institutes, online lectures, and longer-term executive education offerings are available. Fees and registration required. Discounts available to field instructors, adjunct faculty, and WUSTL staff for workshops.
University of Southern California	Offerings and resources for students, alumni, and employers on career development, continuing education, job searching, and licensure are available through the Office of Career and Professional Development. Post-Graduate Certificate in International Social Work Practice in the United Kingdom.
Boston University	Post-graduate certificates offered through the Professional Education Programs (PEP): Cognitive and Behavioral Interventions; Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Programs; Treatment of Trauma; Working with Veterans and their Families; Assessment and Treatment of Couples; Clinical Practice with Adolescents. Workshops and courses offered on a nearly-weekly basis on a variety of topics, offered at the school's many campuses. Registration

	and fee required; discounts available for alumni, field instructors, and faculty advisors
Boston College	Annual National Conference on Social Work and HIV/AIDS. Offer a range of professional development workshops and programs on various topics related to human services, as well as CEUs toward re-licensure.

Table 13: Professional Development and Continuing Education (cont.)

Institution	Professional Development and Continuing Education
Case Western University	The school offers a monthly series of research and training colloquia on professional development topics sponsored by the Office of Research Administration and the Doctoral Program, and the school advertises on its calendar professional development/continuing education opportunities off-campus (Master's students are required to complete 36 hours of professional development to graduate). Certificates offered to those not enrolled in Mandel School master's programs: Nonprofit Management and School Social Work
University of Washington	Certificates offered through the UW Professional and Continuing Education for students and those who hold master's degrees: Guardianship Certificate program, Autism Studies, Gerontology certificate program, and Nonprofit Management Certificate Program.
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	Certificates offered for professionals through UM SSW Continuing Education: sexual health, addictions, advanced clinical dementia practice, integrated behavioral health and primary care, and mixed methods research. Distance learning options available. Online and in-person (self-paced) course offerings on a variety of topics, including prep for licensure. Registration and fee required; no charge for field instructors through the field office.

Alumni Engagement

Alumni of schools of social work can be a tremendous resource to the institutions from which they graduate. In Denver, where a significant proportion of DU GSSW graduates remain in the metropolitan area and surrounding counties, alumni provide an important connection to community organizations, local activists, issue advocacy efforts, and other initiatives that connect to the interest of GSSW students, faculty, and staff. Alumni also formally engage with GSSW through adjunct faculty positions and the field office, as liaisons and by supervising interns within their agencies. These engagement methods are common among schools of social work.

Many of GSSW's peer institutions outside of Colorado have established alumni mentoring programs. This strategy for engaging alumni typically pairs a current student with a practicing MSW that can provide support and advice as the student complete the program, adding the benefit of contributing to a student's development.

Table 14: Alumni Mentoring Programs

Institution	Alumni Mentoring Program Description
University of Denver	--
Colorado Programs	
Metropolitan State University	--
Colorado State University – Fort Collins	--
National Programs	
New York University	Silver School alumni mentor social work students through the university-wide mentorship program. The program includes attending network events, job shadowing, informational interviews and one-on-one contact advice.
Washington University	--
University of Southern California	Coordinated by the USC Social Work Office of Career and Professional Development, the program pairs an alum with a current student for personal and career support.
Boston University	--
Boston College	This program pairs recent alumni with alumni more experienced in the field (e.g., for 2017 program mentors are graduates 2011 and before and mentees are graduates 2012-2016). Coordinated by alumni association volunteer, program expectations include quarterly check-ins between mentor and mentee and quarterly communication from program coordinators.
Case Western	--
University of Washington	The program is a collaboration between Student Services, the Advancement Office, and Field Education. Participants are granted access to a password protected website with resources on career development and contact information.
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	--

Many schools create opportunities to highlight alumni of the programs, with strategies ranging from awards and special distinctions to short articles or blogs on the school's website, newsletter and magazine that briefly highlight alumni's interesting work or an achievement in the field. DU includes such strategies in the alumni section of its website and in *GSSW magazine*. While likely not a large-scale effort for any school, this type of engagement can serve several purposes:

- Demonstrating an interest on behalf of the school in its former students' work;
- Showcasing possible career paths and professional opportunities to current students; and
- Sending a message to the broader DU community about the value and contributions of social work and highlight the diversity of practice that GSSW graduates represent beyond direct mental health practitioners.

As shown above, most schools of social work make continuing education and professional development available to alumni, providing another point of engagement that also helps them stay up-to-date in their social work practice and better serve the community.

In general, alumni are a major target for fund development efforts, and their engagement in other areas of the school can be important cultivation for their future financial support of GSSW. Presently, just under 4% of GSSW alumni are making a financial contribution to the school; nationally, alumni participation in giving to institutions of higher education is higher; however, alumni giving is decreasing, especially for those under age 35[xci].

Implications

As the majority of GSSW's students come from Colorado, offering satellite programs to reach those who want a professional social work education and are not able to leave their home communities is a terrific way to expand its student population. These distance learning opportunities also distinguish GSSW from the other Colorado-based MSW programs.

GSSW is nicely situated with a combination of flexible programs, concentrations, certificates, and dual degrees that allow the school to be competitive from a curricular standpoint. Some offerings are fairly standard, such as children and youth development, and mental health concentrations. Others, such as the Health and Wellness Concentration and the Certificate in Animal-Assisted Social Work are unique to GSSW. In addition, GSSW is known for infusing the curriculum with a social justice lens. This combination of popular curricula, exclusive programs, and a clear perspective on social work allows GSSW to reach a broad range of prospective students.

On the other hand, GSSW's tuition is higher than the majority of its competitors. Combined with the high cost of living, GSSW must be able to discuss its value add to justify the expense. This is particularly true in the school's efforts to reach under-resourced students, particularly as students-of-color are over-represented in this population.

Financial support is also a critical issue for Ph.D. students. Combining the area's high cost of living with less financial support for doctoral students puts the School at a disadvantage in attracting top quality doctoral students. With intentional collaboration between GSSW's unique Institutes and Centers and the Ph.D. program, the School could integrate doctoral research into their work, thus creating opportunities not available at other institutions.

GSSW has opportunities to increase alumni engagement beyond alumni serving as adjunct faculty, field liaisons, and field supervisors. (It should be noted that alumni also contribute through School and University committees and advisory boards; however, that number is more limited.) Professional development and

continuing education is another way that GSSW can interface with alumni and may be a way of reaching out to non-social workers, as well. Offering additional certificates, such as the Institute of Human Animal Connection's Animals and Human Health Certificate, or allowing alumni to earn the Certificates offered students, such as the Social Work with Latinos/as, may help attract alumni back to GSSW as they expand their professional credentials and obtain necessary CEUs.

With dedicated resources and attention, GSSW can begin that engagement process as students are graduating and continue to involve alumni in the life of the School as they progress through their careers. This is particularly true for those alumni living near the three campuses (Denver, Four Corners and Western Colorado). This presents an opportunity to both define the School's success with alumni broadly and measure commitment to GSSW in ways other than through alumni giving. Of course, engaged alumni are a natural audience of potential donors who may be in a position to contribute financially in the near future.

GSSW Current Data

GSSW is dynamic and complex. Data regarding the current state of the School provides a snapshot of the scope of the research, teaching, community activity, and student, faculty and staff engagement that occurs at all three GSSW campuses and online. Appendix 2 provides data regarding:

- Number of staff and faculty;
- Student demographics;
- Concentrations and certificates;
- Field education;
- Tuition;
- Alumni;
- The Facility (Craig Hall);
- Financials; and
- Fund Development.

Appendix 1 - Select Information on GSSW and Competitive MSW Programs

Concentrations at Select Social Work Programs

Institution	Concentrations
University of Denver - GSSW	Aging Services and Policy, Child Welfare, Children and Youth: Risks and Healthy Development, Family Systems, Health and Wellness, Mental Health, Organizational Leadership and Policy Practice, Sustainable Development and Global Practice
Colorado Programs	
Metropolitan State University of Denver	Individuals & Families (students select a track: Children/youth/families, Adults, Older adults, or Child welfare) and Macro Practice
Colorado State University – Fort Collins	Generalist practice (foundation) and advanced generalist practice (concentration)
National Programs	
New York University	Clinical Social Work
Washington University	American Indian and Alaska Native; Children, Youth and Families; Health; Mental Health; Older Adults and Aging Societies; Social and Economic Development – Domestic; Social and Economic Development – International; Violence and Injury Prevention
University of Southern California	Children, Youth and Families; Adults and Healthy Aging; and Community, Organization, and Business Innovation
Boston University	Clinical Social Work and Macro
Boston College	Children, Youth & Families, Global Practice, Health, Mental Health, Older Adults & Families
Case Western	Community Practice for Social Change, Direct Practice
University of Washington	Administration and Policy Practice; Children, Youth & Families Practice; Multigenerational Practice; Community-Centered Integrative Practice; Health Practice; Mental Health Practice
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor (students choose a practice method and a practice area)	Aging in families and society, children and youth in families and society, community and social systems, health, and mental health

Certificates and Dual Degrees at Select Social Work Programs

Institution	Certificates	Dual Degree Options
University of Denver – GSSW		
Colorado Programs		
Metropolitan State University of Denver	Conflict Resolution and Mediation Pre-K through 12 School Social Work Advanced Clinical Behavioral Health Military and Veteran Culture Nonprofit Administration	--
Colorado State University – Fort Collins	--	MSW/MPH
National Programs		
New York University	Post Master's Certificate Programs: Advanced Assessment and Diagnosis, Advanced Clinical Practice, Child and Family Therapy, Clinical Approaches to the Addictions, Clinical Practice with Adolescents, Clinical Supervision, Executive Leadership in the Not-for-Profit sector, Palliative and End-of-Life care, Spirituality and Social Work	Social Work (MSW) and Child Development (MA); Social Work (MSW) and Public Health (MPH); Social Work (MSW) and Health Advocacy (MA); Social Work (MSW) and Law (JD); Social Work (MSW) and Public Administration (Executive MPA)
Washington University	Affordable Housing and Mixed-Income Community Management	MSW/Master of Public Health (MPH); MSW/Master of Architecture (MArch); MSW/Master of Arts in Education (MAEd); MSW/Master of Business Administration (MBA); MSW/Law (JD);

		MSW/Master of Divinity (MDiv); MSW/Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies (MAPS)
University of Southern California	Post-Graduate Certificate in International Social Work Practice in the United Kingdom	MSW and Law, MBA, gerontology, Jewish nonprofit management, planning, public administration, public health, or PhD direct (simultaneously enroll in MSW and PhD, research focus)
Boston University	Post-graduate certificates offered through the Professional Education Programs (PEP): Cognitive and Behavioral Interventions; Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Programs; Treatment of Trauma; Working with Veterans and their Families; Assessment and Treatment of Couples; Clinical Practice with Adolescents	MSW/MPH, MSW/EdM (special education or educational leadership), or MSW/MTS or MDiv (Theology) dual degrees
Boston College	Child Welfare; Latino Leadership; Neuroscience & Social Work; Policy & Community Organizing; Refugees & Immigrants; School Social Work; Trauma; and Veterans & Military Families	MSW/MBA, MSW/JD, MSW/MA (Theology)
Case Western	Nonprofit Management, Management and Leadership, Gerontology, Global Health, School Social Work	MSSA/MNO, MSSA/MPH, MSSA/JD, MSSA/MBA, MSSA/MA (Bioethics)
University of Washington	Guardianship Certificate program, Gerontology certificate program, and Nonprofit Management Certificate Program.	MSW/MPH, MSW/MPA

University of Michigan – Ann Arbor	Child Welfare, Global Social Work, Human Services Management	Social Work and Business Administration, Social Work and Information, Social Work and Law, Social Work and Public Health Student-initiated dual degrees: Social Work and Public Policy, Social work and Urban Planning, and combinations with other units

Appendix 2 – GSSW Data Tables

Staff & Faculty

Staff & Faculty	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
Total # of Faculty	35	38	43	44	48
# of Tenure/Tenure Track Faculty	22	23	21	22	26
# of Clinical Faculty	13	15	18	7	7
# of Professors of Practice	n/a	n/a	n/a	8	8
# of Research Faculty	n/a	n/a	4	5	7
# of Visiting Faculty	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	0
# of Scholars in Residence					
Total # of Adjuncts	121	149	153	165	170
Total # of Staff	58	56	77	69	83
# Butler Institute for Families	21	17	28	16	33
# GSSW	16	18	17	19	20
# Bridge Project	21	19	21	21	20
# Institute for Human-Animal Connection	0	0	1	3	3
# Center for Effective Interventions	0	0	5	5	3
# Burnes Center	0	0	0	0	1
# Other Grants & Projects	0	2	4	5	3

(Source: Strategic Plan Data, Jennie Ratico & Anne Enderby)

Note: As of 2-20-17, data on number of Scholars in Residence was not available and number of "other grants & projects" had not been confirmed.

Student Demographics

Total MSW Enrollment	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	% Chg 12 - 16
TOTAL	454	487	500	502	488	7.5%
Denver	432	444	455	456	449	4%
Four Corners	22	24	23	28	20	-9%
Western Colorado	N/A	19	22	18	19	0%

Denver – Student Demographics		Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
Gender *	Male	52	45	50	52	52
	Female	378	394	399	397	394
	Unknown	2	5	6	7	3
Race	Caucasian/White	370	382	395	380	368
	Black or African American	16	13	12	14	18
	Asian	6	1	4	6	9
	American Indian	8	8	2	5	5
	Multiple Races	7	11	13	15	23
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2	1	0	1	0
	Unknown	23	28	29	35	26
Ethnicity **	Hispanic or Latino	33	49	45	57	49
Age	Under 25	119	150	158	146	167
	25-34	279	263	274	289	240
	35-44	29	34	27	28	18
	Over 45	16	16	11	17	20
	Average*	27.3	26.8	27	27.3	27.6

(Source: Admission Enrollment Concentration Data)

(Source: Student Demographic Data)

Denver-Campus MSW Program	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	% Chg 12 - 16
# Apps Received	840	844	819	868	887	6%
# Apps Completed	781	786	768	795	806	3%
# Apps Admitted	554	592	572	618	630	14%
# Matriculated	250	251	278	263	257	3%
Yield Rate	45%	42%	47%	43%	41%	
Admission Rate (completed apps)	71%	75%	74%	78%	78%	

* GSSW recognizes that gender is not a binary and that these numbers may not accurately reflect the gender of our students. The University however, still maintains a gender binary in its collection of student demographic data.

** The Bureau of Labor Statistics does not include Hispanic or Latino in its accounting of race. The University collects its student demographic data in alignment with national requirements.

Four Corners Program – Student Demographics		Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
Gender	Male	6	6	5	5	3
	Female	16	18	18	23	16
	Unknown	0	0	0	0	0
Race	Caucasian/White	18	21	17	17	12
	Black or African American	1	1	0	0	0
	Asian	0	0	0	0	0
	American Indian	2	2	3	6	5
	Multiple Races	0	0	2	2	1
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0	0	1	0
	Unknown	1	0	1	2	2
Ethnicity	Hispanic or Latino	3	4	2	2	3
Age	Under 25	2	0	7	4	0
	25-34	10	17	14	18	11
	35-44	9	8	3	5	6
	Over 45	5	5	3	4	3
	Average*	37.4	31.1	31.2	37.5	35.1

(Source: Student Demographic Data)

Western Colorado Program – Student Demographics		Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
Gender	Male	n/a	2	2	3	14
	Female	n/a	17	19	12	3
	Unknown	n/a	0	1	3	2
Race	Caucasian/White	n/a	17	19	13	13
	Black or African American	n/a	0	0	0	0
	Asian	n/a	0	0	0	0
	American Indian	n/a	0	0	0	0

	Multiple Races	n/a	2	2	2	3
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	n/a	0	0	0	0
	Unknown	n/a	0	1	3	3
Ethnicity	Hispanic or Latino	n/a	1	1	4	4
Age	Under 25	n/a	2	0	4	0
	25-34	n/a	10	12	9	14
	35-44	n/a	3	3	6	3
	Over 45	n/a	4	4	2	2
	Average*	n/a	35.4	36.5	32.4	33.3

(Source: Student Demographic Data)

Note: as of 2-20-17, the gender break out for Fall 2016 at the Western Colorado campus has not been confirmed.

Doctoral Program	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	% Cng 12 - 16
# Apps Received	28	22	27	35	26	-7%
# Apps Completed	25	18	21	30	21	-16%
# Apps Admitted	10	9	11	9	12	20%
# Matriculated	5	6	5	6	5	0%
Yield Rate	50%	67%	45%	67%	42%	
Admission Rate (completed apps)	40%	50%	52%	30%	57%	

Phd Program – Student Demographics		Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
TOTAL		27	29	32	33	27
Gender	Male	10	6	9	8	3
	Female	25	23	23	25	24
	Unknown	0	0	0	0	0
Race	Caucasian/White	24	21	23	24	20
	Black or African American	1	1	1	1	0
	Asian	3	2	3	2	1
	American Indian	0	0	0	0	0

	Multiple Races	2	2	2	3	5
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	0	0	0	0
	Unknown	4	3	3	3	1
Ethnicity	*Hispanic or Latino*	1	1	1	2	2
Age	*Under 25*	0	0	0	0	0
	25-34	17	15	16	20	15
	35-44	15	13	17	15	11
	Over 45	5	3	1	1	0
	*Average**	35.9	35.3	35	35.2	35

(Source: Admission Enrollment Concentration Data)

(Source: Student Demographic Data)

Concentrations & Certificates

Concentrations	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Adulthood and Late Life Challenges (Discontinued)	40	45	2	1	0
Aging	0	0	6	11	8
Child Welfare	20	15	14	14	10
Children and Youth	0	0	59	50	52
Family Systems	107	104	49	35	32
Health & Wellness	0	0	28	34	38
High Risk Youth (Discontinued)	39	48	1	0	0
Mental Health	0	0	45	64	86
Leadership for Organizational & Community Practice (Discontinued)	30	38	1	1	0
Organizational Leadership & Policy Practice	0	0	41	24	40
Sustainable Development & Global Practice	0	0	10	10	15
Total	236	250	256	244	265

Certificates	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Anticipated 2016-17
Animal Assisted Social Work	35	49	64	58	57
Interpersonal Trauma Studies	98	101	6	n/a	n/a
Social Work with Latinos/as	9	13	12	16	13
Total	142	163	82	74	70

(Source: Admission Enrollment Concentration Data)

Field Education

Field Education - One Year Snap Shot

Concentration	# of agencies
School Social Work	111
Other	103
Mental Health/Community Mental Health	99
Health	90
Family Services	65
Child Welfare	38
Aging/Gerontological	37
Community Planning	28
Corrections/Criminal Justice	24
Alcohol Drug or Substance Abuse	23
Social Policy	22
Developmental Disabilities	15
Housing Services	15
Domestic Violence or Crisis Intervention	13
Administration	7
Public Assistance/Public Welfare	7
Group Services	5
International	5
Occupational/Industry Social Work	5
Rehabilitation	5
Program Evaluation	4
Not Defined	1

Total # of Sites:	722
Active Sites	620

Supervision	#s
# of field supervisors currently	287
# of task supervisors	96
# of agencies with off-site MSW supervisors	41

(Source: Email from Field Education)

Tuition

Tuition (MSW)	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	% Chg
Tuition cost per credit hour (on campus only. Other campuses are discounted)	$1,062	$1,104	$1,142	$1,199	$1,258	18.5%
Annual Tuition flat rate for 12 + hours/ quarter; 3 quarters / year	$38,232	$39,744	$41,112	$43,164	Up to $45,288 (3 qtrs)	18.5%
On-line Tuition per credit hour					$1,258; completed over 9 consquentive quarters	

(Source: Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance)

Notes:

- Quarter tuition covers 12+ credits
- 78% of students carry "significant loan debt" with an average salary of about 1/3 of the other professions
- The average amount of debt for graduating MSW students is approximately $63,000

Alumni

Alumni by Location: Current as of Summer 2016

Metropolitan Area	Alumni
Denver, CO	3205
Boulder, CO	332
Colorado Springs, CO	268
Fort Collins, CO	151
Greeley, CO	89
Los Angeles, CA	87
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	85
Portland, OR	81
Seattle, WA	75
Pueblo, CO	71
Chicago, IL	63
Washington, DC	62
San Francisco, CA	61
Albuquerque, NM	58
New York, NY	58

(Source: Alumni counts by Metro Areas – FY16)

Alumni Giving (see also, fundraising)

Alumni Giving	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17
# of Alumni	6324	6467	6,791	6,966	8028
# of Alumni Giving	346	335	301	273	122
% of Alumni Giving	5.47%	5.18%	4.43%	3.92%	1.52%
$ contributed from Alumni	$315,142	$582,909	$171,193	$357,091	$121,570
Average Alumni Gift	$911	$1,740	$569	$1,308	$996
$ contributed from Alumna/Parent	$23,125	$13,592	$22,773	$11,052	$2,405

(Source: GSSW Fundraising Dashboards 13 – 17)

Facility

Craig Hall was expanded and built in 2005 apart from any University capital campaigns. There have been no major improvements to GSSW's building since 2005. The building is at full capacity, however to accommodate growth, a two double-side trailers were placed in the south parking lot. Research staff, doctoral students, and faculty are located there.

The University of Denver's last major capital campaign, ASCEND, spanned from June 2006 through June 2015. ASCEND raised $490 million from more than 47,000 alumni and friends. Dean Amanda Moore McBride and Assistant Dean Angel Garcia will meet with the University's new Vice Chancellor of Facilities in February to request a space audit to address overcrowding and consider inevitable growth.

(Source: School leadership)

Financials

Budget (in '000s)	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17 (Budget)*
Total Operating Revenue	$14,981	$16,332	$17,910	$18,477	$19,183
Tuition Revenue	$12,891	$14,387	$15,304	$15,633	$16,505
Endowment & Gift Release	$1,770	$1,629	$1,914	$1,926	$1,978
Other Revenue	$320	$316	$692	$918	$699
Total Operating Expenses	$8,578	$9,105	$9,770	$10,525	$10,994
Total Gainshare*	$504	$643	$878	$225	$822
Total GSSW Allowance from Scholarships/Gifts/Endowments	$316	$219	$267	$247	$203
Total - External Contracts and Grants	$4,358	$4,345	$5,897	$7,574	n/a**
Butler Institute	$3,716	$3,535	$5,065	$6,533	n/a
GSSW Faculty	$444	$559	$459	$543	n/a
Center for Effective Inter.	n/a	n/a	$275	$485	n/a
Bridge Project	$198	$251	$362	$442	n/a
Inst for Human-Animal Connection	0	0	$10	$56	n/a
Burnes Center	n/a	n/a	n/a	$44	n/a

(Source: Annual budgets)

* Gainshare is a complicated calculation based on a portion of fiscal year end revenue variance and expense variance. This is not a source of annual fixed funding.

** It is too early to estimate grants and contracts for FY17.

Fund Development

Donor Information	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17 YTD
Graduate Donors	342	332	298	282	121
% Participation	5	5	4%	4%	1.5%
Cert/Other Donors	26	35	29	36	13
% Participation	4	5	3%	4%	1.2%
Total Donors	754	764	696	649	313
New Donors	371	360	283	296	121
Repeat Donors	383	404	413	353	192

(Source: GSSW Fundraising Dashboards 2013 – 2017)

Gift commitments by Category	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17 YTD
Alumna Donors	263	265	254	205	83
$ Commitments	$315,142	$582,909	$171,193	$356,983	$121,570
Alumna/Parent Donors	8	12	9	10	5
$ Commitments	$23,125	$13,592	$22,773	$11,337	$2,405
Parent Donors	19	19	19	22	14
$ Commitments	$62,552	108,086	$266,144	$61,106	$65,127
Friend Donors	365	356	299	294	135
$ Commitments	$473,068	$1,503,260	$334,615	$1,856,808	$175,367
Corporate Donors	59	51	65	54	52
$ Commitments	$309,990	$202,602	$282,912	$228,575	$283,589
Foundation Donors	37	51	42	50	19
$ Commitments	$591,420	$843,203	$865,088	$1,333,050	$170,955
Other Organization Donors	3	10	8	14	5
$ Commitments	$698,847	$217,646	$91,375	$95,247	$36,451

(Source: GSSW Fundraising Dashboards 2013 – 2017)

Gift Commitments by Department	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17 YTD
Bridge Project	$1,248,321	$2,463,710	$1,508,691	$1,234,810	$540,394
GSSW	$98,840	$944,359	$264,831	$818,877	$300,000
Unspecified	$497,983	$63,231	$260,578	$1,889,438	$15,070

(Source: GSSW Fundraising Dashboards 2013 – 2017)

Gift Commitments by Purpose	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17 YTD
Endowment	$180,055	$374,620	$235,710	$87,368	$25,125
Restricted	$1,665,089	$3,096,679	$1,798,390	$3,855,757	$830,339

(Source: GSSW Fundraising Dashboards 2013 – 2017)

Gift Commitments by Level	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17 YTD
$1M + # of Donors	-	1	-	1	-
Gift Total	-	$1,090,993	-	$1,250,000	-
$100K - $1M # of Donors	3	5	4	6	1
Gift Total	$450,500	$806,675	$516,374	$951,500	$168,000
$25K - $100K # of Donors	13	24	19	21	10
Gift Total	$541,381	$841,440	$776,385	$1,017,476	$311,229
$5K - $25K # of Donors	70	53	48	56	27
Gift Total	$587,429	$445,509	$410,320	$471,731	$244,967
$1K - $5K # of Donors	100	114	130	93	50
Gift Total	$190,210	$206,513	$250,260	$169,915	$90,387
< $1K # of Donors	568	567	495	472	225
Gift Total	$75,625	$80,171	$80,760	$82,503	$40,881

(Source: GSSW Fundraising Dashboards 2013-2017)

APPENDIX 3: Endnotes

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APPENDIX 5: Interview Themes

Interview Themes for
The Graduate School of Social Work
University of Denver
February 2017

theromegroup

A critical component of the Graduate School of Social Work's (GSSW's) strategic planning is understanding how its many stakeholder groups view the School. A number of techniques were used to garner this understanding, including interviews, roundtables and surveys. Each technique builds on the one before it, with the interviews providing the foundation for identifying impressions and ideas that were tested with the roundtables and surveys.

In December and January, 2017 The Rome Group conducted 28 confidential interviews with 31 members of the GSSW community. These included internal stakeholders – GSSW staff from all three physical campuses, faculty, Institute staff, and campus leaders – and external stakeholders - community partners, field supervisors, and alumni. The interview protocol included questions regarding GSSW's mission, strengths and challenges; reasons for and expectations of involvement with the School; and critical issues facing GSSW and the social work profession. Though many of the questions were the same among all stakeholder groups, some questions were unique to a particular sub-group (i.e., questions about GSSW's role on the University of Denver (DU) campus were not asked of external constituents.

The following tables present a synopsis of the interviews. Appendix A provides a list of those interviewed. For greater detail on the themes expressed by each stakeholder group, please see Appendices B and C.

GSSW's Strengths	
Internal Stakeholders	External Stakeholders
• Community engagement – school is committed to advancing community change; Durango Program embodies meaningful community partnership; field partners with diverse agencies; alumni engagement is an untapped resource • Diversity and inclusion – this is a value; accessibility will lead to more diversity in student body, diverse faculty and staff will improve diversity of student body • School culture – people are committed; moving toward more collaboration • Academic Strengths – diverse concentrations; quality research; student-centered faculty; power, privilege and oppression (PPO) framework	• Location in Denver • Leadership – new Dean • Community Engagement – reciprocal in community (field partners, professional development, support for social workers in the field); alumni network is an untapped resource; staff committed to community partners and serve as a resource to them • Diversity and Inclusion – PPO framework; demonstrated commitment; • Field Program – supportive; a resource; positive and clear communication; Field Fair is helpful to field sites • Academic Strengths – quality of the program; integration of classroom and field; teach professionalism; intimate learning communities; students are dedicated and passionate; top-notch faculty; diverse offerings

Challenges and Opportunities	
Internal Stakeholders	External Stakeholders
• Accessibility – high tuition cost and cost of living for MSW and Ph.D. programs, need for additional resources and funding for doctoral students, lack of flexibility for students that work • Competition – losing Ph.D. students due to ranking and funding, improve rankings while maintaining commitment to values, other Denver schools more affordable, competing with other institutions for field placements • Brand and reputation – better articulate our competitive advantage, "ivory tower" reputation, not well integrated with other schools at DU, social work brand is misunderstood • Role of Centers and Institutes – clarifying purpose and goals; finding predictable funding sources; need more collaboration and integration across GSSW and beyond; administrative/policy barriers; engaging other campuses; some institutes collaborate and others don't • Academic challenges – The Quarter System; field model (starting internships immediately); our space limits our work; marketing to recruit quality students; preparing students for professional environments	• Accessibility – cost, low earnings for graduates • Fill service gaps – staying nimble to meet greatest community demands • Relationship with the community – meaningful partnership, community-driven research • Brand and reputation – students are homogenous, perceived as "the rich kid school," social work brand is diffuse and misunderstood • Relationships with field sites – greater alignment between student research projects and field site needs; improved communication, evaluation, and training; helping students connect classroom learning to field and vice versa • Culture – creating a respectful, welcoming, nurturing, equitable culture; less hierarchical and clique-y; safe spaces for marginalized groups • Academic challenges – micro/macro divide exists; connecting academics to professional practice; students are younger and less prepared for professional environment; consistency across curriculum; improve diversity and inclusion; improve quality of specializations

Our Mission	
Internal Stakeholders	External Stakeholders
• Aligns with social work fundamentals • Could also highlight other qualities, ways in which we work: innovative, interdisciplinary, nimble, collaborative (partnering with communities), research, scholarship, human rights, environmental justice • Need ways to clearly demonstrate • It's too long • Should read like a change agent mission • It's a good internal mission, but we may need to consider it a part of our brand, communicating the role and contributions of social work	• Reflects the uniqueness of the profession • Timeless, but more opportunities to better live it • Too long and unwieldy • Not inspirational or motivating • May want to include: ethical work and practice, more emphasis on collaboration and partnership

Our Vision	
Internal Stakeholders	**External Stakeholders**
- We want to embody social justice in action - Conducting research for impact – continue to prioritize collaboration with the community and then supply our findings back to advance social change - Owning our unique position, work and passion while elevating the social work brand - Intentional integration of our work across GSSW - More cross-campus collaboration and policies and procedures that support this work - More investment in the satellite campuses - Greater financial sustainability (a named school, a larger endowment, scholarships, and a new building) - Maintain and cultivate our rural and global connections	- More students prepared to work in gerontology, veterans' services, hospital social work, trauma - Serving as a leader in advancing social change – organizing students and movements - More aligned and community driven research - Continue to have GSSW graduates be the best prepared for the workforce - Stay on the leading edge of social work and innovation - Offer more resources to community partners such as research and evaluation and capacity building for nonprofits - More interdisciplinary opportunities - Continued commitment to Social Justice; greater diversity at all levels, and free diversity training for all - Improved affordability and accessibility - Improved alumni engagement - Welcoming and Inclusive Culture

<u>Questions Unique to Internal Stakeholders</u>

How would you describe the University's role in higher education as a whole? What changes in higher education are impacting the University as a whole?
- Student debt   - Growth in online learning   - Greater emphasis on interdisciplinary work   - Continuing reliance on adjuncts, which is a both a benefit and challenge   - Graduate degrees have become the new bachelor's degrees   - A tighter funding landscape, in particular federal funds for research

How would you describe the University's vision for the future? How do the different Schools fit into that vision? Support that vision?
- Preparing students for tomorrow – with an emphasis on stacked knowledge.   - Greater interdisciplinary collaboration – opportunities for GSSW to partner across DU   - Opportunity for greater sustainability and less reliance on tuition   - A focus on all of Colorado and intentional community engagement, with a specific focus on cultivating a community in the area surrounding the DU campus   - Continuing to advance inclusion   - The GSSW best embodies Impact 2025's call to action

Questions Unique to External Stakeholders

What is your current interface with GSSW? Is your organization a field site? Research partner? Are you a field instructor? Adjunct professor?

- Field Site
- Collaborated on Program Development
- Alumni
- Guest Lecturer
- Adjunct

- Serve on the Board of Visitors or Other Committees
- Utilize GSSW as a consultant and best practices resource
- Take advantage of Professional Development Opportunities

How would you describe GSSW's core work: in research, in teaching, in the social work profession, in higher education?

- Delivering the superior Colorado social work education
- Cultivating strong community partnerships with agencies
- Serving as a change agent
- Serving as a resource for the community through outreach and professional development
- Offering diverse specializations

How would you describe GSSW's role in the Denver community?

- Students help advance agency missions
- Student learning in the classroom helps to advance the organization's that they are serving
- GSSW brings resources to the community - expertise, research, professional development
- Resource sharing

What is GSSW's reputation in the community?

- Positive reputation
- Reputable and somewhat prestigious (expensive)
- GSSW is not well known, beyond Social Work circles
- Producing professional and well-prepared graduates
    - Students are seen as better prepared than from other SW schools
    - Students are highly desired & valued for their contributions
- Elitist and privileged

How does GSSW compare to the other schools of social work you work with?
• Metro is more involved in the community
• Metro's curriculum is more intervention based
• Metro is more affordable and a better education for the price
• Metro better prepares their field supervisors, more supportive
• GSSWs field program can be easier to navigate
• GSSW offers more choice in field experience
• GSSW liaisons are an asset

Appendix A: Interview Participants

Participants: n = 31 (28 interviews)

Campus Leadership	
Interviewee	**Title**
Armin Afashi	Vice Chancellor of University Advancement
Rebecca Chopp	Chancellor
Brent Chrite	Dean of the College of Business
Anne De Prince	Faculty Director of the Center for Community Engagement & Learning and Chair of the Dept. of Psychology
Gregg Kvistad	Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor
Karen Riley	Dean of Morgridge College of Education
GSSW Team	
Interviewee	**Title**
Kim Bender	Associate Dean for Doctoral Education
Courtney Brown	Associate Director of Burnes Center on Homelessness & Poverty
Jesse Burne	Director of the Bridge Project
Anne Comstock	ED of Butler Institute for Families
Wanda Ellingson	Four Corners MSW Program Director
Rachel Forbes	Western Colorado MSW Program Director
Ashley Haliko	Director of Development
Michelle Hanna	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Sue Kerns	Executive Director of the Center for Effective Interventions
Ann Petrila	Associate Dean for Field Education
Philip Tedeschi	Clinical Professor and Executive Director, Institute for Human-Animal Connection
Steven Von Merz	Clinical Associate Professor & Chair of Advisory Council on Diversity
Carole Wilcox	Interim ED of Butler Institute for Families
Community Partners	
Interviewee	**Title**
Jane Boone	Freedom Service Dogs
Libby Bortz	Board of Visitors
Nadine Bridges	GLBT Colorado
Annette Camarano	Erickson Living
Tina Hageman	Family Tree
Megan Hope	Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Center
Angela Nelson	Denver's Road House
Dana Niemela	Community Outreach & Resource Engagement Division, Human Services
Karina Benabe Packer	Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Center
Jody Pierce	Pennock Center for Counseling
Constance Tatro	Denver Department of Human Services
Noelle Vignola	Health ONE, Swedish Hospital

Appendix B: Internal Stakeholders – Themes

n = 19 (includes GSSW staff, faculty, institutes, and campus leadership)

Larger Context:

Changes in Higher Education

- Student debt
- Growth in Online Learning
- Greater emphasis on interdisciplinary work
- Continuing reliance on adjuncts, which is a both a benefit and challenge
- Graduate degrees have become the new bachelors (students have to, but don't always want to)
- A tighter funding landscape, in particular federal funds for research

The University's Vision

- Preparing students for tomorrow – with an emphasis on stacked knowledge.
- Greater interdisciplinary collaboration – opportunities for GSSW to partner across DU
    o Structures and systems that accommodate and enable cross disciplinary work
    o "Social Work as with other programs has the obligation to carve out its own unique value proposition while simultaneously informing and being informed by the University's vision"
- Opportunity for greater sustainability and less reliance on tuition
- A focus on all of Colorado and intentional community engagement, with a specific focus on cultivating a community in the area surrounding the DU campus
- Continuing to advance inclusion
- The GSSW embodies the call to action best in Impact 2025

The GSSW Context:
Our Strengths:

Community Engagement:

- Community Engagement is an significant part of the school, both our work and identity
    o The school is committed to advancing community change
    o Faculty engages Ph.D. students in community based research
- The Durango Program embodies meaningful community partnership (the community asked for the program and graduates respond to community needs)
- Field is an important part of this strategy, offering cutting edge and innovative opportunities to students and partnering with diverse agencies across the community
    o Opportunity to dig in to more meaningful partnerships
- Opportunity to more actively engage potential and current employers of our graduates
- How do we more effectively apply our research agenda to meeting community needs and achieving social justice remains a questions
- Alumni engagement is limited (an untapped resource)

Diversity & Inclusion

- We value diversity and inclusion

- We have the opportunity to more fully embrace and deepen the impact of our work
- Accessibility is a key to greater diversity
- Admission's process may need to be considered
- Cultivating a diverse faculty and staff is important for attracting diverse students

School Culture:

- People are committed to the work and to the school
- Opportunity for greater collaboration among the programs, centers, research efforts, and community
  - "The move toward collaboration is exciting, meaningful, and important but there is anxiety too, letting go of some creativity and flexibility"
- Opportunities to build an even deeper sense of community and connection

Academic Strengths:

- Diversity of concentrations and offerings for students
- Quality research that is working towards addressing community needs
- Faculty is student centered
- Our power & privilege framework

Our Challenges & Opportunities:

Accessibility:

- Accessibility is a key issue, both the cost of tuition and living for MSWs and the need for more additional resources and funding for Ph.Ds
- Because of the significant cost, the school struggles to recruit diverse students
- Students across the campuses work, making it school more challenging to complete the degree
  - With no part time option in Denver, professional students can't always complete the degree

Competition:

- Losing top Ph.D. candidates to other institutions because of ranking or funding
- Challenge of maintaining/improving our rankings while maintaining our social justice focus, commitment to teaching, community engagement, and culture
- Many MSW students (especially locals) are choosing other Denver schools because they are more affordable
- Field Education is competing with other SW and internship programs for placements

Brand & Reputation:

- The need to articulate our value add/competitive advantage (what makes the GSSW unique)
- As the private institution, DU has the ivory tower reputation
- Seen across campus as having: great leadership, dedicated and committed faculty, a quality program, and nationally recognized brand
  - Integrated into the community, but less so with the other schools across campus
- Greater chance to tell our story and the impact we're making in the community
- The larger brand challenge for Social Work remains

Role of Centers and Institutes

- The purpose and role within the GSSW is not always clear
- Funding can be unpredictable/unstable (foundations are less willing to invest when part of a University)
- Opportunities exist for greater collaboration and integration at GSSW and beyond
- Working within university policies can be a challenge: desire for more inclusive procedures
- Unexplored opportunities to engage the other campuses
- Field and some the institutes collaborate significantly, while others not at all

Academic Challenges:

- The Quarter System
- The Field Model – students start internships immediately, partnership with field sites, specialized needs of students in certificate programs
- Cost & Accessibility of Denver in particular, coupled with our tuition
- The building and our space limits our work and what's possible
- Marketing our competitive difference to ensure we get the right students
- Preparing students for a changing professional environment

Our Future

Our Mission:

- It aligns with social work fundamentals (no surprise) – captures the broad strokes of our work
- The mission still resonates, but…
    o We could also highlight being innovative, nimble, and interdisciplinary
    o Could we frame it more collaboratively: we partner with communities to create innovative solutions rather than alleviating social problems
    o Where is research and scholarship?
    o There is no mention of human rights or environmental justice (an interest of our students)
- We need ways to more clearly demonstrate and live a shared mission
- It's a little long
- We need it to read more like a change agent mission
- The mission may be written as it stands for an internal audience, but perhaps we need to consider it as a brand piece that articulates to the broader community the role and contributions of social work

Vision for the Future:

- We want to embody social justice in action
- Conducting research for impact – continue to prioritize collaboration with the community and then supply our findings back for use – advancing social change
- Owning our unique position, work and passion (have who we are permeate what we do/are perceived)
    o In tandem, we must elevate the social work brand
- Intentional integration of our work across GSSW
- More cross campus collaboration and policies and procedures that support this work
- More investment in the satellite campuses
- Greater financial sustainability (a named school, a larger endowment, scholarships, and a new building)
- Maintain and cultivate our rural and global connections

Appendix C: External Stakeholders – Themes

n = 12 (includes community partners, field supervisors, and alumni)

Relationship:

Ways Partners Collaborate with GSSW

- Field Site
- Collaborated on Program Development
- Alumni
- Guest Lecturer
- Adjunct
- Serve on the Board of Visitors or Other Committees
- Utilize GSSW as a consultant and best practices resource
- Take advantage of Professional Development Opportunities

Description of the School's Core Work

- Delivering the superior Colorado Social Work Education
    - Good educators, but not social change leaders
    - Delivering important generalist education
- Cultivating strong community partnerships with agencies
- Serving as a change agent
- Serving as a resource for the community through outreach and professional development
- Offering diverse specializations

The GSSW Context:
Our Strengths:

Location: Denver is appealing

Leadership: The new Dean

Community Engagement

- Reciprocal in community, GSSW takes and gives back to field partners
    - Offering Professional Development to Supervisors – access to free trainings is seen as a significant benefit
    - Provides supports for social workers in the field
- Alumni network (untapped potential)
    - Facebook Group
- Staff is committed to its community partners
- Willingness of faculty to serve as a resource (Deb Ortega came to speak to an agency's staff)

Diversity & Inclusion

- Intentionally educating students about diversity through the PPO framework

- Demonstrated commitment to diversity & inclusion

Field Program

- Very supportive, a resource when needed
- Communication is positive and clear, see below for opportunities for improvement
- The Field Fair is meaningful to sites

Academic Strengths

- Quality of the Education Program
    - Generalist Foundation
    - Clinical Program
    - Policy classes enables students to understand systems thinking and advocate
    - Dedicated faculty
- Integration of classroom and field learning for students
- Teaching students professionalism (self-awareness, boundaries, values, etc)
- Intimate learning communities
- Students are dedicated and passionate
- Faculty are top notch
- Diversity of Offerings
    - The Institutes & Centers
    - Satellite Programs

Our Challenges & Opportunities:

Accessibility

- The cost is too significant a burden for many
- Low earning potential for graduates

Fill Service Gaps: **Staying nimble to meet the greatest community demands**

Relationship with the Community:

- Make partnership more meaningful
- Research that is driven by community needs

Brand & Reputation

- **Students are homogenous: young, white, affluent, women**
- Seen as the "rich kid" school
- **The Social Work brand is diffuse and misunderstood**
    - Students sometimes identify more with their desired profession than Social Work
    - Competition clinically with other professions

Relationship with Field Sites

- **Greater alignment between student research projects and field site needs**
- Improved communication with field sites

- o **Very little contact or interaction with the Field Department**
- o Field sites want to be asked about what they as community partners want and need
- **Evaluation is impractical and often disconnected form the actual work happening in practicum**
- Improved training for field supervisors
- Students aren't always clear on how to translate classroom to field and vice versa

Culture:

- GSSW culture can be in-group, out-group
- Creating a welcoming, nurturing, equitable culture
- Reducing hierarchy
- Greater respect
- More integration of the Institutes & Centers
- Safe spaces for marginalized groups

Academic Challenges

- Micro/Macro divide still exists
  - o **Students aren't as well prepared for clinical practice**
  - o Students aren't well prepared for macro practice
  - o More generalist practice
  - o Moe management skills
- Disconnect between GSSW academics and what professionals are doing in the field
  - o Social Work Ethics
  - o Licensure
  - o Practical Skills
- Younger cohorts means students are less prepared for the professional environment
- Consistency across the curriculum – depending on the teacher the quality of learning is vastly different
  - o Teachers must be prepared for hard PPO related conversations
- More work to live our diversity & inclusion values
  - o Students can feel marginalized
- The specializations aren't as meaningful, there is not enough time in the program to develop expertise

Reputation:

- Positive reputation
- Reputable and somewhat prestigious (expensive)
- GSSW is not well known, beyond Social Work circles
- Producing professional and well-prepared graduates
  - o Students are seen as better prepared than from other SW schools
  - o Students are highly desired & valued for their contributions
- Elitist and privileged

As Compared to Other Schools
- Metro is more involved in the community
- Metro's curriculum is more intervention based
- Metro is more affordable and a better education for the price

- Metro better prepares their field supervisors, more supportive
- GSSWs field program can be easier to navigate
- GSSW offers more choice in field experience
- GSSW liaisons are an asset

Role & Impact in Community:

- Students help advance agency missions
- Student learning in the classroom helps to advance the organization's that they are serving
- GSSW brings resources to the community - expertise, research, professional development
- Resource sharing

Our Future

Our Mission:

- Reflects the uniqueness of the social work profession
- Timeless, but more opportunities to better live it
- It may be long and too unwieldy
- Not inspirational or motivating
- May want to include:
    - Ethical work and practice
    - More emphasis on the community/ partnerships/ collaboration

Vision for the Future:

- More students prepared to work in gerontology, veterans services, hospital social work, trauma
- Serving as a leader in advancing social change – organizing students and movements
    - Serve as center for the creation of and dissemination of knowledge
    - **More aligned and community driven research**
    - Leading the charge on best practices
    - Legislative leadership
    - Greater support for the Latino community
- Continue to have GSSW Graduates be the best prepared for the workforce
    - Passionate about social justice and equity
    - Continue to help students understand the difference between opinions and facts
    - More rigorous grading
- Stay on the leading edge of Social Work and Innovation
- Offer more resources to community partners
    - Research and evaluation opportunities
    - Capacity building for nonprofits
- More interdisciplinary opportunities
- Continued commitment to Social Justice
    - Greater diversity at all levels
    - Open and free diversity training for all
- Improved affordability and accessibility
- Improved alumni engagement
- Welcoming and Inclusive Cultu

APPENDIX 6: ROUNDTABLE THEMES

Roundtable Themes for
The Graduate School of Social Work
University of Denver
February 2017

Summary

Between January 17th and February 3rd, the GSSW Strategic Planning Team hosted 14 roundtables, representing 9 diverse stakeholder groups. Each group was asked a structured set of 5 questions designed to solicit feedback about GSSW's greatest assets, opportunities to maximize the School's impact, its lived and espoused values, and untapped potential. The roundtables in Durango and the Community of Color roundtable in Denver also asked participants how GSSW could cultivate a more inclusive culture and program.

The Stakeholder Groups included:

- Adjunct Faculty
- Alumni
- Appointed Faculty
- Campus Partners
- Community Partners
- Constituents of the Durango Program
- Community of Color
- Staff
- Students

A significant number of themes arose, many of them articulated across stakeholder groups. Many of the themes are ambitious and visionary, such as the School serving as a leader in social change on campus and in the Denver community, while others are specific suggestions about tactics to improve certain aspects of the School, such as alumni communication or policies and procedures to better support interdisciplinary work. These themes are encompassed in six major impact areas: educational experience; school culture; community engagement and leadership; diversity, inclusion, and equity; operations; and campus leadership.

An overarching call to action, which encompasses many, if not all, of the major impact areas is for GSSW to align its many assets to create a shared vision for the school. By aligning internal expertise, research, and programs with community need and external resources, GSSW can bring together its community of stakeholders to advance social change. Once the school has articulated a vision for change, these stakeholders are hopeful that GSSW and the community will make measurable progress on social change. This theme is recurring throughout many stakeholder groups, detailed in the following document.

Educational Experience

GSSW's diverse, comprehensive curriculum prepares students with the academic and personal capacities for the workforce – working with diverse populations, advancing social change and self-awareness. The faculty's capacity to deliver this educational experience, including involving students in community-based research opportunities, addressing power, privilege, and oppression (PPO), and real-world problem solving, varies. There are opportunities to tweak and hone the curriculum and its delivery in the years to come.

Alumni make a difference in an array of fields – those related to "traditional" social work such as in mental health, as well as in management positions, leadership of social and human services agencies and

corporations. GSSW's alumni are instrumental in expanding the social work "brand" and helping those outside the profession understand its value and contributions. GSSW can better engage these alumni in the School's work.

Culture

GSSW's culture is demonstrated by its values (integrity, student-centered), its people, and its physical space. People affiliated with GSSW are collegial and share a sense of community. Faculty and staff are committed to producing quality work, and they constantly ask what they need to do to improve their work and the work of the School. Many constituents appreciate Craig Hall, though more space would allow better and more frequent engagement among faculty, staff, and students, as well as with the external community.

Community Engagement and Leadership

A clear theme is that GSSW could better position itself as a leader in the Denver community on issues of social justice. GSSW could accomplish this by proactively working on "Social Work's 12 Grand Challenges," bringing them into a local context. This is particularly important given the current political and social climate. Taking on this role will require close collaboration, recognizing leaders in the community as the experts on what it needs and wants. The community appreciates GSSW's focus on research, and wants the School to build its capacity for applied, participatory research. Faculty will need to continue to engage in research that is relevant to the community, involving them meaningfully, and recognizing "ways of knowing" beyond scientific methods. Approaching engagement with this "community-centered" perspective would enhance GSSW's reputation as a source for knowledge and technical assistance, increase connection to alumni, and benefit the perception of social work and what it entails.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity

GSSW could demonstrate its commitment to diversity by improving and expanding current efforts to build an inclusive environment. Internal changes could include training and support for faculty on engaging in conversations about power, privilege, and oppression (PPO), as well as support for students from groups that are underrepresented on campus. More fully embracing this value of diversity would improve recruitment of diverse faculty and students. Combined with a sincere effort to increase the affordability of a GSSW education, admissions and communications staff would have a strong case to make for GSSW as a welcoming and supportive place for marginalized or underrepresented groups, like people of color, the LGBT community, or people with disabilities. This could improve DU's and GSSW's reputation in the Denver community – as the satellite campuses are doing statewide – and potentially create an increased pipeline of students from the region.

Operations

The administration, finance, and operations functions at GSSW are critical in growing the School and providing an excellent education. Addressing affordability – both tuition and cost of living in Denver – could have a direct impact on enrollment and has implications for fund development efforts. Providing more financial assistance may increase enrollment, positive perceptions of the school, and enhance the educational experience. Combined, these benefits will in turn help bolster a fundraising case for support for GSSW. This cycle also is affected by GSSW's capacity to communicate within and outside of the School about the breadth of activity at GSSW. The more GSSW faculty and staff – including Institute and Center staff – communicate with each other about their work and its impact, the richer the communication to external audiences will be.

Campus Leadership

GSSW has an opportunity to position itself as a leader in the DU community. The School has already taken on leadership in creating dual degree offerings, and should continue to advocate for opportunities for students' interdisciplinary learning (e.g. taking a class outside a student's primary unit), as well as interdisciplinary research and community engagement efforts, by influencing university-wide policies and procedures. GSSW is positioned well to spearhead the University's call to advance the "public good" through meaningful community engagement. This would improve perceptions of DU overall in the community, of GSSW within the University, and may create a pipeline of DU students to social work education at the School.

Themes & Subthemes

The Educational Experience

Diversity of Offerings: Students benefit from a diverse menu of specialization options, a frequently cited asset of the program. GSSW's variety of concentrations, certificates, course offerings, and program delivery options (online, statewide, and in Denver) are seen as meaningful ways for students to engage more deeply in the program. **Curriculum and Course Design:** These offerings are underpinned by a commitment to "educational excellence," a strong curriculum and thoughtful course design, which is both accessible and rooted in a power, privilege, and oppression (PPO) framework. **Curriculum Improvement:** However, a number of stakeholder groups suggest that the curriculum could benefit from greater student, alumni, adjunct, and field supervisor leadership in its development. A few constituents feel the program lacks sufficient micro, or conversely, macro content, usually depending on the participant's particular specialization. Suggestions also were made about more specialized skills that participants would like to see included in the curriculum, such as the currently offered grant writing and suicide prevention courses. Specifically, health related training was cited in Glenwood Springs as a need.

Adjuncts: The adjunct faculty, who teach the majority of GSSW's MSW courses, are seen as an asset. They bring invaluable field experience and dedication to their work. **Improving Teaching Quality:** Nonetheless, adjuncts may need additional training and support to deliver the curriculum effectively. Students and adjuncts suggest taking steps to improve teaching quality and consistency, including citing the critical need to ensure every adjunct has PPO training and classroom management/dialogue skills. **Adjunct Support:** To ensure the best quality teachers, stakeholders suggest providing additional support to adjuncts, from the practical to the strategic. Feedback included:

- Improve compensation, including parking passes and free professional development;
- Implement an annual orientation for all adjuncts;
- Offer more opportunities to share resources such as communication through Facebook, sharing syllabi between professors, and interdisciplinary opportunities;
- Leverage the alumni network to cultivate more diverse and qualified adjuncts; and
- Train adjuncts to work more effectively to address the needs and concerns of underrepresented students.

Many stakeholders feel the School demonstrates a commitment to being "student centered." **Student-Centered Education:** This central value helps to create a positive educational experience for students. Overall, stakeholders feel that students are well taught, supported, and encouraged. A number of groups also

noted that the faculty are engaged in student development, both inside and outside the classroom. **Greater Student Support:** Nearly every stakeholder group suggests that students would benefit from increased support, including *more* faculty engagement – from a greater presence in student organizations to even more time spent formally and informally with students. Students could also use greater help accessing resources on campus, connecting with alumni for mentorship and networking, identifying or accessing affordable housing, and creating opportunities for students to interact with other students outside of their cohorts (e.g. 1st and 2nd year MSW students, MSW and Ph.D. students, etc.). Constituents also suggest that orientation could be better used to prepare students for the program. Students at the satellite campuses appreciate the flexible curriculum that enables them to keep working.

Field Education: The integrated field and classroom model helps to prepare students for the workforce and translate theory to practice. The diversity of field offerings, student choice model, 2 years' worth of internships, and continuity and commitment of liaisons are all seen as strengths of the GSSW field model. **Improving Field Education:** Despite the success of the field model, stakeholders want to see greater integration between the classroom learning and field, an increased sensitivity to the needs of the field sites, more professional development for supervisors, and an improved student evaluation form. One participant suggested developing a field seminar to help advance student learning and better prepare them for the professional demands of working at an agency. Lastly, Paid internships would help offset the cost of attendance.

Professionalism: An important articulated value at GSSW is "professionalism," which stakeholders say is evident in students' systems thinking, ability to meet clients where they are, self-awareness, acceptance, and ability to establish boundaries. **Career Preparation:** In spite of the closely held values and skills of professionalism, both students and other stakeholders feel that students need additional career preparation. This includes helping prepare students to lead social change efforts, inspiring a greater commitment to social justice, and giving students a greater balance of macro and micro skills (some feel that students who concentrate in micro or macro need more of a generalist foundation in the other, while other stakeholders feel students need to go deeper in their respective concentrations, developing more tangible skills). Participants also feel it is important for students to build specific professional expertise. Suggestions include:
- Helping students to prepare for and deal with conflict;
- Providing students a toolkit for activism and exploring the addition of a "community organizing" concentration;
- Preparing students for licensure, including preparing for the exam, supervision opportunities, and navigating the process;
- Teaching salary negotiation workshops; and
- Offering specialized credentialing.

In rural communities, partnerships with local companies may offer a pipeline to jobs, as well as meeting a community need for a talented and experienced workforce.

Workforce Development: By successfully preparing students for thriving careers, the School has contributed significantly to workforce development. Many stakeholder groups cite successful graduates entering the local workforce as one of GSSW's key strengths. Because most graduates stay in the community, alumni have a significant influence on the social service sector in Denver, and this expansive network could serve as resource for both the School overall and current GSSW students. **Alumni Engagement:** The network of GSSW's alumni is both a strength and an opportunity. Stakeholders feel that the School needs to offer its graduates more

engagement opportunities, such as relevant and timely professional development, pathways to serving as adjuncts, and opportunities to contribute financially.

School Culture

Human Capital: One of the most frequently cited strengths of the School is its human capital, from the faculty and staff, to students, adjuncts, alumni and administration. The human connections forged at the school enable much of GSSW's other work – academics, research, and community partnerships. **Faculty:** Appointed faculty are a highly valued asset. They are seen as dedicated leaders who are experts in their fields. They dedicate their time to student development and there is a growing cohort of "five-day" faculty who are in the building all week long. They are seen as the curriculum leaders and those most often demonstrating a commitment to diversity and inclusion. As reported above, adjunct faculty also are seen as a strength, as they bring their real-world experience to the classroom. **Faculty Support:** The faculty could benefit from additional support, as they are stretched thin and feel there aren't enough people in the building to respond to all the demands on them at the School, or in some cases that the work is not evenly distributed among faculty and staff. Faculty also asked for increased professional development funding to stay up to date on developments in the field (e.g. attending conferences and meetings). **Leadership:** With the recent transition to a new dean, the School is feeling hopeful. Dean McBride's leadership is seen as an asset not only for organizational culture and school leadership, but also in her ability to advance GSSW's community engagement efforts.

The Organizational Culture: GSSW's culture is viewed as largely positive, collegial, and supportive. Student learning is valued, relationships are meaningful and encouraged, and success is less traditionally defined. The values of respect, empathy, and equality are lived. **Increasing Self Care:** However, faculty and students both feel that "wellbeing" was more of an espoused than lived value. Faculty could better model a work/life balance for students if it is to become a manifested value. **Opportunities to Improve Culture:** Opportunities to improve culture include a continued commitment to understanding the breadth of activity, research, and community engagement occurring throughout GSSW. The Institutes and Centers were cited as examples of important work that isn't fully integrated into the School. Participants want to feel empowered to take on leadership in nontraditional ways and are looking for more opportunities for information exchange. While some stakeholders feel that the school is highly egalitarian, others reported that GSSW is still very hierarchical and taking a leadership role is less welcome for adjuncts or staff. The internal stakeholder groups, including faculty, staff, and students, all expressed an interest in a greater opportunities to interact, collaborate, and network.

Values: Stakeholder groups identified a long list of lived and espoused values. The values most closely aligned with the organization's culture include being a learning organization that is willing to ask for and integrate feedback (demonstrated by this stakeholder engagement process), being action-oriented by staying current and nimble, maintaining a commitment to integrity, and cultivating greater transparency. The central tenet of the culture continues to be a strength-based approach.

Our Location: The School's position in Denver and the Rocky Mountain West is seen as an asset. Students, staff, and faculty are interested in living in the surrounding communities. **The Building:** The School's geographic position is seen as an asset, but so, too, is Craig Hall itself. The building is seen as a public statement that the School matters to the University, and long-time partners and alumni see the facility as a tremendous improvement over the previous location. **More, Better, and Optimized Space:** While Craig Hall overall is considered an asset, stakeholders feel that it is not optimized to meet the needs of a growing school. The building feels a little out of date, closed in, with few gathering spaces for GSSW constituencies and community members. The building is seen as a potential bridge to greater community engagement, offering

meeting space to the public, though it is not currently optimized to serve this purpose. **Technology:** With a growing reliance on technology, the School could provide additional support to faculty and staff to better utilize its tools and opportunities for long-distance collaboration (e.g. Zoom).

Community Engagement & Leadership

GSSW's breadth of research, its commitment to science and indigenous methods and scholarship, and its diverse institutes and centers are all seen as assets of GSSW. **Breadth of Research:** The School provides opportunities at all levels for meaningful scholarship, leveraging unique clusters of expertise like youth development, interventionists, the human-animal connection, etc. Different paths to scholarship are valued and faculty feel empowered to undertake community-driven research agendas. However, there are differing opinions on how engaged the community is in GSSW's research agenda. One stakeholder said that the School is "true to the Community-Based Participatory Research Model" demonstrating how much GSSW "walks the talk" on community informed research. Another argues that the School is effective at conducting community-focused research, but not community-driven research. **More and Better-Leveraged Research:** A number of stakeholders call for more, better-leveraged research, which will advance the social good in concrete ways. Applied research that is community-based and meets a community need is a clear call to action. Simultaneously, GSSW must elevate its current research and invest in big, innovative, and interesting scholarship. To do this effectively, GSSW may need to invest in the infrastructure necessary to support a more ambitious research agenda. **Institutes & Centers:** GSSW's Institutes and Centers are seen as important contributors to GSSW's research and community engagement agenda. They are putting research into practice and engaging both students and field sites in their work. There is a desire for the role of the Institutes and Centers in achieving the School's mission to be clearly articulated, for their work better promoted, and for the faculty to better align their research with Institutes and Centers, where possible.

Community Engagement: Engaging the community and advancing social change efforts are seen as important values at GSSW and roles the School should take on. Although the School is currently seen as a community partner and convener, there are some very specific calls to action for the School's future community engagement strategy. These calls to action include:
- Integrating classroom learning, internship experiences, community partnerships, institutes, and research agendas to advance specific social change efforts;
- Developing processes, policies, and procedures to formalize community engagement efforts;
- Exploring the establishment of a dedicated community liaison and resource bank with the function of connecting the community to the appropriate GSSW resources for specific topics or issues; and
- Serving as the convener and hub of the Social Work perspective in Colorado.

Lead Community Change Efforts: The School is being asked by stakeholders to build a structure and strategy for community organizing and mobilization. The GSSW community is hungry for leadership around advancing social change, building partnerships and coalitions, and responding to emerging community issues and needs. As a part of this work, the School may consider expanding its partnership network, convening stakeholders in formal ways around key issues, and providing direct social justice, advocacy, and community organizing training. Constituents feel this is especially urgent given the changing political landscape. **The Grand Challenges of Social Work:** As a potential unifying call to action, The 12 Grand Challenges of Social Work and DU's interest in developing Rocky Mountain Grand Challenges could be a central focus of GSSW's community change efforts.

Capacity Building: Several stakeholder groups feel that one of GSSW's roles is to meet community needs by providing specialized training to students and graduates to help close gaps in services. In addition to capacity building for its own students, roundtable participants suggest that the School could play a role in supporting nonprofits by offering them technical assistance for fundraising, programming, and most frequently, evaluation.

Diversity, Inclusion, & Equity

Commitment to Social Justice: GSSW has an articulated and lived commitment to social justice. This is demonstrated through the integration of the PPO framework throughout the curriculum and commitment to inclusive excellence. However, some stakeholders feel that commitment to social justice shows up in antiquated ways. **Greater Commitment to Social Justice:** GSSW could more fully live its social justice roots by better training students to be activists, integrating more multiple identity work into classes, and thinking critically about structures of oppression. Adjuncts, in particular, feel strongly that the best way to advance the School's commitment to this work is to ensure that everyone is trained in theories of PPO and that adjuncts are prepared with the skills necessary to facilitate difficult social justice and diversity conversations.

Diversity & Inclusion: Social justice as a theme and GSSW's expressed commitment to diversity and inclusion were closely intertwined. The School has articulated that inclusion is a closely held value, but many stakeholder groups report that the value is not lived to its fullest. The School aspires to be diverse, but a majority of students continue to be upper-middle class, cisgender, white women. Despite the faculty's efforts to cultivate classrooms where everyone's thoughts, experiences, and perspectives are seen as valid, several groups feel marginalized. This list includes people of color, people with deep religious convictions, and people with right-leaning political views. **Elevating our Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion:** Participants offered a significant number of suggestions for the School to better demonstrate its commitment to diversity:

- Make more room for respectful, dissenting voices in classroom discussions;
- Create safe spaces for marginalized racial and ethnic groups, without white people;
- Develop avenues for anonymous feedback;
- Ensure faculty are accountable, willing to have hard conversations, and have the skills to do so;
- Ensure quality and consistency across PPO classes;
- Cultivate a partnership with Metropolitan State University, which attracts more diverse students; and
- Increase the diversity of students, staff, and faculty.

Statewide Commitment: One resounding bright spot in GSSW's social justice and diversity work is its satellite programs, which are seen to represent a tangible commitment to rural and indigenous communities. Both Durango stakeholders and the Denver groups agreed on the importance of these programs to advancing social change, filling necessary service gaps, and supporting Native American students.

GSSW Operations

Recruitment and Accessibility: Closely tied to elevating GSSW's commitment to diversity and inclusion is the commonly occurring theme of recruitment and accessibility. Because GSSW is a part of a private university with an "ivory tower" reputation, the School is often seen as unsafe or unwelcoming for students in marginalized groups – both by race and class. **Recruitment Efforts:** GSSW could more strategically recruit students of color and students from other marginalized groups. Engaging current students, student groups, and faculty of color can help advance this effort. Rethinking admissions was suggested to better engage diverse students and to improve the quality of candidates. **Cost:** In tandem with targeted recruitment, GSSW must

address the most significant barrier to attendance at GSSW: the cost. Stakeholders felt that financial support is needed for all of GSSW's incoming students. This can come in the form of scholarships, work study, subsidized graduate housing or other funding mechanisms.

Campus partners think that by DU standards, GSSW is operationally healthy — with a stable number of incoming students each year, a growing faculty, a significant number of external grants, and a positive public perception. **Reputation:** GSSW's strong reputation has been built by its long history, recent rise in the rankings, and strong position within the University. **Fund Development:** Unfortunately, the School's operational health and reputation has not translated into thriving fundraising. This is in part attributed to a lack of alumni engagement. Nonetheless, stakeholders feel that a focus on raising contributed dollars is critical for the future health of the School. Participants cited that increased fundraising, including a targeted fundraising strategy, would result in a thriving endowment and more scholarships.

Improved Communication and Marketing: Participants asked for improved communication about opportunities, events, and faculty, staff, and student successes. As mentioned previously, the desire for more opportunities and collaboration must be matched by internal and external communication of school activities. One suggestion is for the School to create a central electronic repository for information and events. **Elevating Social Work:** Stakeholders want to see GSSW do a better job of marketing itself; elevating the work and impact of its students, staff, and faculty; and promoting the profession of social work overall. GSSW is seen as having a role to play in helping those outside Social Work understand the profession's value and contributions.

Campus Leadership

GSSW could position itself as a leader across the University of Denver. **Leadership at DU:** Both internal and external stakeholder groups articulated a desire for GSSW to leverage its position at DU more effectively. The School is seen as a leader in social justice, advancing the public good, and in cultivating interdisciplinary opportunities despite the administrative challenges. With GSSW's deep reach into the Denver community, the School could serve as a campus-wide convener around achieving greater social good in the community. Internally, there is also a desire for GSSW to better shape the narrative about the School, and the profession of social work, across campus, ensuring that its contributions and importance are highlighted. GSSW is seen as a natural leader in achieving the goals articulated in Impact 2025, in particular the calls to action around community and civic engagement. **Interdisciplinary Opportunities:** As a result of the School's position on campus, GSSW is uniquely positioned to advance interdisciplinary opportunities. In particular, GSSW can help to break down administrative barriers to collaborative research, cross-listed courses, and dual degrees. Because more social workers are working in nontraditional fields (*e.g. consulting*), cultivating interdisciplinary partnerships is all the more pressing for career preparedness.

Alignment with Impact 2025

The major impact areas articulated by stakeholders in the roundtables align with the University of Denver's Strategic Plan's, Impact 2025 Transformative Directions. The impact areas are cross cutting, but representative of many of the University's larger calls to action.

Impact 2025	Stakeholder Impact Areas
Transformative Direction One: Students Learning and Leading in a Diverse and Global 21st Century	Community Engagement & Leadership Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Educational Experience
Transformative Direction Two: Discovery and Design in an Age of Collaboration	Campus Leadership Community Engagement & Leadership School Culture
Transformative Direction Three: Engagement and Empowerment in Denver and the Rocky Mountain West	Campus Leadership Community Engagement & Leadership Operations
Transformative Direction Four: One DU	Community Engagement & Leadership Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Educational Experience School Culture

Matrix of Themes

Themes		Stakeholder Groups								
Assets	Adjunct	Alum	Camp. Partner	Comm. Partners	Durango	Faculty	Glenwood Springs	POC	Staff	Student
Action Oriented				X		X				
Advancing Social Change				X						
Breadth & Quality of Research		X	X			X	x	X	X	X
Code of Ethics									X	
Commitment to being a Learning Organization		X						X	X	
Commitment to Social Justice		X	X	X		X		X	X	X
Community Engagement		X	X	X	X	X	x	X	X	
Course Design/Curriculum	X	X		X	X	X			X	
Culture						X	x	X	X	X
Diversity of Offering	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Educational Experience		X		X	X	X	X	X		X
Facility	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
Field	X	X		X	X	X	x		X	X
Innovation			X	X	X	X				
Institutes & Centers		X	X			X			X	X
Leadership	X		X						X	X
Leadership on campus			X							
Location, Geographically			X	X	X	X		X	X	
Native American Engagement					X					
Operational Health			X							
Program Services			X				X		X	
Reduced Tuition					X					
Reputation/Position	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Small Cohorts					X		X			

	Adjunct	Alum	Camp. Partner	Comm. Partners	Durango	Faculty		POC	Staff	Student
Statewide commitment	X		X					X	X	X
Strengths Based Perspective				X		X				
The People (students, staff, faculty)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
The University		X							X	X
Workforce Development		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X

Maximize Impact	Adjunct	Alum	Camp. Partner	Comm. Partners	Durango	Faculty		POC	Staff	Student
Advance Impact 2025			X							
Align Our Assets to Meet a Shared Vision		X				X		X	X	
Better integration of institutes						X		X	X	
Career Preparation		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Curriculum Improvement		X		X	X		X	X		
Community Engagement & Leadership	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Cultivate a Pipeline of Students			X		X	X	X	X	X	
Demonstrated Commitment to Diversity/Inclusion	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Evaluation Training for the Community						X	X			
External Communication/Social Work Branding		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Fund Development		X		X		X	X		X	
Greater interaction/Collaboration (internal)	X					X		X	X	
Improve Teaching Quality & Continuity	X									X
Increased Diversity	X			X		X	X		X	
Information sharing			X							
Innovation									X	
Integration of Field & Classroom	X	X		X	X	X				X
Interdisciplinary Opportunities		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

	Adjunct	Alum	Camp. Partner	Comm. Partners	Durango	Faculty		POC	Staff	Student
Lead Community Organizing (DU)			X							
Leverage position at DU	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
Lived Commitment to Self-Care										X
Meet Community Needs		X	X	X	X		X			
More & Better Leveraged Research				X		X			X	X
More resources for Adjuncts	X	X		X		X		X		
More Resources for Faculty						X				
More, better, optimized space	X							X	X	
Partnership with Metro				X				X		
Professional Development					X				X	
Rethinking Admissions		X	X					X	X	
Serve as Knowledge Bridge			X							
Supporting Student Development		X				X		X		X
Technology Use & Support	X			X	X		X		X	
Values	**Adjunct**	**Alum**	**Camp. Partner**	**Comm. Partners**	**Durango**	**Faculty**		**POC**	**Staff**	**Student**
Advocacy		X	X	X	X	X		X		X
Civic Action					X					
Community (internal)						X			X	X
Community Engagement (external)	X	X		X	X	X			X	X
Diversity & Inclusion	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Empathy/Compassion				X	X				X	
Equity/Egalitarianism				X					X	
Excellence				X		X				
Innovation									X	
Integrity		X		X		X				
Leadership			X	X						
Learning			X	X		X		X	X	
Opportunity	X									

	Adjunct	Alum	Camp. Partner	Comm. Partners	Durango	Faculty		POC	Staff	Student
Partnership/Collaboration				X	X				X	
Passion									X	
Professionalism		X			X					
Respect						X	X		X	
Science			X			X				
Social Justice	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Student Centered		X		X				X	X	X
Wellbeing/Self Care		X		X	X	X			X	X

Untapped Potential	Adjunct	Alum	Camp. Partner	Comm. Partners	Durango	Faculty		POC	Staff	Student
Adjuncts	X					X			X	
Advocacy/Community Change	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Alumni Engagement		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Career Readiness	X	X	X			X				X
Communication		X		X		X			X	X
Community Partnerships			X		X		X			
Demonstrating Impact		X		X						
Greater Alignment/Integration of Work						X			X	
Improving Field Education	X			X	X	X	X		X	X
Leadership at DU										X
Leverage Community Knowledge						X				
Minimize Hierarchy	X								X	
Orientation										X
Preparing Students to advance Social Change	X	X		X		X			X	X
Recruitment & Accessibility	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Research						X				
Support for Students		X		X	X	X	X		X	X

Transparency		X				X				
Working on the 12 Grand Challenges			X			X				

Inclusive Culture	Adjunct	Alum	Camp. Partner	Comm. Partners	Durango	Faculty		POC	Staff	Student
Build Relationships with Other Schools								X		
Commitment to Diversity					X					
Continue to value Indigenous Scholarship								X		
Course Offerings					X					
Demonstrated commitment to inclusion								X		
Durango Program Community					X					
Faculty Accountability					X			X		
Importance of Family Culture					X					
Increase the Diversity of Faculty						Faculty		X		
Subsidize Costs								X		
Support for Diverse Folks						X		X		
Support for Students								X		
Willingness to accept feedback					X	X				

Appendix 1: Adjunct Themes

of Attendees: 13 (2 tables, 1 session)

What opportunities are there to maximize the School's impact?	
Theme	**Frequency**
More resources for Adjuncts • Adjunct Facebook • Greater shared resources • Syllabi support/flexibility – difficult for adjuncts to implement assignments they didn't create • Professional Development, hosted in person and virtually o Allyship, the what, who, and how • Build connections with the other sites/programs • Interdisciplinary opportunities	6
Opportunities for Faculty, Staff, & Adjuncts to interact • Knowledge sharing • Formal & Informal gatherings • Ensure stackable courses are not duplicating content • Networking	6

Greater Understanding of PPO and demonstrated commitment to Social Justice
 	
• "There are [adjunct] faculty who do not understand PPO and are not committed to advancing social justice"
• Ensure students are committed to social justice
• Mandatory training for all students, staff, adjuncts & faculty on PPO
• Demonstrated commitment to Social Justice in how we teach, not just what
• Teaching skills for facilitating dialogues and classroom management around PPO
    o "Students who identified as people of color, LGBTQ, low-socioeconomic status unsupported after elections"
    o "Faculty need to model how to make space for uncomfortable conversations"
• Can we ask everyone to sign n inclusivity commitment form?
	5

Compensation for Adjuncts • Parking passes • Pay adjuncts for time spent in PD	5
Improve teaching quality and continuity • Cohesion of teaching style • Providing feedback • Opportunities for adjuncts to serve on subcommittees or curriculum redesign	3

Integration of Field and the Classroom • Utilizing the Field Instructors: Using them as a leverage point for greater Community Engagement • Aligning field, coursework, and teaching • Greater understanding of the breadth of field opportunities by faculty	3
Community Engagement & Leadership • Greater engagement with the community across all levels - staff, faculty, adjunct • Serve as a convener of the social work perspective in Colorado • Addressing community needs • Play a lead role in progressive movements	3
Increased Diversity • Greater students, staff, and faculty diversity • Greater personal outreach and recruitment to students of color • "Outreach to diverse populations doesn't happen at DU/GSSW, afraid of preferential treatment (from director of admissions)"	2
Technology Support • Expected to use it without the tools and experience to operate it	1
Leverage its position at DU	1
More, better, optimized space	1

What are GSSW's lived values?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Diversity & Inclusion • "students report negative experience- tokenized and asked to be representatives of culture and population" • Not diverse, but aspires to be • Not inclusive, but aspires to be • We're working to cultivate classrooms where everyone's perspectives, thoughts, and experiences are valued	4
Community Engagement • A desire to be responsive to community needs • Integrate students, teachers, and research to meet the needs of Denver • May be espoused – are we really advancing systemic change?	2
Social Justice • Integrated into curriculum	2

• Are we adequately preparing students to advance social justice in community? – may not be lived, yet	
Student Centered • Aspire to activate, not just educate	2
Opportunity • Opportunity for engagement	1

What is GSSW's untapped potential? Challenges/Problems to be solved?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Preparing students to lead social change efforts • "Students are being sent into the fields, but don't know how to talk about the systems that are impacting the communities they work with" • Students may be perpetuating the status quo • Giving every students macro skills • Demanding a commitment to social justice of each graduate • Consider a "community organizing" concentration	5
Recruitment & Accessibility • Address the pipeline problem/engage local students • Offer more scholarships • Address the cost prohibitive nature of the GSSW degree • Recruit more diversity • Continued commitment to rural students	5
Improved Adjunct Recruitment & Retention • Better compensation • Leverage our alumni network to cultivate more diverse and qualified adjunct	3
Advocacy/Community Change • Can we rally around a legislative agenda • Convene stakeholders on key issues • Offer social justice training • Align with and advance the 12 grand challenges work	3
Adjunct Preparedness • Annual orientation/meetings for all adjuncts • Greater emphasis on office of teaching and learning resources • Better, lower cost professional development	3
Adjunct Leadership • Include adjuncts in planning meetings - let them have an influence, organize around their specialties, interact with faculty	1

Minimize hierarchy • Connected to a desire for adjunct leadership	1
Improving Field Education • "Field office holds values of an upper middle class white person, does not represent nor support students of color or diverse populations"	1
Career Readiness • Improved career guidance and assistance	1

Appendix 2: Alumni Themes
of Attendees: 18 (2 sessions, 3 tables)

What are the School's greatest assets and how can we better maximize them?	
Theme	**Frequency**
The People • Faculty • *"Adjuncts were great: they were in the field in incredible positions and I learned so much from them"* • The diversity of student experience • Faculty experience has been on an upward trajectory • New faculty represent more diverse areas of study • Need to ensure Faculty are dedicated to student learning	9
Community Engagement • *" Connection and engagement with community, particularly with bringing in guests, speakers, and presenters"* • Engaged in civic and community engagement • Strong connection to the community • Provide professional advice and local experts • Making a community Impact	6
Educational Experience • Application of field learning to the classroom • The combination of micro and macro • Faculty invests in students even after they leave the program • Social Justice framework	5
Commitment to Social Justice • Working toward greater inclusion • Leading the charge on DU's campus	5
Diversity of Offerings • The varied and unique concentrations • The Progress Program	4
Workforce Development • Network of graduates locally and globally working to achieve community change • Network of field and alumni for job opportunities in Denver	4
Institutes/Centers • Partnership opportunities for alumni in the field	3
Commitment to being a learning organization	2

• *"Continuous quality improvement – that leadership is willing and able to think strategically about where we are willing to go"* • Microcosm of the larger social work profession inside the school	
Field • 2 years of internship • Diversity and flexibility of internships	2
Breadth and Quality of Research • *"opportunities to co-author articles with faculty as community practitioner"*	2
The University • Benefits and challenges	1
Reputation/Position	1
Course Design/Curriculum	1
Facility • *"The building is an asset and beautiful – there is a gender neutral bathroom on the first floor – a small way that we are doing justice work"*	1

What opportunities are there to maximize the School's impact?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Curriculum Improvement • *"Make room for more student and alumni leadership in the curriculum. They have insights on the future of the filed. It creates a pipeline for the work force and it offers specialized skills that are needed to meet community change."* • Engage alumni in curriculum development • More micro skills • Reduce the workload – spend more time developing practical skills	6
External Communication/Social Work Brand • Better marketing • Must elevate the social Work Brand • Elevate our position as experts: team work and emotional intelligence • Advocacy for a living wage	6
Community Engagement and Leadership • Helping to define what local resistance looks like in a Trump Era • *"Build a structure and strategy for community organizing and mobilization (folks are hungry for leadership and need the support) – GSSW can fill that role!"* • Legislative advocacy	5

• Serve as a hub for the social work community ○ *"GSSW can play a convening role as the go to resource for what is happening in social services"*	
Demonstrated commitment to Inclusion • Must make room for dissenting voices (republicans) • The school is still primarily white, cis-females • Creating space to hold different ideologies	5
Career Preparation • Prepare students for careers and leadership • Gerontology skills	2
Support Student Development • Teach students to think critically • Need to support students in self-care (prioritize and practice it)	2
More Resources for Adjuncts • Better compensation • Professional Development, especially around working with marginalized communities	2
Leverage position at DU • Get students more connected to the University overall	1
Rethinking Admissions • Make the selection process more rigorous	1
Align our Assets to Meet a Shared Vision • *"Cultivate and organize students and alumni around their interests, commitment, expertise, and willingness to contribute to the school."*	1
Interdisciplinary Opportunities • Could better utilize faculty from other colleges (collaboration & teaching)	1
Meet Community Needs • Need integrated health practitioners	1
Integration of Field & classroom • Make more time for students to connect in community experiences to the classroom	1
Fund Development • Larger endowment to facilitate accessibility	1

What are GSSW's lived values?	
Theme	**Frequency**

Social Justice • Shows up in antiquated way: chance for us to push more and live it • More of a multiple identity framework – looking at nontraditional structures of oppression • Must push students to do this work • Don't see GSSW promoting it in community • Need teachers to be well versed in PPO	6
Diversity & inclusion (mixed bag) • "Some students shared stories of approaching work from religious standpoint and didn't feel comfortable" • Diversity of political viewpoint needs to be considered • Faculty doesn't always manage, host, or lead classroom discussions around diversity	6
Advocacy • Must incorporate emerging issues • Advocacy is happening but not in well-organized ways • Must help social workers navigate the political climate and ethical quagmires	4
Community Engagement • We need more leadership in mobilizing communities	4
Student Centered • *"GSSW says they will help students (career, etc), but didn't feel true unless students took initiative"* • Valuing student voices	2
Wellbeing/Self Care	1
Professionalism • Boundaries	1
Integrity • Authenticity	1

What is GSSW's untapped potential? Challenges/Problems to be solved?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Alumni Engagement • "we need to keep and get them connected as field instructors, but we also need to be sure to ask them to show up and included" • Incentivize engagement • Professional Development	12

• Develop an alumni support network for safe spaces to process with peers • Untapped potential • Must connect GSSW with alumni careers, not just education • Need to reach out and ask alumni to serve as field instructors, adjuncts, etc • Engage Alumni in Research • Alumni website with relevant information about careers, licensure, etc	
Recruitment & Accessibility • Improve the diversity of students • Housing costs, in addition tuition are unmanageable for many • The cost of the degree compared to earning potential is a difficult calculation	7
Career Readiness • Prepare students for employment opportunities that pay a living wage • More gerontology focused students • Specialization and certifications (MSW doesn't hold as much weight)	3
Working on the 12 Grand Challenges • Connects students to community and national needs • *"Develop Grand Challenges Colorado! It would push our students, faculty, staff, and alumni to lead the change here. Denver and GSSW could become a national model for local organizing."*	2
Advocacy/Community Change • Must be working to disrupt systems of oppression in our own community	1
Support for Students • Mentorship (formal and informal)	1
Preparing students to Advance social Change • Ensure that students are prepared to be challenged on their privilege	1
Demonstrating Impact • Communicate and capture our current scope of work and impact – GSSW	1
Communication • Improved Marketing	1

Appendix 3: Campus Partners Themes

What are the School's greatest assets and how can we better maximize them?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Diversity of Offerings • Online Program – reach more students • Interdisciplinary Offerings • IHAC • Joint Programs	5
The People • Human Connections • Alumni are engaged but not giving • Faculty is committed to the community • Faculty & staff were strategic choices	4
Leadership on Campus • Willingness to engage with other programs • Embodies the spirit of Impact 2025 • Opportunity to better integrate faculty and students on campus • Amanda' expertise in civic engagement could help undergraduate civic engagement efforts	4
Innovation • Focus on Social Responsibility	4
Reputation/Position • Ascension in the rankings	3
Workforce Development • Number of Alumni who stay here	2
Leadership • Dean McBride • Strategic Leadership	2
Statewide Commitment	2
Commitment to Social Justice • Leaders in inclusivity (early adopter on pronouns) • Commitment to accessibility	2
Operational Health • *"By DU health standards - very stable, #s faculty, students, staff, external grants, etc"*	1
Community engagement	1

• Community Connections	
Institutes • Longevity	1
Breadth and Quality of Research	1
Facility	1
Location, Geographically	1

# of Attendees: 17 (1 session, 2 tables)

What opportunities are there to contribute to the University as a whole?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Interdisciplinary Work • Collaboration with the Law School • Partner with the gender equity and women's center • Sports Program • A direct tie to Impact 2025 • Break down administrative barriers • Dual degrees • Engage the Graduate students from across campus • Help raise funds • Centers could be more interdisciplinary • Consistency across field placements	13
Advance Impact 2025 • Partner with Barton Institute of Philanthropy • Advance partner research as a think tank for the community • Conduct Data Analysis (evaluation center) • Align community assets to solve problems – applied research • Nonprofit Capacity Building • Project Excite? • Advance a culture change that support partnership and collaboration	9
Leader in Community Organizing • Need the leadership on campus • Need to better understand the person in environment context for local community (surrounding campus) • Cultivate the public good • *"Help to engage our alumni as citizens in Denver"* • Conduit to the Community	5
Cultivate a pipeline of students	5

• From Across DU • Need more faculty interaction with undergrads • Intro to Social Work Class for undergrads (scientific inquiry society class) • Give undergrads opportunities to work toward the public good	
Leverage Position at DU • Advance more collaboration, research, relationships on campus • Elevate the GSSW exposure on campus • Opportunities for Influence	3
Program Services • Improved staff engagement (better communicate with places like the office of financial aid) • "health and counseling; financial aid, admissions, very decentralized for grad students; admissions suffers when no communications"	2
Serve as a Knowledge Bridge • Across Colleges, research, and engagement	1
Information sharing • Highlight the work of GSSW, research, and skills through an online portal	1
Meet Community Needs • Lead DU Cares to the community's benefit	1

What are GSSW's lived values?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Social Justice	3
Learning • Creating Shared Knowledge • Service Learning • Applied, hands-on learning	3
Advocacy • Social Change	2
Diversity & Inclusion • Greater Opportunity	2
Leadership	1
Science • Putting research into practice	1

What is GSSW's untapped potential? Challenges/Problems to be solved?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Alumni engagement • Class gifts • Alumni giving • Increase Engagement through field placement • Professional Development • Better leverage or maximize them • Meaningful engagement	9
Recruitment & Accessibility • Student scholarships, to address affordability question • Leverage the online program so that more students can access GSSW • Maximize satellite programs • Analysis of scholarship allocation	7
Advocacy Community Change • Grassroots mobilization • Center for Activism on Campus	5
Community Partnerships • *"Service learning not always great for community partners and government entities, can cause more harm; disempowerment; thoughtfully think about how to do this"* • Youth Athletes as partners • Denver Equity Summit leadership	3
Career Readiness • Offer graduate level certificates	1
12 Grand Challenges • The Rocky Mountain Grand Challenges – GSSW should be contributing	1
Rethinking Admissions • Better vetting	1
External Communication/Social Work Brand • Need to educate the community about our work	1

Appendix 4: Community of Color Themes

of Attendees: 16 (1 session, 2 tables)

What are the School's greatest assets and how can we better maximize them?	
Theme	**Frequency**
The people • Faculty • Energy of the students • *"Quality of students, staff, and faculty (really talented people) – they do their jobs very well"*	4
Workforce Development • Networking and connections • Graduates are successful • 80% of graduate are in the area and at every agency	4
Educational Experience • Students feel well taught, supported, and encouraged • Cohort of five-day faculty • Student Clubs	3
Diversity of Program Opportunities • Reputation, scholarship and position in the community	3
Breath of Research • *"True to the Community Based Participatory Research Model: walk the talk (equity between the community and the researchers)"* • The value of indigenous scholarship	2
Culture • student learning is valued • there seems to be less of a hierarchy, less competition • Success is less traditionally defined • More collegiality	2
Facility	1
Statewide commitment	1
Community engagement • Active in the community/community presence •	1
Reputation/position	1
Commitment to Social Justice	1

• Working on inclusion	
Location, Geographically	1
Career Preparation	1
• Ongoing job placement opportunities	
Commitment to being a learning organization	1

What opportunities are there to maximize the School's impact?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Community Engagement & Leadership • Institutionalize relationship, partnerships, and presence in the community • *"Show the presence and reach of the school; have satellites in community and partners' spots."* • *"Have classes, training, clinics at these agencies."* • Better job of integrating community relationships with faculty back into the school • Better leverage our statewide and national relationships • *"I want to see the GSSW more intentionally organizing and participating in social change (I want GSSW to back up student work and advocacy efforts)"*	6
Curriculum Improvement • Need to address systemic racism more directly in classes • Figure out how to address white students learning without doing it at the expense of students of color • Offer classes for folks of color to unpack PPO • Health Concentration requires additional support and collaborations • GSSW to build relationship bridges for concentrations	6
Demonstrated Commitment to Inclusion • More faculty of Color • Make sure that faculty address macroaggressions as they are happening • Facilitate difficult conversations • Increase diversity across the board • Better recruiting for diverse students • Send out religious holiday reminders	5
Supporting Student Development • More opportunities for 1st & 2nd students to know each other • Networking • Training on macroaggressions • Faculty presence at student organizations	5

• Helping folks navigate allyship	
Interdisciplinary Opportunities • Build better relationships with other programs • Offer cross listed courses • Need an interdisciplinary navigator • engagement with other schools on campus	4
External Communication/Social Work Brand • Correct messaging about the school that is honest, but compelling (in particular around diversity & inclusion) • Students need to see and hear that we are fighting for diversity • Address the ivory tower perception of DU • More community focused communication	4
Align our Assets to Meet a shared Vision • Know more about the scope of faculty work • Better utilize and leverage the satellite programs • *"Make sure folks are aware of the common assets and what can be done with them."*	3
More, better, optimized space • Maximize the physical space by listening to what the students are wanting / needing. Have to have student input. • Gathering spaces • Make the space accessible to community groups	3
Leverage position at DU • Champion diversity and inclusion	2
Greater Interaction & collaboration • Opportunities for faculty (research & clinical) the opportunity to gather and get to know each other	2
Rethinking Admissions • *"Can Admissions work with current students of color (groups like SOBA have members who are willing to talk to prospective students)? Will make those who do come feel more comfortable, built-in family; will help with recruitment. Have mentors who look like us."*	1
Cultivate a Pipeline of Students • Need a pipeline form High School to College to GSSW	1
Partnerships with Metro • The do a better job of recruiting diverse students	1
Better Leverage the Institutes	1
Resources for Adjuncts	1

• Preparation for having diversity conversations	

What aspects of GSSW culture make you feel most included?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Support for Diverse Folks • Ombudsman: Offering a support for all people of color & provides safe space • Give safe space unapologetically (space without white folks) • A place to give anonymous feedback • Folks are given space to have a voice (even if its unpleasant)	7
Subsidize Costs • See more financial support for diversity in all of its forms, not just people-of-color. • Cost of tuition AND cost of living here. • Not as much support as thought would be.	4
Demonstrated commitment to inclusion • Diversity and social justice is integrated into the curriculum • The homepage tells you that social justice and inclusion is embraced, its part of our public narrative • Culture and climate at GSSW is so much further ahead than in DU at large	3
Increase the Diversity of Faculty • *"Make sure the faculty reflects the diversity of the community we serve and the students we seek."* • Cultivate diverse alumni for adjunct positions	3
Support for Students • Communal Housing • Graduate housing? GSSW should offer it • Help students of color understand and use the resources for them	3
Faculty Accountability • Honest and Transparency • Willingness to have hard conversations • Not always easy to navigating the school for students	3
Continue to value indigenous scholarship	1
Build relationships with other schools (Pueblo, Four Corners) • Cultural gaps are more than just people of color	1

What are GSSW's lived values?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Learning • Knowledge • We're dynamic and course correcting	2
Diversity & Inclusion • There is a core who is dedicated and others who are not – straddling lived and aspirational	2
Advocacy • Know politics affect our communities, but we're not yet engaged	1
Student Centered	1

What is GSSW's untapped potential? Challenges/Problems to be solved?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Accessibility & Recruitment • Private institution with higher tuition and low diversity is not safe or welcoming to diverse students • Need to recruit more diverse students of color • More diverse students • More scholarships • Better retention!	5
Advocacy/Community Change • *"We need GSSW to be a facilitator - to make introductions and bring people together for collaboration and partnership."* • Offer Professional Development on how to address the current political context and speaking across difference	2
Alumni engagement • *"Engagement of the alumni of color (we're not engaging them in the GSSW community) – leveraging them for adjuncts"*	1

Appendix 5: Community Partners Themes

of Attendees: 37 (2 sessions, 3 tables)

What are the School's greatest assets and how can we better maximize them?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Field • Allows agencies to teach students about their work • Well organized • **Continuity of Liaisons** • Student choice • Supervisor Training	10
Workforce Development • 80% of alumni stay here and populate agencies • GSSW has significant influence because of the # of graduates in the workforce • Adding social worker to interdisciplinary teams • The network of Alumni	5
Community engagement • Community Relationships • Student Contributions to the Community • Soliciting feedback – like through this process	5
Diversity of Offerings • Latino Certificate • Opportunity to specialize • Coursework variety	5
Commitment to Social Justice • Training ground for activists • *"The students that go through the program leave with a solid analysis around power and privilege and systems"* • PPO framework • Diversity	5
The People • Students contribute so much to field agencies • Students, Faculty, Staff • Faculty is accessible	5
Educational Experience • International Experiences	4
Course Design/Curriculum • *"Coursework – intentional, exciting, unique, integrated with field"*	3

Reputation/Position • National and International	2
Advancing Social Change • supporting local nonprofits	2
Action Oriented • Striving to Make change • Staying current on trends	2
Facility	2
Innovation	1
Strengths Perspective	1
Leadership • The Dean is accessible	1

What opportunities are there to maximize the School's impact? Meet Community Needs?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Improved Curriculum • Solicit feedback from field supervisors • Missing clinical skills and life skills • More macro skills • Offer more community organizing skills • Language Immersion Classes • Grant Writing • Macro Credentialing • Suicide • More DV • Data Management • More practical tools vs Theory	16
Career Preparation • Need specific skills and "how tos" - especially in the first year • Students who go straight through need more professional skills • Professional Development • Fundraising Skills • Emotional Intelligence • Gap between licensure and graduation	9

Meet Community Needs • Nurture gerontology students because there is a need • Multigenerational Opportunities • **Help Organizations Collaborate** • **Nonprofit Capacity Building** • Community Initialed Research	8
External Communication/Social Work Branding • Students need to be able to articulate what Social Work is without jargon • Elevate the Social Work Brand • Improving the value of human services work • Position GSSW as the experts	5
Community Engagement • Bank for community connections • Need a central person who knows all the connections – community liaison • Model after CCESL lab	5
Demonstrated Commitment to Inclusion • *"DU is where the rich white girls go"* • GSSW may not feel like a safe or welcoming place	4
Increased Diversity • Recruit older students • Clarify that diversity is a priority in enrollment	4
Interdisciplinary Opportunities • "More and more social workers are working outside the typical realm (i.e. public health) and so overall it would be cool to see more partnerships between the various schools"	4
Partnership with Metro • they attract more diverse students	3
Integration of Classroom & Field • Need to ensure that student requirements align with the needs of the sites • Greater integration of classroom knowledge and lived field experience	3
Fund Development • Be specific about the asks	1
More & Better Leveraged Research • *"Applied research opportunities that are community based and meet a need in the community"*	1
More Resources for Adjuncts • Take a proactive rather than reactive approach to adjuncts	1

Leverage position at DU	1
• Open doors community agencies to other schools in campus	
Technology Use & support	1
• Training for students	

What are GSSW's lived values?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Diversity & Inclusion • Folks who are not far left may feel isolated or marginalized • Faculty need to model tolerance for differing views • Students of color may not feel welcome • The Faculty is getting more diverse • Important to create safe spaces for people of color to gather	8
Advocacy • Activism • Teach students to advocate for themselves	6
Community Engagement • This process of involving the community in the planning	4
Social Justice	3
Wellbeing/Self Care • Need to walk the talk	2
Empathy/Compassion	2
Integrity	2
Partnership/Relationships	2
Equity	2
Leadership	1
Learning • Experiential Learning	1
Excellence • Educational Excellence	1
Student Centered	1

What is GSSW's untapped potential? Challenges/Problems to be solved?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Support for Students • **Mentorship Opportunities** ○ "Matching experienced social workers with new graduates to help each other up the ladder, especially since many women are social workers and need to help each other in light of the present political climate – it also keeps alumni connected and involved" • Greater flexibility for Students • Networking • Stress • Stress & conflict management • Support Advanced Standing Students • Help them identify their own strengths	10
Preparing students to advance social change • Build social workers able connect with diverse populations • Preparing them to have and deal with conflict • Navigating Ethical Quagmires • Encouraging them to fill gaps: rural services, gerontology, etc	8
Improving Field Education • Offering free professional development to field supervisors • Faculty to serve as liaisons • Survey agencies about the overall performance of the School • Clarity on Expectations • Evaluation is cumbersome • Integrate feedback from liaisons and supervisors	7
Alumni engagement • Ask them to support financially • Giving them networking and gathering opportunities • Social Media engagement	7
Recruitment & Accessibility • Prioritize a diverse student population • More affordable tuition • More work study or paid internships • Must address the DU brand	6
Advocacy/Community Change • Teaching students to better advocate for themselves • Have to policy classes run concurrent with legislative session	2
Communication	1

• Highlight the school's community impact	
Demonstrating impact • *"Show long-term impact of social workers on social issues"*	1

Appendix 6: Durango Themes

of Attendees: unclear (1 session, 4 tables)

What are the School's greatest assets and how can we better maximize them?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Workforce Development • Meeting a community need with graduates • Must communicate job and internship opportunities in the 4 corners to Denver students • Professional Development • Alumni network • Fort Lewis – growing internships	6
Community engagement • Larger community is committed to the program • Partnership • Expand to meet community needs	5
Course Design/Curriculum • Integrated Healthcare Class • Intergenerational Care • Meets community needs	4
The People • Utilizing local practitioners as instructors – adjunct • Faculty Expertise • Sustainable relationships • The staff	4
Native American engagement	3
Diversity of Offerings • Animal Assisted • The uniqueness of the Durango Program	3
Small Cohorts	2
Location, Geographically • $ Corners, Tribal Communities	2
Reputation/Position • Relationship to Denver Campus	2
Field	1
Reduced Tuition	1

Innovation	1
Educational Experience	1
What opportunities are there to maximize the School's impact?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Professional Development • Healthcare & Licensure • Bring trainings to rural communities • Serve as hub for supervision	11
Community engagement & Leadership • Advance policy changes • More Connection to Native communities • Bring expertise and systems thinking to the community • Facilitate conversations between the program and professionals	8
External Communication/Social Work Brand • elevate the brand • Marketing and publicity • Bumper Stickers	4
Improve curriculum • More micro skills • International Course work	3
Meet Community Needs • Connect information about needs and services	2
Technology Use & support	1
Cultivate a Pipeline of Students	1
Demonstrate Commitment to inclusion • Maintain commitment to dialogue	1
Interdisciplinary Opportunities	1
Career Preparation • Specialized credentialing	1
Integration of Field & Classroom	1

What are GSSW's lived values?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Professionalism • Systems Thinking • Meeting the client where they are • Self-Awareness • Ability to Vie Back • Nonjudgmental • Acceptance	11
Partnership/Collaboration • Relationships • Connections for improved effectiveness and efficiency	4
Social Justice	2
Wellbeing/Self-care	2
Advocacy	1
Community engagement	1
Civic action	1
Diversity & Inclusion	1
Empathy/Compassion	1

What aspects of the program's culture make diverse populations (people of color, LGBTQIA, people with disabilities, etc) feel most included? In what ways can the program grow and change to expand that feeling of inclusion?	
Theme	**Frequency**

Course Offerings
 	
• Native Policy Class
• Immersion class
• Opportunity for more classes on different populations
  o Disability
  o LGBTQIA
  o Latino certificate
	4

Durango Program Community • Housing	2
Willingness to accept feedback	1

Faculty Accountability	1
Importance of Family Culture	1
Commitment to Diversity	1

What is GSSW's untapped potential? Challenges/Problems to be solved?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Recruitment & Accessibility • Scholarships, loan remission, etc	4
Alumni Engagement	3
Community Partnerships • Presentations • Networking	2
Improving Field Education	1
Stay Responsive	1
Support for students • Open course options for credit • Mentorship	1

Appendix 7: Faculty Themes

of Attendees: 28 (2 sessions, 4 tables)

What are the School's greatest assets and how can we better maximize them?	
Theme	**Frequency**
The People • Everyone is mission driven • Shared values • The students push us and keep us current	10
Culture • Positive culture where people work together • We have fun • Supportive & collegial • Not competitive • Collaborative, but could so more • Faculty is genuinely welcoming • Internal willingness to partner	10
Diversity of Offerings • International offerings • Unique Offerings that reflect our strengths • Students come to GSSW to specialize • Specialized knowledge (perhaps not enough generalist)	6
Commitment to Social Justice • Inclusive Excellence • Desire to be seen as "the go-to partner" for community change efforts • Faculty is committed	6
Course Design/Curriculum • Flexibility • Accessible	4
Reputation/Position • Increase in rankings • We are represented in leadership of national SW organizations • Well perceived within the University • Leverage our reputation for more targeted recruitment	4
Breadth of Research • Unique clusters (positive youth development, interventionists, etc) • Different paths to scholarship is valued • Faculty is empowered to undertake community-driven research agenda	4

Educational Experience • Mentorship for students, formal and informal • Commitment to quality • Faculty is committed to teaching	4
Field • Field has a significant impact on our students • Flexibility of Field placements/internships (desire of more)	3
Location, Geographically	2
Community engagement • Network of community partnerships	2
Innovative	2
Action Oriented	1
Facility	1
Institutes & Centers	1
Strengths Based Perspective	1

What opportunities are there to maximize the School's impact?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Community Engagement & Leadership • **Partnership that advances the communies needs** • **Align research and social justice for the community** • **Be a social justice leader in the Community** • Need to be seen as more than field • Especially important given the political climate • Need systems to support this work • Using technology for mobilization • Expand Community Partnerships • Integrate more community engagement in courses • Measuring Social Justice Impact	13

External Communication/Social Work Branding
 	
• Seen as the state-wide thought leaders
• Need to elevate the social work expertise
    o *"We need to be seen as leaders and agenda setters"*
    o Do a better job of engaging local media
• Communication to advance social change is needed
• Highlight what students are already doing
	13

• Share our research findings with the communities (internal & external) • Countering the ivory tower brand of DU • Spotlights: host our own TEDtalks	
More & Better Leveraged Research • Highlight the work of research faculty • Research should be advancing a social good • Push each other to be more • Embrace multiple ways of knowing • Showcase our research ○ *"Faculty knowledge producers and disseminators- need to focus more on making a big deal of what we do ourselves"*	7
Align our Assets to Meet a Shared Mission • *"Alignment of where we have depth, where there is opportunity, there is partnership opportunity – identify places where we can go deep"* • *"Align our expertise, community need, and resources (regional, national, and international"* • Alignment of our work • shared understanding of our mission/direction	6
More support for Faculty • Folks are stretched too thin • Not enough human capital • Clarity of Expectations • PD funding opportunities	5
Fund Development • We are the "social harm offset" • Grants – someone needs to lobby and educate at the state level for why GSSW should receive funding • Pull down more university funds	4
Greater Interaction & collaboration (internal) • Recognize and leverage unique strengths • Valuing what others are doing	3
Demonstrated Commitment to Inclusion • More support for students • Send out materials in different languages • Make our own classrooms safer	3
Interdisciplinary Opportunities • Dual Degrees • Certificate Opportunities	2
Leverage Position at DU • Continue to take a leadership role	2

• Shape DU's narrative about GSSW	
Increased Diversity • We need to look the community we serve	2
Evaluation training for the community	2
Career Preparation • Must prepare students to go out and get a job	1
Supporting Student Development • More time spent with students (formally and informally)	1
Cultivate a Pipeline of students	1
Integration of Field and Classroom	1
More resources for adjuncts • Must invest in them financially and personally • PPO training	1
Better Integration of Institutes	1

What are GSSW's lived values?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Diversity & Inclusion • Must define diversity broadly • It's a priority, but there isn't sufficient diversity at all levels • A Student of color can go through the program without seeing a teacher who looks like them • Everyone needs to be committed to PPO	9
Social Justice	4
Advocacy • We must teach students how to advocate for themselves	3
Community engagement (external) • Citizenship at all levels	3
Integrity • Openness • Accountability	3
Wellbeing/Self Care • Faculty must model this, but they themselves don't have the time • Promotion of a work/life balance	3

Learning • More than one way of knowing • Open to struggle and change	3
Science • Is there a tension between social justice and science? • Evidence based practice	2
Excellence • Data, Evaluation, and CQI	2
Respect • Good Citizenship	1
Community (internal) • Not hierarchical	1

What is GSSW's untapped potential? Challenges/Problems to be solved?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Alumni engagement • The institutes do it really well, but it needs to be formalized • Must get alumni engaged beyond serving as field instructors • Define and capture ways alumni are already contributing • Need to give them more opportunities to feel connected • Meaningful Professional Development opportunities	8
Support for Students • *"Helping students become better aware of the resources on campus"* • More opportunities for 1st & 2nd year students to interact • Clarity around what students will receive: process, and less content • Flexibility to accommodate working students • Get doctoral students more involved, highlight their doctoral defenses	6
Recruitment & Accessibility • Greater financial support for Master's students • Cultivating a more diverse and local student body	3
Career Readiness • Specialization & Competency Education • Other academic products • Specializations or competencies in nontraditional fields	3
Greater Alignment of Work • Are we going to wide? Are there specific issues we can align around?	2

• *"We are the untapped potential. I don't know what a lot of people do"*	
Preparing Students to Advance Social Change	2
Leverage Community Knowledge • *"Making sure that the community knows how we can assist them and vice versa. Agencies already have a lot of answers and a lot of data about what is going on in the community."* • Need a way for the community to access the right person or support	2
Advocacy/Community Change • Advancing Social Justice	1
Working on the 12 Grand Challenges	1
Research • *"Sophisticated research that's big, interesting, and innovative (but we don't have the infrastructure to support this) – we need more capacity, nimbleness, and support to do this"*	1
Adjuncts • Are they adequately prepared and trained?	1
Improving Field Education • Take the show on the road to field agencies	1
Communication • Elevate the success of our faculty (awards)	1
More transparency	1

Glenwood Springs Themes

of Attendees: 26 (xx sessions, 3 tables)

What are the School's greatest assets and how can we better maximize them?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Community Engagement • Strong political Support and Community Partnerships • Accessible to the community • True community based research	6
The people • Students from rural areas have a lot of applied experience • Diversity of students makes the environment for study more rich • Faculty: come from Denver to teach (really brings the school to the community)	4
Workforce Development • Students can immediately apply their work to the community • Stipend for child welfare workers • " *Openness to explore workforce needs through training, curriculum, community partnerships*" • Connections to the business community	4
Educational Experience • Would benefit from more DU/Denver resources	2
Program Services • Flexible Program to accommodate working students	2
Field • Gets students in community	2
Reputation/Position	2
Breadth and Quality of research	2
Culture • Students are very supportive on each other	1

What opportunities are there to maximize the School's impact?	
Theme	**Frequency**

Meet Community Needs (in particular in rural environments) Employers: • Internships can help fill a community need • Cultivate greater career development opportunities for graduates • Employers are not investing in the rural workforce Graduates: • Graduates have to be prepared to treat the full spectrum of needs • Limited professional development opportunities • Greater connection to Denver Community: • Lead the charge in Two Generation and Social Determinants • Serve as a regional training center • Supporting immigrant groups • Homelessness • Better serve Pitkin County	12
External Communication/Social Work Brand • *"Marketing by way of newspapers and local radio as these are still the primary forms of communications in our rural areas as opposed to the internet"* • Information booths at community events • Articles in the local newspaper answering "What is Social Work?" • Greater awareness of what social workers do	10
Career Preparation • Trauma skills • Utilizing service animals – connection to the agriculture roots of rural communities • Food/Environmental Justice • Gerontology • Managing resources when you have none • Building strong networks and communities for students outside of school • Reimbursement of Services	10
Curriculum Improvement • More public health/health/integrated health • More student research • Interdisciplinary employment opportunities	7
Evaluation Training for the Community	3
Cultivate a Pipeline of Students • Recruiting students who are bilingual, bicultural to better serve communities	2

• MOUs with Fort Lewis and Colorado Mesa for a five year MSW	
Interdisciplinary Opportunities • Health and Legal • Collaboration with CMU and CMC (given their BSW and ASSW program)	2
Increased Diversity • More meaningful engagement with minority populations • Need more resources to work with diverse populations (E.G. Spanish speaking assistance)	2
Technology Use & Support • Technology can improve access	1
Fund Development • Less reliance on grants	1

What are GSSW's lived values?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Social Justice • Sustainable development • Environmental Justice	4
Respect • Dignity and worth of the individual	1

What is GSSW's untapped potential? Challenges/Problems to be solved?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Recruitment & Accessibility • More scholarships • *"Financial accessibility to higher education so that professionals will reflect the local community"* • Loan forgiveness • 3:2 models • Endowment • Increased enrollment	10
Improving Field Education	3

• Greater education needs to be done with agencies in rural communities so they understand the value of internships • There is a resistance and a fear of liability re: internships • **Must offer paid internships because of financial realities for students**	
Alumni Engagement • Recruiting alumni to serve as adjuncts • Cultivating opportunities for meaningful engagement with former students • Develop an alumni association for 4 corners and Western Slope	3
Support for students • Transportation • Consider a physical campus	2
Community Partnerships • Untapped potential on the western slope, could cultivate more partnerships that increase networking, supervision, and career development • *"Manaus Valley Project with an objective to create relationships among diverse populations"*	2
Advocacy & Community Change • More leadership in community organizing • More tools to engage marginalized populations	1

Appendix 9: Staff Themes

of Attendees: 26 (2 sessions, 3 tables)

What are the School's greatest assets and how can we better maximize them?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Leadership • The Dean is committed to challenging the status quo • Leadership in Civic engagement • Leading the culture change • Setting the expectation of "one GSSW" • Dean's vision for the school • Focus on internal strengthening is necessary	8
Diversity of Offerings • **Entrepreneurial nature of the program** • **Responsive to and participatory in trends** • Meets the needs, interests, and passions of a variety of students • Multidisciplinary collaboration in our offerings • Drives enrollment	6
Institutes & Centers • Provide a bridge to the Community • Give students unique hands-on opportunities • Opportunity to strengthen connections among institutes • Implement interdisciplinary work - now	6
Culture • Personal connections • Collegial • Healthy relationships and healthy conversations • Positive shift in recent months	5
The People • Nice mix of institutional memory and new energy	3
Course Design/Curriculum • At our satellite campuses students help inform curriculum • Integration of Field & Classroom • Experimental courses	3
Community Engagement • Community Partnerships • Connections in the Community	3
Community Engagement	3

• Community Partnerships • Connections in the Community	
Location, geographically • Denver is a desirable place to live • We serve as a local and national hub	3
Commitment to being a Learning Organization • Self-evaluative	3
Code of Ethics • Frames our work and helps us prioritize	2
Reputation/Position • Students are excited to be a part of GSSW	2
Program Services (distinct from the larger university) • We provide individualized services to students (registrar, admissions, etc) • More autonomous- have some control over what courses/services offered	2
Commitment to Social Justice	2
Field	1
Statewide Commitment	1
The University • *" DU is private-in theory-should be able to be more nimble to offer special interest courses, special things going on in the community to address issues more quickly and effectively"*	1
Facility	1
Workforce Development • *"Alumni base – thousands of change makers in community, many engaged as adjuncts, field instructors, etc"*	1
Breadth of Research	1
Students • Come from diverse backgrounds (educational & work experience)	1

What opportunities are there to maximize the School's impact?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Leverage Position at DU • Maximize assets to serve DU community better • Leadership around Impact 2025	17

- GSSW should have an impact on how things are done campus wide - GSSW could serve as mentors for undergraduates - We represent the school's mission – the "public good" is our specialty - Can serve as experts - Need for a rebrand of GSSW at DU - Lobby for inclusive policies that make the work less cumbersome	
Community Engagement & Leadership - The diversity of offerings paves the way for increased community partnerships & collaboration - Opportunity for greater activism and organization (given the current political climate) - Opportunity to better learn from the community – let them set the agenda - Elevate student activism - Harness and leverage all of DU in community change - Need to be a resource to people in the field, across Colorado & Nationally - Provide opportunities for area youth to use the space - Host GSSW networking events with partners, community, alumni, etc - Better leveraging our alumni Network - More outreach to partners by our Dean *"I would like to see us literally out in the community in partnership that the community surrounding the university is invested in – du is a tenant in the community but we aren't hardwired in what the surrounding residents are invested in"*	15
Interdisciplinary Opportunities - Partnerships are valuable, but challenging - No centralized way to communicate across campus - Students need interdisciplinary skills *"Students want to do different things with their degrees- need interdisciplinary, transferability of MSW, job acquisition, connecting to community"* - Can we share our internship database with other schools - Policies and procedures are prohibitive - Currently rooted in personal relationships - Need the financial structures to make collaboration possible - Greater support for untraditional partnerships	12
More interaction/collaboration - Greater collaboration between institutes and faculty - Desire to get to better know fellow community members - Institute regular meetings - A clear purpose for Institutes - Relationships are central to our work, across the school, the University, and the Community	10

Fund Development • Identify nontraditional donors • Need to grow the endowment • Poor donor management to date • Central advancement has been problematic • Desire for money to drive decision making less • Better marketing for increased fundraising • Common grant resources	10
External Communication/Social Work Branding • To the community, alumni, partners • Raising the profile of social work – uplift the social work brand • Digital Communications • Story Telling • Leverage the distance programs • Seen publically as the area expert on social issues	9
More & Better Leveraged Research • Engage students • List of research projects published somewhere • **An aligned Research agenda – students, faculty, institutes, community** • Dissemination of scholarship (especially beyond journal articles, think practical products for the community)	8
Career Preparation • More robust alumni network • Better social media connections • Providing networking opportunities to students • Career pipelines • Preparing students for nontraditional careers	6
Demonstrated Commitment to Inclusion • We're seen as ivory tower • Are we a welcoming place for the community and clients? • Faculty & staff must lead and model for students • Include more diverse voices in curriculum	6
More, better, optimized space • Need space better optimized for community use • Need for more gathering space	6
More robust Professional Development • Serve a broader audience • Offer PD through certificate programs • Better leverage this as a revenue generator	4

• Targeted PD can fill curriculum gaps	
Greater integration of institutes • *"Institutes need to be more connected with what is going on in the classrooms, and in the community as far as research and other info"* • Need a plan for the institutes: improved management, integration, and communication • Feeling like they are a burden	3
Better Coordination of Our Assets to Meet a Shared Vision • More intentional community partnership • Alignment of our research • Need a shared vision, to achieve the trickledown effect of a more cohesive culture	3
Increased Diversity • Improved staff diversity, more specific hiring • Of thought - *elevate diverse voices*	2
Cultivate a pipeline of students • Host youth events at the building • Begin recruit efforts with younger students who want to help people	2
Innovation • We must interrogate what we've always done	1
Rethinking Admissions	1
Technology Use & Support • Offering online Professional Development	1

What are GSSW's lived values?	
Theme	**Frequency**

Diversity & Inclusion
 	
• Fostering an inclusive culture
• More work to be done:
    ○ *Students can feel silenced if they differ in their opinions, not welcome,*
    ○ *Staff can experience this too- scary to have differing opinions, not comfortable, doesn't feel safe to dissent) certain people*
    ○ *Having an assumption of good intent*
    ○ *Students of color- can feel called out*
• Opportunity to elevate separate community assets
	8

Innovation • More work to do	6

• Balance between historical context and innovation • *"We are so much more than a cookie cutter social work school"*	
Community (internal) • faculty and students engage with one another – could do more • Faculty & staff collaborate • Collegial • Not as elitist as other places	5
Partnership • Inside and outside DU • *" we have a knack for putting things together and fostering relationships"*	4
Empathy & Compassion • Kindness	3
Social Justice • More work to be done	3
Continued Learning • Opportunities for staff- encouraged, but unrealistic in time constraints • Practical Constraints	2
Student Centered • commitment to student learning	2
Equity/Egalitarianism • This is not lived, must better align ○ *fair, reasonable, paid benefits, expectations, program assistance in offsite programs- pay equity, impacts GSSW- doesn't align with professional values, Issue at GSSW*	2
Wellbeing/Self Care • incongruent with time and expectations	1
Passion	1
Respect	1
Community engagement	1

What is GSSW's untapped potential? Challenges/Problems to be solved?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Communication • Students aren't always well informed • Better public clarity on research agendas/work	6

• Website • Marketing and story telling	
Preparing Students to Advance Social Change • Offer course that promote political involvement • Leadership development in civic engagement • Civic engagement beyond coursework • Inspiring students to be active and engaged their first day	5
Recruitment & Accessibility • The need for increased financial aid • More need vs merit scholarships • Need to continue to offer financial aid and parental support	4
Alumni engagement • Greater communication, engagement, and partnering • Consistency in maintaining relationships • Better leverage the Board of Visitors	4
Minimize Hierarchy • Institutes feel "less than" and that their contributions are undervalued • *"Breakdown of hierarchy and people are empowered to innovate to lead to manage to build connections"* • Equally value work	3
Support for Students • Greater flexibility and support for part time students • Explore offering Saturday classes	2
Greater Alignment/Integration of our work • Integration of the work done in institutes	2
Improving Field Education • The evaluation is not widely applicable	1
Adjuncts	1

What are the School's greatest assets and how can we better maximize them?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Field • Supervisors • GSSW reputation • Liaisons • Sites work to integrate classroom learning • Diversity of choices and placements	8

• Meaningful Learning • *Challenge: Need support to secure a better match*	
The People - Faculty • Quality of Teaching • Integration of practice examples in class • Faculty make an effort to connect with students • Adjuncts have practical experience	7
Diversity of Offerings • wide range of specialties • variety of classes, concentrations • Opportunities to explore many interests	6
Workforce Development • DU is an importer of talent • Career Services • Alumni Network to lean on	3
Culture • Meaningful conversations • Positive atmosphere • Student input is sought out • Gatherings are appreciated	3
Generalist Foundation	3
Breadth of Research • Opportunities to get engaged at all levels • Community focused research, but not yet community driven	2
Leadership • dean's experience and vision	1
DU • corbel, disaster psychology, international studies	1
Institutes	1
Statewide Commitment	1
Commitment to Social Justice	1
The Students	1
Facility • *"We have our own department, we aren't housed in another school (we have our own building, and staff focused exclusively on our success)"*	1

Appendix 10: Student Themes

of Attendees: 19 (2 sessions, 3 tables)

What opportunities are there to maximize the School's impact?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Improve Teaching Quality & Continuity • Adjuncts need more training (especially in PPO) • Desire for teachers to be hired who are committed to student engagement • Experience can vary widely based on the instructor • Better Adjuncts	9
Career Preparation • More professional and management skills • Balance between being a specialist & generalist • Networking opportunities • Salary Negotiation workshops • Information on nontraditional careers • More identity exploration in the curriculum	8
Demonstrated Commitment to Inclusion • More PPO • Students are struggling to navigate hard conversations around diversity • Greater consistency across PPO courses • Offer a Social Justice Concentration	5
Community Engagement & Leadership • Increased connection to the community • Stacking classroom, practicum, research, partnerships • The need to be responsive to community needs ○ *"if we were in the community, we would know what they need, and they could drive the research"* • Develop process and policies to support civic engagement	3
More Interdisciplinary opportunities • Courses available in other programs; Workshops; things that can inform our practice; leadership in developing relationships, working together	2
More effective student organizations • Low attendance • Lack of communication • **Limited faculty support**	2

Demonstrate Self Care	2
• Take a holistic approach to the demands on students time • *"There are things we say are important, like building community, but don't always have time, or motivation to attend club events"*	
Leverage Position at DU	1
• More present • More activism • Build our reputation on campus	
More research opportunities	1
Integration of Field & Classroom	1

What are GSSW's lived values?	
Theme	**Frequency**
Diversity & Inclusion • Cost can diminish diversity & inclusion • "Faculty don't always feel that GSSW/DU is a safe space, not able to be open and dissent" • Need to more thoughtfully support our students of color • Need to integrate a multiple identity framework	6
Community (internal) • We have a lot of committees but minimal action • Students of color don't always have the necessary space to convene • Desire for greater connection across year and between MSW/PhD • Mentorship	4
Wellbeing • Caring for one another • Providing space after the election	2
Social Justice	2
Community Engagement	2
Student Development	1
Advocacy • *"encourage a lot of fighting for your clients, social justice, and be involved in the rallies and social movements"*	1

What is GSSW's untapped potential? Challenges/Problems to be solved?	
Theme	**Frequency**

Support for Students
 	
- PhD
  - Valuing "different ways of knowing"
  - Evaluation of success is antiquated – value is subjective
  - Greater interaction with MSWs
  - Greater understanding of faculty's lived experiences
  - Greater recognition that students are intersectional
- MSW
  - Support for working students
  - Food bank for students
  - Mentorship
  - Counseling Services
	8

Recruitment & Accessibility - Need greater diversity - The cost is prohibitive - Need for additional scholarships - Recruit from HBCUs - DU's brand is a challenge	7
Improving Field Education - More clearly align it with classroom work - The challenge of selecting a site without information - Greater integration of student feedback - Add a field seminar	6
Communication - Need a central repository for information, events, happenings - More communication about opportunities: field, research, etc…	2
Orientation - Better leverage the time together	2
Career Readiness - Skills for the practicing professional - Career pathways	2
Advocacy/Community Change - "Organizing around social problems- what's being done, interest groups, what faculty and institutes are doing"	1
Preparing Students for Advancing Social Change - Environmental Justice - Activism, civic engagement, community organizing	1

Leadership at DU	1
• Interdisciplinary Opportunities	

APPENDIX 7: ELECTRONIC SURVEY DATA SUMMARY

SUMMARY

The GSSW Strategic Planning Committee distributed an online survey to its constituents to gather input regarding GSSW's future plans and opportunities. The constituent list included current students, alumni, faculty (adjunct, research, clinical, practice, tenured and tenure track), financial contributors, field liaisons, community partners, and others. More than 500 participants responded with valuable insight on the areas that members of the GSSW community would like to see reflected in the strategic plan, and the future direction of the school.

Highlights included:

- Positioning GSSW as a leader on social change in Denver and beyond;
- Maximizing our field education department to integrate the classroom curriculum into field, make meaningful connections with community partners, and enhance our focus on career and professional development;
- Enhancing and improving our efforts to make GSSW – and DU overall – a diverse and inclusive environment by aligning with Impact 2025 goals and focusing on attracting and retaining diverse students, faculty, and staff in alignment with Impact 2025 goals;
- Addressing the cost of a GSSW education. Participants resoundingly identify GSSW's cost – and relatedly its lack of racial and economic diversity – as a defining characteristic of the school.

The themes of educational experience, diversity, and leadership in community echoed in participants' overall responses, dovetailing with much of the qualitative data gathered to date.

I. SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Between February 13 and February 24, 535 participants responded to GSSW's survey about its strategic plan. Participants described their role(s) at GSSW as follows:
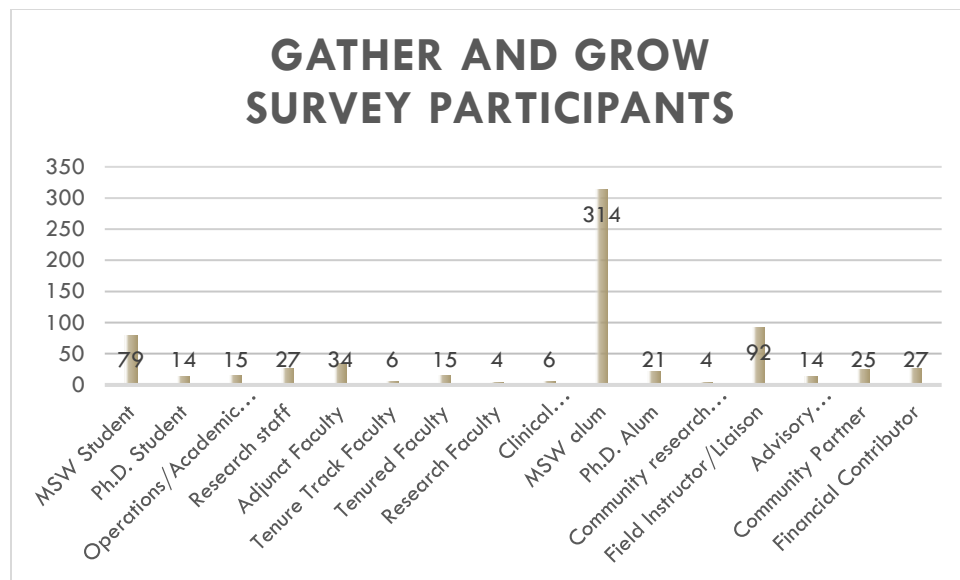
More than half of the participants identified as MSW alumni (58 percent). Participants could check any relationship to the university that applied; as such, 103 of the MSW alumni who responded indicated another role at the school (e.g. financial contributor, adjunct, field liaison). An additional 12 respondents are alumni of the Ph.D. program with no other role at GSSW. Put another way, 223 of the 535 responses — more than 40% of the sample — were from an individual whose sole relationship to the university is being a graduate of one of its programs.

Fully 75% of faculty (tenure/tenure track, clinical, professors of practice, and research — excluding adjuncts) responded to the survey.

II. SURVEY RESULTS

<u>Three Words to Describe GSSW</u>

Participants were asked to list three words that they use to describe GSSW. The responses fell in the following categories:

- <u>Advocacy & Activism</u> – respondents chose words that communicated GSSW's commitment to social justice, advocating for the public good, and policy and advocacy expertise
- <u>Community Engagement and Leadership</u> – many words reflected GSSW's commitment to working in the Denver community through partnership and a commitment to support local agencies
- <u>School Culture</u> – participants used words that reflect a warm, welcoming, and collegial culture within the school.
- <u>Curriculum</u> – participants shared words that suggest they believe GSSW's curriculum is well-rounded, rigorous, flexible, and rightly focuses on field education
- <u>Diversity</u> – participants described GSSW as having made progress on diversity, but also indicated that there is more work to do to make GSSW truly inclusive.
- <u>Platitudes</u> – many respondents used this opportunity to express their satisfaction with and appreciation for GSSW
- <u>Reputation</u> – some responses indicated that GSSW is a prestigious, well-ranked school that is respected in the Denver community and beyond
- <u>Scholarship</u> – participants expressed an appreciation for the educational experience at GSSW, the rigor of the curriculum, the research that faculty conduct, and the school's position as a thought leader and innovator
- <u>Values</u> – participants articulated GSSW's commitment to being an ethical institution, driven by its mission to help communities and do good

While the overwhelming response was positive, some participants provided words that suggest areas in which GSSW can improve. A few of these words corresponded to the aforementioned opportunity or the school to strengthen its commitment to being diverse and inclusive. As was the case with responses that focused on GSSW's strengths, the descriptors ranged from constructive feedback to words that reflect specific experiences or attitudes (and sometimes animus). A full list of all words and themes can be found on page xx.

Goals

On a scale of 1 (not a priority) to 7 (essential priority), please rate the following possible goals for the school in terms of how much priority they should be given in the strategic plan.	
	Mean, all respondents
Be a leader in diversity and inclusion within social work, higher education, and DU	6.07
Better integrate curriculum, field, and community partnership for targeted student career development	5.87
Be a leader in Denver and beyond, educating the public on critical social issues and action	5.87
Create more intentional community partnerships in our curriculum and research practices to respond to community-identified needs	5.80
Become a source of evidence and best practices for service delivery and policy specific to Colorado	5.66
Contribute to a "rebranding" of social work, making clear our values, skills, and impacts	5.49
Position the school to be a leader nationally in specific substantive areas, e.g., youth development, child welfare, homelessness, etc.	5.38
Increase interdisciplinary collaboration across DU	5.11
Create a "One GSSW" identity across all centers, institutes, and initiatives	4.40

Strategies

On a scale of 1 (not a priority) to 7 (essential priority), please rate the following strategies in terms of how much priority they should be given in the strategic plan:	
	Mean, all respondents
Recruit/retain more diverse students	5.94
Recruit/retain more diverse staff	5.83
Recruit/retain more diverse faculty	5.86
Tie field education more closely to curricula and community partnerships	5.78
Create a more inclusive climate	5.75
Raise money for scholarships	5.70
Provide more career services support to current students and alumni	5.62
Offer professional development/continuing education offerings for social workers and related fields	5.61
Develop more community partnerships for applied research	5.53
Create networking opportunities among students and alumni	5.41
Offer online professional development/continuing education offerings	5.27
Offer certificates that distinguish areas of expertise, e.g., practice with Native and Indigenous peoples	5.20
Offer educational events and programming for the larger public	5.14
Increase supports for faculty research	4.94
Offer subsidized graduate student housing	4.86
Explore alternative outlets for sharing faculty research	4.72
Grow the doctoral program	4.67
Pursue dual degrees with other disciplines/professions, e.g., MBA, JD, MPA, etc.	4.56
Grow the Four Corners (Durango) Program	4.56
Grow the Western Colorado (Glenwood Springs) Program	4.54

Grow the online MSW program	4.43
Develop more digital communications, e.g., electronic newsletters, social media videos, etc.	4.38
Improve processes and procedures of internal operations, e.g., financial reporting	4.34
Secure new space	3.95

Impact 2025

Of the four "transformative directions" of IMPACT 2025, how much priority should GSSW place on each direction on a scale of 1 (not a priority) to 7 (essential priority)?	
	Mean, all respondents
Students learning and leading in a diverse and global 21st century	5.88
Engagement and empowerment in Denver and the Rocky Mountain West	5.67
Discovery and design in an age of collaboration	5.35
One DU (bringing together the processes and potential across all units of the university)	4.91

Culture & Climate

On scale of 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree), please rate the following items addressing GSSW's culture and climate:	
	Mean, all respondents
I have positive interactions with members of the GSSW community.	5.31
I can be myself when interacting with members of the GSSW community.	5.19
GSSW is committed to diversity and inclusion.	5.14
I feel positively challenged by my interactions at GSSW.	4.98
I am able to pursue my interests at GSSW.	4.88
I feel a part of GSSW.	4.72

What do you want GSSW to be known for?

Affordability: GSSW will be a quality institution open and accessible to all. Cost will not be a barrier.

Community Engagement: Our institution will be known for its meaningful and productive engagement in the community. We will be a resource to organizations and individuals on the ground working on social change, policy, mental health, and other areas in which our research and work can make a difference. We will train our graduates to make a difference in the communities where they live and work.

Diversity and Inclusion: GSSW will be an institution with a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. We will be known as a leader on efforts to improve diversity and inclusion, and well-known for efforts to incorporate a "power, privilege, and oppression" lens into all areas of our work.

Excellence: We will be a top institution, providing quality education that produces competitive graduates who go on to be leaders in the field. We will conduct groundbreaking and innovative research, and we will be known for the quality of our work and of our people. GSSW will be a top-ranked school of social work.

Leadership: GSSW will be a leader in preparing students to practice social work, in addressing a range of social change and social justice issues, and in making the DU community – and the social work profession – more diverse.

Social Change: GSSW will be known for its contributions to achieving social justice and its leadership on social change efforts. This will happen through preparing students to make a difference on these issues, partnering in the community with individuals and groups contributing to social change, and engaging in research and scholarship that advances social justice.

APPENDICES

<u>Appendix 1: Crosstab Groupings</u>

STUDENTS - 93

      Current MSW student (79)

      Current PhD student   (14)

ALUM (335)

      MSW alum   (314)

      PhD alum   (21)

STAFF (42)

      Academic/operational staff of the school   (15)

      Staff affiliated with a faculty research project, institute, or center   (27)

ADJUNCT (34)

      Adjunct faculty (34)

FULL-TIME FACULTY (31)

      Clinical faculty/professor of the practice   (6)

      Research faculty   (4)

      Tenure track faculty   (6)

      Tenured faculty   (15)

COMMUNITY PARNTERS (162)

      Field instructor/liaison (92)

      Research partner   (4)

      Community partner (i.e., in other ways besides field and research)   (25)

      Board member/advisory committee member for the school and/or institutes(14)

      Financial contributor to the school   (27)