



School
of Social Work
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Strategic Planning Insight Report

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Table of Contents

Introduction	04
Methodology	06
Themes	08
Appendix One	40
Appendix Two	46

About this Report: This report reflects the current perceptions of those who participated in the interviews, focus groups, town hall, and survey based on the questions they were asked. Coraggio's interpretations of these perceptions are noted throughout the report as Insights and Implications. Quotations were captured as stated by respondents without attribution to protect their anonymity. In some cases, stakeholder perceptions varied; thus, the Portland State University's School of Social Work (PSU SSW) may need to undertake further exploration to better understand certain stakeholder perceptions.

Introduction

The last few years have brought many changes to Portland State University's School of Social Work (PSU SSW). The School has welcomed a new Dean, adapted to the numerous challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, faced increased pressure to grow enrollment at a time of uncertainty for higher education, and has sustained cuts to its State-funded research and training projects.

Despite these challenges, the SSW has moved up in its national ranking among schools of social work in the country, from 38 to 36 out of 298 schools. This ranking reflects the unwavering commitment of PSU SSW's faculty and staff, who have not only mobilized to meet the challenges of an extended quarantine in Oregon, but who have gone the extra mile to grow, ensuring that the SSW is well positioned among units at PSU to continue delivering high quality instruction in its four academic programs (BSW, CYFS, MSW, PhD) and excellence in its Regional Research Institute and Center for Improvement of Child and Family Services.

With the end of the pandemic in sight, PSU SSW has identified a need to develop a Strategic Plan to ensure that the School continues to grow and excel in this post-pandemic world. To this end, PSU SSW has partnered with Coraggio Group to develop a Strategic Plan that will help further strengthen and grow the School. This report was informed by stakeholders through a robust engagement process facilitated by Coraggio Group. This report highlights key themes and potential areas of focus for PSU SSW to consider as it moves forward with the development of the plan. A few things to note about this report:

- The purpose of this report is to provide context for PSU SSW in the creation of its next Strategic Plan.
- This report is not a strategic plan or a recommendation of next steps, but a summary of input received from internal and external stakeholders on challenges and opportunities the School should be aware of as it creates strategies.
- The data in this report reflects the information-gathering practices from consultative services and Coraggio's methodology for strategic planning.

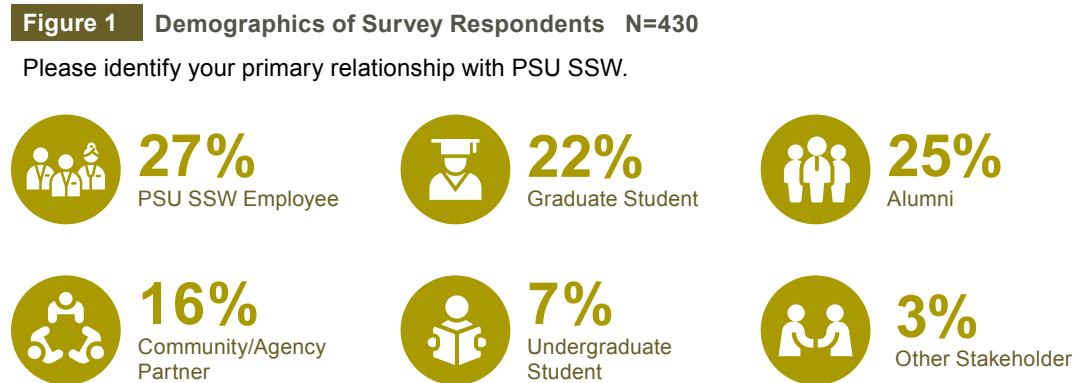


Methodology

This report is a summary of the data collection and community engagement effort conducted by Coraggio Group on behalf of Portland State University's School of Social Work (PSU SSW). The purpose of this effort was to gather insights from key stakeholders in preparation for PSU SSW's next Strategic Plan.

The engagement took place from January 2022 to March 2022. Coraggio Group partnered with PSU SSW to gather information through one-on-one interviews and focus groups in order to understand the perspectives and priorities of a broad range of stakeholders. A total of 74 stakeholders provided input through this process, with 16 one-on-one interviews and 9 focus groups with a total of 58 participants. The external engagement efforts included stakeholders such as community partners, elected officials, non-profit and governmental agency partners, alumni, and foundation supporters.

In addition to the interviews and focus groups, Coraggio Group also conducted an online survey that ran from January 11 to January 28, 2022. A total of 430 individuals responded to the survey from the following self-reported demographic groups:



For cross-tabulation and to identify any large differences in opinions, survey respondents were asked to self-identify their race/ethnicity, age, gender, and, for PSU employees, role and division. Any significant differences are noted in the themes. Additional survey demographic information can be viewed in the appendix.

Questions in the interviews, focus groups, and survey focused on the following topics:

1. Vision and Mission
2. Strategic Priorities, Challenges, and Opportunities
3. Reputation
4. Role Importance and Effectiveness
5. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
6. Internal Culture and Values
7. Organizational Health
8. Change Readiness



Themes

This report highlights key themes identified through the community engagement. Each theme is supported by relevant data and quotations. These themes were developed using several methods:

- Quantitative questions were analyzed using category means, percentage rates and frequencies.
- Qualitative, open-ended questions were analyzed by assigning themes based on response content and Coraggio's interpretation of those responses.

Themes included in this report were identified by both frequency of mention and number of distinct groups and individuals who mentioned them.

Strategic Themes

- 1 Staff and faculty want a more collaborative and supportive culture.**
- 2 Faculty and Staff are committed to social justice and serving diverse communities, and believe work is needed in bringing the School's internal systems and practices into alignment with the School's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.**
- 3 PSU SSW's current organizational structure, processes and procedures are creating high workload for staff and faculty.**
- 4 SSW has been lacking a clear strategy and needs a unified vision and mission.**
- 5 Stakeholders want to see SSW step into a leadership role and take action to change and innovate social work.**
- 6 Internal stakeholders have negative perceptions of SSW's reputation.**
- 7 Funding constraints threaten SSW's ability to grow and support social work.**



Staff and faculty want a more collaborative and supportive culture.

Key Insights

1. Staff and faculty consistently described PSU SSW's culture as both disconnected and supportive. The top words used to describe the culture of the School were disconnected, siloed, hierarchical, and supportive (Figure 2 – Culture Descriptors).
2. Faculty and staff feel safe and supported within their own programs and work groups, but believe the culture of the School overall can be toxic and hierarchical. This has led many to disengage from larger discussion and meetings. Faculty and staff felt that someone cares for them, but felt overall disengaged as employees of the School (Figure 3 – Gallup Q12 – Employee Engagement).
3. Staff and faculty don't believe the School has an inclusive work environment or a culture that enables them to do their best work (Figure 4 – Organizational Culture).
4. These perceptions were held more strongly by academic faculty who feel unsupported by the School and believe too much emphasis is being given to research. Academic faculty were more critical of the School and believed many elements of the organization did not support them, compared to research faculty who had an overall more positive outlook (Figure 5 - Whole Systems by Role). However, some research faculty feel that academic faculty get more support than research faculty.
5. Faculty and staff believe that COVID-19 has made it difficult to feel connected with colleagues, but believe there is an opportunity to address SSW's culture as the School reopens. Improving internal culture was identified as a top opportunity (Figure 6 – Opportunities).
6. There is a strong desire to see the culture of the School shift toward being more collaborative, inclusive, and supportive (Figure 7 -Ideal Culture Descriptors). Staff and faculty want greater integration and collaboration throughout the School, particularly between research centers and teaching.

Implications

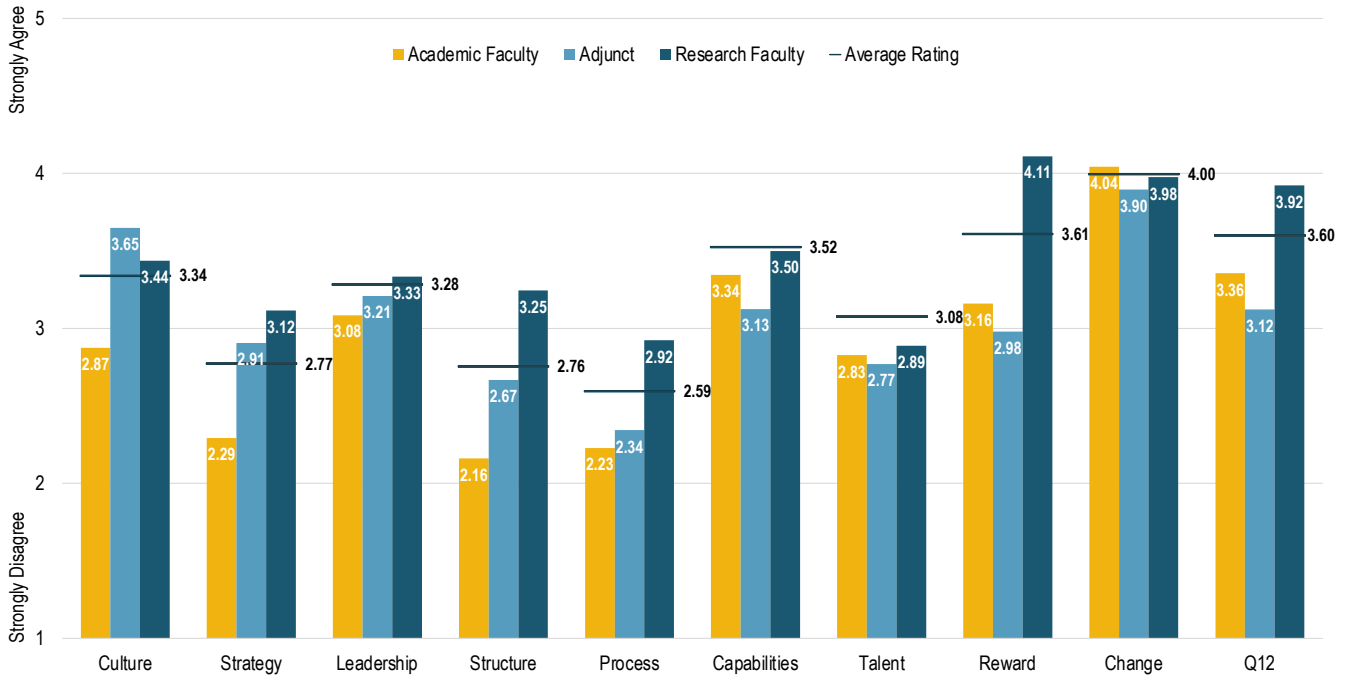
1. Organizational culture is the glue that brings an organization together. Developing a culture of collaboration will be critical to the adoption and success of the Strategic Plan.
2. Organizational culture plays a large role in employees' decision to join or stay at organizations. PSU SSW may face increasing difficulties with recruitment and retention of faculty and staff if cultural challenges are not addressed.
3. Given staff and faculty perceptions of feeling disconnected and siloed, developing stronger communication channels across the organization may alleviate some of the cultural challenges the School is facing.

Figure 4 Organizational Culture N=103 PSU SSW Employees

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement:



Figure 5 Whole System (Organization Health) by Role N=99 PSU SSW Employees



* Please see appendix one for methodology.

Figure 6 Opportunities N=212 All Stakeholder

What do you believe is the single most significant opportunity PSU SSW should leverage in this plan?

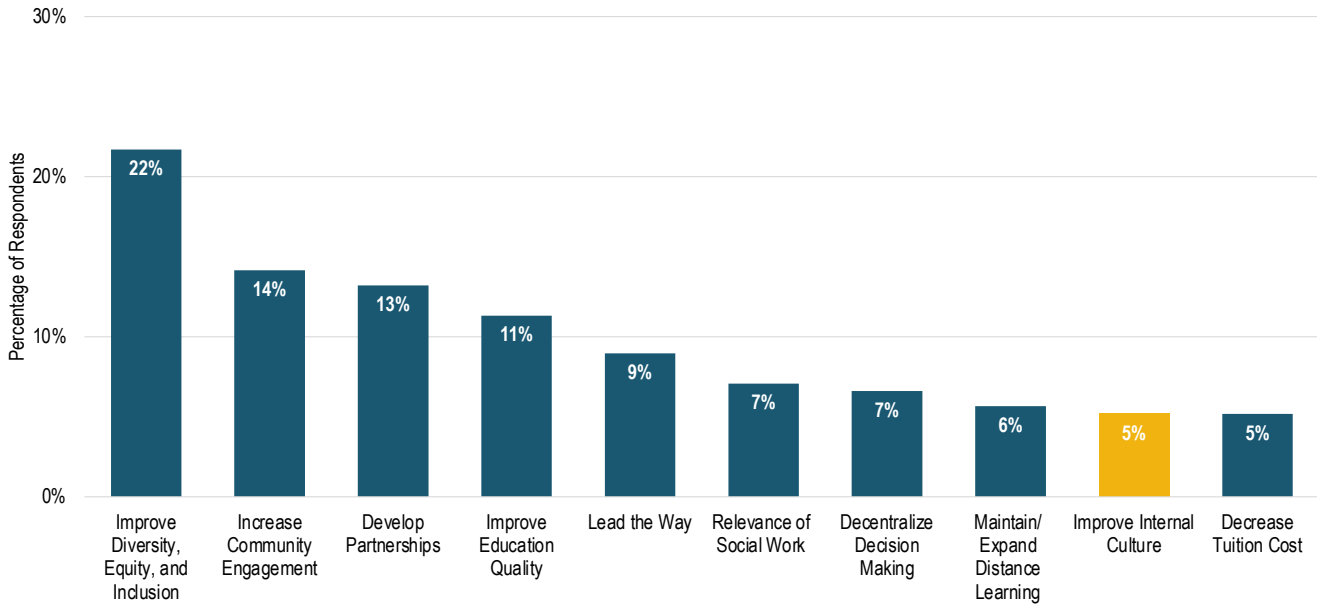


Figure 7 Ideal Culture Descriptors N=99 PSU SSW Employees

What three words would you like to use to describe PSU SSW's organizational culture in the future?



Responses

“Backbiting and unwillingness to work on change [is a challenge]. We get stuck in the “talking about what’s wrong” part, or complaining phase for too long and never make concrete movements forward.”

“A lack of aligned focus as an academic community committed to supporting one another [is a challenge].”

“Equity across all roles and units within the School. Working as a team.”

“It is difficult for me to answer this question as I don’t really feel connected to the SSW culture; within our unit it’s different, but it feels quite stand alone.”

“There is a fear of repercussions or consequence if you speak up.”

“The school is consumed with teaching and student success that invests absolutely nothing on the growth of faculties or their research. They try to present themselves as diverse, but I never felt being excluded

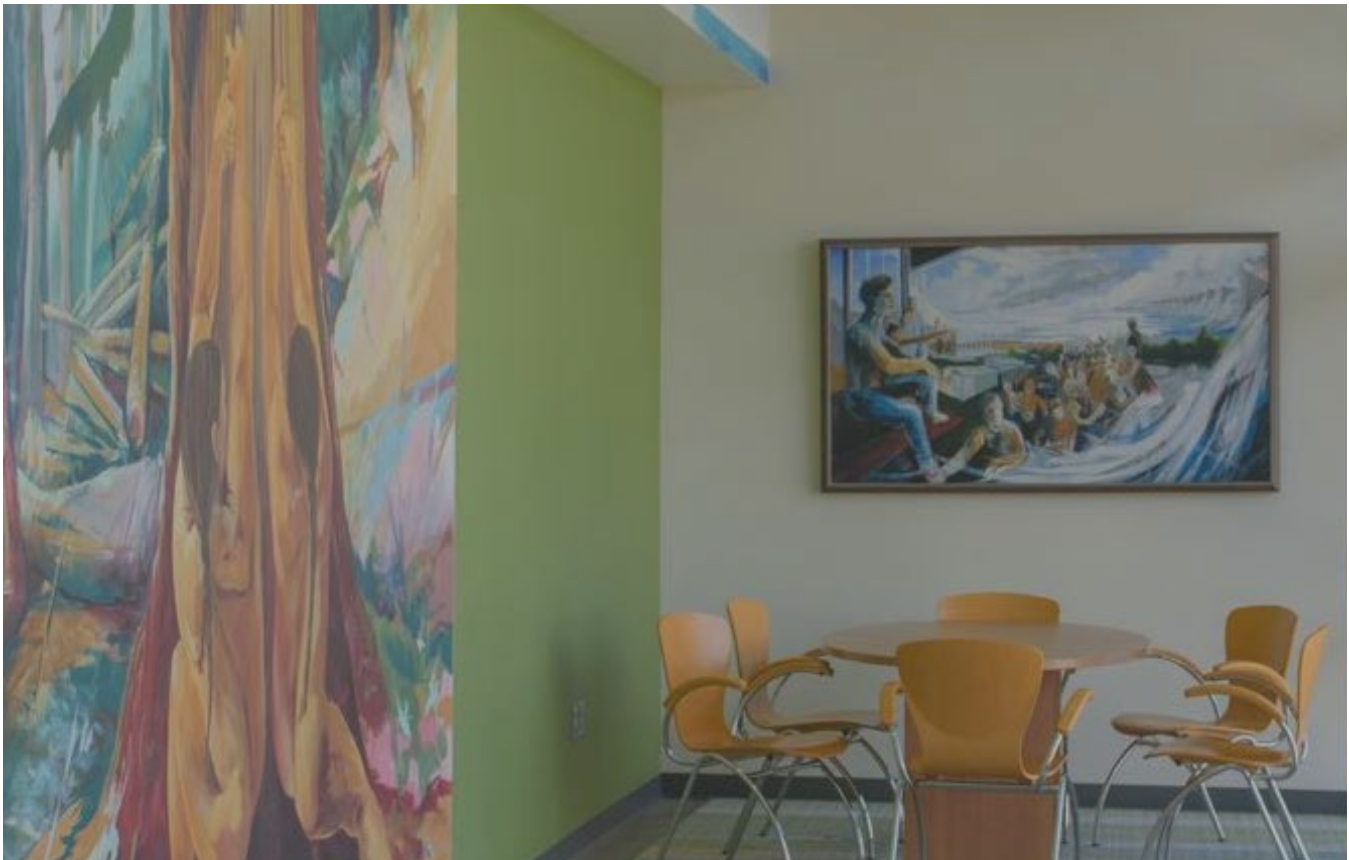
in any other setting compared to PSU.”

“I don’t have the opportunity to interact enough with the SSW as a larger organization to be able to really answer these.”

“This is hard for me in some ways, because I think the SSW is too big of a unit for this analysis. I could answer these questions much easier about my own program, but I don’t really feel a deep connection to the idea of the SSW in the first place.”

“To have a research-responsive curriculum that provides infrastructure whereby knowledge gained in SSW’s research centers and institutes is shared promptly with students and faculty. And simultaneously, the knowledge and information needs within the classroom is shared with research faculty to inform their research programs.”

“The disconnect between those faculty who understand the way that social work can focus on structural change and the rest of the faculty. Also, stop trying to be an R1 and focus more on teaching. Teaching should be much much more prioritized over research.”



Faculty and Staff are committed to social justice and serving diverse communities, and believe work is needed in bringing the School's internal systems and practices into alignment with the School's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Key Insights

1. Stakeholders overwhelmingly stated that they want a vision and mission that is centered in DEI (Figure 8 – Vision Descriptors and Figure 9 -Additional Mission Words). Participants from all stakeholder groups recognize the importance of weaving DEI principals into the vision and mission of the organization. They state that DEI is fundamental to the practice, curriculum, and research of the School.
2. DEI were top words used to describe future reputation that people want PSU SSW to have (Figure 10 – Ideal Reputation). Participants would like SSW to increase its fluency and commitment to DEI principals in a visible and tangible way. Commitment to social justice is a core element of the reputation that stakeholders would like SSW to embody.
3. However, for many stakeholders, commitment to DEI must start by addressing the structural barriers and inequalities within the internal culture and operation of the School. Stakeholders identified a commitment to DEI as an important challenge facing the School, as well as a top opportunity for the School to address (Figure 11 – Challenges and Figure 12 – Opportunities).
4. Stakeholders voiced concerns that the School's commitment to DEI is both insufficient as well as dogmatic. Faculty and staff are particularly cynical about the School's ability to match action to DEI principals. Some participants felt that SSW does not do enough to live into its commitment to DEI; however, other participants found that DEI principals are used to shut down voices with different perspectives or political orientation. Creating a more unified vision for DEI will help clarify the School's role in DEI practice.
5. Increasing the School's clarity on what DEI principals look like in action and thought-leadership will help the School more effectively engage the diverse communities in which social workers serve (Figure 13 – Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion). Currently, stakeholders believe SSW has been ineffective in engaging community partners and serving systematically underserved and underrepresented students. It is key for SSW to demonstrate its commitment to DEI through engagement and measurable actions that are transparent to the multiple communities it serves.

Implications

1. PSU SSW must continue to strengthen its commitment to DEI principals through its internal culture, policies and actions. Failure to do so may damage the School's reputation and decrease engagement with internal and external stakeholders.
2. Although staff are committed to the principals of DEI, the School may need to adopt clear definitions to ensure that all stakeholders are striving for the same ideals.
3. PSU SSW may be able to quickly develop and maintain momentum on initiatives related to DEI given staff's commitment to this value.
4. Programs must foster healthy debate and conflict to create a more ideologically inclusive environment.

Figure 8 Vision Descriptors N=391 All Stakeholders

What three words would you use to describe your vision for PSU SSW?



Figure 9 Additional Mission Descriptors N=327 All Stakeholders

What three words would you like to see included in PSU SSW's mission in the future?



Figure 12 Opportunities N=212 All Stakeholders

What do you believe is the single most significant opportunity PSU SSW should leverage in this plan?

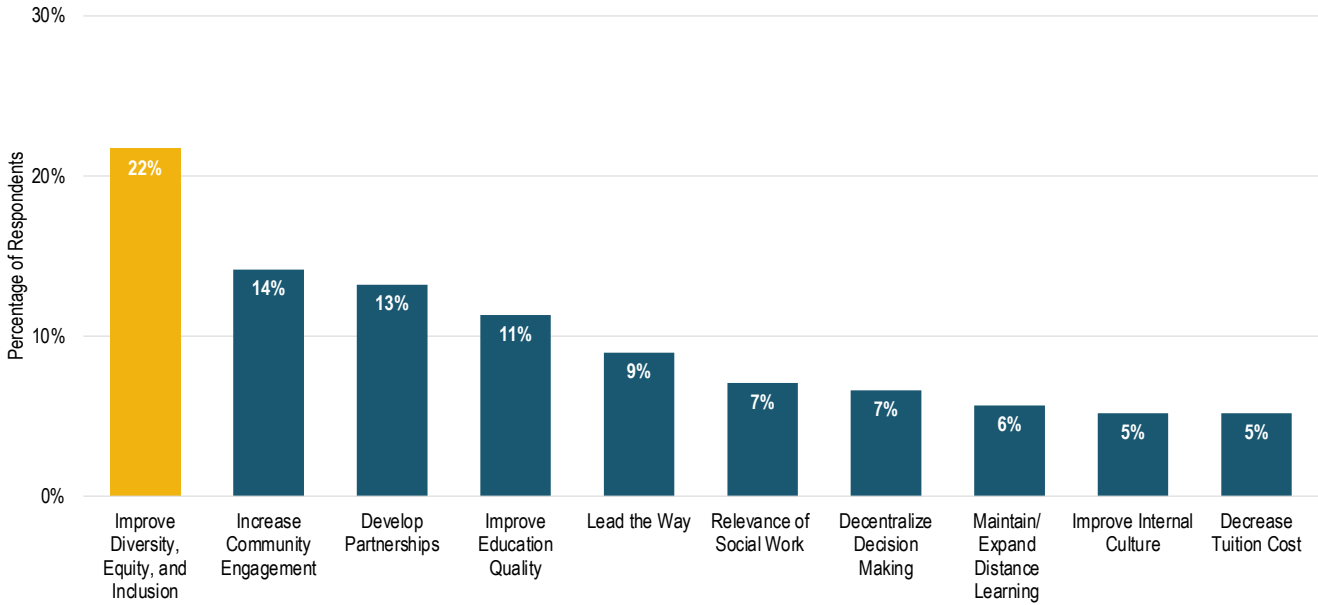
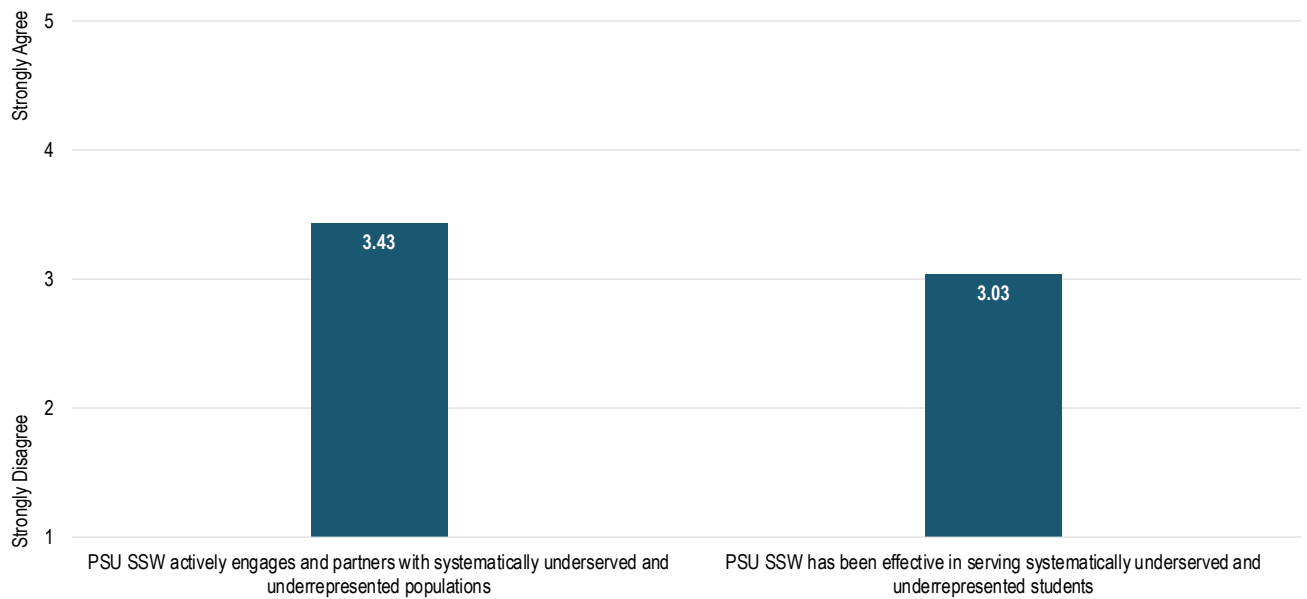


Figure 13 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion N=291 All Stakeholders

Please indicate your level of agreement with these statements:



Responses

“As an alumni of color that works with communities across the whole state, I feel the School of Social Work falls short in being inclusive of values that exist outside of Portland.”

“Lots of lip service from white-identified individuals with no real shift in curriculum or pedagogical frameworks. Still learning about whiteness from whiteness.”

“I see students of color still advocating for the same things we were working on five years ago.”

“It’s based on thinking, not doing.”

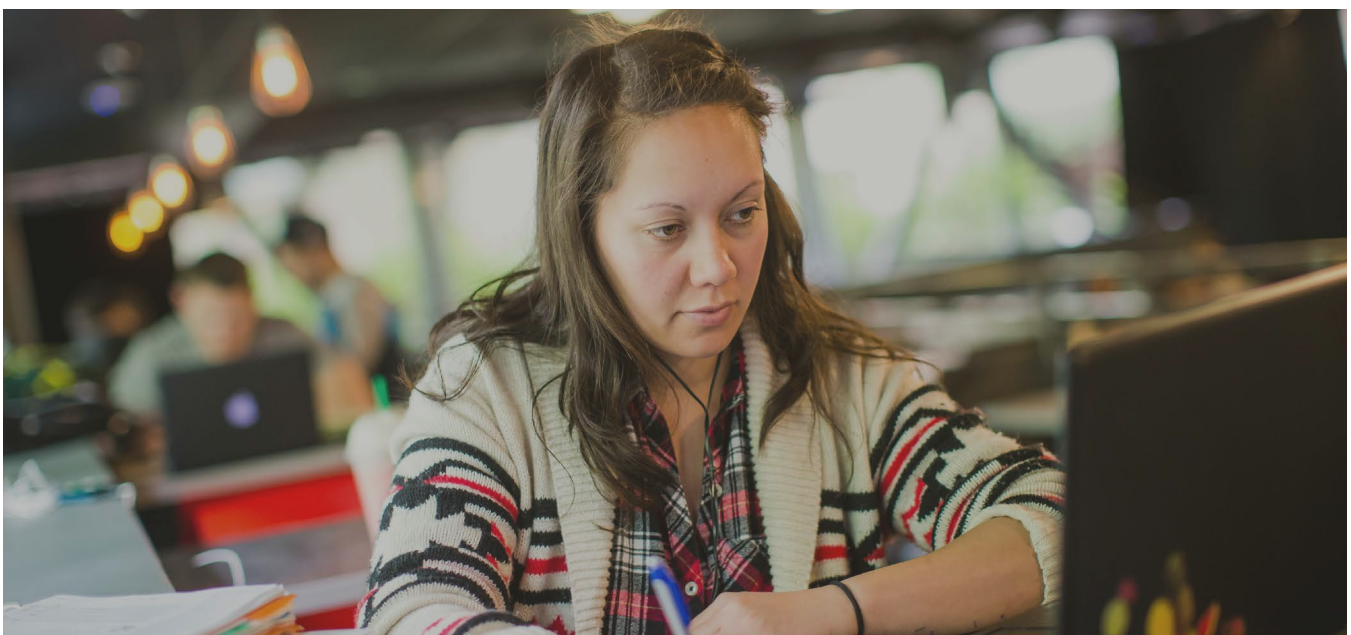
“There is a lack of congruency in how PSU SSW and the SW field fully embodies and practices social justice. There is a disconnect and a lot of injustice, racism, elitism, and many other oppressions actively negating the work and teachings for future SW practitioners.”

“The structure of the University continues the oppression which it seeks to dismantle.”

“I think the intent to serve underrepresented students and populations is real, and the anti-oppressive focus is woven into both the curriculum and the way that instructors conduct classes (e.g., empowering students to shape the direction of the course, being validating and responsive to feedback). That said, disability seems to be at best an afterthought in this program, and I think there would be a lot to be gained from social workers considering disabled people as an oppressed group, understanding how that oppression functions, and considering how to interrupt it in their work. In learning about disabled people’s oppression, we need to learn from disabled social movement leaders, disabled academics, etc. (not just non-disabled social workers who’ve worked with disabled people).”

“This connection is strong when individual faculty have the relationships, and weak when these faculty leave or when a rupture in relationship occurs. It would be better for the Dean to institutionalize relationships, and perhaps with specific communities. The absence of a sustained institutional relationship with Tribes and urban Indigenous serving agencies is regrettable and should be addressed.”

“The school’s commitment to social justice has led the way in our community and continues to be a beacon of light for students and those partnering with the School.”



PSU SSW's current organizational structure, processes and procedures are creating high workload for staff and faculty.

Key Insights

1. Staff and faculty feel that the School's current structure and processes do not support a collaborative and productive culture (Figure 14 – Org Culture and Figure 15 - Systems and Processes). Improving the organization's structure was identified as a top opportunity (Figure 16 – Opportunities).
2. The school's processes and procedures are considered to be ineffective and undocumented. Communication processes are an area many felt needed additional support. Stakeholders provided examples of unclear guidelines on committee expectations and communication breakdowns on distance learning site closures as examples.
3. Communication around decision making is also seen as a large problem. Staff and faculty desire more transparency and would like a more decentralized decision-making process to be considered (Figure 17 – Opportunities).
4. Funding challenges limit the School's ability to have a strong structure. Position cuts and loss of support staff are believed to play a large role in workload challenges staff are experiencing.
5. Research staff felt that the School's funding/structure model was leading to wage inequity as employees working in research centers have less job security and increased risk in their employment status. This is felt to make it harder for the School to hire and retain faculty (Figure 18 – capabilities, talent and rewards).

Implications

1. Given staff desire for more connection between research and teaching, the Strategic Plan may need to include a focus on increasing cross departmental collaboration within the School.
2. Increasing cross departmental collaboration may help decrease silos within the School and improve employee engagement.
3. PSU SSW may need to review its organization structure to ensure that it supports the School's mission, vision, and growth goals.
4. Improving and documenting processes and procedures will be critical to improving perceptions of workload as it decreases time spent on navigating processes and procedures.

Figure 14 Organizational Culture N=103 PSU SSW Employees

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement:



Figure 15 Organizational Structure and Processes N=99 PSU SSW Employees

Please select your level of agreement with the following statements regarding organizational structure and processes:

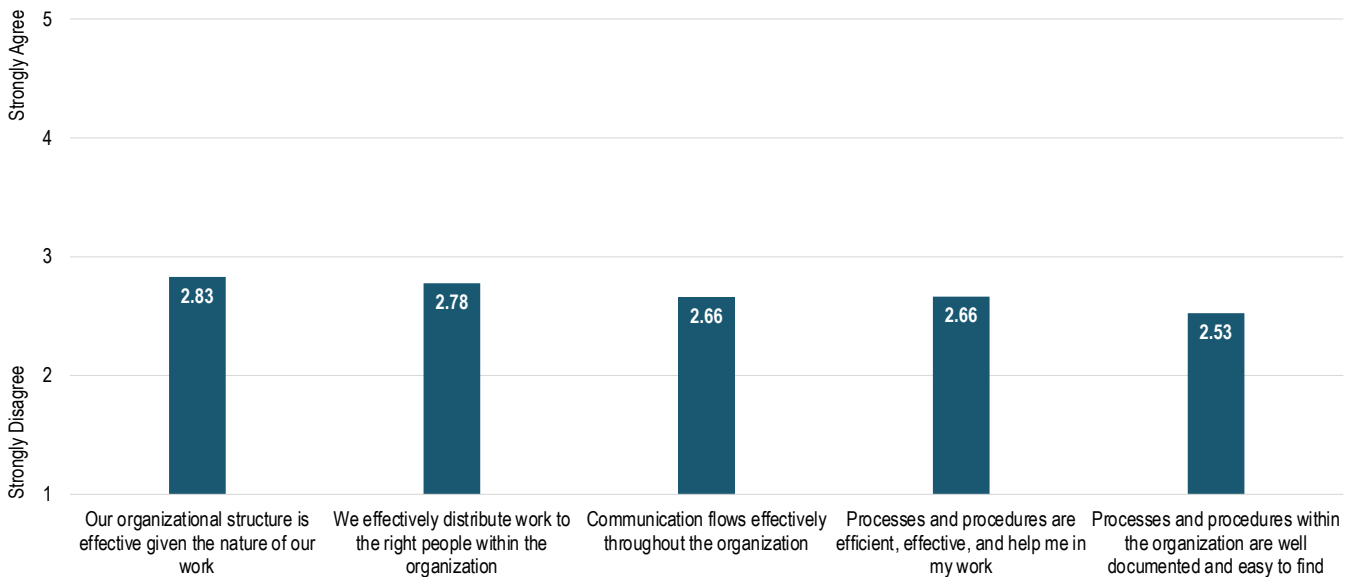


Figure 16 Opportunities N=212 All Stakeholders

What do you believe is the single most significant opportunity PSU SSW should leverage in this plan?

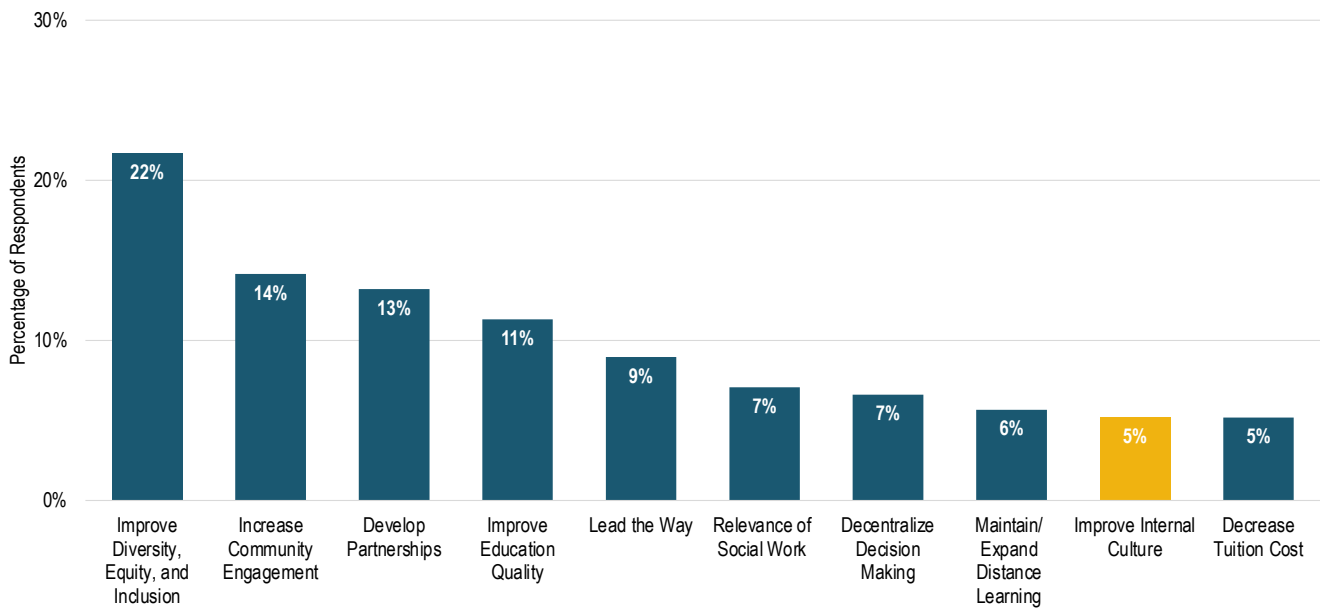


Figure 17 Opportunities N=212 All Stakeholders

What do you believe is the single most significant opportunity PSU SSW should leverage in this plan?

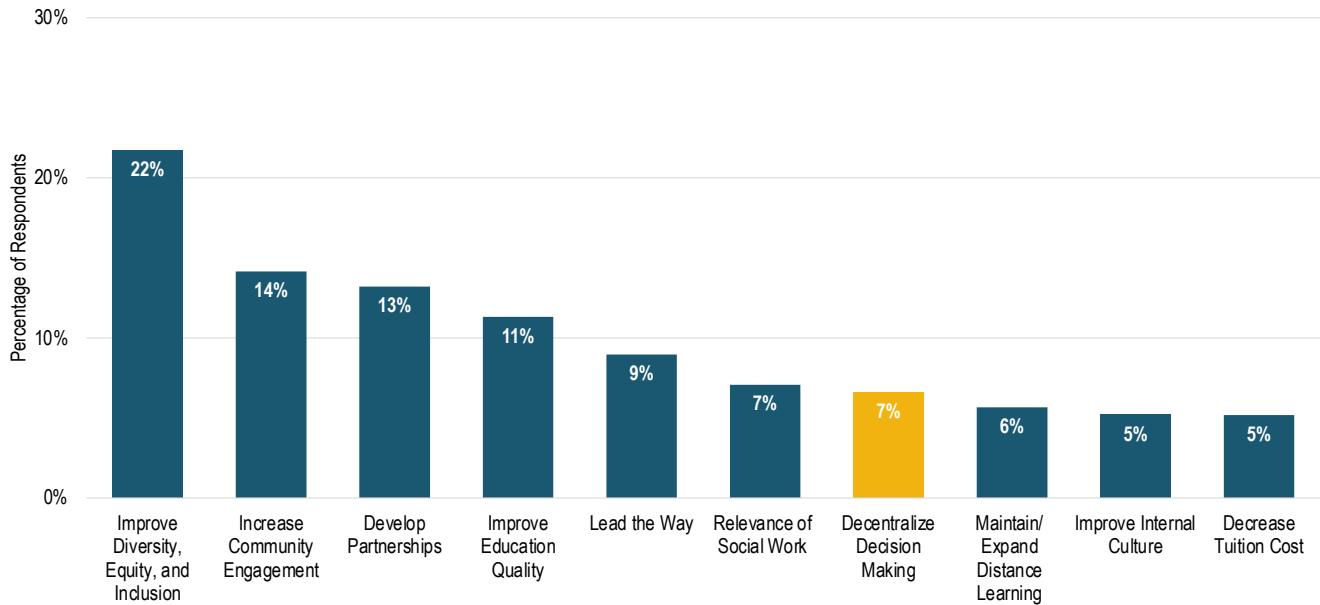
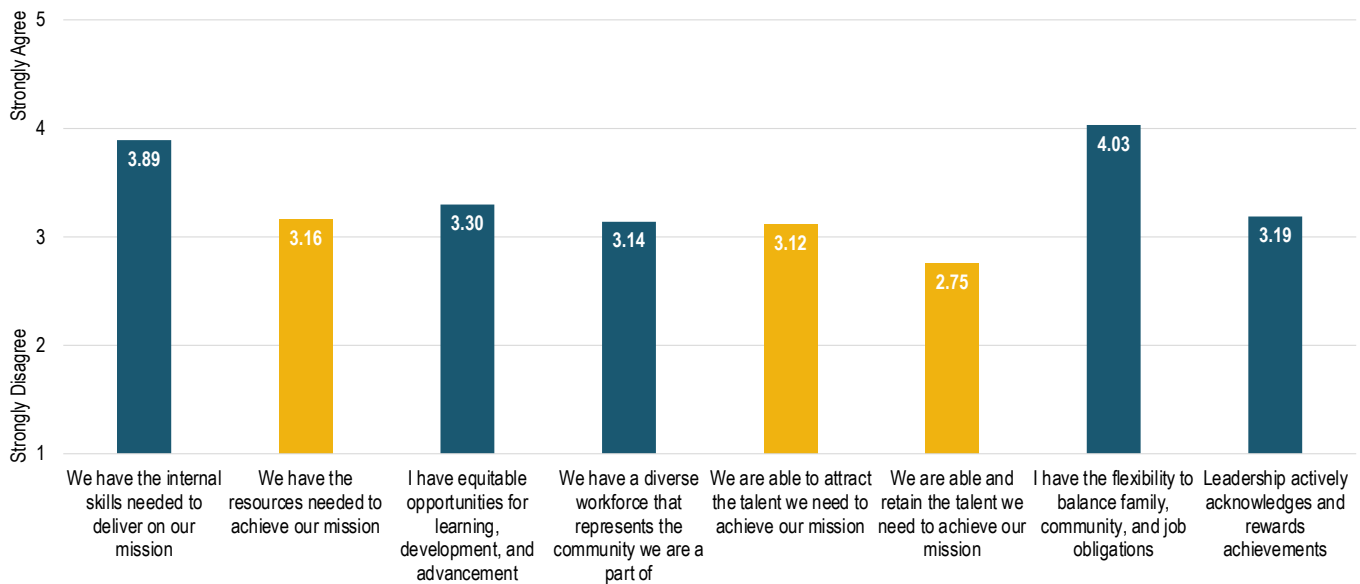


Figure 18 Capabilities, Rewards, and Talents N=101 PSU SSW Employees

Please select your level of agreement with the following statements regarding capabilities, talents, and rewards:



Responses

“The organizational structure, which is focused on the 4 teaching programs, is a huge barrier to achieving our overall mission. And the siloed approach between the teaching side of the school and anything that has to do with research or scholarship makes communication and collaboration, much harder than it should be.”

“I think we have a real opportunity to change how we think about internal, collaborative communication among our staff and faculty. We’ve been operating in a “scarcity” mindset, where we argue about who gets what resources, as opposed to trying to pool our resources collectively for the bettering of the School and the student experience.”

“Many processes at the university level are difficult to find. The people responsible for implementing those procedures are wonderful, but finding them can be a real difficulty.”

“We have the possibility of creating a truly inclusive and representative, non-traditional leadership and decision-making structure that may better enable us to serve and interact with people as they would like to be (rather than leading based on our own expectations and experience).”

“Our organization structure and communication has not been revised to address the growth in the program and there has been little investment in the structural parts of the program.”

“I think this has been brought up in various spaces before but to me it’s always felt like we’re trying to operate like a small program when we are very much a large school.”

“Research and Scholarship: Faculty skill/interest in research and scholarship is stifled by workload and institutional infrastructure for research (e.g., RRI) is underutilized”

“Some of that has to do with how we make decisions – where I would hear people alluding to some of the problems that we face. Our PhD program just announced a decision about dissertation formats that fundamentally changes the way advisors work with students. But never ever consulted professors. Over 40 people are affected by a decision that never even came up as a discussion.”

SSW has been lacking a clear strategy and needs a unified vision and mission.

Key Insights

1. The current organizational culture is fragmented. Faculty and staff are highly aligned to the mission and purpose of their programs and research centers; however, many were either unaware of the mission of the School or felt it was irrelevant moving forward (Figure 19 - Mission Relevance). Participants in every part of the School echoed their sense that the various programs and research centers within the School lack a unified mission and vision. While many felt a high degree of commitment and cultural belonging to their respective programs and centers, there was universal sentiment that the School culture itself is fragmented and siloed.
2. Staff and faculty don't believe the School has clear goals and strategies or a consistent approach to executing strategies. The lack of clarity around decision-making and strategic direction has a negative effect on the School's internal communication (Figure 20 – Strategy & Leadership). Participants report low confidence in strategic planning implementation in part due to gaps in organizational structure and processes (Figure 21 – Organizational Structure and Processes).
3. Stakeholders want to see the mission better reflect the strength of SSW's commitment to social justice. SSW's reputation for thought leadership in DEI is an important value that the School brings to the University, and social work community and participants would like the School to further center social justice in its mission and practices (Figure 22 – Additional Mission Descriptors).

Implications

1. Developing a Strategic Plan with a strong mission and vision may help create unity by providing the different programs within the School guidance and a vision that they can align their goals with.
2. The Strategic Plan must have clear and transparent accountability for guiding decision-making and priorities that align with a shared vision for the School.
3. The Strategic Plan implementation team must establish regular updates to communicate progress and ensure feedback opportunities.
4. Programs and research centers within the School need to increase opportunities for collaboration and greater capacity for information sharing.

Figure 19 Mission Relevance N=406 All Stakeholders

To what extent do you believe the current mission continues to be appropriate for our next strategic plan?

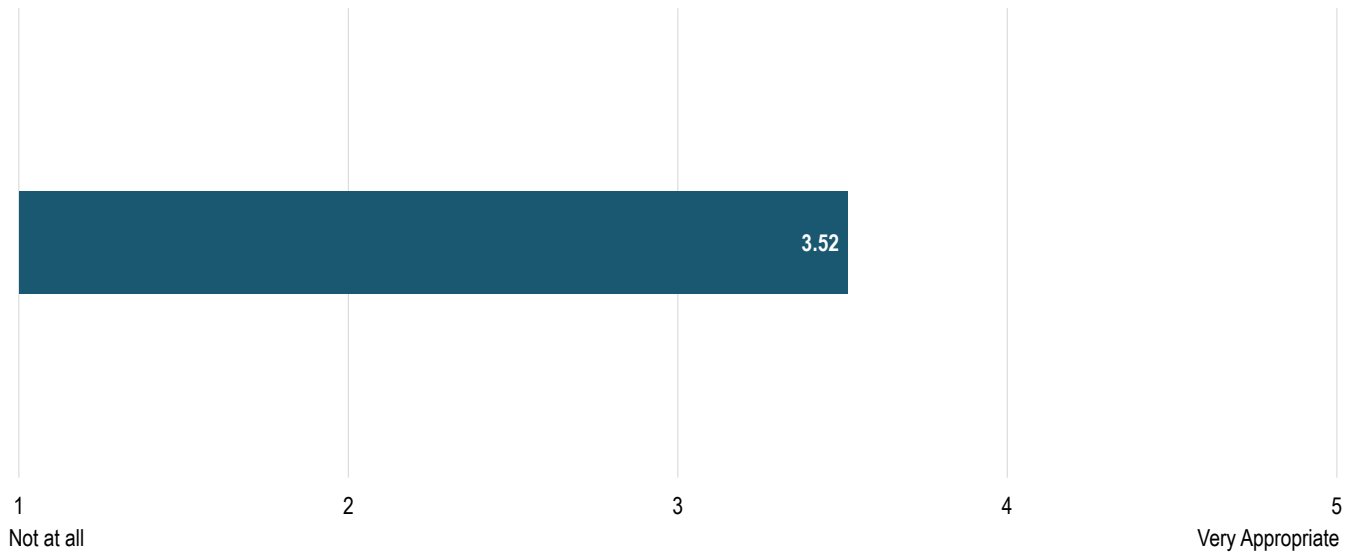
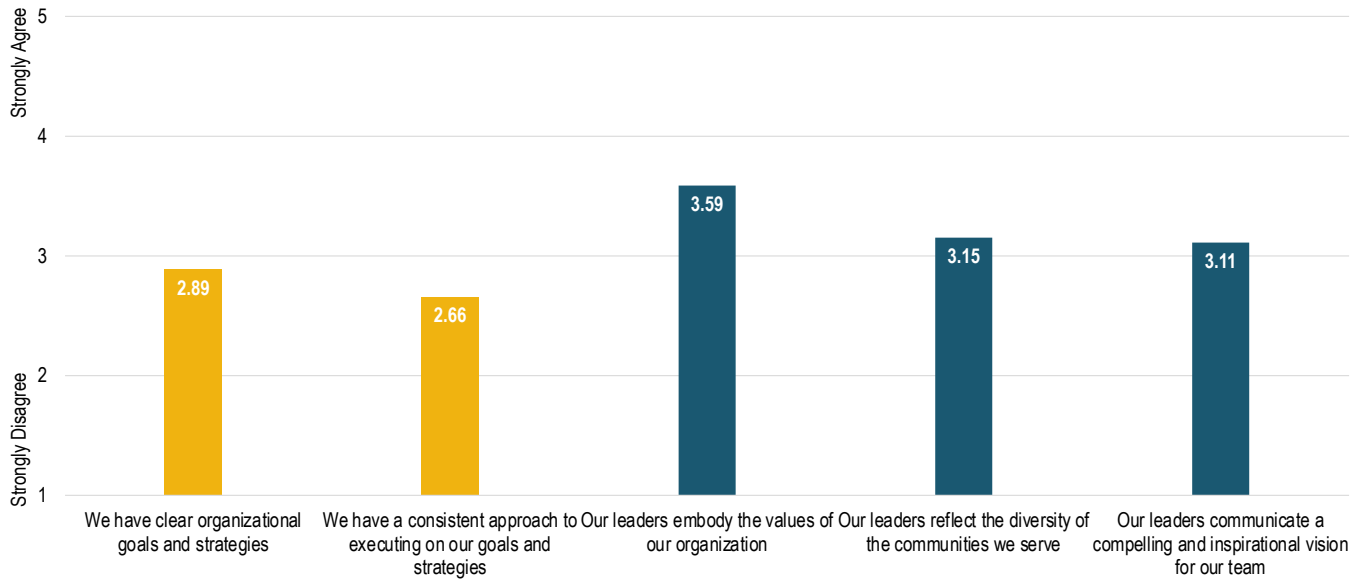


Figure 20 Strategy and Leadership N=99 PSU SSW Employees

Please select your level of agreement with the following statements regarding leadership and strategy:



Responses

“The mission makes some bold claims about supporting social justice and eradicating poverty; yet, the School is not offering free admission to Black, Indigenous, and other students of color. There just seems to be such a divide between the mission and the actual steps the School is willing to take to get there.”

“I think it will live up to the mission statement when school is affordable for more people.”

“Need to consider rural community needs outside of metro area, or narrow mission.”

“The world has shifted SO MUCH in the past 5 years and the language of the mission needs to reflect the School’s adjustment to present-day context.”

“Is the stated mission a nice idea? Yes. Does it feel like it is actually being carried out? Not exactly. If you hope that social workers of the future will be effective and educated, how about we start with self-care and choices in our learning? If I can’t meet my own basic needs sometimes, how can you expect me to effectively and ethically provide the best care for my clients? And why are our electives largely irrelevant? It’s often either things I’ve already taken multiple classes about or things I have no interest in. If we commit to providing autonomy for clients, why do we not have autonomy in our educational passions that we are paying thousands of dollars to pursue?”

“It feels critically important to me that we start by asking the question of whether or not we even have a clear enough identity as THE SSW to create a single plan.”



Stakeholders want to see SSW step into a leadership role and take action to change and innovate social work.

Key Insights

1. SSW has competing demands from their role as a state-wide system for social work training and support. The demand for trained social workers has increased, particularly given community burdens during COVID-19, and PSU is the state's training and workforce development agent. Training students to work in social work while also working to innovate the field puts increased pressure on faculty and staff.
2. Stakeholders see online education as an opportunity to make classes more accessible; however, many stakeholders argue that opportunities for in-person instruction outside the Portland region is important to SSW's commitment to providing increased access, particularly in rural communities (Figure 23 - Opportunities).
3. While the School's role in workforce development is important, stakeholders also want to see PSU SSW lead the way in taking social work to the future, both in practice and by advocating for research-based innovations in the field (Figure 24 – Opportunities).
4. Stakeholders would like the School to work more on being known for its innovation, inclusive community, and collaboration. Participants reflect the sentiment that they would like SSW to become a more visible leader in the social work literature and applied practice (Figure 25 – Ideal Reputation).
5. Stakeholders see increased community engagement and partnerships as a key area to continue to strengthen (Figure 26 – Opportunities).
6. Stakeholders see the provision of high-quality education and affordable education as very important, but do not rate SSW as highly effective in fulfilling these roles. Many would like to see the School implement innovative approaches to educating and developing graduates of its programs as well as advocating for affordable education and better wages for social workers (Figure 27 – PSU SSW's Roles).

Implications

1. SSW must balance online and decentralized, in-person centers to provide training and community collaborations state-wide.
2. SSW should increase the visibility of its research and community practice in local and state-wide policy discussions.

Figure 23 Opportunities N=212 All Stakeholders

What do you believe is the single most significant opportunity PSU SSW should leverage in this plan?

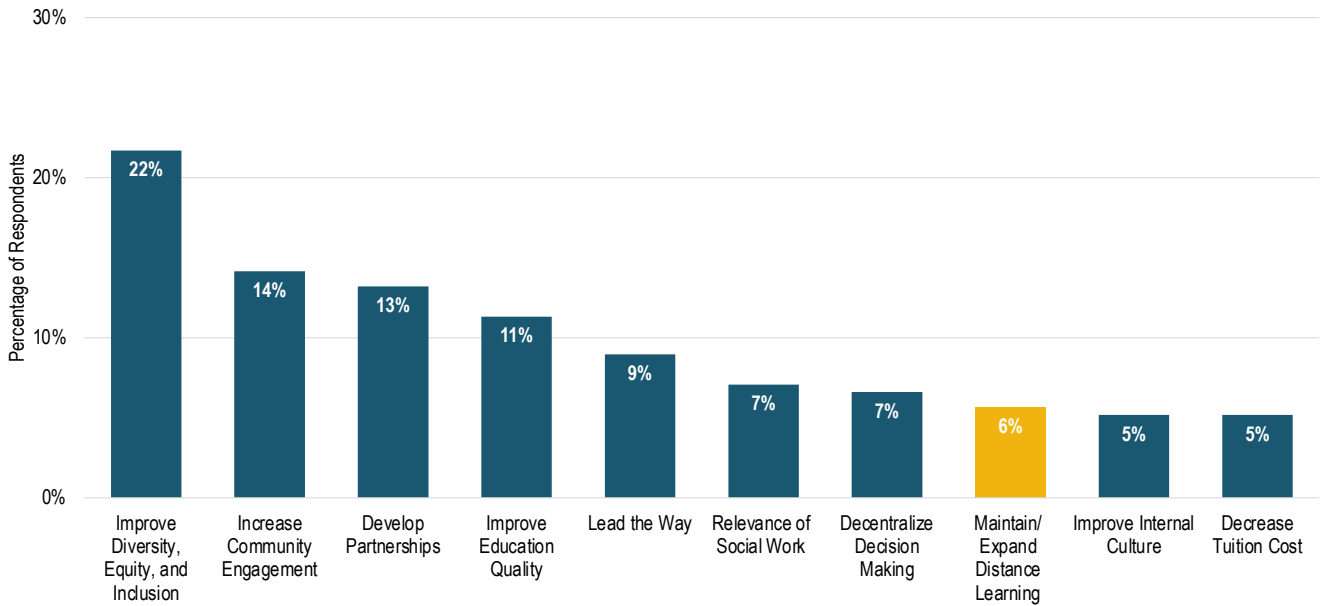


Figure 24 Opportunities N=212 All Stakeholders

What do you believe is the single most significant opportunity PSU SSW should leverage in this plan?

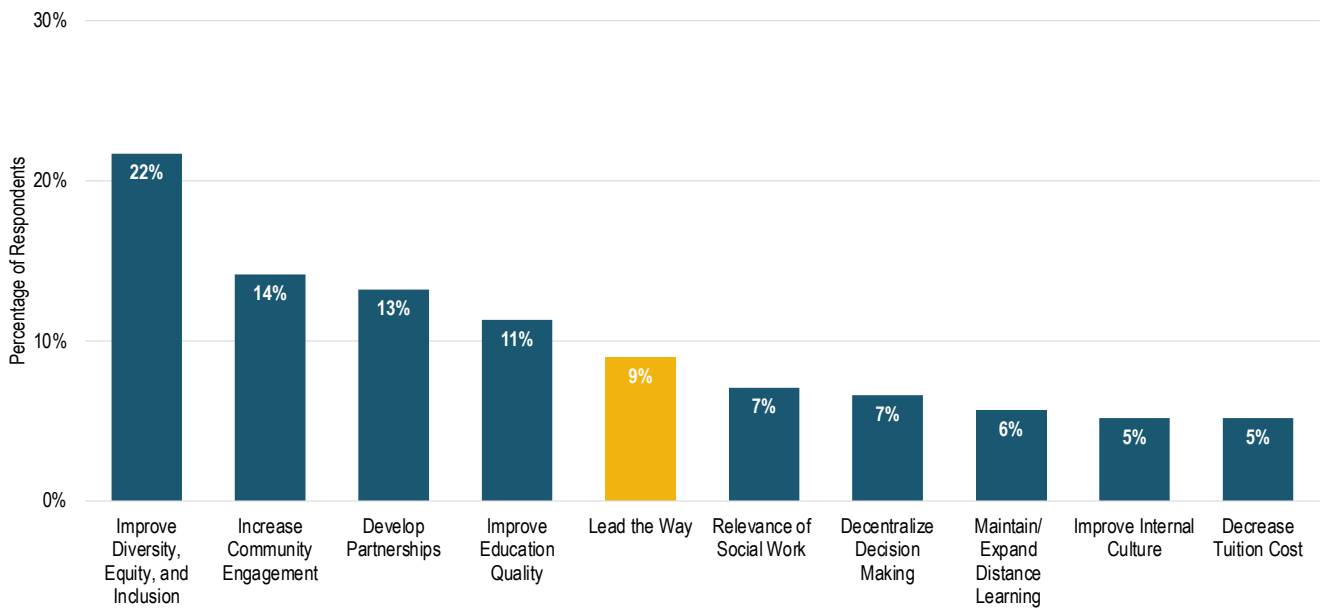
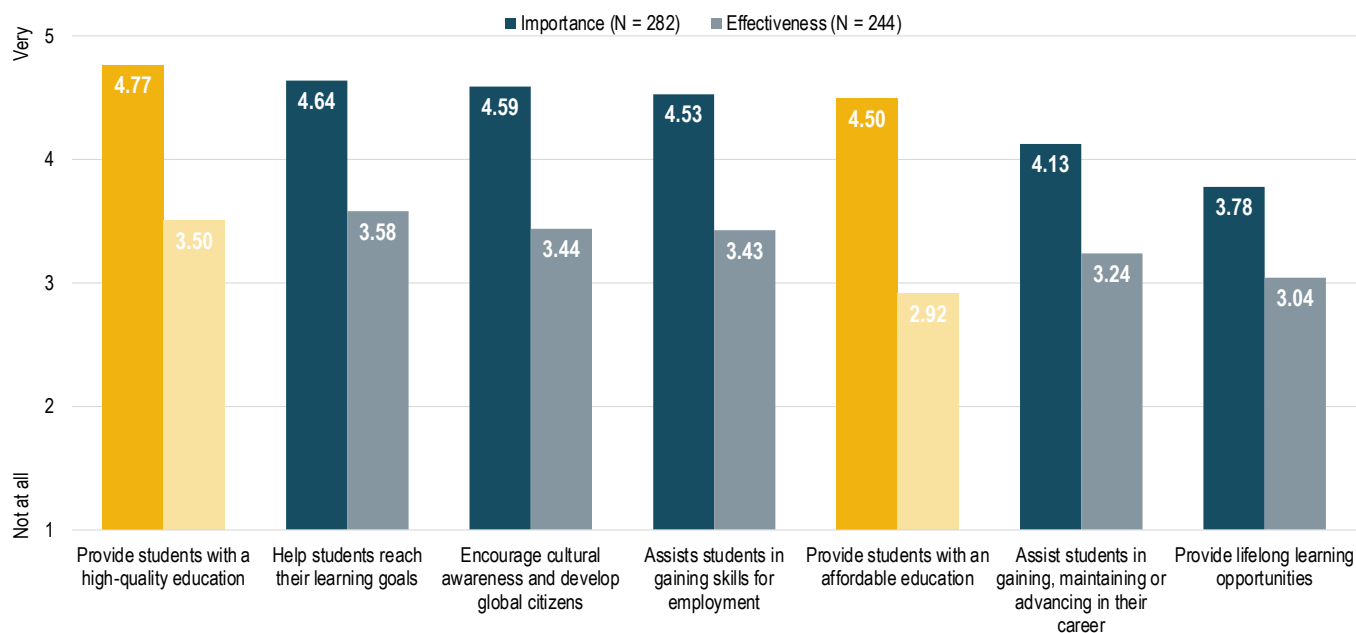


Figure 27 PSU SSW's Roles N=282 All Stakeholders

Please rate how important the following roles are and the effectiveness of PSU SSW in these roles.



Responses

“The SSW is caught between three different goals that are in conflict with each other. 1) Minting new SW practitioners, who need to get hired in actual real world organizations; 2) encouraging SW students to do a lot of work on themselves - why are you here, what are your biases, blind spots, strengths, passions, what brings you to the work and whether or not you should be in the profession; 3) and a radical utopianism for the future of our society, completely unmoored from day-to-day realities, completely unfeasible, and frankly, probably disastrous. I don’t know how you reconcile those three things.”

“It’s the only MSW program facility in Oregon and the degree is highly valuable professionally. Online schools are turning out comparable clinicians. PSU is not well tuned into workplace needs, preparation for employment, or meeting community clinical workforce needs. Unavailable for partnering to improve competence for today’s Social Worker/Therapist.”

“PSU School of Social Work has offered one of the best programs in the nation for its engagement, collaboration, and integration with the local community. Building on this capacity for meaningful and practical education is essential for a student’s ability to succeed in human services work after graduation. Yet, too often missing from the Social Work curriculum are essential leadership skills in understanding finances, how to analyze data, and critical thinking skills for decision making, which, when coupled with important caring advocacy efforts for individuals and society, makes it possible to gain traction and succeed in our competitive and consumer-focused environment.”

“Let’s be super real about the urgency- the desperate need for systemic change. The role of the social worker today should be to redesign the framework of society. Every institution should be truly public and run in a collective manner. We need to organize. We need to radicalize the NASW.”

Stakeholders have negative perceptions of SSW's reputation.

Key Insights

1. Survey participants have a negative perception of PSU SSW. Forty percent of respondents were detractors of the School and would not recommend the School of Social Work to others, leading to PSU SSW getting a Net Promoter Score of -16 (Figure 28 - NPS).
2. The perception of SSW's reputation varies based on stakeholder role within the School. Students reported greater satisfaction in the BSW program than did graduate students the MSW program. Stakeholders in research centers regarded the reputation of their center as more important than the reputation of the School.
3. The most common word used by stakeholders to describe PS SSW's current reputation was "white." Given stakeholder desire for a focus on DEI, the School's current reputation does not appear to live up to that desire. There are also considerable positive words that arose that describe the School's current reputation, such as progressive, social justice, inclusive, good, and respected. However, the School's reputation is also mired by words such as disconnected, elitist, and racist (Figure 29 – Current Reputation).
4. The School's reputation is also negatively affected by perceptions that they have not been able to provide students with a high-quality education (Figure 30 – PSU SSW's Roles). Some stakeholders believe the School's success is due to it being the only public school of social work, rather than from having a positive reputation for high-quality education.
5. The quality of education and improving it were top challenges and opportunities (Figure 31 – Opportunities, Figure 32 – Challenges). Stakeholders are concerned about the ability of the School to control the quality of the students who graduate from their undergraduate and graduate programs.

Implications

1. SSW needs to demonstrate its capacity to provide oversight and accountability over the quality of its student work. Improving the quality of education will be critical to developing a positive reputation.
2. PSU SSW's current reputation may hamper the School's ability to grow. Improving communication and engagement will be critical to developing a positive reputation and the success and growth of the School.

Figure 30 PSU SSW's Roles N=282 All Stakeholders

Please rate how important the following roles are and the effectiveness of PSU SSW in these roles.

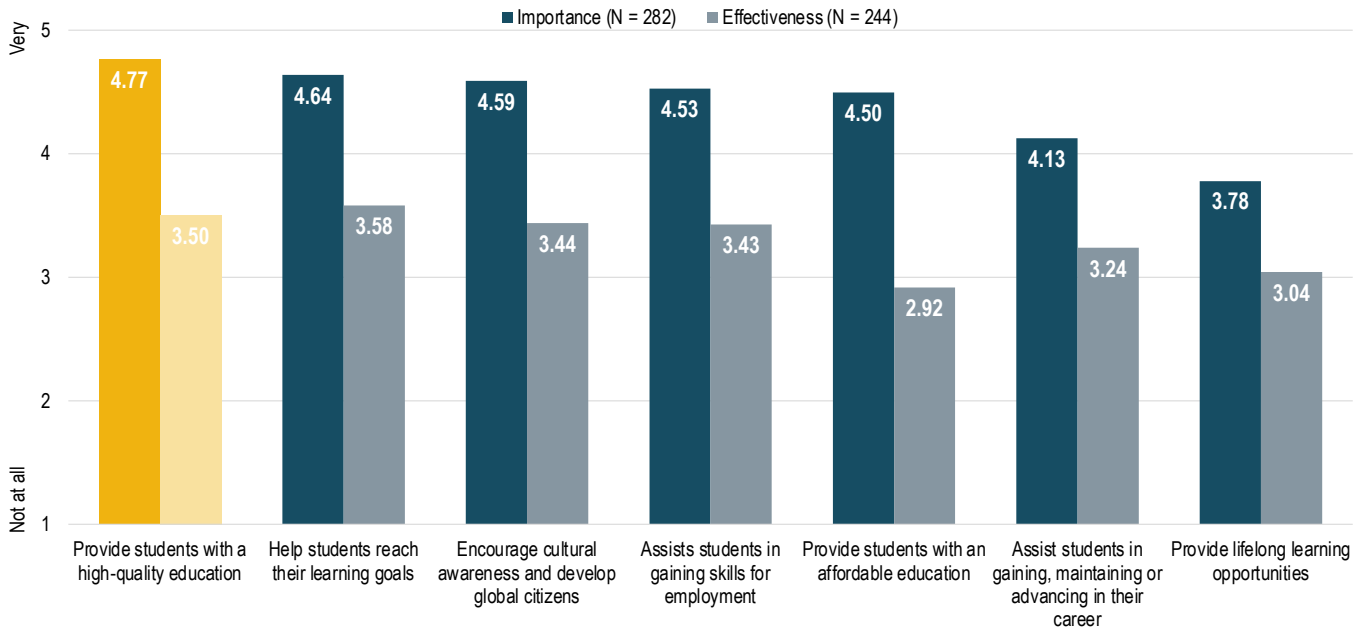


Figure 31 Opportunities N=212 All Stakeholders

What do you believe is the single most significant opportunity PSU SSW should leverage in this plan?

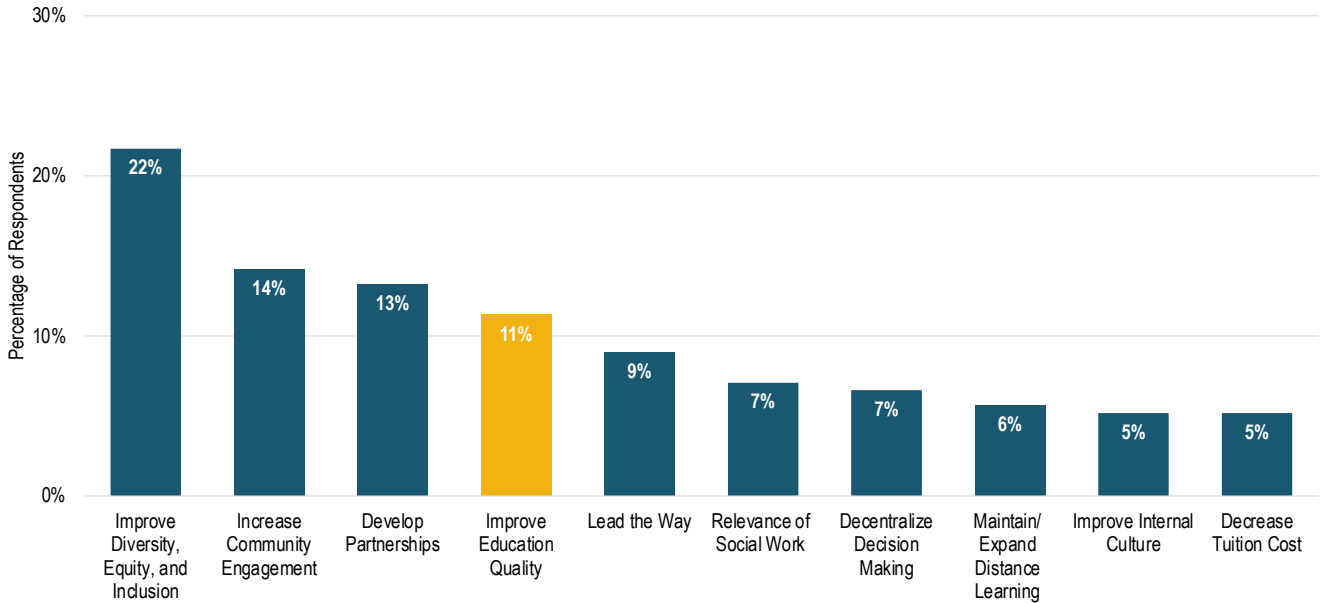
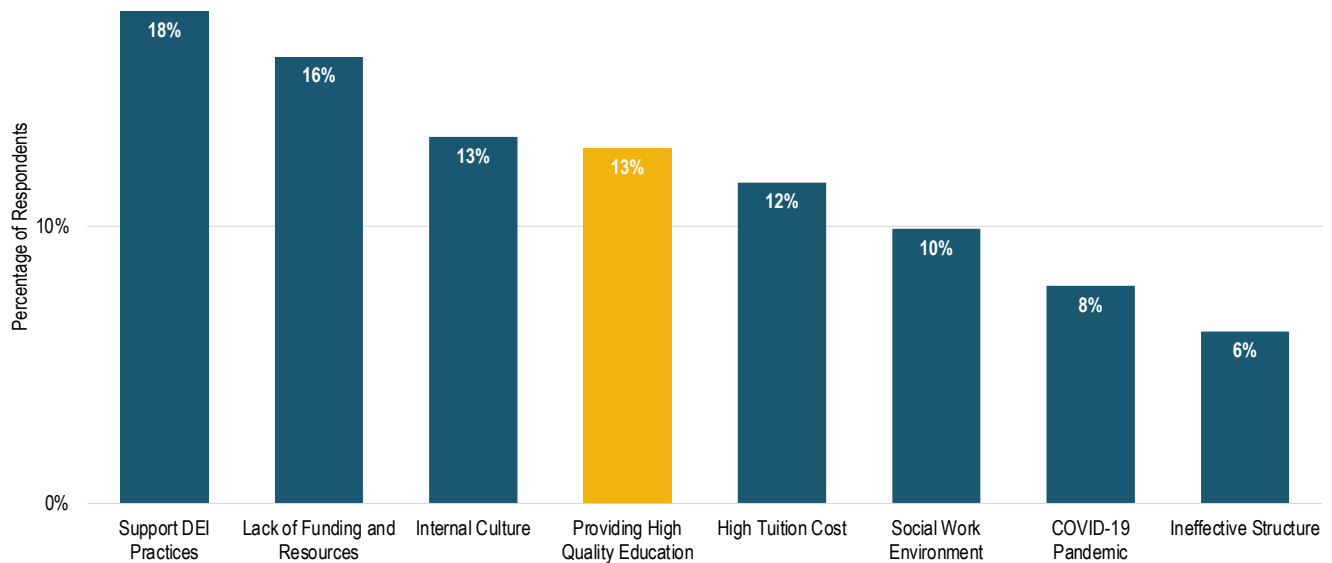


Figure 32 Challenges N=242 All Stakeholders

What do you believe is the most significant challenge facing PSU SSW?



Responses

“PSU is so focused on catering to the socialist left, they have forgotten their conservative students.”

“The program is too easy and not rigorous; students do not have to write a thesis or take an exam to graduate.”

“This school is taught by white people, about white people, to white people.”

“Honestly, I think the quality of PSUs education is exemplary, but ideological perspectives often feel isolating. Both when I went to school and as I’ve mentored students over the last 10 years, folks sometimes feel less than valued for having a conservative perspective. It’s also dangerous to speak up. I have also made attempts to stay engaged as an alumni, but have never been included or welcomed.”

“In the Queer/Trans community, I have heard negative things about PSU SSW’s programs.”

“PSU has a narrow culture catering to very specific ideals on social justice.”

“PSU is very understanding and adapts its expectations to help students be successful. However, I think some of those adaptations are harmful to student’s learning. Having an MSW from PSU doesn’t mean what it used to in terms of graduates who have a certain level of understanding, an ability that I would expect. I hope there are ways to hold students to high expectations while making accommodations for them to meet those high expectations instead of changing the expectations.”

“We are receiving new grads into the work place who are not prepared to do work.”

“Many people, myself included, as an alumni and social work field placement for students, have had overall negative impressions of the School. The sense is that because this school has a non-competitive monopoly on the MSW market in the state of Oregon, it has not had to be accountable to critical feedback from students, adjunct faculty, partners, alumni, etc. Harmful practices have been voiced and reputation of the School is absolutely broken.”

Funding constraints threaten SSW's ability to grow and support social work.

Key Insights

1. Over the last two years, social workers across the nation have been asked to step up to support the multitude of issues facing society from houselessness to mental health to substance abuse. PSU SSW's stakeholders are acutely aware of the need for social workers given current trends and events (Figure 33 – Opportunities).
2. Stakeholders are concerned with the work environment social workers have to face given the increased demand, and the School's ability to meet this demand and equitably serve its students and graduates while facing funding challenges and rising tuition costs (Figure 34 – Challenges).
3. While the School of Social Work has been successful in increasing enrollment year over year, PSU has experienced year over year drop in enrollment since 2010.¹ At the same time, support from the state has decreased as well, leading to a heavier burden on students as they pay a larger proportion of total education and general expenses (Figure 35 – Shifting Costs from State to Student).
4. Stakeholders are concerned that given the tough work environments social workers face, with high workloads and low wages, in addition to student debt incurred due to high tuition, may lead to lower enrollment in the future as students seek other professions that may offer less stress and better pay. Some stakeholders believe addressing and lowering tuition costs should be a priority to ensure the School stays successful (Figure 36 – Opportunities).

Implications

1. While the School has been successful financially, it will need to pay close attention to the environment it operates within to ensure it stays ahead of trends and remains financially stable long term.
2. The Strategic Plan may need to address the lack of financial resources available to students seeking a degree from the School.
3. Addressing the larger environment Social Workers operate in may require the School to develop new capabilities that it does not currently possess.

Footnote

1. <https://www.pdx.edu/research-planning/fte-headcount>

Figure 33 Opportunities N=212 All Stakeholders

What do you believe is the single most significant opportunity PSU SSW should leverage in this plan?

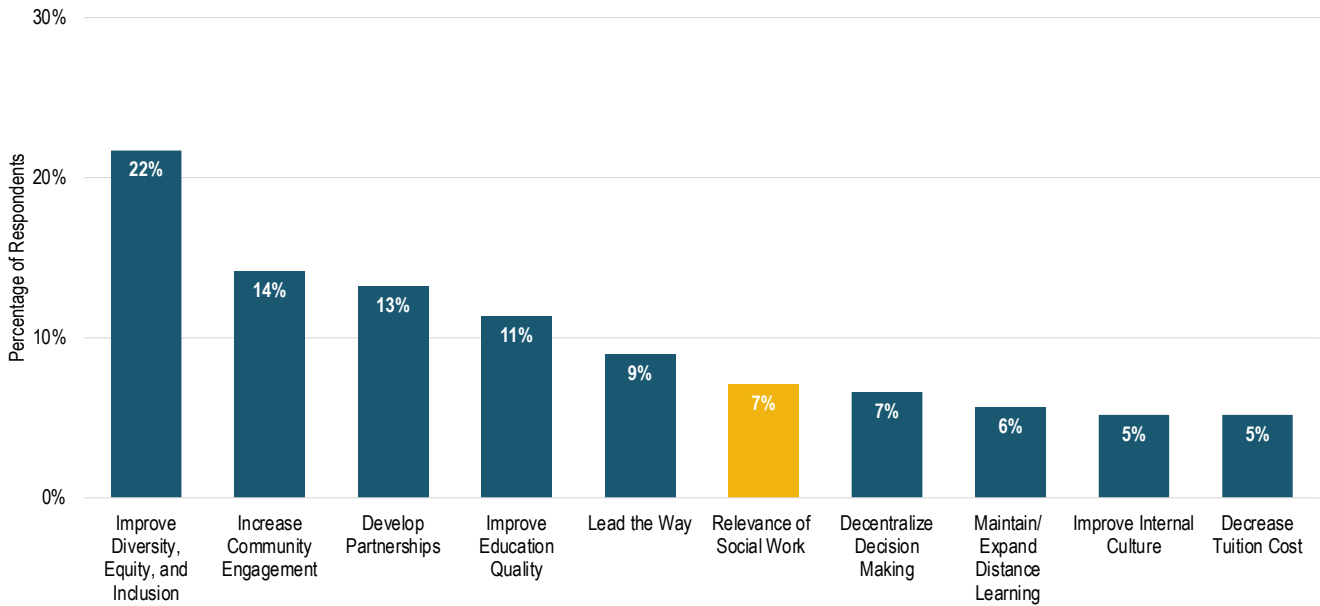


Figure 34 Challenges N=242 All Stakeholders

What do you believe is the most significant challenge facing PSU SSW?

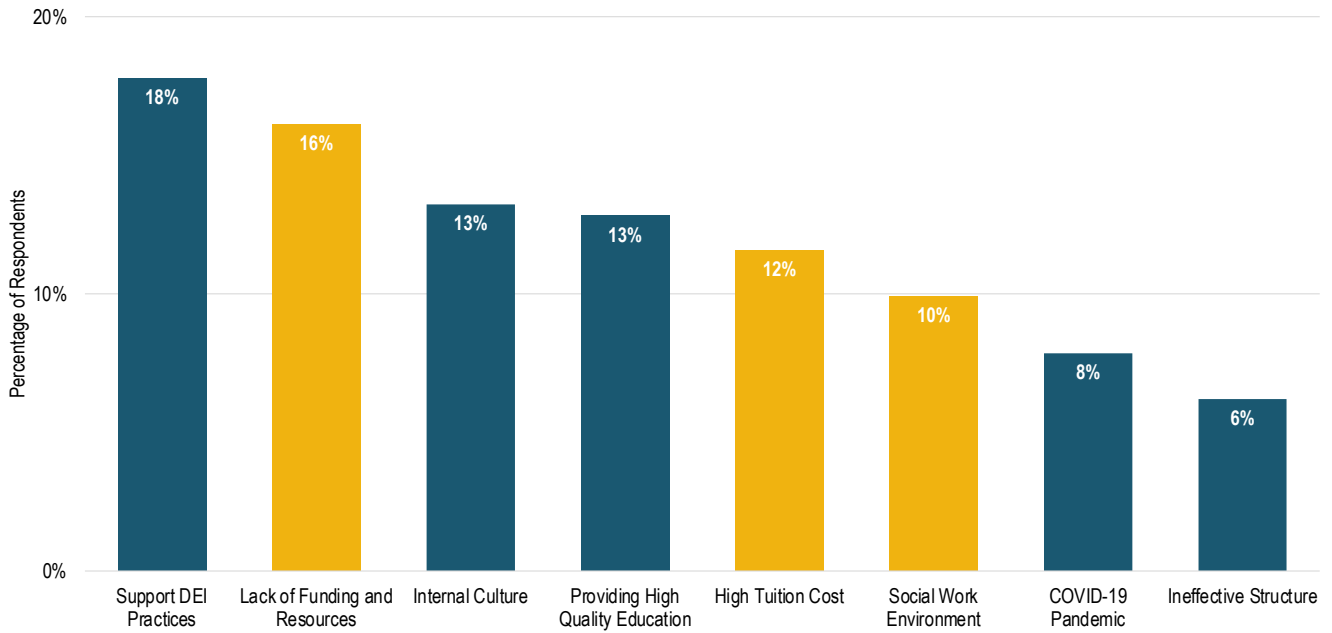
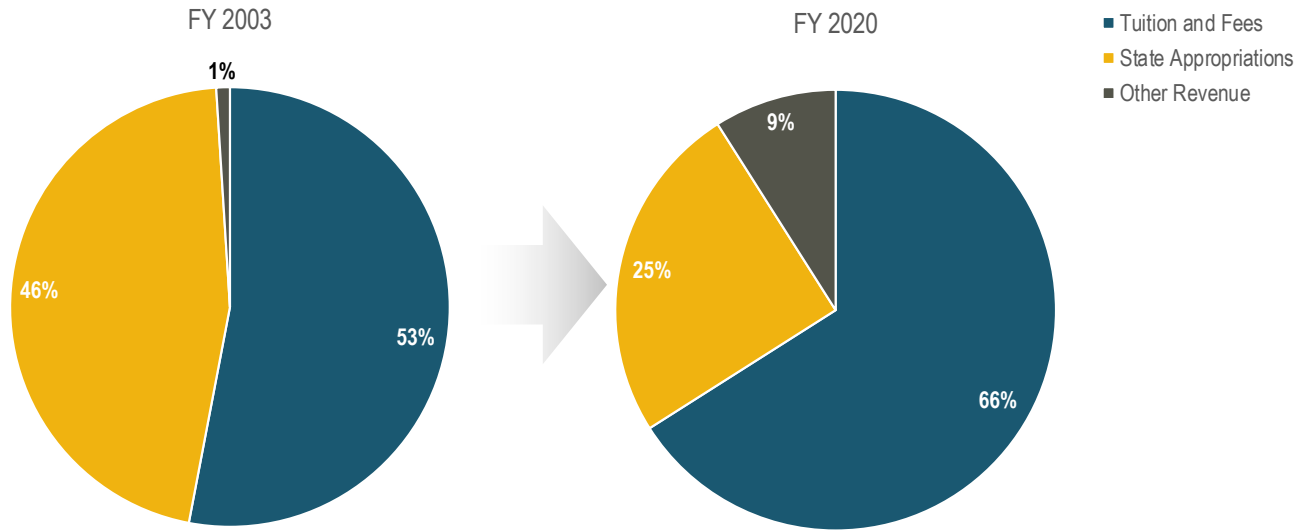


Figure 35 Shifting Costs from State to Student

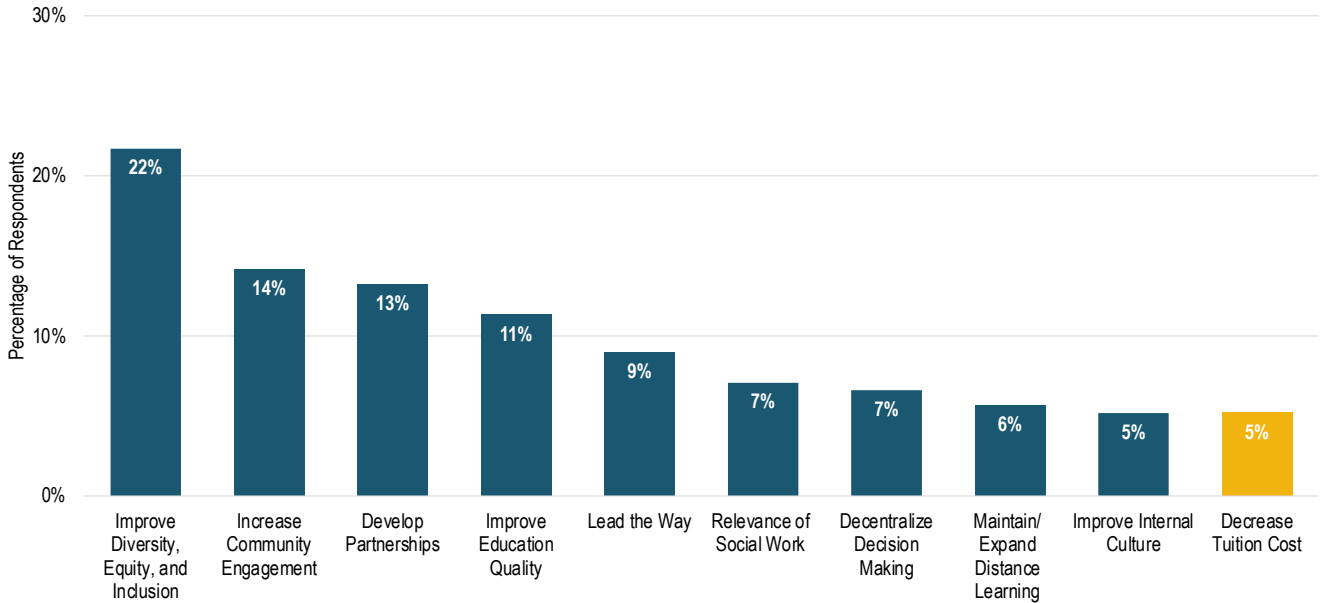
Students, through tuition & fees are paying for a much larger proportion of total education and general expenses over time.



Source: Office of Postsecondary Finance and Capital

Figure 36 Opportunities N=212 All Stakeholders

What do you believe is the single most significant opportunity PSU SSW should leverage in this plan?



Responses

“Higher education in Oregon is historically and systematically underfunded. The current situation with a very tight labor market means less students go [back to] graduate school.”

“Funding and the ability to equitably serve students while honoring the value of instructors, operations, and PSU [is the largest challenge].”

“Price vs earning potential. It is a widespread problem, but many are no longer seeing the value of a college education due to the cost and burden of student loans.”

“Retaining affordability of the program given compensation for social workers in the field.”

“In an environment where there is intense pressure on social service agencies to cut costs and increase productivity (by making its employees work under more stress with more “accountability,” meaning more paperwork, meetings, hoops to jump through), and the cost of education outpacing inflation by a wide margin, eventually prospective students won’t bother getting an SW degree because the cost of a BSW or an MSW will be so high, while the potential wages and work/life balance of the jobs will be so low. It will crash the system entirely.”

“Affordable education. Need more ways to provide tuition remission and scholarships to MSW students.”

“I think students cannot afford tuition without taking on lifelong debt, and that needs to stop. As a parent, I am encouraging my child to get into a Registered Apprenticeship program instead of college so that my child will not have the same financial burden that I have.”

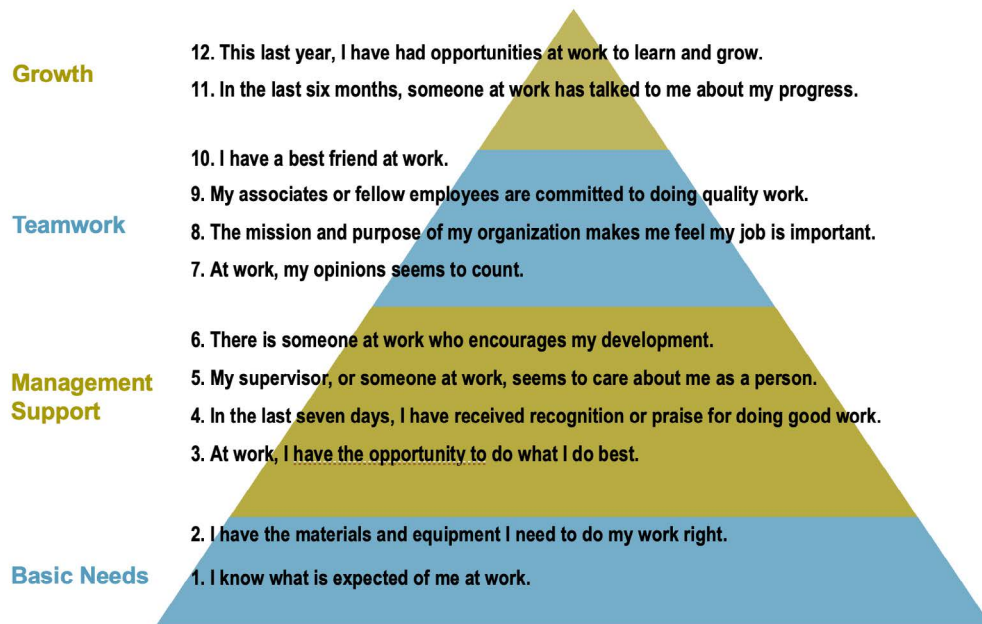


Appendix One – Internal (staff) survey

This appendix includes results from all questions asked of PSU SSW Employees in the survey. This survey utilized a Whole System approach, focusing on eight key categories to assess organizational performance and health. The survey also utilized Gallup's Q12 framework to quantify employee engagement.



Gallup Q12: Employee Engagement



Appendix 1.1

Culture and Atmosphere Descriptors N=96 PSU SSW Employees

What three words best describe PSU SSW's current organizational culture?



Appendix 1.2

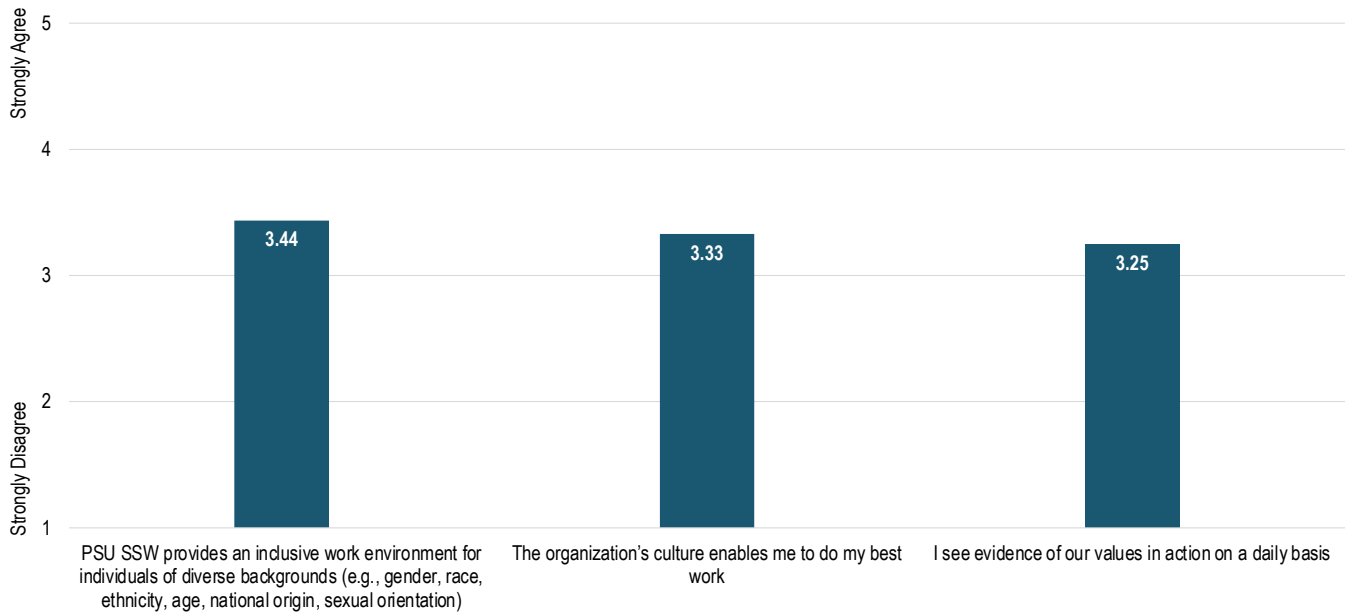
Describe the Ideal Culture and Atmosphere N=99 PSU SSW Employees

What three words would you like to use to describe PSU SSW's organizational culture in the future?



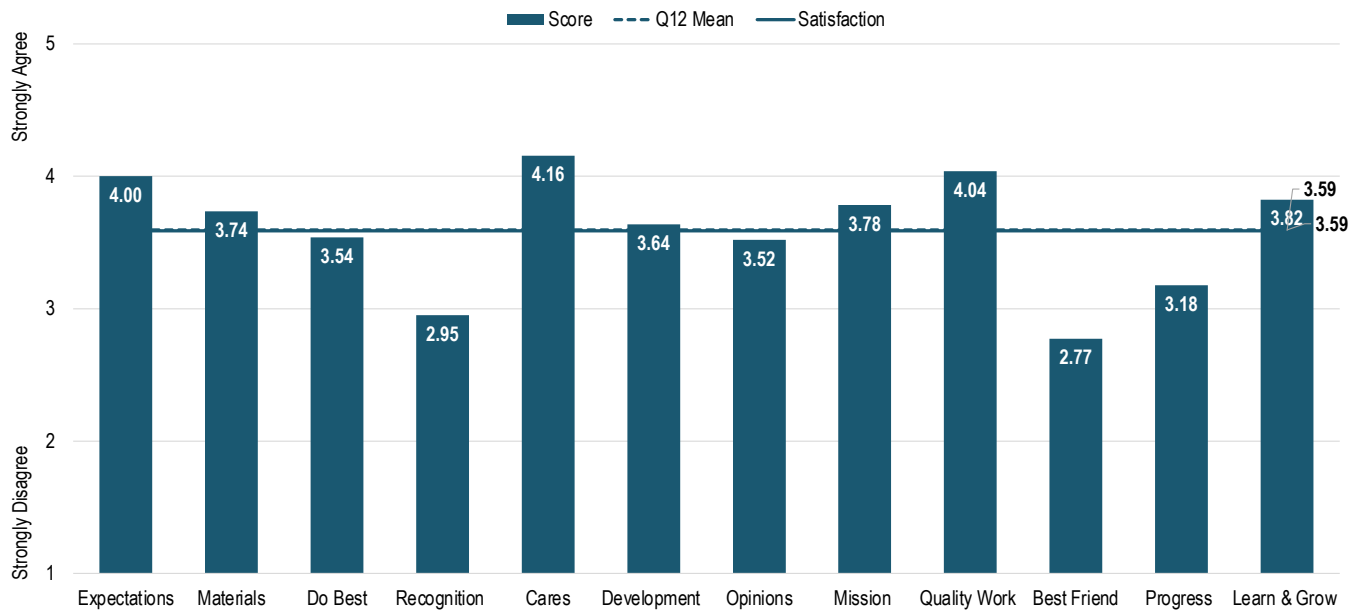
Appendix 1.3 Internal Organizational Culture N=103 PSU SSW Employees

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement:



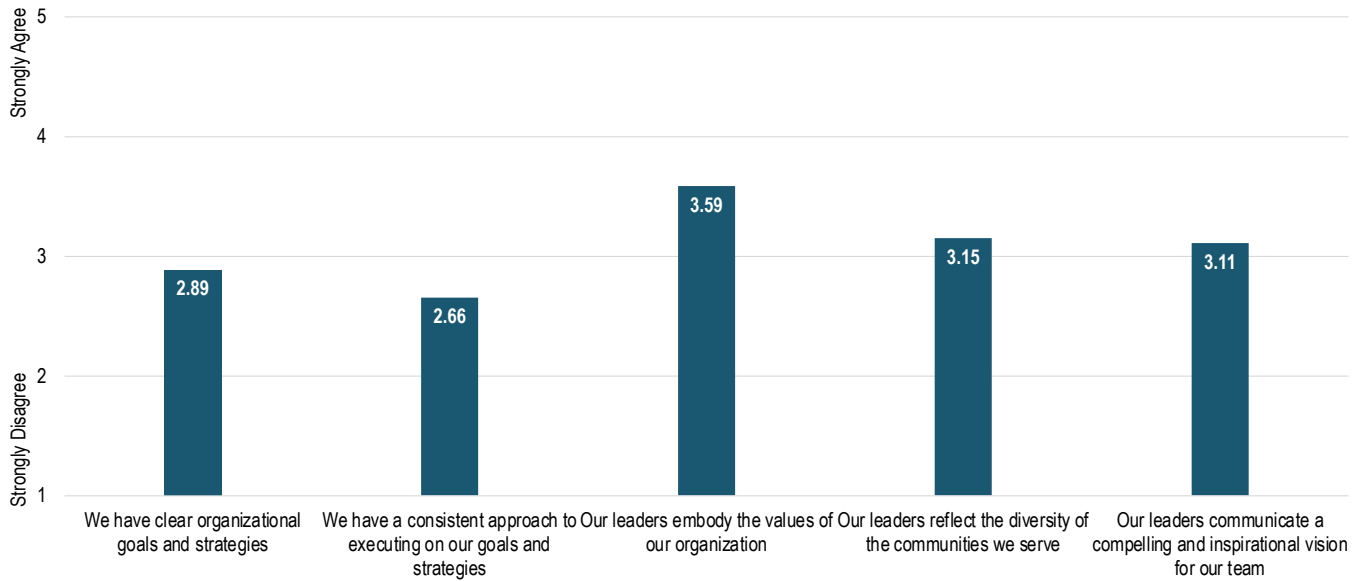
Appendix 1.4 Gallup Q12: Employee Engagement N=102 PSU SSW Employees

Please select your level of agreement with the following statements:



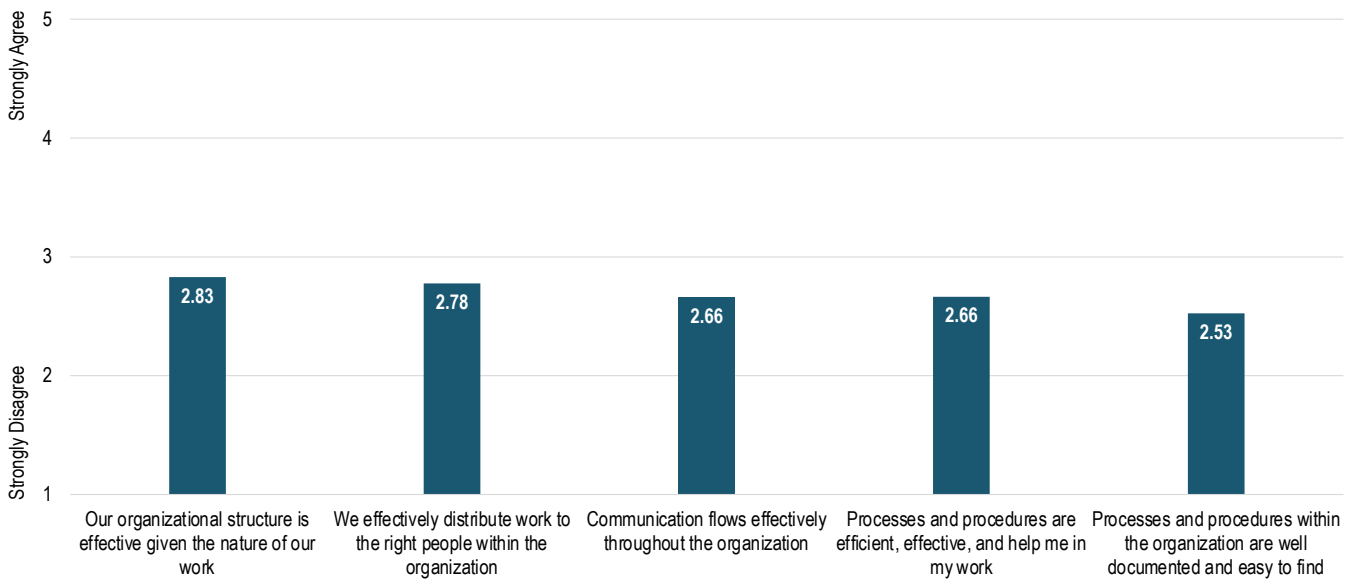
Appendix 1.5 Strategy and Leadership N=99 PSU SSW Employees

Please select your level of agreement with the following statements regarding leadership and strategy:



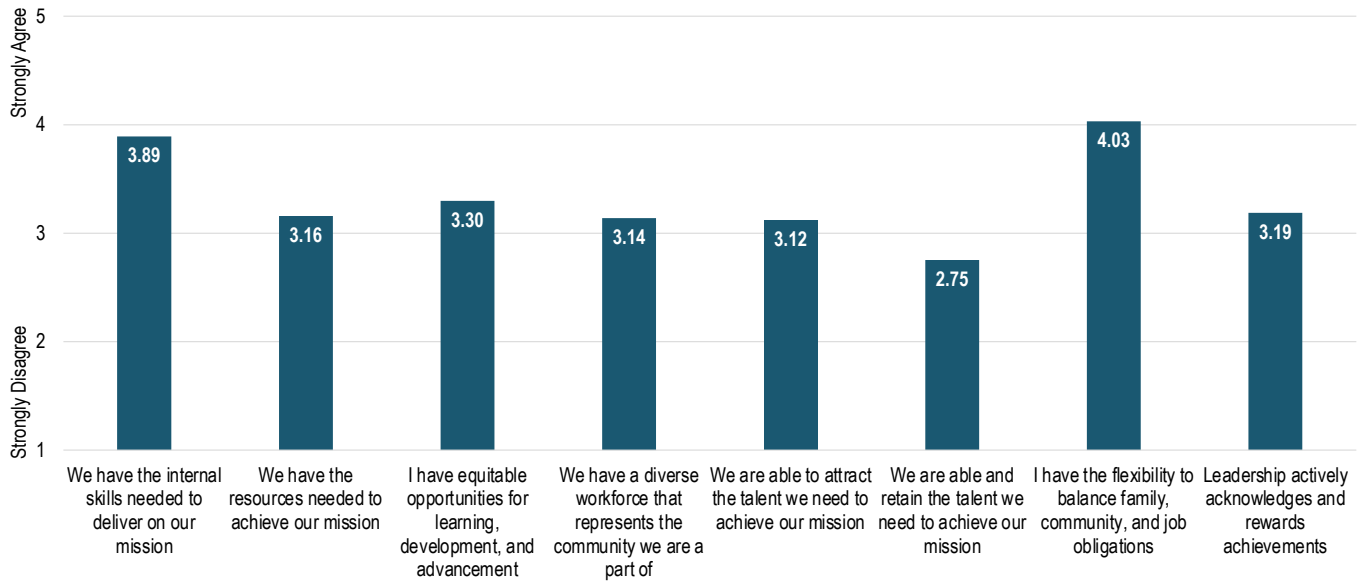
Appendix 1.6 Organizational Structure and Processes N=99 PSU SSW Employees

Please select your level of agreement with the following statements regarding organizational structure and processes:



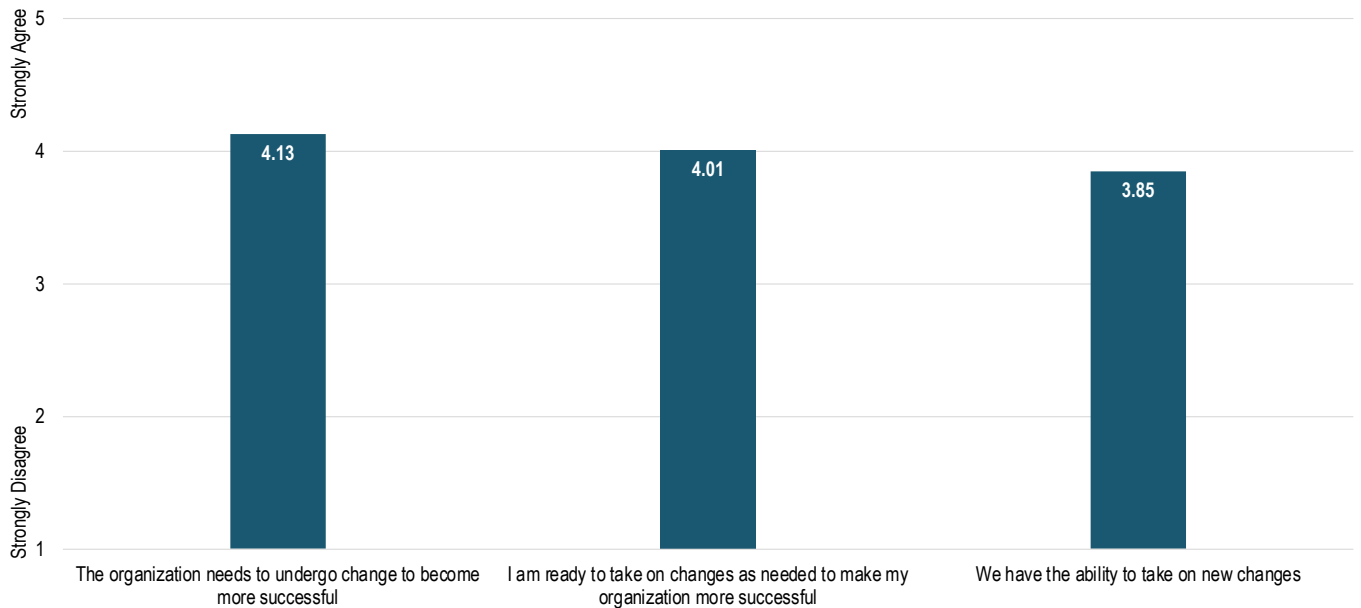
Appendix 1.7 Capabilities, Rewards, and Talents N=101 PSU SSW Employees

Please select your level of agreement with the following statements regarding capabilities, talents, and rewards:



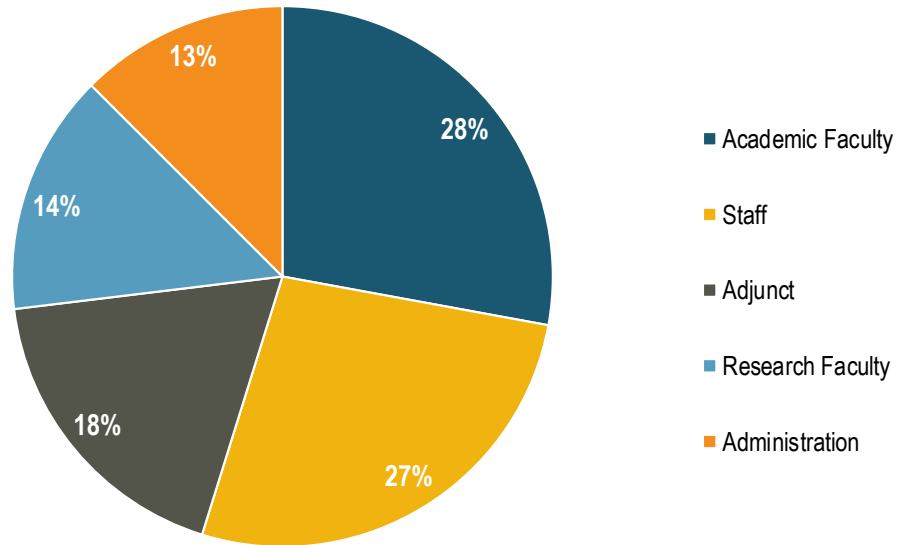
Appendix 1.8 Organizational Change N=100 PSU SSW Employees

Please select your level of agreement with the following statements regarding change:



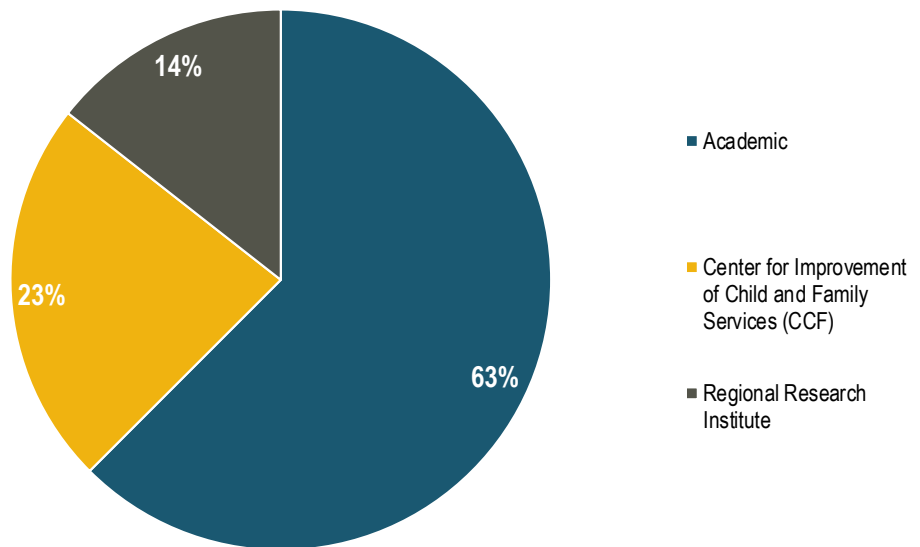
Appendix 1.9 Staff Respondents by Role N=104 PSU SSW Employees

What is your primary role within PSU SSW?



Appendix 1.10 Staff Respondents by Division N=104 PSU SSW Employees

Which division do you primarily work in?



Appendix Two – School-wide survey

This appendix includes results of all the questions asked of external stakeholders in the survey.

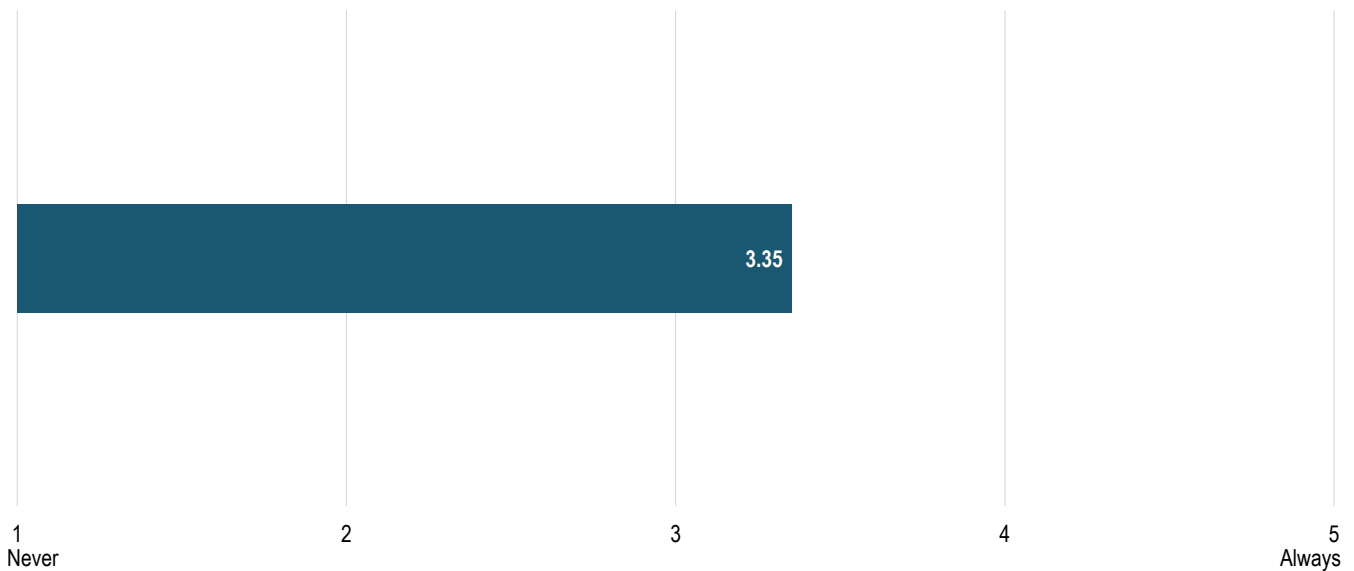
Appendix 2.1 Vision Descriptors N=391 All Stakeholders

What three words would you use to describe your vision for PSU SSW?



Appendix 2.2 Current Mission N=406 All Stakeholders

Reflecting on PSU SSW’s vision, how often does the school live up to its mission?



Appendix 2.5 Organizational Values N=231 All Stakeholders

What three words would you use to describe the organizational values of PSU SSW?



Appendix 2.6 Current Reputation N=245 All Stakeholders

What three words do you believe best describe PSU SSW's current reputation?



Appendix 2.7 Ideal Reputation N=246 All Stakeholders

What three words would you like to use to describe PSU SSW's reputation in the future?



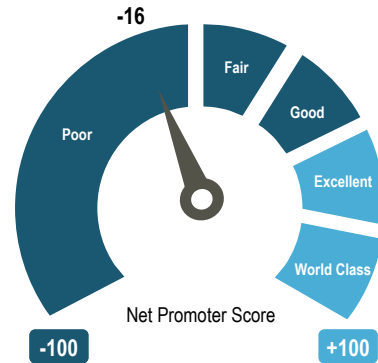
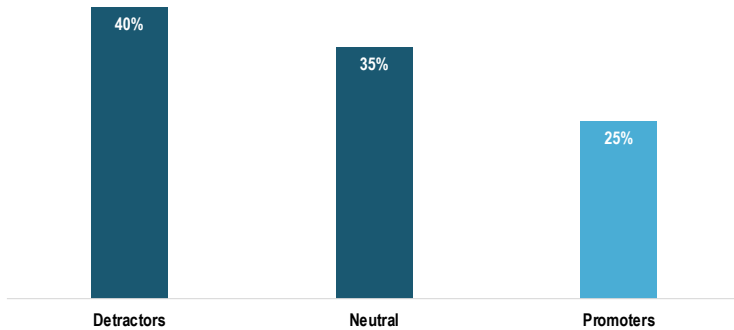
Appendix 2.8 Net Promoter Score (NPS) N=326 All Stakeholders

How likely is it that you would recommend PSU SSW to a friend or colleague?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Detractors						Neutral		Promoters	

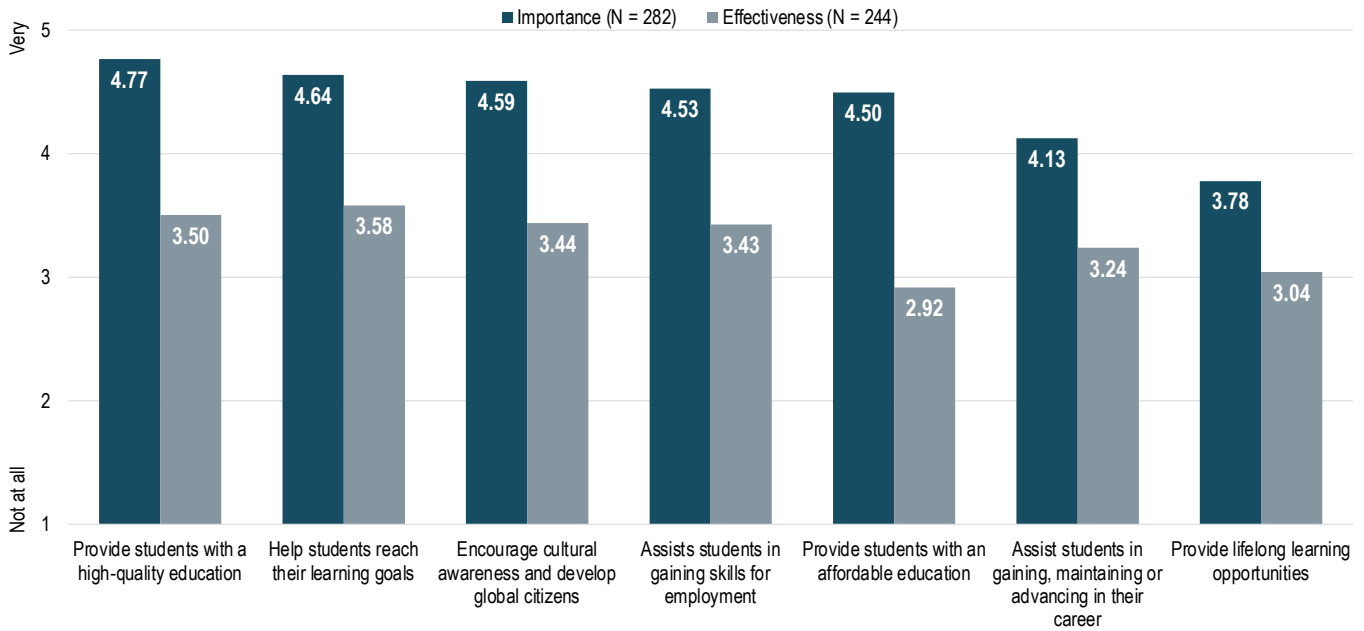
The NPS measures stakeholder perception of PSU SSW. Score ranges from -100 to 100 with a score of 0 to 10 considered fair, 10 to 30 good, 30 to 50 excellent and 50+ world class.

$NPS = \% \text{ of Promoters} - \% \text{ of Detractors}$



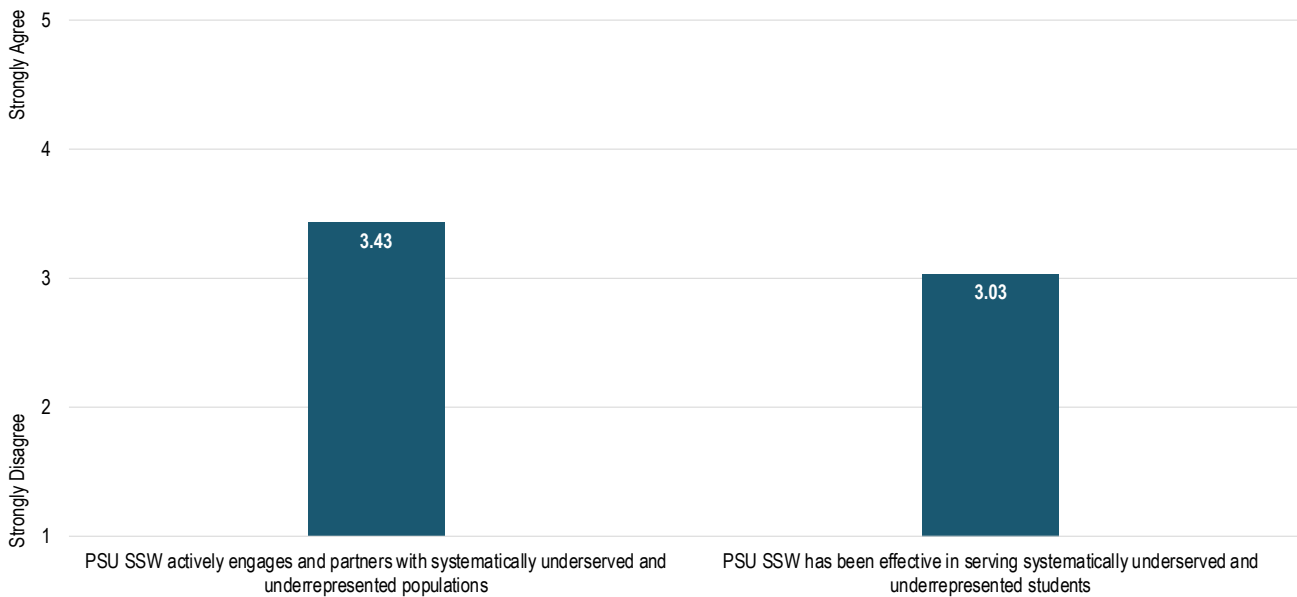
Appendix 2.9 PSU SSW's Roles N=282 All Stakeholders

Please rate how important the following roles are and the effectiveness of PSU SSW in these roles.



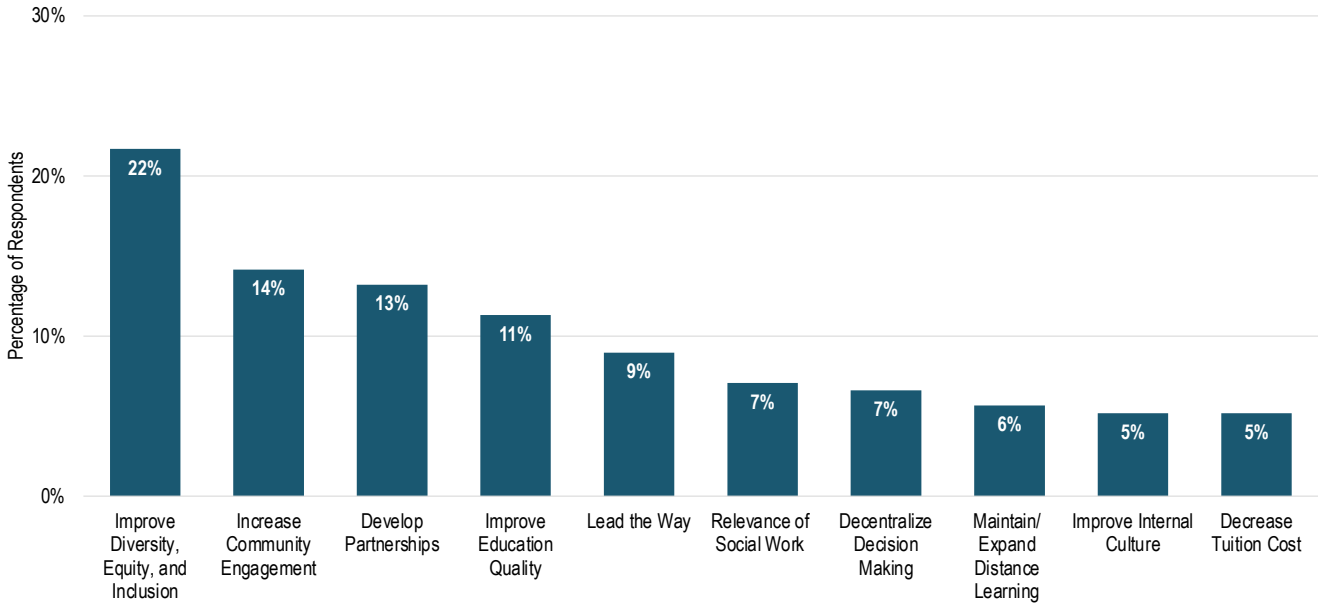
Appendix 2.10 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion N=291 All Stakeholders

Please indicate your level of agreement with these statements:



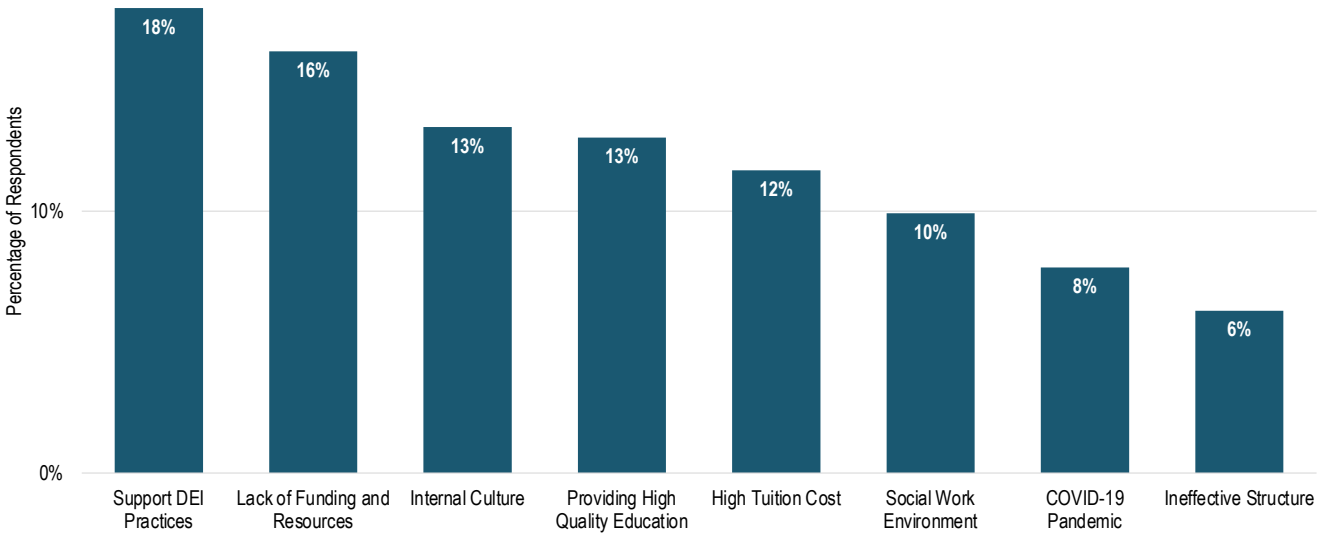
Appendix 2.11 – Significant Opportunities for PSU SSW N=212 All Stakeholders

What do you believe is the single most significant opportunity PSU SSW should leverage in this plan?



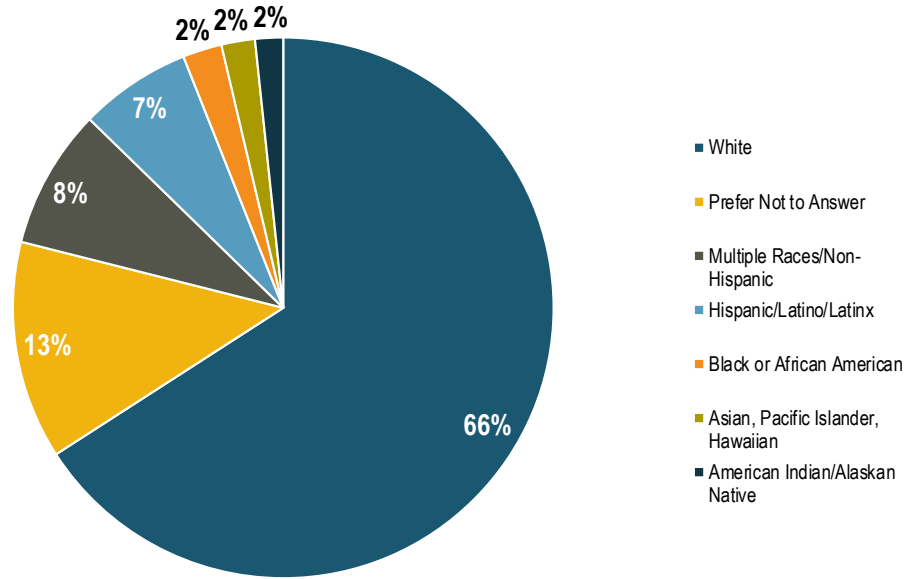
Appendix 2.12 Challenges facing PSU SSW N=242 All Stakeholders

What do you believe is the most significant challenge facing PSU SSW?



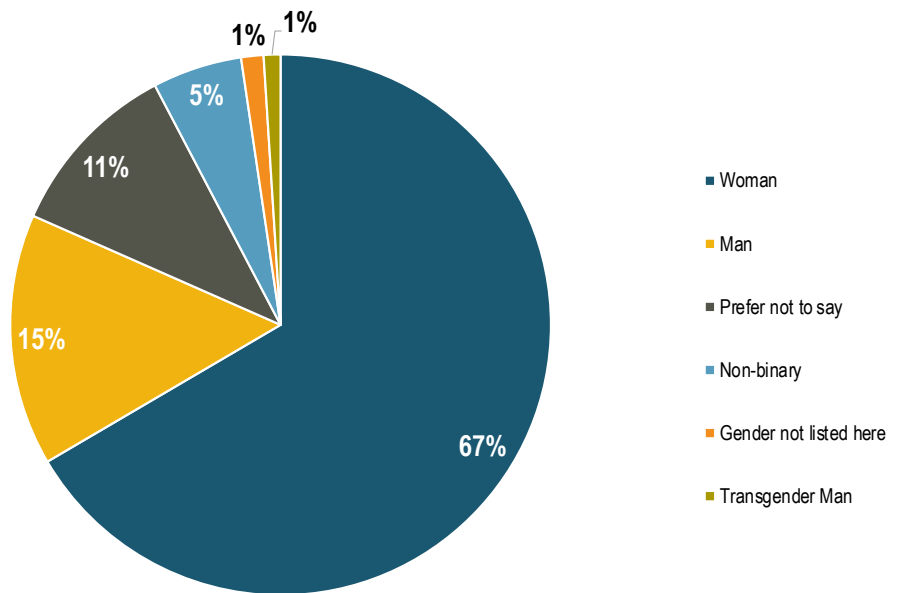
Appendix 2.13 Survey Respondents by Race/Ethnicity N=299 All Stakeholders

What is your race or ethnicity?



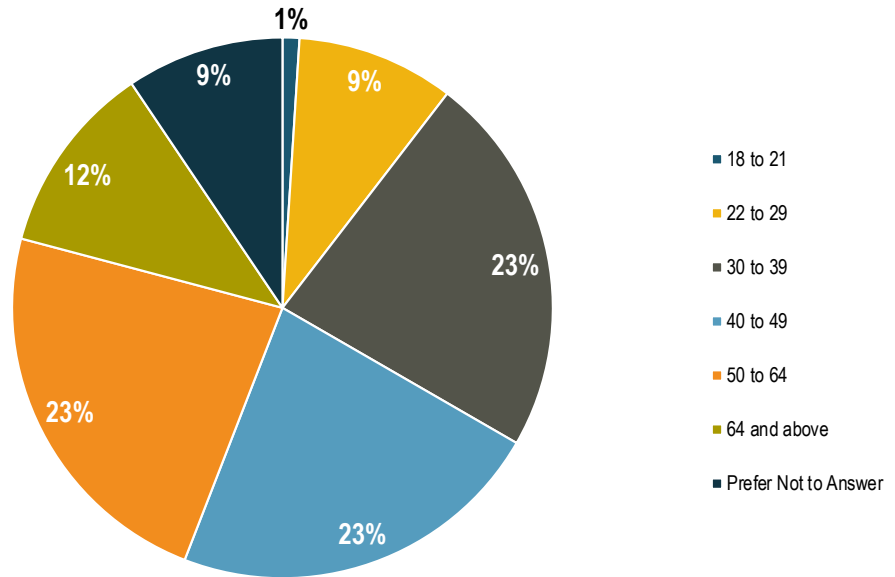
Appendix 2.14 Survey Respondents by Gender N=299 All Stakeholders

Which of the following best describes your gender?



Appendix 2.15 Survey Respondents by Age Group N=297 All Stakeholders

What is your age?









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