




IUPUI

**OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR**

INDIANA UNIVERSITY—PURDUE UNIVERSITY  
Indianapolis

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: IUPUI Faculty Council  
Faculty / Staff of IU School of Social Work

FROM: Charles R. Bantz, Chancellor 

DATE: September 30, 2014

RE: Administrative Review of the Dean, IU School of Social Work

This memo summarizes the report of the Administrative Review Committee (ARC) on the office of the Dean, IU School of Social Work Michael Patchner.

Chair David J. Russomanno, Dean, Purdue University School of Engineering; Faculty from other schools: Steven L. Jones, Associate Professor of Finance, IU Kelley School of business; Stuart J. Warden, Associate Professor and Director, BSW Program, IU East; Social Work Faculty: William H. Barton, Professor; Katharine V. Byers, BSW Program Director; Edward Fitzgerald, Assistant Professor, IU East - Director of Social Work; Darlene H. Lynch, Professor and Director, IU Northwest; Jeffrey Wayne Thigpen, Associate Professor; Robert E. Weiler, Senior Lecturer, Vice President NASW Indiana Chapter, Continuum of Care, Advisory Board Chair; Staff: Katrina R. Patterson, BSW Administrative Secretary/Student Services and BSW Recorder; Undergraduate Student: Laquisha Deann Glasco, IUPUI Upward Bound; Graduate Student: Kurtis L. O'Brien, MSWSA President/Curriculum Representative; Community Representative: Mary Beth Bonaventura, Director, Indiana Department of Child Services.

The process included a personal statement from Dean Patchner; direct interviews conducted by the review committee members; campus surveys conducted by the Survey Research Center (SRC) of faculty, staff and students. The SRC conducted surveys of focus group sessions to gather input from recent graduates of the IU School of Social Work (IUSSW) and individuals currently volunteering as IUSSW field instructors. Respondents represent each campus on which the school is found: Gary, South Bend, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, Bloomington, Kokomo, and New Albany. In addition, over twenty direct interviews were conducted by pairs of team members of the ARC and included deans from IUPUI and IUB, as well as other campus leaders. In addition, national leaders external to the University representing groups like the National Association of Social Workers and the President of the National Association of Dean's and Directors of Schools of Social Work were interviewed.

### **Observations**

- a. Faculty and staff are impressed by Dean Patchner's ability to increase the reputation of the school, as well as for his leadership, vision, and external affairs.
- b. There was no overwhelming disparities, only slight variances, regarding the perceptions of Dean Patchner by faculty, staff and students on campuses for which he is responsible throughout.
- c. Some faculty and staff expressed apprehension that the school – in particular the Indianapolis campus – is growing at a rate that is too rapid to be adequately handled with existing resources.
- d. The most common limitation of the dean cited was with respect to communication and transparency. A few faculty members discuss situations where a decision made in Indianapolis wasn't effectively communicated to the other campuses. Several raised the issue of the dean failing to communicate a clear and consistent overall strategic plan and vision for IUSSW across all campuses. Several reviewers expressed their observation that Dean Patchner has a habit of taking on too many responsibilities himself.
- e. Dean Patchner is considered effective or very effective by 90 percent of staff and faculty when it comes to his ability to provide strong advocacy for the school. Equal confidence is placed in his establishment of effective, beneficial, university-wide relationships.
- f. The great majority of IUSSW students characterize faculty under the leadership of Dean Patchner to be knowledgeable, professional, helpful, approachable and supportive. All but one of 37 less enthusiastic responses were from graduate students (primarily in Indianapolis) who complain that many graduate level courses lack rigor. Graduate students are overall satisfied, with those on the Indianapolis campus reporting the lowest levels of satisfaction.
- g. Alumni praised the school on many aspects of quality and value associated with their education. Alumni and field instructors expressed concerns on improving the student practicum program and agreed that incentives should be improved to help motivate higher levels of field instructor involvement in training and meetings.

### **Recommendations**

1. In reducing the number of responsibilities for the dean, the addition of one or two associate deans may help advance strategic priorities, including research.

2. Given the accelerated growth of the program, consideration of programmatic needs such as staff support across the various campuses should be a priority.
3. With the commitment to diversity, there is a need to define and implement a functional strategy to achieve goals of recruitment.
4. There is a need to address the perceived lack of clear and consistent communication across campuses of strategic vision and mission.
5. The IUSSW should pursue opportunities to increase productivity through enhanced collaboration, particularly with the health schools, to create win-win partnerships which will lead to increased extramural support and recognition of its research accomplishments.
6. Reviewers cite a need to improve the student practicum. Among other things, alumni suggest that students be encouraged to take an active role in their own practicum placements, to take on ownership of seeking out and securing placements that match their needs and interests.

### **Summary**

- a. Dean Patchner has numerous strengths that were consistently reported across all constituency groups. He is highly regarded nationally and internationally by the social work community.
- b. Dean Patchner is consistently described as accessible, calm, collaborative, focused, inclusive, open to new ideas, passionate, respectful, trustworthy, and a strong advocate for faculty, staff and students.
- c. He is considered to be very skilled in the Responsibility Centered Management budgetary model and is an overall excellent fiscal manager.
- d. Dean Patchner is an excellent role model for deans; his collegiality was consistently expressed by others as outstanding, as well as his willingness to contribute to the overall advancement of the entire university.
- e. The direct interviews consistently revealed that Dean Patchner and the IUSSW were responsive to the needs of the community.