UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare has provided statewide, national, and global leadership in evidence-informed social work practice and social policies since its inception in 1944. Despite the small number of our faculty, we have for decades been ranked the most productive group of social welfare scholars in the country, producing new knowledge that regularly challenges conventional wisdom and paves the way for new practices and policies. Equally important, our graduates become agents of social change through direct practice, agency management, policymaking, and leading new discoveries that address the grand challenges confronting our society. Collectively, as both scholars and practitioners, Berkeley Social Welfare continues to have a significant, positive impact on the common good across many social issues and populations in need.

**Primary Positions Currently Held**

- 50% social worker, counselor, or case manager
- 19% mental health provider/professional
- 17% manager, administrator, or management consultant
- 5% all other occupations
- 4% faculty/educator
- 3% researcher/research analyst
- 2% advocate (community/legal), activist, policymaker

*Figure 1. Primary positions currently held by Berkeley Social Welfare alumni (2014)*
TAKING CHARGE OF OUR FUTURE

In 2013, we embarked on a transformative strategic planning process to focus our attention on identifying the elements of a more robust future, not only for Berkeley Social Welfare, but also for and with our community partners. Based on input and feedback from students, faculty, staff, and community stakeholders, we identified the following four goals that embody our mission, vision, and values as well as help us to maintain a leading role in the future of our society:

1. **Lead discoveries that solve grand challenges facing our society in the coming decades.**

2. **Educate for impact by developing practitioners and scholars with the skills to become leaders in our communities, the courage to challenge conventional wisdom, and the creativity to find innovative solutions to our most pressing problems.**

3. **Ally with communities to organize social change at neighborhood, community, national, and global levels.**

4. **Develop a sustainable community to maintain our leadership in discovery and transformative change for the common good.**

Why is each of these goals critical to Berkeley Social Welfare’s ability to thrive in the coming decade?

These four goals create the foundation for a more vibrant and dynamic Berkeley Social Welfare in coming years. This document details how Berkeley Social Welfare will achieve these goals and build a sustainable future in which we continue to create, lead, and inspire change for the common good.
GOAL 1:
LEAD DISCOVERIES THAT SOLVE THE GRAND CHALLENGES OF SOCIETY

The grand challenges before our increasingly diverse society require innovative and collaborative scholarship in order to discover, implement, and evaluate new solutions. Team-based research that bridges expertise from a range of disciplines and professions will be needed to solve these challenges.

UC Berkeley is consistently ranked the top public university in the world, and one of the top of all universities globally. Similarly, Berkeley Social Welfare is ranked one of the best schools of social work, and our faculty is nationally and internationally recognized. We have led the field by employing an interdisciplinary faculty that collaborates broadly. Our collaborative approach continues to inspire the intellectual leadership that results in important changes across multiple areas of society – from child and family welfare to mental health services, from aging and health services to social and community development, and from improved management of social agencies to new social policies.

To maintain our leadership, we must push the boundaries of our field by building even more bridges across disciplines and within the community to address complex challenges. As a professional school, we must continue to focus our discovery on engagement, assessment, prevention, intervention, and evaluation that lead to evidence-informed change.

**How do we lead discoveries that solve grand challenges?**

Scholarship is the foundation of Berkeley Social Welfare; it fosters creativity, promotes collaboration, and creates a laboratory that allows for the development of innovative and practical solutions that address society’s current and emerging grand challenges. Our engagement with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and key community stakeholders over the last several years has yielded a clear result. We must strengthen our research and scholarship to not only meet, but also anticipate, the needs of the communities we serve. Several external and internal pressures require that we strengthen our academic community – the rapidly changing social welfare landscape, the growing need for interprofessional and cross-disciplinary solutions to manage society’s challenges, and imminent faculty retirements.

Berkeley Social Welfare has hired seven new faculty members in the last four years, significantly diversifying our faculty in terms of experience and expertise and infusing our program with new energy and dynamism. We also appointed our first associate dean for research, who is charged with strengthening and renewing the School’s research infrastructure. In an effort to further strengthen our intellectual community, we have expanded professional development, community outreach, formal mentorship, and engagement through the implementation of more formal presentations, workshops, and events, such as the annual Tripodi lecture on research methods and participation in a national initiative on Grand Challenges for Social Work.
3-5 year plan

- **Continue faculty renewal and retention efforts**, focusing on diversifying research expertise and increasing professional development of junior faculty
- **Strengthen research infrastructure** by developing a more structured support system and clear processes for accessing research and funding opportunities
- **Create incentives** to increase community-based, cross- and inter-disciplinary partnerships within UC Berkeley and beyond
- **Create a dynamic and engaged research and practice community** through strategic events, social media, partnerships, and outreach
- **Recruit and retain the best doctoral candidates** by reevaluating the admissions process, financial support, curriculum, and faculty mentorship in the doctoral program

**Figure 2.** 197 Berkeley Social Welfare doctoral alumni locations (1963 - 2014)
The rapidly shifting nature of our society requires change agents who are able to navigate uncertainty while promoting the common good. Without a renewed effort to promote social change, we risk becoming a society with even greater divisions and inequality.

Our School was founded with a focus on “social welfare,” which is broader in nature than many other schools of social work. As such, Berkeley Social Welfare cultivates multidimensional change agents — scholars and practitioners who are able to work and lead across issues, across sectors, at multiple levels, and within the constantly changing field. We train students to be direct-service practitioners, social welfare managers, researchers, and policymakers. Our graduates are prepared to analyze widespread social issues; evaluate programs; and create, identify, and advocate for broader change in society and social policy.
How do we educate for impact?

As the field of social welfare becomes increasingly complex, social welfare scholars and practitioners are expected to address emerging issues effectively and efficiently with fewer resources and support than ever. We are preparing our students not only to manage these challenges, but also to lead and thrive. In response to students’ request, we are increasing career development support and resources and integrating more opportunities for skill-building, mentorship, research, and experiential learning. In order to maintain excellence in teaching and instruction, we also continue to engage in regular program and pedagogical evaluations.

In academic year 2013-2014, the Masters program (MSW) underwent a reaccreditation process that occurs every eight years, as required by the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE). This review led to significant positive program and curriculum changes, including greater alignment between field education and classroom learning and expanded local and international field education opportunities. Additionally, beginning in the fall of 2015, Berkeley undergraduate students will be required to meet explicit criteria in applying for the social welfare major, resulting in more competitive students in the program. We will also participate in Berkeley Connect, a research/mentorship program that connects interested undergraduate students with doctoral student mentors. As part of our efforts to strengthen professional development opportunities for students, we hired our first director of career and professional development in 2013.

Lastly, in order for Berkeley Social Welfare to continue to produce competitive and highly skilled students, we must align our technological capabilities with the needs and expectations of society. In order to educate our students accordingly, we have updated several classrooms and will train our faculty and staff on new instructional technology. Enhanced instructional technology will also allow us to increase our accessibility to local and global audiences through alternative, part-time, and life-long learning opportunities.
GOAL 3: ALLY WITH COMMUNITIES TO ORGANIZE SOCIAL CHANGE

Our nation celebrates a long history of social activism from the Boston Tea Party, anti-slavery, women’s suffrage, and Free Speech movements to the contemporary peace, women’s rights, civil rights, and marriage equality movements. Many smaller community change movements and organizing have also worked to create pressure for more local and incremental changes. Often only at the behest of such social movements and community organizing have policymakers and practitioners designed, implemented, and evaluated innovations to improve the well-being of our society.

Berkeley Social Welfare students exemplify this activist spirit and have rallied for change in the curriculum, program, and culture of the School. In support of local and national movements, our students have thoughtfully and courageously organized events and conversations that compel us to revisit our values and strategic priorities. In recognition of and appreciation for the legacy and spirit of social activism in our students, we are affirming our commitment to studying and teaching skills to lead and inspire community engagement and movements for social justice in our increasingly diverse society.

Significant social change requires leadership and community partnerships to propel these movements forward and encourage action and sustainable improvements. Our students are the future leaders of society, but they cannot do it alone. As such, we also seek to strengthen their abilities to develop communities, build partnerships, generate new scholarship, and strategically collaborate to create a better future.

How do we ally with communities to organize social change?

Dean Edleson initiated a series of Grand Challenges events at Berkeley Social Welfare as part of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare’s Grand Challenges for Social Work initiative. These events invite us to examine how we can adapt our programs and environment to nurture the next generation of leaders and changemakers and maximize our impact on the key challenges facing our society.
In collaboration with students, faculty, and staff, Dean Edleson also created an action plan to strengthen equity, inclusion, and diversity in the Berkeley Social Welfare community and in our curriculum. A result of the continuing dialogue with students was the request for more formal and structured leadership training and development opportunities. In response, we are developing and integrating more robust leadership development programming into the curriculum. Each fall, all incoming MSW students participate in experiential training that emphasizes leadership, teamwork, and community-building. Additionally, the faculty are integrating leadership concepts and skills into the curriculum and developing a specific course on leadership. Current and planned reviews of both the undergraduate and doctoral programs will also include a greater emphasis on leadership and social change.

As we increase and strengthen our engagement and collaboration across professional schools on campus and with other disciplines, leading research institutions, communities, institutions, organizations, and consortia, there will be more opportunities for students to build relationships with community stakeholders and serve as change agents in real-world settings.

Berkeley Social Welfare will also create more accessible educational options and lifelong learning opportunities for local, national, and global audiences. These alternative education options will both increase access to post-secondary social work education and training opportunities for many populations and enhance our relationships with a diverse population of experienced professionals by providing more opportunities for engagement with the Berkeley Social Welfare community.

Figure 3. Fall 2014 undergraduate and graduate diversity and inclusion breakdown for Berkeley Social Welfare and campus at-large.
During these challenging times for public higher education, we are developing a physical, organizational, and financial infrastructure that ensures our leadership in learning and discovery. Our faculty is in the midst of an important renewal that will continue in the coming years and give direction to our future scholarship. Each of our student programs is focusing on developing leaders for social justice. Our home, Haviland Hall, requires renewal as a facility that will support our 21st century scholarship and professional education. The current fiscal environment requires that we resolutely steward our scarce public resources by prioritizing our efforts and actively seeking alternative sources of support, such as private funding and innovative revenue streams, to sustain and maintain the success and leadership of Berkeley Social Welfare.

How do we develop a sustainable community?

In the last two years, we’ve made a number of updates to Haviland Hall, including the creation and renovation of the Social Research Library, Haviland Commons, and Nathan Grove. In the coming years, we will participate in a whole-building study of Haviland Hall to identify the structural renovations and maintenance that are needed to continue to support leading scholarship and professional education. We are also developing a sustainability plan to support further building and technology needs.
Berkeley Social Welfare will re-envision our funding and development models and create new academic and philanthropic partnerships in order to move in the strategic directions reflected in this document. As a first step, we will create an office for innovation and strategic efforts to fully support the development of these new partnerships.

The strength and vitality of our community has traditionally been a deciding factor in many student, faculty, and staff decisions to join the School. To ensure that we are able to support, stimulate, and inspire our next generation of leaders, we must invest in developing and strengthening our community. We are increasing communication and strengthening transparency through regular all-School meetings, an annual State of the School address, and an annual feedback survey. Students in each academic program have increased access to and communication with the dean through open forums. We have also enhanced and strengthened our culture of scholarship through the Grand Challenges events, increased research methods training opportunities, and more colloquia.
In the last several years, we have made considerable physical, curricular, and program updates to support our four goals and Berkeley Social Welfare’s future in the following areas:

- Allocated over $100,000 to support our research infrastructure, providing us with a strong foundation on which we plan to build;
- Substantially increased our capacity for research and broadened our expertise by expanding our Senate faculty with seven new hires;
- Nearly doubled financial aid and increased professional development opportunities for students;
- Redistributed nearly $500,000 to renovate the Social Research Library and create both the Haviland Commons and Nathan Grove;
- Collaborated with staff to realign priorities and responsibilities in order to provide more streamlined program services, support, and resources; and
- Implemented significant curricular and program changes to refine and enhance our undergraduate, Masters, and doctoral programs.

Over the next five years, we plan to make a number of program, staff, and resource adjustments to further support and advance our four goals. Berkeley Social Welfare depends more and more on the generosity of our alumni, friends, and community for support because federal and state support has decreased significantly.

We will require additional financial support of at least $200,000 per year to sustain and expand our research and academic infrastructure with more opportunities for training in new research methods, support for methods and statistical consulting, and additional support for our doctoral students. These funds will also support the expansion of our programs through increased professional development, professional research partnerships, and training opportunities. Additionally, we are prioritizing hiring the necessary staff to strengthen our academic community, with the intent to add 4-6 professional staff in the coming years.
We will require an additional investment of $450,000 per year to enhance and expand our instruction and innovation. These investments will permit us to strengthen our ability to support our students in the field, use the most up-to-date instructional technology, reach our alumni and other professionals with a variety of teaching approaches, invest in innovation generated by our students and community partners, and better assess the outcomes we are achieving in these domains. These investments will also allow us to develop and strengthen leadership, social justice, and diversity programming for the entire Berkeley Social Welfare community.

Finally, it is critical that we develop and sustain a dynamic and resilient program and community. **We will require an investment of $3 million per year over the next five years to reinforce the physical and community infrastructure of Berkeley Social Welfare.** These funds will be used to complete the necessary physical renovations to Haviland Hall and manage renewed funding, development, and partnership-building models. They will also allow us to foster community both within the School and locally through increased internal and external programming, outreach, and collaborations. These additional investments are vital to our long-term goals and strategies. They will further secure our position as a leading academic institution and will continue to allow our community to generate innovative, collaborative, and leading scholarship that pushes boundaries and influences the future of social welfare policy and practice.

**How did we get here?**

At Berkeley Social Welfare, we strive to train scholars and practitioners who can work and lead across issues, across sectors, at multiple levels, and within the constantly changing field. In order to do so, we understood the need to develop goals and strategies that reflect the multidimensionality of the field. As a result, we intentionally sought feedback and input throughout this process from a wide range of constituents to obtain diverse perspectives on the needs, challenges, and opportunities that may arise in the field in the next decade.

Over the course of 18 months between 2013-2014, we held 36 meetings and events and consulted with over 138 people, including faculty, staff, students, community stakeholders and leaders, and deans from other professional schools on campus. We also made an intentional effort to reach out to “unknowns,” or local leaders and organizations that Berkeley Social Welfare isn’t connected to, but should be. We used these discussions to inform the strategic planning process; determine areas of concern, growth, and/or opportunity; identify strategic directions and actions for the School moving forward; and gather feedback and input on draft documents throughout the process. Our discussions guided the development of our four goals, which changed significantly throughout the process and may continue to evolve.
SUPPORT
BERKELEY SOCIAL WELFARE

Berkeley Social Welfare is dedicated to serving the needs and advocating on behalf of our society’s most vulnerable members by preparing the next generation of social work practitioners, educators, researchers, and changemakers. Help support our uncompromising commitment to developing our profession’s future leaders.

[link]

If you would like more information on ways to support Berkeley Social Welfare, contact Francesca Dinglasan at swoutreach@berkeley.edu or 510.642.5063.
PLANNING COMMITTEE
Jeffrey Edleson, Dean
Senate Faculty
Heidi Wagner, Assistant Dean for Administration
Elizabeth Taing, Project Policy Analyst
Katherine Mitchell, Organization Development Consultant
Senior Management Team