

Multiyear Research Plan for the USC School of Social Work

March 2015

Prepared and Approved by the Research Council

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“Science guiding innovation in human service interventions”

Introduction

The University of Southern California School of Social Work (USC-SSW) is making significant contributions to the knowledge and training that promotes science and guides innovation in human service interventions on a global scale. Our school is strategically placed at the crux of critical societal challenges and opportunities in areas including health care reform, services integration, behavioral health and care, child development and children's services, homelessness and supportive housing, aging, military veterans and families, trauma, and community well-being. The USC-SSW research portfolio continues to expand, with annual grants and contracts of \$10-\$12M, as reported for the first quarter of FY 2015, or approximately \$40M over the previous four years. The USC-SSW's research enterprise is guided by the vision that complex societal problems will be solved only through an interdisciplinary approach that embraces the science of social work.

The USC-SSW Research Council (RC), a democratically elected body drawn from all faculty tracks, is the steward of our research vision. The RC, an official School governance unit, provides a foundation for the distinct research enterprise that is grounded in the science of social work. The RC has overall responsibility for the development of the USC-SSW research enterprise, and for the oversight and efficient functioning of the research clusters of excellence and Hamovitch Center for Science in the Human Services (HCSHS). The HCSHS has responsibility for the execution of RC policy and provides efficiently organized research administration and an infrastructure that is essential in the preparation and processing of proposals, grants and contracts. Research clusters of excellence are the core of the USC-SSW's research enterprise. Faculty and students in each of these seven clusters maximize the synergies and unique gains that are possible when researchers with similar interests work together toward larger goals that would not be possible to achieve if each worked alone.

USC-SSW faculty represent a diverse set of expertise in social work, psychology, sociology, nursing, anthropology, gerontology, engineering, public health, and statistics, with research collaborations engaging most schools within USC. Collaborations exist with a wide range of universities and research institutes in the Americas, Asia and Europe. Our research network also extends to local, national, and international human service agencies. Faculty utilize a multidisciplinary approach aimed at integrating biological, psychological, and social factors into social work's ecological perspective in the which the individual is viewed in the contexts of the environment. Our research has the overarching goal of illuminating and solving real-world challenges and promoting engagement in community service, with emphasis on translational research for change that will improve the well-being of the individual and society.

This multiyear plan, approved by all voting members of the RC in February, 2015, defines our research strategy over the next five years and represents a process that has been established and refined over the last decade.

I. Research Council

The Research Council (RC) is an official School governance unit that has overall responsibility for the development of the USC-SSW research enterprise, for developing policy pertaining to research in the School, and for the oversight and efficient functioning of the HCSHS and the Research Clusters of Excellence. The RC has a status equivalent to other USC-SSW faculty governance units (Faculty Council and Curriculum Council) and promotes the USC-SSW's institutional interests in scientific research productivity.

The selection of seven RC members is made as follows:

- (i) Election of four faculty members from a pool meeting the criteria of Principal Investigator (PI) on a minimum of two grants, with one R01 grant or equivalent (as determined on a case-by-case basis) from public or private sources within the previous ten years, and competitive peer-review experience on research or research training grants at either public or private funding agencies.
- (ii) Election of two members at-large from all ranks and lines.
- (iii) Appointment of one member designated by research cluster directors.
- (iv) Four RC members must be on the tenure line, two of whom must be full professors.
- (v) The RC will recommend two candidates to the dean for Chair, of whom the dean will appoint one. The chair must be on the tenure line.
- (vi) Ex-officio members will include two associate deans of research, one program director, and one ad hoc consultant.

Terms of service for the RC are as follows:

- (i) Chair: two years
- (ii) Voting members: two years
- (iii) At-large voting members: one year

Decisions about the composition of the Research Council were deliberated on and developed over the course of a one-year period, with the goals of maintaining and nurturing peer-reviewed scientific research expertise at the most rigorous and competitive levels expected within one of the top "Research 1" universities in the U.S., as well as ensuring faculty representation and input from all tracks.

II. Hamovitch Center for Science in the Human Services

The Hamovitch Center for Science in the Human Services (HCSHS) is the functional and administrative core of the USC-SSW's research enterprise. With responsibility for executing RC policies pertaining to the promotion of our research enterprise through effective and efficient research administration and infrastructure, the HCSHS is charged with assisting PIs with pre- and post-award functions for grants and contracts, and in maintaining research integrity through regulatory compliance and good business practices. HCSHS administration also has the mission of facilitating the acquisition of research funding and national and international interuniversity research collaboration. These are accomplished through the HCSHS systems of research

administrative support, its editorial and database management services, and its statistical analysis core and support network of external statistical, methodological and substantive consultants.

The HCSHS works with the RC and Clusters of Research Excellence to manifest a culture that is both service-oriented to researchers of all levels as well as supportive of new theories and methodologies to improve the delivery and quality of health and human services. The HCSHS is *interdisciplinary as* reflected in the following arrangements:

- 1) The HCSHS serves researchers having diverse disciplinary backgrounds including social work, nursing, sociology, psychology, anthropology, business, education, statistics, public health, engineering, medicine and gerontology. Many researchers have well-integrated backgrounds of more than one discipline through formal education, research experience and teaching.
- 2) Several Social Work faculty members have dual or multiple academic appointments with education, gerontology, psychology, preventive medicine, and business.
- 3) The HCSHS is home to numerous major research projects and two established research units that are uniquely interdisciplinary.
- 4) The HCSHS periodically organizes interdisciplinary methodological and substantive seminars for students, faculty and professionals, as well as international conferences that bring renowned experts and scholars to USC.
- 5) The HCSHS organizes systematic interdisciplinary review seminars and consultations for students and faculty with outside experts from diverse disciplines to increase the competitiveness and quality of grant applications.

History, mission, objectives. The HCSHS was established in 1982 with the mission of supporting faculty researchers engaged in basic and applied research focused on the needs, behaviors, and problems of vulnerable populations. In 2006 the HCSHS was recognized as an organized research unit (ORU) of USC by the university.

Three objectives, derived from the RC's mission statement, guide the activities of the HCSHS:

- 1) To support research, scientific career development and curriculum enhancement activities directed toward the advancement of a science of social work focused on basic and applied scientific investigation of interventions relevant to the improvement of human services and their clients;
- 2) To support the dissemination and implementation of research peer-reviewed findings that promote the advancement of social work knowledge and lead to innovative research supported by public and private funding sources;
- 3) To sustain and continuously improve the quality and effectiveness of the HCSHS's own research support infrastructure.

Physical plant. The HCSHS occupies two floors of the AT&T Building located at 1150 South Olive Street, Los Angeles, California 90015. The majority of HCSHS space is allocated to research project staff, arranged as a constellation of research offices, work stations, and conference spaces. HCSHS spaces house the Roybal Institute for Aging, Center for Innovation and Research on Veterans and Military Families (CIR), research faculty, clinical teaching faculty, postdoctoral scholars, doctoral students, staff members and other assigned research and administrative personnel.

Structure. The administrative structure of the HCSHS and the associations among Research Council, the Research Clusters, Associate Deans of Research, and HCSHS are depicted in the organizational chart presented in *Figure 1*.

A full-time faculty member appointed by the USC-SSW dean directs the HCSHS. The Director is responsible for the promotion of the center and provides administrative oversight of its business operations. There are two associate deans of research: Associate Dean of Faculty Research Development; and Associate Dean of Research. The two associate deans are collectively responsible to the RC for the development of USC-SSW research and oversight of its research programs.

A full range of scientific, technical and administrative support also make up the HCSHS:

Research Administration

- Associate Director/Certified Research Administrator
- Contracts and Grants Coordinator (proposal and pre-award)
- Center Business Administrator/Certified Research Administrator (post-award)
- Budget/Business Analyst
- Grants Technician

Communications and Publications

- Editor/Writer
- Project Assistant, California Social Work Archives
- Internal Managing Editor for the USC SSW Journal Holdings

Data Analysis and Management

- Senior Biostatistician (joint appointment professor with the Keck School of Medicine)
- Biostatistician (PhD)
- Data Manager (Master)

Research Development

- Consultant network including a senior scientific advisor, advanced statisticians and proposal reviewers

Operations

- Research Council Administrator
- Administrative Assistant(s)

The services of the HCSHS are available to all faculty and students who have an interest in research.

III. Research Clusters of Excellence

The core of the research enterprise currently consists of seven clusters of research excellence. The research clusters were initially conceived as incubators of innovative and impactful research expressing the knowledge interests of the science of social work. The clusters are dynamic and synergistic research communities consisting of faculty, doctoral students, and postdoctoral fellows in the School, as well as faculty, students and fellows across USC and other universities. The clusters represent current principal areas of research of USC-SSW faculty. Clusters are expected to generate ideas and innovation, foster discussion, and produce interdisciplinary scientific grant applications, as well as provide mentoring, conferencing and networking mechanisms for PhD students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty. Clusters are united under a progressive scientific research program dedicated to the development and promotion of social work as a science.

Aging, Community & Integration. The aging, community and services integration research cluster fosters a comprehensive research program focused on a healthy lifestyles and elimination of health disparities in the aging population. The cluster is a leader in translational clinical and community research, and engages community organizations in research innovation and disseminates research results at the local, regional, and national levels. Research includes the development of metrics for assessing the quality of aging for vulnerable populations residing in Los Angeles County, developing culturally relevant behavioral health care interventions for elder minorities, and investigating the influence of religion and spirituality on aging. The cluster science approach, that includes secondary analysis of major data sets, uses cutting edge methods including GIS and growth-curve modeling of accumulating risk in the aging process.

Serious Mental Illness Services & Quality of Life. The serious mental illness services and quality of life research cluster has been especially effective in drawing all levels of faculty, PhD students and postdoctoral fellows in the conduct of translational research and collaborative learning. Research education and training of cluster members is a prominent feature of the cluster, which engages key agencies and universities in Los Angeles around translational research projects and sustains solid relations with the NIMH. NIMH has continuously funded the cluster's research since 1989. Research includes the investigation of the critical area of informed consent for Latinos with mental health disorders and the peer navigators of the county mental health system. Mental interventions that are designed to be culturally relevant to the diverse ethnic communities in Los Angeles through integrating specific spirituality practices highlight the cluster's interest. This research interest is articulated in projects aimed at improving the overall quality of life of communities through the integration of primary and behavioral health services for the diverse seriously mentally ill population.

Homelessness, Housing & the Social Environment. The homelessness, housing and social environment research cluster focuses on enhancing the health and well-being of persons experiencing homelessness and on solutions to homelessness through permanent housing and supportive services, areas of growing concern in policy development and research. The cluster sustains collaborative relations with an impressive network of community-based organizations in Los Angeles, a city with one of the largest and most visible homeless populations in the nation,

and across the U.S. The cluster is also expanding its international associations. Collaborative partners both locally and beyond are engaged with the cluster members in both research and policy development. Cluster members have been awarded a NIMH R01 grant to investigate HIV risk in homeless youth through innovative use of social media and social networking theory; a NIDA R21 to adapt and test evidence-based HIV/AIDS risk reduction interventions for homeless women; a NIDA R01 to investigate the transition to permanent supportive housing and its social and health consequences among chronically homeless men and women; and a Southern California CTSI grant to test feasibility and acceptability of innovative assessment technologies among adults experiencing serious mental illness and homelessness. The cluster's proposal on Ending Homelessness was recently selected as a Grand Challenge for Social Work by the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare. The cluster is a recognized repository of expertise on the health, social, and human rights challenge of homelessness and its solutions.

Child Development & Children's Services. The child development and children's services research cluster focuses on improving the well-being of children and families, building community supports for families, and improving large-scale public service systems through science and research. Cluster activities promote translational research for children's services and encourage innovative methods and cross-disciplinary approaches to improving child welfare, juvenile justice and other key public agency systems. The cluster provides mentorship and support for doctoral students, as well as working to expand pre- and post-doctoral fellowship opportunities. The cluster supports faculty working on a wide array of research projects including prevention of child maltreatment, the effects of maltreatment on adolescent and adult development, and enhancing rehabilitation and positive development for youth in the juvenile justice system. Faculty projects include the Children's Data Network, which harnesses the scientific potential of linked administrative data to inform children's programs and policies, building on foundation funding to establish a California-wide data network integrating multiple databases from local and state child services. Research also includes a long-term follow-up of a cohort of maltreated children to determine the effects of child abuse and neglect on adolescent and adult development and multi-generational transmission of child maltreatment. Other research includes the effects on children of depressed mothers, the behavioral and epigenetic changes in severely neglected children undergoing cognitive behavioral treatment, and the connections between obesity and involvement in the child welfare system.

Behavior, Health, & Society. The behavior, health and society research cluster is the largest in the HCSHS with more than 25 faculty members, 3 affiliated post-doctoral fellows and 12 affiliated doctoral students. The cluster has been a leader in behavioral health services, health behavior, implementation research and social determinants of health and health disparities. Areas of inquiry include immigration research, global health and experiences of mental health distress. Other areas of inquiry among cluster members include: mental health among older adults, patient navigation and care in health systems, substance use, sexual health, LGBT identity and minority stress, overweight and obesity among vulnerable children, influences of family systems and social support on mental and physical health, and interventions and translational science. The focus on global health includes projects on immigrant health, epidemiology and prevention of drug abuse and HIV in Mexico, mental health distress in older adults in China, and disaster response and mental health outcomes in the Philippines. Activities within the cluster include: hosting international visiting researchers, providing pilot funding for cluster members' projects (which have led to federal proposals), facilitating visiting lectures from senior scholars, and developing research partnerships with schools within and outside of USC.

Military Behavioral Health & Trauma. The military behavioral health and trauma research cluster is sponsored by Center for Innovation and Research on Veterans & Military Families (CIR). The cluster conducts research on innovative training protocols incorporating state-of-the-art technology such as avatars and virtual reality. The cluster also implements a vital research program on school violence prevention in 150 military-impacted schools in San Diego County. An interdisciplinary team that includes researchers from Stanford University, Bar Ilan University in Israel, the USC Rossier School of Education, and the USC-SSW implements the project. The Department of Defense has funded current research on school violence, school mental health, suicide and intimate partner violence. Disaster research is also an area of interest, and SAMHSA-supported research by the cluster continues to receive attention from the White House and the international research community.

Management, Organizations and Policy Transformation. The Management, Organizations and Policy Transformation research cluster brings together industry-sponsored research with federal and institutional funding to develop and promote sustainable and enduring scientific innovations that create positive change in communities, organizations and businesses. The cluster was awarded federal funding from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute to investigate the use of patient advocacy to improve health care outcomes in a consortium of Los Angeles universities and hospitals. Five-year funding from the National Institute on Drug Abuse has allowed organizational researchers in the cluster to investigate the capacity of the addiction treatment system to implement service integration and eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in access to care. Cluster members are also conducting cutting-edge research funded by the Southern California Clinical and Translational Science Institute and National Institute on Drug Abuse grants on leadership and organizational interventions to implement evidence-based practices. Using simulations, this research is also informing drivers of system performance. The cluster is especially active in the development of research collaborations with business and industry to understand diversity, inclusion and work performance. Contact with the new National Science Foundation Division of Social and Economic Science's program of Science of Organizations has led to a major proposal that includes the collaboration of the Faculty of Industrial Engineering and Management at the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology and the U.S. Government Office of Personnel Management. The cluster supports consulting and teaching doctoral students in real-world service settings through the use of participating organizations, a network of more than 300 behavioral health service agencies. Finally, the cluster is also building a portfolio of innovative research in the military seeking to inform policy and practice on ways to evaluate the transition of service members from military to civilian life.

Budget and resources. The administrative operating budget for the research enterprise is more than \$1.8M (FY 2015). These funds have been administered through the clusters of research excellence to enhance the mission of the research enterprise through pilot studies, seminars and other research activities. The HCSHS also administers the Larson Fund for Innovative Research and Teaching, which yields over \$200,000 per year (based on FY 2015 figures). One of the primary goals of the Larson fund is to support interdisciplinary and investigator-initiated pilot research that will lead to larger grant applications for extramural research support to federal agencies and private foundations.

Current funding portfolio. The current multiyear total for awards of all types primarily comes from federal sources, including the National Institutes of Health, Department of Defense and Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute. In most of these awards faculty members play leadership roles as PIs of the funded studies. *Figure 2* presents the total awards of the research enterprise by fiscal year 2000-2014. NIH funding, traditionally our largest source of federal research support, has been static or has diminished over the past years despite the brief spike in stimulus funding instituted in 2009. As can be seen in the figure, the portfolio of the research enterprise first followed this national declining trend, but then recovered and continues to be recovering showing significant overall increases in the past two years. This recovery is facilitated by a change in funding strategy toward a diversification of funding sources including non-NIH government funding, private foundations and, to some extent, state and local funding. Recovery is also attributable to a radical increase in the number of proposal submissions stimulated by the Research Clusters of Excellence, and the enhanced proposal review processes within the Clusters and through external expert reviewers funded by the HCSHS.

IV. Multiyear Goals

The strategic goals of the RC are not discrete and disparate targets, but aligned with the University's Strategic Vision for research which calls for "matching deeds to ambitions" and the specific path forward of "creating scholarship with consequence."

Our multiyear goals are as follows:

1. Sustain the continued growth in the quantity and quality of investigator-initiated research that will lead to the development of high impact research center and consortium grants.

A. Research services support. The HCSHS currently provides comprehensive research support services, both pre-award, post-award, and proposal review. The HCSHS continuously monitors the degree to which the support needs of investigators are being met; maintains compliance with university policies and procedures; and meets the requirements of sponsors. This is especially important in a highly competitive research environment. Necessary funding to support the direct costs and infrastructure for conducting meaningful scientific research can no longer be assumed to expand and can even be expected to contract with new political pressures and government cut-backs. An important resource to sustain growth is the engagement of consultants to work directly with faculty and students in the development of their grants from conceptualization to complex statistical data analysis plans. These consultants can be engaged throughout the pre-award stage of the grant as well as be written into the grant in the post-award stage. Pre-award support also involves editorial grant writing services from the editorial staff of HCSHS as well as external grant writers employed by the USC-SSW Advancement Department specializing in foundation proposals.

B. Mentoring of investigators. The Associate Dean of Research (Faculty Research Development) as well as other senior investigators in the RC and Research Clusters currently provide investigator mentoring in grant application development to reinforce the work of external consultants and reviewers. The Research Clusters also have a strong mentoring function, with each one having at least one senior faculty member with extensive experience as a PI and in performing peer-review services. The objective is to further expand the current high level of mentoring. This objective is founded on the conviction that mentoring is essential to the process of developing, submitting, re-

submitting, and carrying out grant-supported research as well as for enriching the scientific culture of the research enterprise as a whole. The quantity of faculty, postdoctoral scholars, and PhD students who are submitting federally funded research applications at both the junior and senior levels is expanding and is expected to continue to do so in the next five years. To stimulate this growth, mentoring will be especially directed to increasing the quality of the proposals, which will be reflected in an improved success rate. Mentoring will be done in teams consisting of a primary mentor and other mentors having complementary strengths. This complementariness of the mentoring team will also expand the breadth of sponsoring agencies to which proposals will be directed. In this expansion of mentoring activities, efforts to improve the support, fit and participation of all non-tenured faculty and interested field and clinical faculty within the research clusters will be undertaken. Senior faculty will also be encouraged to take advantage of mentoring on proposals, with the recognition that these faculty members can also often benefit from expert advice on decisions to embark on particular proposals, for example. This mentoring involves a pre-writing review of initial concepts of a proposal by the Associate Dean of Faculty Research Development and a designated expert and then critical discussion by an internal pre-submission review panel that includes an external reviewer to provide written critiques to investigators. The resources for additional external review provided by the Office of the USC Vice President for Research will also be utilized in the pre-submission review.

2. Increase our interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and translational research structures through building cross-cluster, cross-school, and cross-institutional research collaborative partnerships and initiatives.

Increasing collaboration is a goal that is directly related to goal 1 of increasing the quality of our proposals and scientific products. Collaboration is one of the best ways to bring needed expertise into USC-SSW that is not sufficiently available in our own faculty and students. Goal 2 aims at increasing collaborative partnerships that are multifaceted. The mechanisms of research collaboration will be through grant application sub-contracts, consulting relationships, training activities, collaborative learning arrangements with other schools and universities, cross-cluster and cross-school colloquia, seminars, courses, and dual degree options for PhD students. Most importantly, collaboration is seen as the main modality for innovative thinking challenging the research enterprise with new ideas, perspectives and solutions to stubborn scientific problems. The tempo of on-going cross-school research collaboration partnerships through joint seminar series and mini-retreats that support brainstorming between our faculty and students and those from other schools will be strategically accelerated in order to identify a sound basis for partnership. These seminars and mini-retreats are designed to open new opportunities in funding for clinical trials and other intervention research. They are designed to stimulate collaboration to develop projects for federal health care funding tied to the current changes brought about by the Affordable Care Act. The areas of strategic interest include child maltreatment, homelessness, housing as a platform for health and quality of life, the integration of mental health, substance abuse and primary health services, Latino culturally relevant health services, LGBT health, global public mental health and community participatory research. Through collaborative partnerships, the impact of our research will be significantly increased. Collaboration will enable access to resources (e.g. wet and computational labs) necessary for our pursuit of interdisciplinary, “gene x environment x development” approaches. Collaboration is also a means for sharing funding resources to accelerate the investment capital we have to launch both pilot and large scale studies. Moreover, collaboration is an essential modality for recruiting new scientists with unique research

experiences to USC-SSW. Through such collaborations, we will enhance strengths in areas where we are weak, we will enhance local and global impact, and we will improve the quality of research projects.

3. Increase our training and development activity for faculty and students.

The USC-SSW has offered seminars, workshops, colloquia series, and international conferences since 2005. Many of these initiatives are currently under the direction of the RC and Research Clusters, with the strong support of HCSHS. Since the Research Clusters were established, they have organized most of the seminars, workshops and colloquia. These events consist of lectures provided by national or international experts in a thematic area and attract researchers from local universities as well as stakeholders in human services. They have been available via webcast at no cost. The clusters will expand their training activities by setting aside pilot study resources for projects that involve an intense training component for students or a career development component for faculty members accelerating a new direction in their scientific research. The Research Clusters have also requested expanded funds to provide extended summer support for doctoral students working on cluster projects and developing fellowship training applications to support their doctoral dissertations.

In former years, advanced methodological seminars for faculty and graduate students from across USC and other local universities have also been organized by the HCSHS data management and data analysis core. These training activities will be retooled into larger roundtables to bring leading experts from around the world to the HCSHS to debate burning theoretical and methodological issues that are critical to the growth of a science of social work. The Associate Deans of Research will lead the efforts to integrate the results of these roundtables into the curricula of both the PhD and the new departmental MSW programs.

PhD students and postdoctoral scholars will benefit from growth of the Clusters through large NIH training and center grant applications. The HCSHS will provide pre-award administrative support to the Research Clusters that propose large NIH training (e.g. T32) and center grant (P-series, R24) applications. In the effort to expand training resources, large university structures will also be engaged such as the Southern California Clinical and Translational Science Institute (SC CTSI) project funded by the NIH. USC-SSW faculty members have had substantial roles in the development of the SC CTSI and will continue their active participation through the existing career development award and pilot study programs.

4. Strengthen and expand relationships with community and governmental organization stakeholders in the health and human services.

Recognizing that leaders in public sector organizations are increasingly interested in evidence based practice, we will continue to invest in the development of relationships with elected officials and key administrators from large-scale public service agencies and organizations. Leadership of governmental and community-based organization is being targeted for these efforts and includes the Los Angeles County Departments of Children and Family Services, Mental Health, Substance Abuse, Public Health and Probation. Long-term partnerships with these organizations will involve receiving research summaries from the Research Clusters, staff education and training on current evidence, analysis of available data, as well new studies that can produce relevant information in timely and useful formats. Participation in multiple efforts pertaining to health care reform and the

extension of health and social services to vulnerable populations will be intensified. These include advice on the evaluation of programs and policies of large-scale initiatives such as health homes and healthy neighborhoods.

The Research Clusters are also organizing faculty from several universities in research consortia to address questions of concern to military serving schools and county child welfare and juvenile justice agencies. The clusters are developing relationships with local foundations and philanthropic groups to seek research in new topic areas. They are also investing in developing community-based research partnerships, recognizing the need for active collaboration with the community groups, families and individuals who are most affected by pressing social problems.

5. Advance a specific role with the Cochrane and Campbell Collaboration groups

Under the leadership of the Associate Dean of Research and Director of HCSHS, a continuous expanding our administrative and training connection with the Cochrane Collaboration (C1) and Campbell (C2) Collaboration groups will occur providing greater training opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars. The C1 and C2 are international networks of researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and consumers who endeavor to prepare, maintain, and disseminate systematic reviews of studies of interventions in the biomedical and social and behavioral sciences (<http://www.cochrane.org> and <http://campbellcollaboration.org>). Efforts to attract the international colloquium of the Cochrane Collaboration in 2018 and other strategic meetings will to serve to accomplish this goal. The advancement of a specific role for the research enterprise is critical for the vision of the establishment of a science of social work in the coming period of growth. Systematic research reviews, synthesis and meta-analysis of effectiveness studies of interventions are necessary research activities of intervention science and the determination of evidence based practices. These reviews are designed to generate high quality evidence and inform users about what interventions help, might harm or have no detectable effect. Over the years systematic review production has developed a body of methodology and theory that makes it a science in its own right. Systematic research reviews have become the backbone of guidelines, mandatory or as recommendations, issued by government agencies, and determine practices of many professional fields.

6. Expand our funding portfolios for faculty-initiated research

The research of the USC-SSW had until recently relied almost exclusively on funding from the National Institutes of Health. The current trend of static federal NIH funding and diminished proposal success rates requires not only enhanced ability to compete for these prestigious awards, but also a focus on ways to reduce sole reliance on one agency for governmental funds. Recent success with Department of Defense funding and with Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) as well as the Administration of Children and Families is charting a new opportunity structure for the research enterprise. New proposals to the National Science Foundation have been submitted for the first time and our new faculty hire from the School of Engineering has opened up the opportunities for NSF and industry funding. In order to expand the funding portfolio faculty members will be encouraged to identify mentors who have had success in competing for research funding from targeted private foundations. As described in goal 2, mentors will be retained as consultants with the cost supported by HCSHS funds.

Also to expand the funding portfolio, the faculty and HCSHS will become increasingly engaged in contract research with industry. Several of these submissions has recently occurred, with more underway, mostly for research on military populations. The companies with which HCSH have been working include the following: SoarTech, a manufacturer of software for complex human system interaction with military applications with whom an evaluation study has been conducted; 3Wire, a private entity funded exclusively by the Department of Veteran's Affairs for telehealth services to veterans and their families, with whom a recently submitted proposal for study of sleep coaching interventions with PTSD has been submitted; Providence Care, an insurance and health care firm, with whom an RCT on three types of PTSD therapy has been developed; 4 Patient Care, with whom a grant involving testing of new technology for improving adherence to treatment by diabetics has been developed; Kognito, a firm that works on avatar development, for research on alternatives to training community service providers treating PTSD; and eCaring, a startup company in software development for monitoring status of homebound patients. Planning with eCaring, a telehealth company offering services to homebound elderly and other populations. In addition, our Research Cluster on Homelessness and Housing has developed an MOU with McCormack, Baron and Salazar, a housing industry developer. The Management, Organization and Policy Transformation cluster already has established partnerships with Microsoft and Nike that will be further developed. Funding has been obtained from a Taiwan private foundation to support innovative research involving the expansion of technology into health care. The health care industry is expected to grow exponentially as a result of this ruling. USC-SSW and HCSHS have long standing relationships with hospitals and other health providers that will be a priority for expansion of our industrial sponsored research.

Together with the newly appointed Associate Dean of Development, the Research Clusters will create strategies for expanding the HCSHS's capacity for acquiring and managing funds from industry and private donors. These efforts are coordinated with the USC Stevens Center, the technology transfer office of the university. Three projects with a strong commercialization potential have been identified with Stevens and will be included in a wider initiative in the HCSHS to construct accelerators for fast tracking the innovative ideas of our research into commercial products that can be brought to market.

7. Intensify work with the Master's program on research.

The MSW program stresses the importance of evidence-based and empirically guided practice methods. MSW students will be encouraged to develop research internships in the research clusters with the support of the clinical faculty members of the clusters, the Associate Dean of Research (Faculty Research Development) and the Vice Dean of Student and Academic Affairs. These internships will involve research-training activities involving hands-on research experiences for active projects of the research clusters. The Masters students' honor society Phi Alpha organized with the RC a research symposium where the clusters of research excellence presented their research programs and students were informed of concrete opportunities for research internships. A follow-up symposium will occur in which the MSW students will present the results of their internships. These symposiums carried on the tradition of the HCSHS and individual faculty researchers to provide MSW students with direct exposure to the latest research projects and results of the research enterprise. These symposiums will be expanded and continue each year in the future. Also innovative ways of bringing the research results of the clusters into the MSW curriculum such as through the production of research videos will be amplified. Through the

reorganization of the educational enterprise of USC-SSW into three departments, the opportunities to more directly engage students will be more likely to occur. With the enhanced opportunity of clinical faculty members to be represented on the RC, a more direct link between the research and education enterprises will take place. The Faculty and Student Initiated Research courses will be more tightly coordinated with the clusters of research excellence and the Vice Dean of Student and Academic Affairs in the future. A new science of social work course has been developed for the foundation of the new curriculum that will also intensify MSW student engagement with the research enterprise.

8. Build a predictive analytics and evaluation capacity in the HCSHS in order to provide dashboards, projections and feedback for steering the growth of the research enterprise.

The building of a predictive analytics database that also includes profiles of the expertise of research-active faculty currently developed by the editorial core of the HCSHS will extend the decision-making and strategic planning capacity of the research enterprise. The database also will have an external function of marketing and communicating the research enterprise's specific research strengths and of attracting potential research collaboration institutional and individual partners. To maintain excellence in the modern organizational environment, predictive analytical capacity is needed for strategic planning and policy-making. This capacity has been developing in the past year and will be significantly expanded in the next five years. Progress in constructing and validating quantitative performance indicators in the domains of grant aspiration, submission, quality and award, mentoring, interdisciplinary seminars and interdisciplinary and inter-institutional networking and collaborations will continue in the areas of data capture and advanced analytics. These performance indicators will be established as critical quantitative outcome measures for the evaluation of the clusters of research excellence. The performance monitoring strategy will include the establishment of a process evaluation component of the full HCSHS organization including the research, data management and data analysis, the editorial and the administrative cores. The establishment of a standing evaluation system will involve the retaining of an outside consultant who will provide a comprehensive report on the current curriculum and research organization of the USC-SSW.

9. Launching of an innovative electronic on-line electronic journal akin to the *PLoS* for advancing the science of social work.

The research enterprise has claimed the high ground internationally in the field in the advancement of the new integrative science of social work. In order to solidify this movement and to establish USC-SSW as the science of social work's global intellectual center, an innovative electronic journal that will be cutting-edge, timely, highly visible and aligning social work with other sciences in its unique integrative function will be launched. This electronic journal is consistent with the acknowledgment of USC-SSW as a highly innovative and leading force in virtual social work education extending this into the area of research. The journal will have a clear international and social work research focus distinguishing itself from newly emerging e-journals with a more national and practice orientation. The USC brand will mark the journal for standing for the independence of the science of social work as expressed above and beyond the existing scientific interests of current social work organizations. The journal will recognize USC SSW's rapidly accelerating trajectory of international social work research excellence and will provide a vehicle for bringing to the research enterprise new ideas and new opportunities for collaboration and

strategic initiatives. The initial challenges of launching the journal will be soliciting a sufficient number of articles directly addressing the issues of the science of social work and identifying and funding the editorial leadership and supporting staff of the journal.

10. Vigorous solidification of the global dimension of our research activities.

Collaboration in research with global partners is a complex process that requires a commitment of continual support to solidify international research contacts. While research contacts continue to expand, it is particularly important to continue to understand and develop knowledge about the funding mechanisms that will support international research. Strategically, collaborations that are essential to the identification and development of funding mechanisms for international research will be solidified. This strategy encompasses both external and internal funding sources that can be creatively leveraged to support pilot projects of research teams consisting of cluster faculty, students and postdoctoral scholars and their international collaborators. Continuing research activity in the Pacific Rim, particularly China, Korea, and Japan needs to be reinforced by appropriate support to grow into sustainable projects that integrate students and faculty. Individual faculty members supported by their respective clusters of research excellence will spearhead the building of international collaborations. The HCSHS continues to work also on building these collaborative relationships through the organization of international conferences and on providing its extensive network of contacts including European centers for research and for evaluation of social work practice, the Inter-Center Network for the Evaluation of Social Work and the Cochrane and Campbell Collaboration groups. Apart from sustaining of the Pacific Rim research activities and partnerships, new areas of strategic collaboration with Latin America focusing on Mexico, Brazil and Chile are rapidly emerging built upon several funded research projects that are already functioning. Collaborations are also expanding in Europe built on existing research exchanges with France, the Netherlands, Israel, Norway, Sweden and Germany. These collaborations will be accelerated in the next five years through multifold exchanges of faculty member and student research projects and ideas.

Figures

Figure 1. Organizational Chart for the Hamovitch Center for Science in the Human Services (FY 2015)

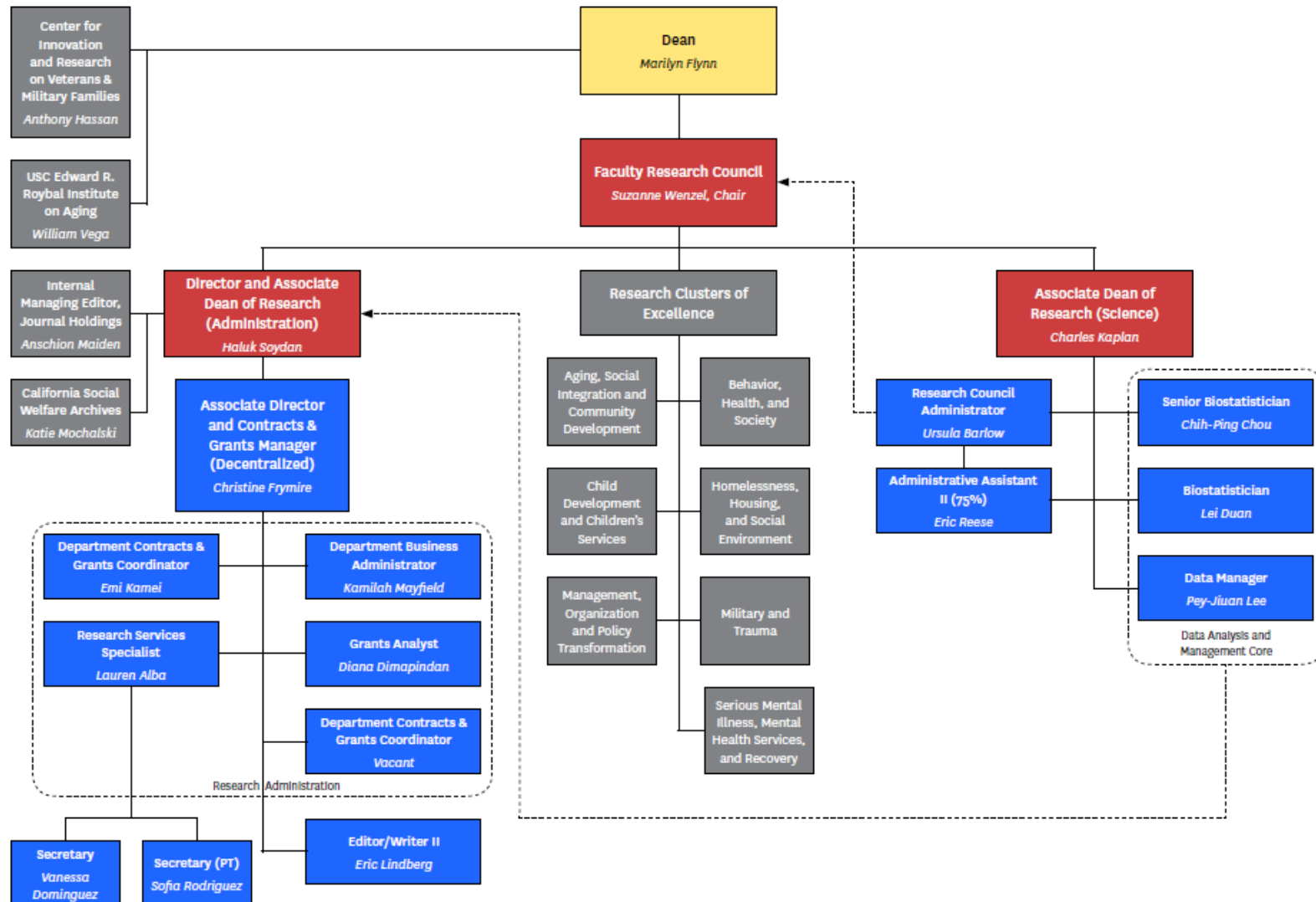


Figure 2. USC School of Social Work funding awards (FY 2000-2014)

