

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
MISSION, VISION, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Mission

Western Michigan University School of Social Work educates social workers to advocate for social and economic justice and personal well-being for all people. The faculty provides leadership on a local, national, and international level through research, scholarship, community service and partnerships, and other creative activities relevant to the profession.

Vision

We seek to be a school that:

- strengthens students' critical thinking skills, helps them formulate a vision of a just society, and enables them to move towards the realization of their vision;
- prepares ethical, competent, reflective practitioners to work with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and institutions within a global and changing environment;
- fosters sensitivity to diversity, cultural competence, and practice effectiveness;
- provides a nurturing, respectful, inclusive environment that maximizes the contributions and development of students, faculty, and staff.

Guiding Principles

We believe in:

- facilitating excellence in professional education;
- integrating theory and practice;
- conducting research on best practices that foster solutions to community needs;
- participating and seeking out mutually collaborative relationships;
- ensuring professional competence through gate-keeping and bridge-building activities;
- understanding and intervening within a person-centered ecological model;
- evaluating educational outcomes, skills, knowledge, and values;
- creating a student-centered educational environment;
- maintaining a commitment to life-long professional learning for faculty, staff, and alumni;
- preparing social workers to advocate for social justice.

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