Message from Dean Nancy Smyth

Amid a sea of changes in our global and national environments, higher education, and the social work profession, we at UB are charting our course based on our vision of a just, diverse and humane society. Our strengths include a focus on community-engaged partnerships for research and practice, trauma-informed and human rights perspectives, and our willingness to employ new technologies to extend our reach. Our new Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care, part of the Buffalo Center for Social Research, showcases one aspect of our unique impact: an innovative approach to change that integrates evidence-based and best practice, research and teaching with a trauma-informed lens. Our award-winning podcast, inSocialWork, continues to extend its global reach to communicate new developments in research and practice. This brochure presents a gestalt of who we are and the issues we focus on – please check out our website for more detail.

“Our profession was born in the industrial revolution. Over the past century we’ve developed a toolbox and perspective that uniquely position us to solve the problems confronting the 21st century. But to do this, we need to integrate our social work skills with those of the digital age.”
Our Office of Continuing Education offers an Online Trauma-Informed Clinical Foundation Certificate Program. This program makes information about trauma treatment more accessible to clinicians and agencies both locally and internationally. Understanding the nature and treatment of trauma is the first step in helping professionals and organizations evolve to better meet the needs of trauma survivors.

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**Definitions: Trauma, Human Rights and Trauma-Informed Care**

The UBSSW faculty acknowledges the interrelationship between trauma and human rights and has adopted these as guiding principles for the school and curriculum.

**Human Rights**
are inherent to the dignity of each person; they are universal, inalienable and indivisible.

**Trauma**
can follow events that involve actual or witnessed death, serious injury or threat to physical integrity.

**Trauma-Informed Care**
includes understanding “What happened to you?” instead of “What’s wrong with you?” and encompasses policies, services and practice that incorporate knowledge about the impact of traumatic experiences.

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**Trauma-Informed Care in Action**

Former MSW students Brad Linn, Meaghan Barone and McKenzie Mattison identified an opportunity to directly contribute to county service delivery by revising the admissions process at the Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP) at Erie County Medical Center (ECMC) through a course assignment in Evaluation in Social Work (SW 514), taught by Dr. Thomas Nochajski. Struck by the observation that clients who have experienced trauma are often faced with an uncomfortable series of interviews with various professionals, and that helping systems can thus potentially re-traumatize clients, the students developed an instrument to utilize a trauma-informed perspective while evaluating new patients who are seeking care. “We never thought it would be something necessarily adopted by them,” says Linn, “but ECMC changed their intake process so clients meet with a social worker first.”
Our Faculty

Filomena Critelli
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
“I view my research as a form of activism, and I love the cross-cultural aspects of research. My goal is to prepare students with a global perspective so they can advance social justice and human rights and to connect my research and teaching to the promotion of social change.”

Louanne Bakk
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
“Individuals should have equal access to services and benefits as they enter later life. Because of disadvantages throughout the life course, inequities exist. My research focuses on racial, ethnic, and gender disparities under policy initiatives designed to assist older adults. I’m dedicated to helping students understand how programs differentially impact the aging population.”

Laina Bay-Cheng
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND PHD PROGRAM DIRECTOR
“I see gender norms and sexism as risk factors since they often undercut young women’s access to social and material resources and their leverage in negotiating with male partners. These ideas drive my current study of how socioeconomic resources and future prospects affect young women’s investment and power in heterosexual romantic relationships.”

Diane Elze
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND DIRECTOR OF THE MSW PROGRAM
“My focus is on the wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth. Sexual orientation and gender identity are integral to our identity. Issues impacting adolescents also impact LGBT adolescents, who in addition may face the trauma of rejection because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. LGBT rights are human rights.”

Lisa Butler
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
“Being grounded in trauma research has led me to realize the importance of conceptualizing what trauma really means. We must clearly define traumatic events as distinct from other major stressors, even if the latter have profound effects; we must also be able to identify the events are uniquely human rights violations.”

Sue Green
CLINICAL ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND CO DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE ON TRAUMA AND TRAUMA INFORMED CARE
“My work is concentrated on trauma and trauma-informed care across the lifespan within communities and organizations. We now have tools to help people heal from trauma and to avoid retraumatizing those seeking help. What an honor to be in a position of helping people recognize the possibilities in our work.”

Catherine Dulmus
PROFESSOR, ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR RESEARCH AND DIRECTOR OF THE BUFFALO CENTER FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH
“Many adults suffer terribly with serious mental illness, often starting when they were children. I’ve expanded my research in children’s mental health through a university-community research partnership whereby our findings are quickly applied in practice. My hope is to develop interventions for children that lead to a more satisfying adult life.”

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Robert Keefe  
**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR**  
"My research focuses on the service needs of new mothers of color and their children who are unable to access prenatal healthcare agencies. By assisting healthcare professionals in rendering culturally-sensitive services, we can improve health outcomes for mothers of color and their children."

Annette Semanchin Jones  
**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR**  
"My focus is on a new approach to child welfare called Family Assessment Response and its impact on families, specifically issues of racial equity and disparities. It directly impacts my teaching, encouraging future social workers to help build knowledge and advocate for equitable implementation of policies and programs that impact children and families."

Isok Kim  
**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR**  
"I believe that social work research and practice based on a trauma-informed, human rights perspective is reflected through community-based participatory research. Thus, addressing the mental health needs of the Asian American community requires that its community members are systematically involved in establishing culturally appropriate services and providing feedback for continuous improvement of services."

Wooksoo Kim  
**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR**  
"I am passionate about increasing knowledge concerning alcohol and gambling issues among Asian immigrant elders, a frequently marginalized group. Through research, we can improve the lives of this vulnerable population. The school has many faculty members interested in immigrant and refugee issues. Together, we can advance science and make changes in these communities."

Kathleen Kost  
**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR**  
"I work with students to help them gain an understanding of the dynamic nature of poverty and opportunity at both the local and global levels of practice. In particular, I focus on the influence social workers can have on the collaborative activities of organizations and resources in poor communities."

Denise Krause  
**CLINICAL PROFESSOR AND ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS**  
"I'm interested in training students and professionals in solution-focused approaches to work at all levels of practice. My hope is that by emphasizing engagement and listening before acting, our graduates will create empowering practice communities."

Patricia Logan-Greene  
**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR**  
"Social workers typically work with victims, but if we’re going to prevent violence, we really need to focus on the perpetrators. The goal of my current work with court-involved youth is to underscore the fact that the victims and offenders are the same people: a punitive approach is not helpful for these youth."

Yunju Nam  
**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR**  
"My research focus is economic security and asset building among elderly immigrants, as this population is in a particularly vulnerable position in respect to economy. Low-income populations have a right to economic security and development, so it’s important not only to provide them with something to get by, but also something to build upon."
Thomas Nochajski
RESEARCH PROFESSOR AND CO-DIRECTOR
OF INSTITUTE ON TRAUMA AND TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

“My primary work has been concentrated in the addictions area. The focus in my research has always been to help make things better through application. From my research with DWI offenders, I developed a screening instrument for DWI offenders that is currently being used in several states and Canadian provinces.”

Kelly Patterson
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

“Residential segregation relegates the poor and minorities to the most disadvantaged neighborhoods. This means they have unequal access to valuable resources such as housing and education. I believe everyone has the right to access decent affordable housing in neighborhoods that offer them opportunities for social and economic mobility.”

Barbara Rittner
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR ADVANCEMENT

“It’s about the welfare of children, not just about the system that delivers child welfare services, and understanding how childhood trauma is different than adult trauma. My passion is to get people to question authority, question assumptions and create literature that informs the role of advocate. That’s critical to being a good social worker.”

Adjoa Robinson
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

“A common challenge of caregiving is facing a myriad of decisions with little information and few resources. I’d like to boost the health literacy of African American caregivers of older adults at the critical time of transition into the caregiving role, toward better functional outcomes for both caregiver and recipient.”

Peter Sobota
CLINICAL ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

“I want our students to think beyond the typical. I remind them that a real social worker not only provides social services, but also works for social change. That’s what gets me excited as a social work educator—teaching students about theory and then showing them how it works in the real world.”

Charles Syms
CLINICAL ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

“Trauma is, unfortunately, an integral part of the experience of marginalized and vulnerable populations. The trauma-informed perspective provides a path for social workers to understand and address, at multiple levels, the experience of these populations. Challenging trauma at the structural level is a human rights imperative.”

Deborah Waldrop
PROFESSOR AND ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

“I believe that a ‘good’ late life and death are universal human rights. I’m committed to advancing awareness about the interrelationship between aging and progressive limitations. My research focuses on understanding how decision-making about options for care happens and on increasing knowledge about people and families’ expressed wishes near life’s end.”

Hilary Weaver
PROFESSOR AND ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

“Whether it’s a substance abuse, nursing home or child welfare issue, I’m always interested in how the cultural piece fits with helping people. With its many ethnic populations, Buffalo is a great place to work. The social work profession has a mission to serve disenfranchised populations and that includes being culturally responsive.”
Buffalo Center for Social Research

With a commitment to community-based research, the Buffalo Center for Social Research (BCSR) infrastructure assists both faculty and students in developing and sustaining their research programs. The center’s allure is its breadth of research, which ranges from addictions to mental health, child welfare to geriatrics. Each research topic is valued and supported at the BCSR.

Research institutes in trauma and trauma-informed care, program evaluation, and behavioral sciences in India have developed under the umbrella of the BCSR. We look for opportunities to organize research by topic through an institute structure to expand research opportunities and increase impact.

The generous endowment of alumnus Les Brun supports research pilot studies that are of particular help for tenure-earning faculty. The gift is also directed to fellowships for doctoral students from underrepresented populations to eventually increase their numbers on social work faculties.

The BCSR’s community-based research among Buffalo’s diverse populations provides training opportunities for doctoral students to assist in transforming their studies into real-world practice, developing the skills they need to support their particular area of research interest while broadening their world view.

Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care

The Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care (ITTIC) provides evaluation, trauma-specific treatment interventions, training, technical assistance, and consultation for community organizations specific to trauma-informed care.

The ITTIC partners with UB’s Office of Continuing Education and other academic institutions in training geared toward evidence-based practice, with trauma-informed and/or trauma-specific field placements, as well as overseeing independent studies, funded research projects and grants. Targeted areas of care include domestic violence, substance abuse, and the plight of refugees, immigrants and asylum seekers. A trauma-focused support curriculum has been developed for those without access to treatment.

The ITTIC has become the administrative home of the Trauma-Informed Community Initiative, a coalition of influential leaders in health care, education, behavioral health and law enforcement across the WNY region who are committed to trauma-informed care. An expert advisory panel also helps maintain the objectives of the ITTIC as a hub of training, consultation, research and evaluation.

International Field Placements

The Field Education Department has available internationally-focused regional field placements that provide services to refugee and immigrant populations and address global, social and economic issues and policies such as human trafficking, refugee resettlement and immigration status. International field placements are developed by the field education staff in partnership with the student and an interested international organization. Most recently, MSW students have worked with the Burma Border Projects in Thailand and with the Korean Unwed Mothers Support Network in South Korea.

Sarah Nesbitt (MSW ’13) teaching a public health class to refugee camp in Thailand.

UBARI

The UB/Amrita Social Sciences and Behavioral Research Institute (UBARI), a collaborative partnership between the Department of Social Work at Amrita University in India and the UB School of Social Work, is committed to creating, enhancing and supporting interdisciplinary transnational research initiatives and global academic learning opportunities for scholars, students and faculty.

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A binational region steeped in history and diversity

From the nearby Southern Ontario region of Canada to the reservation communities of the Seneca and Tuscarora Nations, Western New York and the Buffalo Niagara region have much to offer:

- Rich architectural heritage, including buildings by Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan
- Extensive Frederick Law Olmsted system of parks and parkways
- Affordable housing and low cost of living
- Award-winning schools
- Proximity to three Great Lakes
- Thriving arts and cultural scene, including the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, the Burchfield-Penney Art Center, Just Buffalo Literary Center, Shea’s Performing Arts Center, Irish Classical Theatre, and Shakespeare in the Park
- Minutes from Canada (Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls, Toronto, The Shaw Festival, Stratford Festival)
- Urban, suburban and rural communities
- Major league professional sports (football, hockey, lacrosse)