



College of Humanities & Social Sciences Transforming Communities Institute UtahStateUniversity®

Strategic Plan 2022-2027

Mission

We respond to community-identified needs across Utah. Drawing on strengths and assets, we collaborate and engage with stakeholders to transform communities through research, professional education and training, advocacy, and action to build strong, resilient, and inclusive communities.

Vision

All Utahns will live in thriving, vibrant communities.

Values

- **We listen:** to all community voices.
- **We learn:** with and from community members.
- **We educate:** future social work professionals, community leaders, and members.
- **We engage:** with diverse community partners.
- **We value:** diverse perspectives, experiences, and contributions.
- **We mobilize:** individuals, groups, and agencies.
- **We collaborate:** intentionally and effectively to improve key community outcomes.
- **We work:** the process from initial assessment to final outcomes.

Priority Areas

A months-long community assessment process was initiated in 2021 with support from the College of Humanities & Social Sciences. Community decision-makers, elected officials, and community-based agencies in Logan, Brigham City, Kaysville, Tooele, Price, Vernal, Moab, and Blanding were surveyed regarding their perceptions about urgent social needs in their communities. Additionally, students and alumni of the Department of Social Work were interviewed about their future practice and educational options and views about macro social work practice. More than 200 stakeholders participated -- results helped TCI identify key priority areas that support community well-being, especially for marginalized groups.

- Housing & Homelessness
- Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, & Recovery
- Mental & Physical Healthcare Access
- Family & Partner Relationships

Other priority areas include community vitality, sexual health and education, LGBTQ+ issues, and racism.

Strategies & Activities

Strategy 1: Community-Based, Collaborative Research

- **Activity:** Build an interdisciplinary faculty and student fellows program with appropriate supports and benefits
- **Activity:** Conduct research in, with, and for communities, capitalizing on our relationships among faculty, current students, alumni, and community agencies
- **Activity:** Create an open-access journal that focuses on student-faculty research in and about communities and organizations
- **Activity:** Translate and disseminate research into action and consumable products (e.g., plain-language summaries, toolkits, podcasts, fact sheets) for research participants, general public, organizations, and policymakers

Strategy 2: Education in Community and Organizational Social Work Practice

- **Activity:** Strengthen the commitment to an advanced generalist program and bridging micro and macro practice through reviewing and revising existing course outlines and field placements
- **Activity:** Offer a community practice certificate based on ACOSA's offering for current students and alumni
- **Activity:** Promote existing certificates at the university level that will complement macro social work practice
- **Activity:** Offer guidance to faculty on how to integrate macro practice knowledge and activities into existing courses
- **Activity:** Build a macro practice library

Strategy 3: Professional Development & Training

- **Activity:** Provide affordable CEU opportunities to alumni and existing practitioners in Utah communities
- **Activity:** Provide affordable trainings to community agencies, professionals, and policymakers in priority areas and faculty expertise

Strategy 4: Consulting & Other Services

- **Activity:** Provide affordable consulting and service provision in areas of expertise to assist in program development, implementation, and evaluation; grant writing; and problem-solving

Strategy 5: Community Building

- **Activity:** Generate policy statements and recommendations
- **Activity:** Develop a TCI policy repository in Digital Commons
- **Activity:** Recognize a community advocate on an annual basis
- **Activity:** Highlight community activists through communication channels
- **Activity:** Turn applicable research into policy briefs and actively educate locally and statewide to policymakers
- **Activity:** Track legislation in conjunction with appropriate courses
- **Activity:** Train community advocates and leaders
- **Activity:** Train current students and alumni to be active coalition members
- **Activity:** Support and serve on coalitions aligned with TCI priorities, values, and expertise