



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

DEAN, COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

Leadership Profile



The Opportunity

The Ohio State University is seeking an accomplished, passionate, innovative, strategic, and values-driven leader to serve as the next dean of the College of Social Work. Ohio State seeks a dean who will foster the college's commitment to building stronger communities, celebrating difference, and promoting social and economic justice for vulnerable populations. The next dean will set a bold and ambitious vision for the college.

Reporting to the executive vice president and provost, [Melissa L. Gillian, MD, MPH](#), the next dean will arrive at a time of tremendous opportunity and optimism. Serving as the chief academic officer of the college, the dean will connect the talent, creativity, diversity, expertise, and passion across the community, empowering faculty, ensuring student success, leading staff, and representing the college within the university, the community, and in the broader world.

The College of Social Work

The Ohio State College of Social Work (CSW) is committed to collaborating with the social work community to improve and resolve an extensive array of contemporary social problems making it an integral and valuable resource to the State of Ohio, the nation, and the world. The college offers bachelor's and master's programs online and in person and an in-person PhD program in Columbus, providing students with the knowledge, values, and skills needed for professional social work practice and research. Students can complete their BSSW at all four regional campuses—Lima, Mansfield, Marion, and Newark—through a blend of distance-learning technologies and traditional classroom instruction.

One of the oldest academic social work programs in the U.S. and housed in an internationally renowned top public research university, CSW has developed a long-standing and deeply ingrained culture of applied research as well as basic research and scholarship that permeates its programs; informs its community service and engagement; and contributes to the greater good of the profession, society, and the world. The CSW is ranked 13th among all social work programs and sixth among public universities by *U.S. News & World Report*.

MISSION

The College of Social Work, through excellence in teaching, research, and service, prepares leaders who enhance individual and community well-being, celebrate difference, and promote social and economic justice for vulnerable populations. The College fosters social change through collaboration with individuals, families, communities, and other change agents to build strengths and resolve complex individual and social problems. As an internationally recognized College, we build and apply knowledge that positively impacts Ohio, the nation, and the world.

VISION

Embrace Difference. Seek Justice. Be the Change.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Social work exists as a profession because living in society is harmful to many, and inaction supports a societal status quo that perpetuates racism and inequality. The CSW invites all to replace fear and confusion with compassion and curiosity and to learn with them. As a college, there is a focus on research, teaching, and community advocacy to advance principles of anti-racism and anti-oppression in social work.

HISTORY

Social work has a long and rich tradition at Ohio State, starting with the very first social work course offered in 1875. The first Bachelor of Social Service was conveyed in 1916, the first master's degree in 1923, and the first doctorate in 1934. First accredited in 1919, the CSW is the oldest continuously accredited public social work program in the country.

The CSW program in Columbus is located in Stillman Hall, a building constructed as a Works Progress Administration project and dedicated in 1937. Stillman Hall is home to the WPA Federal Arts Project in which 10 life-sized murals depict scenes from the history and development of social welfare. Ohio-native artist Emerson C. Burkhart completed the murals in 1939.

Social work programs were subsequently added on the four regional campuses of Ohio State.

FACULTY

The CSW includes 32 full-time tenure-track faculty. Additionally, 27 full-time and 75 part-time lecturers provide field instruction, continuing education workshops, and supervision of field placements in a variety of ways. Many of the CSW lecturers are practitioners with rich experience and expertise that brings the profession to the classroom.

The CSW is home to four Fellows of the Society for Social Work and Research—Drs. Natasha Bowen, Dawn Anderson-Butcher, Alicia Bunger, and Audrey Begun (Professor Emeritus).

RESEARCH

The CSW faculty are engaged in important research, harnessing the energies of individuals and communities in responding to opportunities, and seeking to solve the pressing problems for local, state, national, and international communities. Methods range from clinical trials to implementation research to community-based participatory research done in partnership with community members and organizations. Areas of research expertise and focus in the college include: alcohol and other drugs of abuse; children, youth, and families; mental health; youth development; aging; race and race relations; LGBTQIA+ health and wellbeing; community health and social development; human trafficking; school social work; and internet-enabled information and communication technologies.

In the past five years, the CSW has seen a dramatic increase in external research expenditures from just over \$1.6 million in FY17 to \$6.56 million in FY21. The college's largest funded research projects include:

- Two grants to work with Ohio communities in reducing fatal opioid overdoses and in enhancing permanency for families affected by the opioid epidemic.
- Funding to assess the impact of sport-based youth development programs through *LiFEsports* summer camps, an initiative run by the CSW faculty, staff, and students.

- A research evaluation of a series of free, online training opportunities provided by the CSW's Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Drug Misuse Prevention and Recovery to behavioral health professionals to increase opportunities for professional development, increase confidence, expand individual knowledge bases, and enhance existing skills.
- A community-based intergenerational project conducted with partners in Extension that utilize youth and older adults as resources to each other in supporting development.
- An assessment of the implementation of a traumatic brain injury screening in behavioral healthcare organizations.

Grants come from a variety of sources including foundations, contracts, donors, and federal funders. Faculty engage in an array of innovative community engaged projects such as the impact of information and communication technologies on the well-being of marginalized adolescents and emerging adults, surrogacy and sex work in India, and community engaged work with the Bhutanese/Nepal community in Ohio.

ACADEMICS

The CSW offers degrees at the bachelor's, master's, and PhD levels. Programs are offered in person, through distance education, and on regional campuses of Ohio State, elevating the diverse learning opportunities for students. From preparing students for generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to preparing the next generation of social work researchers and educators, the ultimate goal is to positively impact the lives of individuals, families, communities, and society.

The programs develop leaders in social work whose practice promotes professional values and ethics and demonstrates commitment to difference and diversity. Graduates employ culturally responsive evidence-informed practice, advocate for and empower marginalized populations, and advance social, economic, environmental, and political justice.

ACCREDITATION

The undergraduate and master's programs in Social Work are reviewed for [reaccreditation](#) by the [Council on Social Work Education](#) (CSWE) every eight years. Both programs were reaffirmed for accreditation until October 2026.

STUDENTS

The college provides accredited BSSW and MSW programs to over 1,700 students a year. In addition, the college offers a PhD program that has approximately 40 active students at any given time.

Each year students participate in a wide range of research projects, publish peer-reviewed articles, and present findings at conferences.

The Social Work Student Association is officially recognized within the college as a voice for all students. Designed to accommodate and promote student needs—whether professional, educational, or social—it provides a forum to discuss concerns with the appropriate faculty, staff member, or college committee and implement changes within the college.

FIELD EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND SERVICE

The CSW was one of the first programs in the field to hire and staff a Director of Advocacy position to create opportunities for social workers and students to expand their advocacy skills and political involvement.

Undergraduate and master's students in the CSW contribute over a half-million hours per year in field education throughout Ohio, across the country, and all over the world. By advocating for and meeting the needs of individuals, families, and communities with minoritized identities, social work students from Ohio State are making an impact during the program and beyond. The CSW is affiliated with 1,225 community agencies, of which, 440 are located in Central Ohio.

The CSW requires all students to complete human rights activities (HRA) each semester they are enrolled in field education. The purpose of HRA is to engage students in advocacy outside of their field placement, as well as to allow them the opportunity to provide volunteer services to those most in need.

Through Field Education, students put their classroom learning into practice, engage with social workers, and develop their professional identity, completing their work in Ohio and throughout the country and world. Field Education has been identified as the signature pedagogy of social work, by the Council on Social Work Education.

ALUMNI RELATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

The CSW has over 14,300 alumni who are leaders nationally and within their communities. Graduates of the college have gone on to become CEOs of Netcare, United Way, and other organizations that have significant community impact. The alumni network supports students in Columbus and around the globe through the Student-Alumni Mentorship Experience (SAME). SAME mentors share their experiences and insights and offer guidance to their mentees.

In 2019, Ohio State launched the public phase of *Time and Change: The Ohio State Campaign*, the most ambitious, inclusive, community-building, and fundraising endeavor in the university's history. The CSW had a campaign goal of \$15 million. As of September 1, 2021, the college officially exceeded that goal with just over \$15 million pledged and will continue its aggressive fundraising and outreach efforts to support students, faculty, and college initiatives. Future campaigns will include fundraising to meet the ambitious Presidential goal for undergraduates to be debt free.

BUDGET

The CSW routinely manages a \$21+ million annual operating budget, a robust external research portfolio, and numerous endowed funds within a responsibility center management (RCM) budget model.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The CSW began a strategic planning process in 2019 with plans for in-person meetings and focus groups with key stakeholders. With the pandemic, the plan was temporarily put on hold. A consultant was brought in during March and April 2021 to gather information to create a short-term plan to guide the college's work until the next dean is appointed. The new dean will have the opportunity to work with faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders to establish long-term goals for the college.

The Role

Reporting to the provost, the dean serves as the chief academic and executive officer of the [College of Social Work](#), empowering faculty, ensuring student success, leading staff, and representing the college within the university and in the broader community. The dean promotes a culture of innovation and excellence within the college and fosters collaboration across the university and with key external partners.

The dean will collaboratively set a vision and strategic direction for the CSW, including primary responsibility for a \$21 million annual operating budget.

In partnership with other deans at the university, the dean of the CSW has the opportunity to foster areas of excellence in a dynamic and interdisciplinary environment at Ohio State and play a leadership role in social work nationally. The dean is the chief steward of relationships with the college's alumni base of more than 14,300 individuals, with community partners and organizations, and with research partners.

Direct reports to the dean include an associate dean of research, associate dean for academic affairs, assistant dean of strategic initiatives and community engagement, chief administrative officer, doctoral program director, chief diversity officer, and a talented and dedicated [staff](#) of researchers; directors; managers; coordinators; and finance, career services, and outreach professionals.

Opportunities and Challenges

The dean of the CSW will address several strategic areas, including:

Provide strategic vision and leadership: As a land-grant institution, Ohio State is a distinctive university focused on teaching, research, and service. In keeping with that mission, the dean will develop and articulate a vision that continues to advance the CSW and ensures it remains at the forefront of excellence in research, fieldwork, teaching, and service by drawing upon the college's strengths and creatively leveraging areas of excellence across the entire university. Garnering grants and developing external partnerships will be critical to this effort.

Academic and knowledge enterprise excellence: The dean will recruit and retain faculty and staff who will support and enhance the research, teaching, service, and engagement missions of the college. It will be essential that faculty engage in scholarship and creative expression to generate innovative ideas that will lead to discoveries to better society and influence communities. OSU is committed to leveraging the talent of its most valuable resource, its people, to become a premier employer. It is the dean's responsibility to create an environment and culture in which all faculty and staff can thrive and achieve their career goals.

Empower educational innovation and excellence: The CSW provides an exceptional learning environment and is committed to field experiences and the alumni mentoring program (SAME). The dean ensures the college is at the forefront of curricular and pedagogical innovation in classrooms and online, building a nurturing environment for students both on campus and off. The college must be attuned to the needs of its students and foster a community in which all students can thrive, and graduates can impact the lives of individuals, families, communities, and society.

Champion and advance the institutional and college commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion: The dean will acknowledge, promote, and recognize diverse means by which faculty advance the field and serve the college mission. The dean will provide leadership to advance the university's goals to create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community across its student, faculty, and staff populations. The dean will champion diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of the college including fostering conversations about race, inequity, oppression, and difference. The dean will create an environment that nurtures and celebrates diversity and challenges the next generation of scholars and practitioners to understand its value and navigate its complexity. The dean will promote accessibility and affordability.

Elevate the visibility of the college and forge strong relationships: The dean will be a champion and advocate for the ways in which the Ohio State CSW is changing the world and must continue its strong history of partnering with communities and working collaboratively with the state and legislature to address important issues related to social work and provide solutions. The dean has the opportunity to be a leader in responding to major issues impacting society—from the opioid epidemic to children's mental health—and to serve as an expert consultant to the state for policy making in areas related to social work.

Advocacy, alumni relations, and philanthropy: The dean will publicize the accomplishments of faculty, staff, and students and ensure the latest communication methods are used to reach a broad audience. The dean must also nurture relationships with donors, governmental agencies, and human services partners. Continued work in building relationships with alumni and working effectively with the Ohio State advancement team to continue a strong record of fundraising and philanthropy for the college as part of the university-wide \$4.5 billion goal for the [Time and Change](#) campaign will be required.

Strategic planning and visioning: As the CSW continues to be an important contributor to the field of social work in Ohio, in higher education, and beyond, the next dean will have the opportunity to create a strategic plan that will allow the college to further define its areas of leadership, partnership, and vision for the future.

Innovative curriculum and delivery: The CSW has a track record of offering innovative and important social work programs and providing students with a variety of options to pursue and advance their education. The next dean will continue to look for ways to innovate the curriculum and program offerings, as well as how they are delivered.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate will personify the mission and vision of The Ohio State University as a whole, and the College of Social Work in particular, supporting programs in Columbus as well as engaging with and supporting programs at the regional campuses. The CSW is seeking a dynamic leader who brings passion and an understanding of the values that drive the college's and university's success and impact.

The ideal candidate will be:

- A visionary leader who embraces research, fieldwork, teaching, and service; supports a culture of innovation, openness, and intellectual curiosity; and who can inspire others to engage broadly in solving intractable problems;
- A strong promoter of faculty research with a demonstrated record in securing external funding and research support;
- A champion and strong communicator of the university's mission of equity, inclusion, and diversity, will challenge racist and oppressive systems, and who will possess the necessary experience to make strong contributions to enhancing inclusion and structural and functional diversity;
- A leader who will advocate for social justice in vulnerable communities across the city, state, and nation;
- A highly relational leader who values working in partnership with the other deans and looks for opportunities to foster interprofessional education;
- A skillful budget executive who can contribute to financial stability through careful stewardship of funds;
- An open and transparent communicator who possesses the ability to develop a shared vision;
- An experienced leader and administrator;
- A relationship builder with the ability to fundraise and steward donors;
- An experienced leader accustomed to interacting with local community organizers, as well as the state legislature and other government leaders; and
- A person of great energy, enthusiasm, and spirit.

Candidates for the Dean of the College of Social Work should demonstrate the following qualifications and traits:

- Academic qualifications and achievements consistent with an appointment as a tenured, full professor in the College;
- A passion for and commitment to the field of Social Work;
- Significant administrative experience in a complex environment; and,
- A demonstrated track record for serving in a leadership capacity.

The Ohio State University

Founded in 1870 as the land-grant and state flagship university, and subsequently receiving designations as a sea- and space-grant university, [The Ohio State University](#) is one of the world's finest institutions of higher education. A member of the distinguished Association of American Universities, it is consistently recognized among the most innovative and far-reaching universities in the world. It is an engine of innovation and discovery with annual research expenditures of approximately \$968 million. The central campus is located in the state capital of Columbus with regional campuses in Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark, and Agricultural Technical Institute in Wooster that extend its reach and provide access to students throughout the state. The Ohio State boasts 570,000 living alumni, and its endowment stands at nearly \$5.3 billion.

Ohio State is ranked 17th among national public research universities in the United States, according to *U.S. News & World Report*, while its library system is ranked seventh among public universities in the country. The university is also a major economic engine for the region, with annual revenues of more than \$6.8 billion, including both its academic and medical operations. Ohio State has been rated AA/AA1 by the three credit rating agencies, with a stable financial forecast.

As Ohio's flagship university, it is the leading comprehensive teaching and research institution in the state, and one of the nation's top 20 public universities. Nearly 68,000 students are enrolled at The Ohio State University, including 53,557 undergraduate, 11,110 graduate, and 3,290 professional students.

Ohio State's shared values are the commitments made by the university community regarding how work will be conducted. Our values include:

- Excellence
- Diversity in people and of ideas
- Inclusion
- Access and affordability
- Innovation
- Collaboration and multidisciplinary endeavor
- Integrity, transparency, and trust

One of Ohio's greatest assets, Ohio State is a world-class public research university and the flagship teaching and research institution in the state. The institution provides a distinctive educational experience for students and pursues leading-edge interdisciplinary research that brings together scholars from diverse disciplines to solve key challenges in our society.

About Columbus, Ohio

The 14th-most populous city in the nation and one of the country's fastest growing cities, Columbus is Ohio's state capital and a center of technology, commerce, and education. In addition to The Ohio State University, Columbus is home to multiple universities and colleges as well as the Battelle Memorial Institute, the world's largest private research and development foundation.

Forbes has given Columbus an “A rating” as one of the top U.S. cities for business. In addition to The Ohio State University, major employers include Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company, American Electric Power, L Brands, JPMorgan Chase & Co., Honda of America, Kroger, Whirlpool, Huntington Bancshares, Abbott Nutrition, Nationwide Children’s Hospital, OhioHealth, Cardinal Health, and Quantum Health.

Columbus prides itself on a diverse population, a thriving LGBTQ community, a flourishing visual and performing arts scene, exciting sporting events, a strong network of public and private schools, numerous public parks and recreational areas, and an array of fine restaurants, museums, and cultural activities.

In addition to Ohio State Buckeye sports, fans can enjoy the NHL’s Columbus Blue Jackets, the Columbus Crew men’s professional soccer team, and Columbus Clippers baseball. The PGA Memorial Golf Tournament is held annually at Jack Nicklaus’ Muirfield Village and each fall thousands run the Columbus Marathon.

Procedure for Candidacy

The review of credentials will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled. To apply, please submit a current curriculum vitae, a letter of interest describing interest in and qualifications for the position, and a list of five references which may include administrators, faculty, students, and community leaders. Applications, nominations, and inquiries should be directed to:



Steve Leo, Managing Director
Vicki Henderson, Senior Associate
Storbeck Search
610-572-4296
OSUDeanSW@storbecksearch.com

The Ohio State University is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability status, or protected veteran status.

The material presented in this position specification should be relied on for informational purposes only. This material has been copied, compiled, or quoted in part from Ohio State documents and personal interviews and is believed to be reliable. Naturally, while every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and factual situations govern.

Please note that all applications, nominations, emails, and other inquiries are subject to Ohio Public Records Law (Ohio Revised Code, chapter 149.43).