

CENTER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (CSJ)

“Social Justice is the
undeniable human right
to dignity, equity, and
full participation in
society,”



Social Justice Subcommittee of the President's
Council on Equity and Campus Diversity



BUFFALO STATE
The State University of New York



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As SUNY's only urban four-year college, Buffalo State College's mission is inspired by and reflective of its location. For 150 years, we have served the city because we are the city.

Buffalo State's mission as an anchor institution reflects its ongoing commitment and continued investment in social, cultural, and communal capital as Buffalo, NY, overcomes decades of hardship and experiences a renaissance.

Consistent with its mission, Buffalo State has long been recognized as a national leader in diversity and inclusion. The college has also been recognized for its commitment to supporting marginalized students in their pursuit of social, economic, and communal mobility. Buffalo State ranked 35th out of 1,449 benchmarked colleges and universities in CollegeNET's 2020 Social Mobility Index assessment and 16th out of 174 regional colleges and universities in the north in U.S News and World Report's 2021 assessment of top social mobility performers.

Yet, we recognize that we must commit to doing more.

Troubling and violent national events are spurring widespread grassroots activism, bringing greater awareness to both long-standing and emerging social injustices. We join in the spirit of the Women's Rights, Black Lives Matter, and #MeToo movements, legislative efforts to protect the rights of voters, the LGBTQ+ community, the DREAMers, and the push for environmental justice. To this end, we continue to work toward creating a campus, community, and country that actualizes the undeniable human right to dignity, equity, and full participation in society for all.

Buffalo State affirms its steadfast commitment to these values through the development of a Center for Social Justice (CSJ).

This endeavor is guided by the prescient words of New York State Assemblyman Arthur O. Eve, founder of the Educational Opportunity Program established at Buffalo State in 1967: "Education is the number one civil rights issue of the day...today, tomorrow, and forever, because our kids have to compete with the world."

Buffalo State will leverage the expertise of its faculty and staff and build upon the incalculable strengths of its diverse, civically minded, and socially engaged student body to create a welcoming, affirming, and empowering campus learning environment.

We will provide an educational pathway to social mobility for victims of the ongoing social, economic, and political injustices that maintain the status quo, and serve as a community hub to address student, staff, faculty, and community social justice priorities. Further, by partnering with the local community in the spirit of reciprocity and mutual respect, we commit to an active and intentional role in dismantling injustice within our own campus and the broader region.

Subcommittee Charge

The Social Justice Subcommittee of the President's Equity and Campus Diversity Council was charged by the provost and chief diversity officer/chief of staff with creating recommendations to create the foundation for a Center for Social Justice (CSJ) at Buffalo State to be launched in fall 2021.



Social Justice Subcommittee Structure

The Social Justice Subcommittee was convened by the provost and chief diversity officer in January 2021. The subcommittee grew from a group assembled by Provost Mayrose in fall 2019 to discuss justice education efforts. Subsequently, that group reformed in summer 2020 as a grassroots campus response to the murder of George Floyd. The more formally organized subcommittee immediately developed five workgroups composed of faculty, staff, and students. Workgroup leadership and membership is in Appendix 1.

Recommendation Drafting Process

The CSJ drafting process (Figure 1) was developed to be inclusive by ensuring that student, faculty, staff, and community partner voices informed the recommendations. There were 166 faculty, 43 students, 44 staff, and 10 community members who provided feedback.

This process started with the subcommittee drafting initial ideas and priority frameworks for campus feedback and input—collected through open forums and surveys (Phase 1).

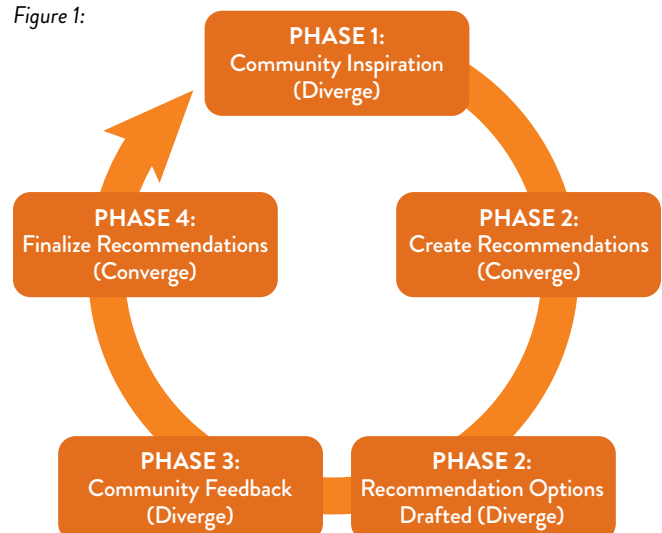
Feedback and data were processed at the workgroup- and subcommittee-level through an analysis of the CSJ's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) (Phase 2).

From the SWOT analysis, the subcommittee identified two central questions: "Why does Buffalo State College want a CSJ?" and "What does the subcommittee not intend the CSJ to become?"

The subcommittee workgroups finalized the second draft of recommendations by considering those prioritized themes and questions. (Phase 2).

The subcommittee then entered Phase 3 of the process by sharing a draft report with the campus and community partners for feedback, input, and additional ideas to shape its final recommendations.

Figure 1:





MISSION, VISION, AND GOALS

CENTER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (CSJ) MISSION, VISION, AND GOALS

Campus input and feedback informed the draft mission and vision statements, and social justice definition for Buffalo State. The subcommittee determined it was critical to discuss and articulate why Buffalo State should have a social justice focus.

Additionally, the subcommittee framed what the center should not be.

There were strong opinions about building trust, creating community, and fostering a commitment to long-term change in our internal systems, programs, and processes.

The subcommittee has articulated a vision that social justice efforts expand to be weaved throughout the college—from curriculum to hiring and from communication to decision making.

Social Justice Definition: The undeniable human right to dignity, equity, and full participation in society.

Mission Draft: The CSJ will deliberately and intentionally acknowledge and deconstruct historical and current injustices and empower faculty, staff, students, and community members to transform policies, systems, and institutions to be equitable and accessible. SUNY Buffalo State College will accomplish this through education, research, and community engagement.

Vision Draft: The CSJ will develop social justice change agents who will boldly transform the campus, the community, and the world.

Why does Buffalo State College want a Center for Social Justice

1. “Social justice isn’t an emerging term or a buzzword, but a norm and a standard of living where people deserve to be treated equally and equitably.” (student statement).
2. “The CSJ is needed to educate students for the future. A place that empowers students and gives opportunities and resources to support and help students graduate.” (student statement).
3. The CSJ is needed for faculty, staff, students, and the college to create a brave space to discuss, explore, learn, and engage in restorative dialogue.

4. A place where the college’s public commitment to social justice can be activated and realized through the continued growth, amplification, and collaboration of faculty, staff, students, departments, and community initiatives.
5. The CSJ is needed to better serve our changing student, campus, and local community populations.
6. The CSJ is needed to be the leading urban-engaged institution in promoting social justice for all, as well as providing innovative curriculum in addressing ever-changing social issues.
7. To better support and partner with the community to advance community social justice priorities.
8. Ingrained in the college’s system so that it becomes a human endeavor that is not intimidating, not a choice, and not a chore.
9. Recognize and respect a person-centered approach where there are varied perspectives, while working collaboratively to advance the college’s commitment to social justice.

What does the subcommittee NOT intend a Center for Social Justice to become?

1. A place that is not student focused, where actions are not informed by students, and that suppresses and silences students (student statement).
2. A place that lacks representation, is exclusive of student, staff, faculty, or community members, and only provides one-dimensional learning (student statement).
3. Stagnant and does not address emerging social issues, campus concerns, and changing student needs (student statement).
4. The only campus space where social or restorative justice practices are happening (student statement).
5. The area where all the marginalized or historically underrepresented populations get stuck.
6. A “feel good” exercise, promotional item, or marketing strategy to recruit and keep students of color, performative, a fad, and a shield.
7. A contentious budget issue.
8. Straying away from intended mission or goals.
9. A place that uses or exploits the community for the advancement of institution goals and objectives but becomes a mutually beneficial endeavor.

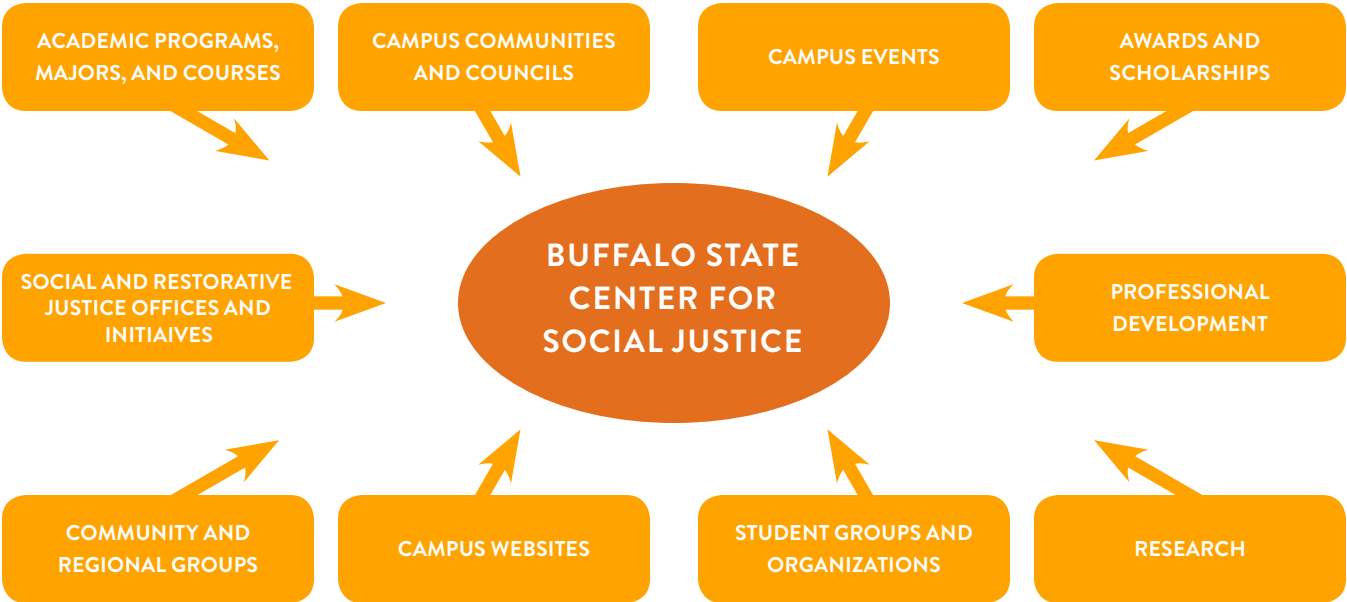


ASSET MAPPING

The subcommittee recognizes that although there is significant work to be accomplished to deepen and expand Buffalo State’s social justice efforts, the institution currently houses, hosts, and sponsors multiple programs, classes, and events that purposefully celebrate diversity, equity, and social justice. This document provides a listing of known campus programs, organizations, and resources that align with the proposed CSJ’s priorities. This list is not intended to be comprehensive,

but simply provide an at-a-glance view of the institution’s many social justice assets and opportunities. Information has been culled from campus websites, Daily Bulletin submissions, and faculty and staff annual reports, as well as responses to subcommittee surveys.

To add to this asset map, please complete the [student survey](#) or [faculty and staff survey](#) or contact the subcommittee co-chairs.





OFFICES AND INITIATIVES

- Anne Frank Project
- Bengal Allies
- Campus Equity and Diversity Office
- Community Academic Center
- Civic and Community Engagement Office
- Educational Opportunity Program
- Inclusion and Equity Office
- Global Engagement Office
- LGBTQ+ Resource Center
- PRODiG Fellowship Consortium
- Restorative Justice Center
- School of Education Buffalo Urban Teacher Pipeline Residency Program and Urban Teacher Academy
- West Side Promise Neighborhood Initiative

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, MAJORS, AND COURSES

- Majors
 - Africana Studies
- Minors
 - African and African American studies
 - Indigenous Studies
 - Women and Gender Studies
- Learning Communities
 - First Gen: Telling Your Story
 - T.H.U.G. (The Hate You Give) Life
 - Transforming Lives through Teaching
- Courses
 - AAS/HIS 341 AFRICAN AMERICANS AND CIVIL RIGHTS
 - AAS/CRJ 425 RACE, ETHNICITY, AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE
 - AAS/HIS 469 BLACK PROTEST AND LEADERSHIP IN THE U.S. IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
 - AAS/PSC 218 AFRICAN AMERICAN POLITICAL CULTURE
 - AAS/SOC 351 SOCIOLOGY OF RACE AND ETHNICITY
 - ADE 655 DIVERSITY ISSUES IN ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING
 - ANT 101 UNDERSTANDING CULTURE
 - ANT 300 INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF WESTERN NORTH AMERICA
 - ANT 301 INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF EASTERN NORTH AMERICA

- ANT 330 INDIGENOUS HAWAIIANS
- ANT 332 GENDER AND ARCHAEOLOGY
- ANT 341 INDIGENOUS ART OF NORTH AMERICA
- CRJ 430 GENDER AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE
- EDU 380 INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS STUDY ABROAD AND SERVICE LEARNING
- ENG 353 NATIVE AMERICAN LITERATURE
- ENG 645 LITERATURE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
- ENG 354 ETHNIC AMERICAN MINORITY LITERATURES
- EXE 646 CULTURE, DIVERSITY, DISABILITY, AND EDUCATION
- HEA 588: MOVEMENTS OF RESISTANCE: COLLEGE STUDENT ACTIVISM
- HEA 623 COUNSELING TECHNIQUES FOR DIVERSE CULTURES
- HEA 670 THE COLLEGE STUDENT MOVEMENT 1955-1975
- HIS 363 AMERICAN IDENTITY IN TRANSITION: DIVERSITY AND PLURALISM IN THE UNITED STATES
- PSC 319 GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, QUESTIONING POLITICS
- PHI 301 JUSTICE: LIBERTY VS. EQUALITY
- SOC 380 SOCIOLOGY OF CRIME
- SOC 350 POWER, CLASS, AND INEQUALITY
- SOC 310 SOCIOLOGY OF SEX AND GENDER
- SOC 212 FEMINIST THEORY
- SOC 333 SOCIOLOGY OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
- SSE 363 AMERICAN IDENTITY IN TRANSITION: DIVERSITY AND PLURALISM IN THE UNITED STATES
- SWK 419 SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY
- UED 632 CRITICAL EDUCATION THEORY IN URBAN EDUCATION
- WGS 101 INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN AND GENDER STUDIES

CAMPUS COMMITTEES/COUNCILS

- All IN Campus Democracy Challenge
- Anchor Institution Committee
- Campus Safety/Community Policing Committee
 - Community Oriented Policing Philosophy
- Civic Action Plan Implementation Committee
- Legacy Committee
- President's Council on Equity and Campus Diversity
- Sustainability Council



CAMPUS EVENTS

- Alternative Break
- Anne Frank Project Social Justice Festival
- Bengals Dare to Care
- Beyond Boundaries Film Series
- Conversations with ‘Hef’
- Cultural Cafe
- Developing Cultural Competence (BSL Diversity and Inclusion Track)
- Diversity Dialogue Speaker Series
- Equity and Diversity (films, presenters, and discussion)
- How to be an Advocate for Change (BSL Civic Engagement Track)
- Identifying Micro-Aggressions (BSL Diversity and Inclusion Track)
- Men of Merit
- SouthEast Asia week
- Student Conduct community circles
- Talking Peace

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

- CollegeNET Social Mobility Index rankings
- Dr. Muriel A. Howard Presidential Award
- Equity And Campus Diversity Program Grants
- George Floyd Memorial Scholarship
- Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Diversity and Inclusive Excellence Workshop Series for Faculty and Staff
- Professional licenses/organizations’ continuing education requirements and codes of ethics (various professions across campus)

RESEARCH (FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS)

- Annual Reports (2019-2020 individual annual reports from faculty, librarians, and management confidential).

Of the 373 individual annual reports available for review, 343 (92%) participated in at least one of these six opportunities:

1. Service-learning courses
2. Service to community
3. Support of diversity mission
4. Support of global learning
5. Community partnerships
6. Applied learning

Of the areas that had at least one faculty member submit a report, 42 (78%) listed participation in at least one SJ initiative.

Out of 343 respondents:

303 (88%) faculty support of diversity mission (41 areas)

240 (70%) support of global learning (42 areas)

228 (66%) faculty offer/include applied learning (41 areas)

213 (62%) faculty participate in service to community (42 areas)

176 (51%) faculty involved in at least one community partnership (39 areas)

73 (21%) teach at least one service-learning course, (28 areas)

- Publications, papers, and presentations from faculty and staff.
- Undergraduate Summer Research Fellowships



Student Groups and Organizations

- A-Amen
- Adelante Estudiantes Latinos (AEL)
- Black Active Minds (BAM)
- Caribbean Students Organization (CSO)
- Devoted to Realness
- International Student Organization (ISO)
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- Native American Student Organization (NASO)
- Pan-African Student Organization (PASO)
- Pride Alliance
- Sororities and Fraternities
- WBNY-FM 91.3
- You are My Sista

CAMPUS WEBSITES

- Buffalo State Social Justice page
- Campus Equity and Diversity Site
- Library Guide to Teaching BLM
- Sociology - BLM resources

REGIONAL AND RELEVANT SJ EFFORTS

Community

- Black Love Resists in the Rust
- Coalition for Economic Justice
- Erie County Restorative Justice Coalition
- Family Justice Center – Erie County
- GLYS Western New York
- NFJC of Western New York Inc.
- Niagara Organizing Alliance of Hope (AH)
- Open Buffalo - Buffalo, NY

- PPG Buffalo
- Pride Center of WNY
- VOICE Buffalo
- WNY Peace Center

Higher Education

- D'Youville College
 - Office of Diversity and Inclusion
 - Racial Justice Plan
- Niagara University
 - MAIS - Social Justice | Niagara University
 - Office of Multicultural Affairs | Niagara University
- SUNY
 - BLM: UFS Black Lives Matter Resolution (Board of Trustees)
 - BLM:UFS Black Lives Matter Resolution (University Faculty Senate)
 - PRODiG
 - State of the University Address
 - UUP Committees
- SUNY Brockport
 - Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
 - Office of Equity Diversity and Inclusion
- SUNY Fredonia
 - Diversity and Social Justice
 - Sociocultural and Justice Sciences
- University at Buffalo
 - Center for Diversity Innovation - University at Buffalo
 - Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice - University at Buffalo
 - School of Social Work - University at Buffalo
 - Social Justice Initiatives
 - Equity and Diversity Advisory Group



RECOMMENDATIONS

The subcommittee identified five priorities for implementation of the Center for Social Justice:

1. Create a Sustainable Campus Infrastructure
2. Develop a Social Justice-Centered Curriculum and Co-Curriculum
3. Cultivate and Strengthen Community Partnerships for Social Justice
4. Advance Social Justice and Liberation Focused Research
5. Communicate Effectively and Foster Visibility for the Center for Social Justice

The five priorities are detailed below and include a draft implementation timeline based on campus input about importance, as well as organizational structure needed for success. The timeline acts as a roadmap, rather than a prescriptive plan, and the subcommittee recognizes that as priorities and opportunities change, the timeline will change as well. The recommendations also serve to create space for discussion and dialogue for our campus community to reflect, deliberate, and grow as we continue to evolve as a social justice institution.

PRIORITY 1: CREATE A SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS INFRASTRUCTURE

In order to establish successful operations, the subcommittee has articulated that thoughtful and integrated infrastructure is critical and must be established immediately. The infrastructure, funding, and efforts of the CSJ will expand and change over time but must be set up for success from day one. The subcommittee recognizes that sustainability refers to longevity and permanency of the effort, as well as recognition and integration of social, economic, and environmental efforts that intersect with social justice. To establish the CSJ, the subcommittee has provided priorities and recommendations for early adoption, as well as efforts and ideas for later integration.

“A place where the college’s **public commitment to social justice** can be activated and realized through the **continued growth**, amplification, and collaboration of faculty, staff, students, departments, and community initiatives.”

YEARS 1-2

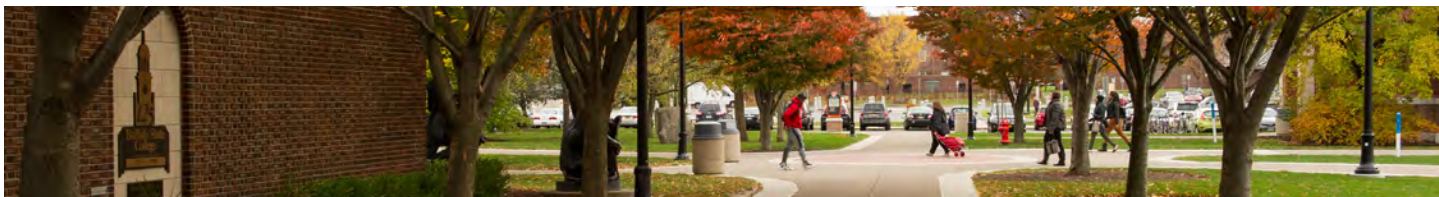
1. Establish a centralized and inclusive space for the Center for Social Justice

- a. Identify a physical space or home for the CSJ within the main thoroughfare of campus that presents opportunities for growth.
- b. Ensure the space is inviting and inclusive for students, faculty, staff, and community partners to gather and work. An annual conference is also recommended, and space for students will be a critical consideration to ensure collaboration and community building.

2. Investigate and address institutionalized systems, procedures, and policies through a social justice lens. Facilitate ways to alleviate disproportionate debt for students of color. Review relevant policies, hiring practices, and processes to articulate opportunities for expanded inclusion and representation

3. Support existing efforts and build appropriate leadership and staffing that will grow with the CSJ

- a. Utilize the asset map and identify additional initiatives to thoughtfully consider how the CSJ intersects with and collaborates with other efforts on campus while being inclusive of and celebrating efforts and successes.
- b. Buffalo State will need CSJ leadership with administrative expertise, academic experience, and diversity, equity, and inclusion expertise to establish the center immediately in fall 2021. A leader with a support staff member will be critical as an initial commitment.
- c. A paid student leadership position should also be established, and can serve to ensure student representation, inclusion, and student-centered activities. Additional staffing needs should be explored, while ensuring collaboration with other initiatives and offices which do congruent work and are articulated in the asset map.
- d. Create a diverse advisory board with students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partner leadership that prioritizes racial and cultural representation within the first year of operations.
 - The advisory board should advocate for the needs of underrepresented communities in Western New York.
- Utilize feedback and guidance to ensure that the CSJ remains attentive to and inclusive of everyone, specific to the breadth of peoples and communities who have suffered structural



injustices based on race, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, indigenous heritage, religion, physical ability, immigration status, and/or country of origin.

4. Establish an institutional structure that is reflective of campus priorities

- a. Create a dual reporting line to have the CSJ report to the provost and chief diversity officer
- b. Foster collaborations across institutional programs and cross-promote and connect marketing and implementation efforts

5. Establish a foundational budget for the CSJ

- a. A permanent annual state operating budget is needed that is inclusive of, but not limited to, staffing, programs, and operations as articulated throughout the document.
- b. Initial funds will be needed for:
 - Equipment, furniture, supplies, and materials
 - Funding for guest speakers
 - Stipends for faculty fellows
 - Travel
 - Professional development
 - Student support funds for research, conferences, and workshop participation
 - Resources for marketing and development
 - Funding for racially and culturally diverse faculty/staff searches
 - Training for all staff and faculty, particularly search committees
 - Specialized services for students of color within individual departments

6. The CSJ can serve to foster institutional efforts to become a more just educational community

- a. Opportunities for institutional improvement can be led by the CSJ
- b. Social justice should emerge as a priority in the college's strategic planning

“CSJ is needed to educate students for the future. A place that empowers students and gives opportunities and resources to support and help students graduate.”

— **Student statement**

YEARS 3-5

1. Adjust leadership and staffing as needed

- a. With growth, faculty affiliates, trainers, a curriculum developer, grant writer, and program coordinator may also be important positions within the CSJ.
- b. Consider a role or “Office of the Ombuds” to provide confidential, objective, and informal guidance to campus constituents regarding a broad range of concerns that might arise
 - Assist with mediation in disputes and/or facilitate communication among people with diversity, equity, and inclusion concerns
 - Identify and track trends or patterns of complaints or problems that might be systemic

2. Expand on CSJ budget

- a. By years 3-5, the CSJ budget should be secure and maintained, with continued efforts to foster gifts and grants for projects and programs. Multiple grants and industry partners can support efforts, and conferences can assist with revenue generation and support.
- b. Potential to develop sustainable funding programs including certifications, faculty led adult education courses and workshops, digital credentials, and professional development opportunities can be explored. Naming opportunities by corporations or organizations, K-12 afterschool and school-based programs may also be an opportunity. Institutional resources as well as endowments, gifts, grants, and other external sources of revenue will be critical to support successful operations in the long-term.

3. Continued efforts to foster institutional change and planning should remain a focus

- a. Social justice and equity considerations and support for institutional improvements must be considered including connections to tie these priorities to annual reporting and departmental evaluations and individual performance programs.

Examples of Social Justice Efforts Built into the Academic and Resource Infrastructure

The School of Education fosters and establishes deep and broad social justice efforts built into the academic and resource infrastructure of the school including the [Urban Teacher Academy](#), [Woods-Beals Endowed Chair in Urban Education](#), [Hank Mann Endowed Chair for Exceptional Education](#), the [Success Zone](#), [Global Literacy Channel](#), and Buffalo Urban Teacher Pipeline Residency Program.



PRIORITY 2: BROADEN OUR SOCIAL JUSTICE-CENTERED CURRICULUM AND CO-CURRICULUM

Buffalo State College is an urban-engaged institution with a strong connection to the city of Buffalo, surrounding Western New York community, as well as the broader national and international community. Buffalo State needs to promote social justice for all and to better support and partner with the community to advance social justice priorities. Buffalo State's institutional learning outcomes provide a framework for student-learning and include skills relevant for a just and equitable community of learning including cultural fluency, urban engagement, and ethical reasoning.

“CSJ is needed to be the leading urban-engaged institution in promoting social justice for all, as well as innovative curriculum in addressing ever changing social issues.”

YEARS 1-2

1. Expand the academic learning environment to place a focus on issues of social justice at each academic level and across academic disciplines.

- a. Revise IF curriculum to include a distinct category of required courses focused on social justice
 - Collaborate with General Education Taskforce to articulate opportunities for IF as part of shared governance
 - Identify existing courses that include student-learning outcomes implicitly and explicitly focused on social justice
 - Develop new and revise existing course(s) to explicitly focus on social justice
 - Work with academic programs that are not traditionally associated with social justice themes to identify existing, and, where necessary, innovate new opportunities within curricula to include social justice course content
 - Expand upon the general education curriculum to require a social justice-focused course that will serve as the basis for continued learning opportunities within students' respective academic programs thereafter.

- b. Develop interdisciplinary degree-granting and micro-credential opportunities in social justice at the undergraduate- and graduate-level.

- Expand and grow internships and externships internally and externally that provide experiential-learning opportunities to enrich student-learning and impact campus and community priorities
- a. Articulate and advance global-learning opportunities
 - Highlight and expand “global village” events that welcome our international students, while bringing cultural awareness and respect for difference.
 - Support SUNY's Global Learning for All initiative and advance the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

2. Position the CSJ as a campus hub for professional development, student engagement, and community outreach.

- a. Create a robust offering of professional development programming to assist faculty with revisions to existing courses, development of new courses, building pedagogical acumen related to teaching about social justice, and engaging with local, national, and international community partners.
 1. Establish a social justice faculty/staff mentoring program in which faculty can volunteer to attend regularly scheduled social justice-related professional development programs and work closely with a mentor.
 2. Establish a Social Justice Leadership Scholarship program and staffing opportunities for students.
 - o Modeled after the Honors program; students take specific courses in social justice, leadership, community building, etc.
 - o CSJ Scholarship recipients will be considered as part of the competitive process of choosing a student director of the CSJ
 - Cultivate a collection of related texts and socially just literature in the library (LibGuide)
 3. Offer presentations to classes, establish recognition opportunities to celebrate successes, and provide other direct programming to build knowledge and support for socially just practices.
 4. Utilize existing model initiatives and efforts to expand and deepen social justice programming.
 - Expand on the successes of the Anne Frank Project youth programming to further Buffalo State and community student social justice learning opportunities
 - Deepen efforts of the Restorative Justice Center to utilize restorative justice circles for dialogue and healing
 - Further the work of the Community Academic Center, West Side Promise Neighborhood Initiative, and other civically engaged programs to promote access and education



YEARS 3-5

1. *Create a public advocacy initiative that represents students, faculty, staff, and administration.*
 - a. The public advocacy initiative will be devoted to improving the quality of campus discourse by providing conflict resolution tools and improving communication skills and opportunities across campus
 - b. Create a standing, student-led committee, not affiliated with USG, devoted to providing feedback to the President regarding the campus culture and climate
2. *Continue to develop curricular and co-curricular student-learning experiences*
 - a. Establish a student scholarship program to provide funding for CSJ research, scholarship, creative works, community-engagement, and/or experiential learning opportunities
 - b. Support and advise student leaders and student clubs with their pursuit of social justice, advocacy, and activism
 - c. Explore the opportunity to offer credit for social justice efforts similar to Global Engagement Option Four

YEARS 5 AND BEYOND

1. *Establish campus-wide expectations for engagement in substantive social justice-related programming.*
 1. Explicit data collection of social justice activities from faculty and staff through their annual reports to demonstrate the campus' commitment to social justice
 - a. Categorize social justice-related professional development at multiple scales, along with campus and/or community-based social justice activities for faculty, librarian, and professional staff individual annual reports
2. *Provide a social justice "experience" for every student, each semester.*
 - a. Integrate an experience in first- and second-year facilitated by faculty in courses and community-engaged learning experiences
 - b. Third- and fourth-year experiences can be facilitated within academic departments and reflective of each department's operationalization of social justice themes within their respective program objectives

“To that end, **social justice needs to be ingrained** in the college's curriculum and co-curriculum so that it becomes a **human endeavor** that is not intimidating... and is not a chore.”



Examples of Social Justice Centered Curriculum and Teaching

“All of my courses integrate activities where diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice are discussed and put into practice. I provide opportunities for my teacher candidates to earn extra credit through attending activities, professional developments, and workshops offered at Buffalo State and other locations that are relevant to these topics. I want to ensure that my students, who are future teachers, develop the understanding that an inclusive culture promotes an environment where all children can truly learn and feel a sense of belonging”.

— Awilda Ramos Zagarrigo,
Associate Professor, Exceptional Education

“In 2018, the HESAA Program adopted social justice as one of its four core values. We took steps to evaluate how we infuse those values throughout the program and our work. One of those steps was a deep dive into our curriculum to ensure that there is a social justice and inclusion student-learning outcome associated with every core course in the curriculum.”

— Amy Wilson,
Chair and Associate Professor, Higher Education Administration

“I believe that incorporating problem-based learning and service-learning into crime and justice studies is one of the best ways to fulfill Buffalo State’s diversity and global learning missions. Students can identify an authentic problem in local agencies, discuss causes of the problem, and finally provide corresponding solutions in meaningful ways.”

— Dae-Young Kim,
Associate Professor, Criminal Justice

All of my courses include extensive discussions of the nature and meaning of “respect,” and the importance of careful and thoughtful dialogue with all points of view. My ethics courses also carefully consider the social and personal demands of justice.

— Jason Grinnell,
Chair and Associate Professor, Philosophy

“The teacher candidates in my courses are required to think critically about ways to address diversity and include all students in the classroom. My courses incorporate readings, videos, and methods providing teacher candidates with culturally responsive, sustaining literacy strategies that model best practices to promote social justice addressing learners’ strengths. The teacher candidates discuss their perspectives with support from texts written by experts in the field.”

— Ellen Friedland,
Associate Professor Emerita, Elementary Education,
Literacy, and Educational Leadership

“Issues of social justice remain central to everything I teach. To me, there is no part of the curriculum that can’t be explored or better understood by viewing through the lens of social justice. Lectures, assignments, advisement discussions are all opportunities for me to learn from those who experience injustice and pass along what I’ve come to learn to those who haven’t.”

— James Golden,
Assistant Professor, Social Work

“I work to incorporate issues of diversity and social justice in all of my classes. In my PSY 472 Senior Seminar on the Psychology of Food and Eating, we have a unit on social justice that addresses access to food and human rights issues in the production of food. However, the place where my work most directly fits the diversity mission is my PSY 381 Psychology of Culture course where students complete a service-learning project with recently arrived refugees. The project varies each year according to the needs of the agencies, with recent projects including working with asylum seekers at Vive, teaching financial literacy in a Jericho Road program, and teaching English online through the International Institute.”

— Jill Norvilitis,
Professor, Psychology

“The dance program is civically and community engaged with many courses embedding inclusivity, diversity, equity, and accessibility in teaching and learning. All course syllabi have an inclusion and mutual respect clause. The annual dance concert is inspired by civic engaged- and social justice-themes and the student company members celebrate their diversity.”

— Joy Guarino,
Interim Director of Global Engagement and Professor of Dance



PRIORITY 3: CULTIVATE AND STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Rooted in this region's powerful history, we recognize that Buffalo and the Western New York community has long been a setting for social justice work, from civil rights and women's suffrage to immigration and the plight of indigenous people of New York state. There are significant and impactful community efforts that work to address inequity and injustice. Likewise, as an urban-engaged institution, Buffalo State does not operate in a vacuum. We are, in fact, inexorably linked to our neighborhoods, city, region, and even our international community. Our self-care cannot be in opposition of community care. As a result, continuing to build local and global partnerships will be critical for the success of the Center for Social Justice. In framing the work of the center within the larger community context, we rely on the humanist African philosophy of Ubuntu, where the idea of community is one of the building blocks of society; "I am because you are." We want to ensure that the center supports and builds on community expertise to add value and collaborate for real change.

YEARS 1-2

1. *Continue to develop the asset map recognizing community-based social justice expertise and ensure a community voice is reflected in all aspects of our work*
 - a. Document local efforts, organizations, and trainings that address and support social justice
 - b. Utilize the Civic and Community Engagement office to identify existing campus partners that do work in social justice
 - c. Explore national efforts and best practices for consideration
 - d. Recognize that partners have expertise, provide fiscal and other resources to share their expertise, and acknowledge instances where higher education has used or exploited community groups. Frame the current work to indicate the importance in our shift away from that negative history
 - e. Establish a list of potential community speakers, and establish funding to bring these speakers to campus
 - f. Recognize that we have current students and alumni who may be working professionals in related fields, and leverage their experiences to enhance partnerships and efforts
2. *Identify and meet with community organizations and community leaders focused on social justice to explore collaborative opportunities for becoming social justice partners and change agents*
 - a. Listen and respond to community input to shape and influence our efforts across the institution, both vertically and horizontally

- b. Investigate potential for collaborative faculty and student research, classroom connections, and partnerships
- c. Enhance existing and build new community relationships that will deepen experiences and impact. Recognize that high-quality partnership building effort requires time, investment, and dedicated personnel
 - Explore opportunities to create reciprocal partnerships that benefit our campus learning and influence community priorities
 - Discuss how our internal efforts can align with community-driven efforts with the goal of collaborating for shared impact
 - Build trusting relationships with community members to have honest conversations which can result in connections and collaborations
- d. Contribute to community conversations and leadership based on current events

YEARS 3-5

1. *Develop specific collaborative partnerships to advance mutually beneficial projects and goals*
 - a. Explore mutually beneficial programming, advocacy, and educational efforts. This may include leadership development training, conferences, symposiums, structured networks, shared dialogues, and other professional development opportunities
 - b. Develop student, faculty, staff, and alumni opportunities for collaboration and integration to meet community priorities
 - c. Expand social justice internships and externships that can be mutually beneficial for partners and students
 - d. Expand on student and faculty research partnerships to support community initiatives and efforts
 - e. Capitalize on alumni expertise to further campus/community goals, education, and advocacy
 - f. Develop mentoring opportunities to pair community experts with students interested in social justice work
 - g. Explore opportunities for collaborative grant writing to advance impacts
 - h. Collaborate to advance, promote, and communicate just policy development and advocacy opportunities
 - i. Work to ensure that grants are not competitive with community organizations, but can be collaborative and add to the value and impact of partners



2. Increase awareness of the CSJ in the community

- a. Identify and connect with campus advisory groups including the Small Business Development Center Innovation, Creativity, and Entrepreneurship Council, the Civic and Community Engagement partner meetings, and academic department advisory groups
- b. Share information about the scope of work as well as short- and long-term goals of the CSJ, being open to input and advice
- c. Continue to deepen efforts to create mutually beneficial partnerships as the CSJ priorities grow and change
- d. Advance regional networking and community building efforts around resources available

3. Foster opportunities to collaborate on mutually identified programs and priorities

- a. Create awards and scholarships that support the larger goals of CSJ for individuals or organizations who are transforming their communities
- b. Create a clearinghouse of institutional and community wisdom that houses a database of past social justice-related events, activities, and institutional documents

“A social justice curriculum would inform the theoretical underpinnings that would **shape minds, research ideas, and provide tool sets** so that social justice isn’t an emerging term or a buzzword but a norm and a standard of living where **people deserve to be treated equally and equitably.**”

YEARS 5 AND BEYOND

1. Provide critical public education and programming, where appropriate
2. Ensure sustainability of community-campus partnerships to advance social justice, adjust and revise collaborations for continuous improvement and honest working relationships

Example of Cultivating and Strengthening Partnerships for Social Justice

[Alumni, Assistant Professor Combine Talents in Video Heralding Black Women](#)



PRIORITY 4: ADVANCE SOCIAL JUSTICE AND LIBERATION FOCUSED RESEARCH

The recent College Senate approval of a revised Supplemental DOPS Policy on Scholarship Encompassing Applied Research, Scholarship of Teaching, and Community-Engaged Research and Scholarship has significant positive implications for social justice-focused research, and the subcommittee identified the opportunity to develop and connect student and faculty research priorities to support and collaborate with organizations to provide critical data to foster change.

YEARS 1-2

1. Collaborate with the Civic and Community Engagement Office and Undergraduate Research Office to align support to prioritize and advance social justice research opportunities
2. Investigate faculty and student social justice research efforts already under way

YEAR 3-5

1. Articulate opportunities to align the Student Research and Creativity Conference and the Fall Faculty and Staff Research and Creativity Forum to highlight and focus on social justice

2. Assess and develop Center for Social Justice research agenda and projects
3. Develop campus grants for collaborative faculty/community social justice-focused research that is mutually beneficial and driven by community priorities

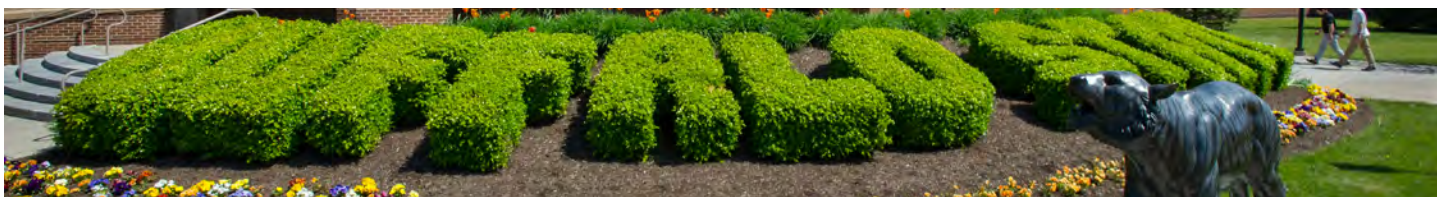
YEARS 5 AND BEYOND

1. Establish additional internal forums featuring social justice research, if appropriate
2. Highlight and support social justice scholarship through publications, presentations, and conferences
3. Investigate the potential for a social justice education journal
4. Promote and incentivize research across academic disciplines, communities, and constituent groups

Example of Social Justice and Liberation Focused Research

“The Cycle of Poverty: What Allows a Person to Break the Cycle”

by students Jahnia Chen, John Keen, Leonna Morris, and Amed Sylla.
Faculty mentors: Jane Sullivan, College Writing Program; Susan Mary Paige, Academic Success



PRIORITY 5: COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY AND FOSTER VISIBILITY FOR THE CENTER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Buffalo State has other significant and relevant priorities and concerns. The draft spring 2021 Middle States Self-Study Design articulates four campus priorities to be addressed. The priorities are consistent with the college's mission statement and the goals of the strategic plan and include

1. Long-term viability
2. Student retention, support, and success
3. Serving as an anchor institution
4. Academic and creative excellence

As we grow and expand our social justice work, there are unique and important ways to align with each of these Middle States priorities. As community awareness of a campus effort to create an equitable environment continues to grow, we have the ability to positively impact each of the Middle States priorities including student recruitment, success, and retention. Raising awareness of our efforts can and should be shared widely, even as we encounter hurdles, setbacks, and challenges. Our honest and raw attempt to create a more inclusive, more justice-oriented campus community is an important aspect of the work.

YEARS 1-2

- a. *Listen to students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners to build community, expand understanding, and explore priorities*
 - a. Strengthen alumni relationships to bring alumni with similar priorities into shared community
 - b. Create ongoing open forums and surveys to build understanding and assess social justice awareness and skills
 - c. Continue to review annual reports for social justice initiatives, involvement, activities
- b. *Connect with internal and external stakeholders to build collaboration*
 - a. Create regular interactions among subcommittee workgroups (communications, community, curriculum, infrastructure)
 - b. Build awareness of Buffalo State's efforts, successes, and programs
 - c. Develop a strong presence throughout Buffalo and beyond
 - d. Collaborate with social justice-related majors /classes on their goals and communication needs.

- e. Foster external communication to expand opportunities and explore connections
 - Communicate with community partners through in-person and electronic strategies
 - Have a CSJ presence/representation at community social justice events, where appropriate
 - Ensure adequate marketing and public relations support for efforts

c. *Establish effective communication systems*

- a. A website with a donor page will be important to establish early in the process
- b. Effective marketing and communications strategies will be necessary to facilitate internal and external communications
- c. It will be important to continue opportunities for ongoing suggestions and feedback from various constituents
- d. Communicate Buffalo State's social justice mission and initiatives throughout the student experience
 - a. Share the social justice webpage widely
 - b. Distribute the social justice definition questionnaire throughout campus
 - c. Create informal educational experiences at orientation, student-staff training, and Weeks of Welcome, led by students
 - d. Identify student organizations and classes that can help spread the word about the CSJ: athletics, learning communities, USG
 - e. Solicit feedback about Buffalo State's social justice mission and initiatives from graduating seniors and alumni
 - f. Develop a CSJ newsletter and social justice campus podcast

YEARS 3-5

1. *Build CSJ's reputation as go-to advocates for facilitating and directing responses to social justice issues on campus*
2. *Chart how CSJ has moved the needle on campus community awareness, response, and reputation*
3. *Promote CSJ to prospective students; to local, national, and international media*

YEARS 5 AND BEYOND

Contribute to the local and international dialogue and advancement of Social Justice

APPENDIX 1: SOCIAL JUSTICE SUBCOMMITTEE BY WORKGROUP

	Infrastructure	Definition, Mission, Vision, and Goals	Curriculum, Research, Co-curricular Campus and Community Programming	Asset Mapping/ External and Internal Communications	Community Partnerships
Facilitator	Carol DeNysschen, Chair and Professor, Health, Nutrition, and Dietetics Department	Amy Wilson, Chair and Associate Professor, Higher Education Administration Department	James Golden, Assistant Professor, Social Work Department	Mark Norris, Associate Director of Web Administration and Editor, Marketing and Communications Office	Terri Massenberg, Complex Director, Residence Life Office
Project Manager	Kristin Fields, Director, Continuing Professional Studies	John Cabra, Professor, International Center for Studies in Creativity	Judith Harris, Lecturer, Exceptional Education Department	Agnieszka Zak-Moskal, Interim Assistant Provost for Academic Success, Title III Activity Director/ Director, First-Year Student Success	Peter DeJesus Jr., Assistant Women's Basketball Coach
Student Co-Facilitator	Solomon Joseph, Graduate, Higher Education & Student Affairs Program	Deandre Campbell, Senior, Sociology Program	Shenese Patterson, Senior, Sociology Program	Laura Brown, Graduate, Higher Education & Student Affairs Program	Jhada Hutchinson, Senior, Individualized Studies Program
Members	Kerry Brogan, Instructional Support Technician, Information Technology Services	Sherrie Bernat, Nurse Practitioner, Weigel Wellness Center	Lisa Marie Anselmi, Associate Professor & Chair, Anthropology Department	Michael Heflin, Assistant Dean of Inclusion and Equity, Dean of Students Office	Naila Ansari, Assistant Professor, Theater Department
	Melissa Holland, Director of International Education, Global Engagement	Joshua Scarbrough, Complex Director, Residence Life Office	Maria Brzykcy, Office Assistant 1 (Keyboarding), Admissions Office	John Mack, Assistant Clinical Manager, Weigel Wellness Center	Frances Gage, Associate Professor, Art and Design Department
	Eric "Luke" Krieg, Professor, Sociology Department	Marcus Watson, Assistant Professor, Individualized Studies	Drew Kahn, SUNY Distinguished Service Professor, Theater Department; Director, Anne Frank Project		Jason Knight, Associate Professor, Geography and Planning Department
	Vida Vanchan, Associate Professor, Geography and Planning Department		Alice Pennisi, Associate Professor, Art and Design Department		Tristin Salter, Academic Coordinator, Continuing Professional Studies
Co-Chairs & Project Manager	Co-chair: Yanick Jenkins, Director, Educational Opportunity Program Co-chair: Laura Hill Rao, Director, Civic and Community Engagement Office Project Manager: Jonathan Hulbert, Director of Leadership and Organizational Development, Professional Development Center				



BUFFALO STATE
The State University of New York