

REALIZING OUR COLLECTIVE PROMISE



The 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN
of the Graduate School of Education
University at Buffalo, State University of New York

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DEAN'S LETTER

Suzanne Rosenblith
*Dean and Professor
Graduate School of Education
University at Buffalo*



In spring 2019, the Graduate School of Education (GSE) initiated a collaborative academic strategic planning process. Beginning with a reconsideration of GSE's mission and vision, the faculty and staff of GSE considered its purposes and commitments.

After laying the initial groundwork, a steering committee was established with faculty and staff representation to facilitate the articulation of a new mission and vision. This new mission and vision was approved in September 2019. Following this work, GSE moved into the next phase of strategic planning by arranging for focus groups comprised of faculty at all ranks, students, and staff. At these meetings, facilitated by an external consultant, groups were able to articulate their strategic priorities and goals for GSE. Compiling the findings from each focus group, we arrived at this strategic plan: *Realizing our Collective Promise*.

This collective promise reflects our obligations to excellence, impact, and inclusivity in all that we do. We make this promise to each other, our

students, and the individuals and communities most impacted by our work.

A second steering committee was established with representation from each department and from the staff to identify a comprehensive action plan for each strategic goal. The results of their work are presented within this document as the Graduate School of Education strategic plan. Like other strategic plans, this is conceived as a living document subject to adjustment or revisions as new opportunities and priorities emerge.

I am grateful to the many individuals who participated in this iterative process that resulted in this strategic plan. Our diverse and engaged community will be key to the success of this plan, and ultimately, to a thriving Graduate School of Education.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne Rosenblith". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

MISSION

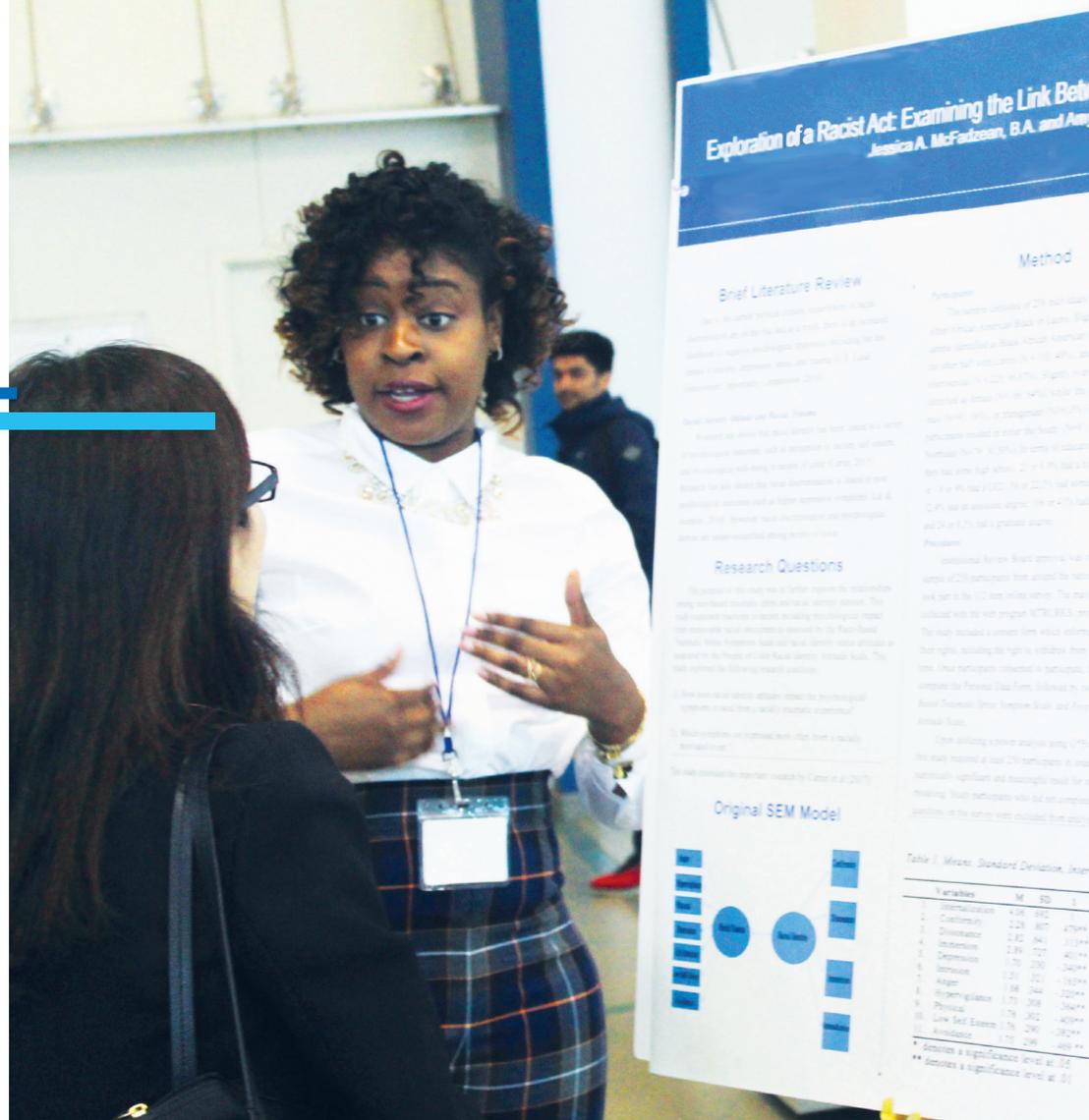
With a focus on local-to-global impact, the Graduate School of Education is an inclusive community engaged in ground-breaking research and teaching across education, human development and information science that improves educational, social and economic opportunities for individuals and communities.

VISION

As an integral part of a premier, research-intensive public institution committed to equity, diversity and inclusion, the Graduate School of Education will be recognized worldwide for outstanding and transformative research and teaching linked to educational, social and economic opportunities and outcomes at the individual and collective levels.

Strategic

GOAL ONE



Cultivate a Diverse, Inclusive, and Collaborative Community of Faculty, Students, and Staff

Fundamental to our mission as a graduate school of education is ensuring that our community is representative of all aspects of diversity and that we create systems and model practices that allow every member of our community to grow, succeed, and thrive. We are committed to creating a diverse, inclusive, just, and equitable community of faculty, students, staff, and administrators where all feel welcomed, included, supported, empowered, and have equal access to resources, supports, services, and opportunities that ensure their learning and success. Cultivating such an environment is essential to our roles as educators, scholars, and leaders within our professions and communities.

OBJECTIVE 1

Attract and retain a highly-talented and diverse faculty, staff, and student body.

→ ACTIONS

- Implement comprehensive recruitment plans that outline innovative and practical recruitment strategies to help ensure broad outreach, identify high-caliber applicants, attract top candidates, and provide programs and resources to ensure retention.
- Coordinate social events, programs, and activities that serve to welcome, engage, and support all students and that bring together members from across our learning communities.
- Develop professional development activities to establish expectations and practices that build respectful relationships where there can be constructive collaboration and meaningful dialogue around diversity, equity, inclusion.

OBJECTIVE 2

Encourage and create opportunities for all members of the community to engage in curricular, co-curricular, and research activities that improve diversity, equity, and inclusion within GSE and through our community engagement.

→ ACTIONS

- Increase the number and range of GSE sponsored programs and conversations related to diversity, equity, and inclusion and encourage participation from a broad range of perspectives.
- Promote and encourage participation in mentoring, training, and professional development activities focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Engage, foster, and empower collaborative groups of faculty and students who conduct scholarship on diversity, equity, and inclusion, to leverage their expertise to inspire change and promote dialogue on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

OBJECTIVE 3

Enhance effective, consistent, and equitable teaching, mentoring and professional development opportunities to meet the needs and provide appropriate supports for all GSE students, faculty, and staff.

→ ACTIONS

- Strengthen faculty awareness, knowledge, and ability to create culturally inclusive classrooms where students are able to express diverse perspectives and cultivate open and honest dialogue.
- Develop and extend curriculum and pedagogy that actively and intentionally addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Re-imagine and enhance advising and mentoring practices that are inclusive and equitable.
- Provide professional development opportunities to enhance culturally inclusive mentoring practices

Strategic

GOAL TWO



Create and Sustain Mutually Beneficial Partnerships That Solve Genuine Problems of Practice and Inform Policy

As a school of education, we must engage meaningfully with the schools and communities we serve. We are committed to building and sustaining partnerships that allow for the mutual exchange of ideas, and working collaboratively to conduct research that solves genuine problems of practice and informs policy for the public good.

OBJECTIVE 1

Invite community stakeholders to engage with GSE's programs, initiatives, and research to regularly identify points of intersection and sustain collaborative partnerships.

ACTIONS

- Develop structures that effectively engage community partners in order to cultivate mutually beneficial partnerships and the open exchange of ideas.
- Establish regular programming that connects faculty, community, and school-based partners around genuine problems of practice and that enables research to inform practice and policy.

OBJECTIVE 2

Create opportunities for faculty to engage with Community-Based Educational Institutions, conduct research that solves genuine problems of practice, and make community impact.

ACTIONS

- Create and sustain programming that fosters substantive faculty engagement with the concerns of community-based educational institutions and partners.
- Develop supports that enable faculty collaborations and the translation of research to policy and practice.



Strategic

GOAL THREE



Create a Strategic and Supportive Culture of Research

As scholars in a research-intensive university, we strive to improve the lives of others by generating and sharing knowledge through systematic inquiry. By creating a supportive culture within GSE that prioritizes research, we can realize our potential and keep our promise to the public.

OBJECTIVE 1

Heighten grant engagement by increasing the number of faculty participating and the number of submissions each year; and by seeking more ambitious awards.

→ **ACTIONS**

- Bring together faculty teams across GSE to pursue diverse funding opportunities to meet our collective mission to serve the public good, as well as support individual programs of research.
- Recognize and celebrate faculty scholarly achievements that reach academic and non-academic communities.
- Nurture a new generation of civically engaged scholars by fostering cross-program and cross-departmental collaborations that support graduate student grant skill development.

OBJECTIVE 2

Prioritize research and grant-related learning among faculty, and provide relevant supports to empower faculty to initiate and carry out successful funded research programs that add to the civic good.

→ **ACTIONS**

- Initiate regular, structured, faculty self-assessment that informs individualized programming, mentoring, and other supports to expand grant skills and deepen expertise.
- Convene experts from research, practitioner, and funder perspectives to share knowledge, generate ideas, and develop projects that serve the civic good.



Strategic

GOAL FOUR



Achieve Student Excellence Through a Rigorous and Supportive Teaching and Learning Environment

At the heart of what we do in GSE is preparing the next generation of practitioners and researchers. We do this by ensuring that GSE students are provided with the very best experiences in terms of their academic programs, co-curricular experiences, advising, and research opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 1

Deliver curriculum that is innovative, inclusive, rigorous, engaging, and flexible

→ ACTIONS

- Create and develop signature curricula and degree programs through ongoing assessment and innovation of coursework, excellence in instruction, strategic academic partnerships, and annual assessment.
- Offer curricula and degree programs honoring and integrating equity, diversity, and inclusive practices.
- Embed learning in a culture of rich experiences enhanced by visiting scholars, site-based learning, and active engagement in research.

OBJECTIVE 2

Ensure that Ph.D. programs are current, integrated, distinctive, flexible, and right sized

→ ACTIONS

- Foster doctoral excellence by ensuring programs prioritize doctoral student development within the context of the ongoing pursuit of rigorous, innovative and distinctive training.
- Engage in student-centered mentorship in the conversation and professional norms of their disciplines that is invitational, engaging, inspiring, and responsive.

OBJECTIVE 3

Provide students with rich and rigorous online educational experiences.

→ ACTIONS

- Ensure that online learning experiences are top-quality, engaging, and rigorous by developing and utilizing effective strategies for teaching and creating community in the online environment
- Utilize cutting-edge technology and infrastructure to enhance asynchronous and real-time connection with online and on campus learners for special engagements/events and typical class learning





 University at Buffalo
Graduate School of Education



367 BALDY HALL | BUFFALO, NY
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