



# ACADEMIC STRATEGIC PLAN

October 2023

*One School: Toward  
an Equitable and  
Sustainable Future*



## Purpose and Audience

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This document is intended to guide decision making over the next five years—2023 to 2028—in the Syracuse University School of Education (SOE). Its audience includes everyone who is invested in SOE, including faculty and staff; students and their families; collaborative partners; alumni, donors and friends of SOE; and other members of the University community.

## History and Context

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SOE was founded in 1906 as the Margaret Olivia Slocum Teachers' College, with a primary focus on training teachers. Several decades later, with increased student enrollment and an expanded purview, Dean Harry Ganders led an effort to reframe the organization as the "All-University" School of Education. Since that time, SOE has made notable contributions to the campus, Central New York and the field of education that we often document via the social media hashtag, #ProudToBeSOE.

In the 1930s, for instance, SOE launched a first-of-its-kind program to prepare university deans of women, and its graduates became a nation-wide network of transformational leaders at a time when few administrators were female. In the present day, SOE's graduate students develop their professional skills and provide leadership at the University and in the community through assistantships, internships, and clinical practica, as well as via campus-wide programs such as Teaching Mentors and Intergroup Dialogue.

Starting in the 1950s, SOE was an innovator in audiovisual communication and instructional technologies, eventually serving as the creators and first host for the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information Resources, an early and influential public repository. Today, our faculty and students design apps to support learning and self-advocacy, create virtual reality tours to promote science and technology learning and facilitate multimedia composition as a form of social activism by youth.

In the 1970s, SOE led the deinstitutionalization movement in the United States. Many milestones followed this trailblazing work, including national leadership in school inclusion, the first disability studies program in the U.S. and the first integrated program in elementary and special education to be offered by a research university. Founded in 2014, InclusiveU, the country's largest and most comprehensive postsecondary program for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, is just one of many inheritors of that tradition in inclusive education.

SOE was the home in the late 1970s and early 1980s for groundbreaking research in content area reading led by faculty and graduate students who worked closely with local educators to develop instructional approaches that would support greater success in various subjects by all students. Such leadership continues, with four presidents of the Literacy Research Association (formerly National Reading Conference) coming from Syracuse in the last two decades and an unbroken chain of collaboration with schools around literacy interventions, particularly in Syracuse city schools.

In the 1980s and 1990s, SOE was notable for innovations in qualitative research methods that helped to document the perspectives of marginalized groups and suggest more equitable ways of living and learning together. These commitments live on in SOE today, finding their most recent expression in the formulation of the QuantCrit research group, an interdisciplinary team of scholars focused on integrating equity and criticality into quantitative research methods that have historically, and erroneously, been perceived as neutral and objective.

In the 2010s, SOE focused its attention on expanding educational access to under-served groups. Building on the efforts of the opportunity programs that are now clustered in the Center for Academic Achievement and Student Development, we became a lead partner in establishing the Say Yes to Education program in Syracuse, offering unprecedented financial, academic and social resources to support college-going aspirations for local youth. We also developed an innovative online master's program in instructional design, development and evaluation for enlisted military personnel at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas. Both of those programs continue, and their graduates speak compellingly of the value of their SOE and SU experiences.

This representative but far from exhaustive review of our history suggests that the School is at its best when it operates in solidarity with those who have been traditionally silenced and underserved; when it collaborates with a wide range of constituencies both within and beyond the University; and when it integrates attention to research and creative work, teaching, service and advocacy, allowing gains in one area to be leveraged for progress in the others. We acknowledge that we have not always lived up to these ideals and recognize that our understandings of complex phenomena, including identity, equity and justice, have evolved, and will continue to evolve, over time.

The strategic plan outlined in this document is intended to honor those roots and address these shortcomings while charting a course for the next five years that is forward-looking and responsive to the complex and shifting issues of today. The document is organized into four sections: 1) an account of the planning process that yielded it; 2) a description of our overarching strategy; 3) a discussion of the three signature areas around which SOE intends to coalesce; and 4) an overview of additional School-wide commitments that we believe to be essential to achieving our goals. This structure intentionally mimics that of the University's Academic Strategic Planning framework, to better demonstrate the connections between the texts.

## Planning

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Most of the University's schools and colleges began their most recent round of academic strategic planning in Fall 2022, coinciding with the refresh of the University's strategic plan. At that time, SOE had already been engaged in two years of conversations about School-wide Re-design. Those efforts were

catalyzed initially by “Call for New Strategic Priorities,” authored by SOE’s Black faculty members working in a collective entitled Faculty for Racial Justice and Equity in Education (FREE). Submitted in August 2020, during heightened awareness of both racial inequity in response to police brutality and the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, the document challenged SOE to put antiracist principles and practices explicitly at the center of everything we do, with recommendations across categories such as leadership, student recruitment and retention, budget, curriculum and research. As a result, SOE leadership sponsored several different kinds of professional development, devoted regular portions of Assembly and departmental meetings to brainstorming and discussion and formed several working groups to propose new administrative structures and processes designed to reduce harm and increase belonging for all.

Efforts to enact these recommendations intensified during the 2021-2022 academic year as more sharply articulated University priorities and trend lines related to enrollment, revenue and costs presented opportunities and risks for SOE, demanding a bold and proactive response. Our community embraced the idea that an internally led, rather than externally imposed, process was most likely to be transformational if it focused on four imperatives: 1) greater appeal for students whose interests align with our strengths and signatures; 2) increased commitment to inclusion and antiracism in our operations, not just our curriculum; 3) greater efficiency to increase bandwidth for faculty and staff; and 4) a stronger commitment to fiscal sustainability.

To achieve these ends, we submitted a proposal to Provost Gretchen Ritter to Re-design SOE with a “One School” orientation that was approved by 91% of our Assembly’s voting members in October 2022. That proposal included the following recommendations:

- De-departmentalize, adopting new School-wide leadership and governance structures.
- Develop and sunset academic programs and allocate resources in ways that better balance our historical foci with other crucial and evolving areas in the field of education.
- Develop a shared and signature-focused approach to doctoral studies that addresses existing and emerging specializations.
- Develop mechanisms to strengthen the connections between SOE’s three centers—the Center for Academic Achievement and Student Development (CAASD), the Center on Disability and Inclusion (CDI), and the Center for Experiential Pedagogy and Practice (CEPP)—and the teaching, learning and scholarship of our academic programs.
- Assess, intentionally and continuously, SOE’s structures, policies, practices and messages as they affect our ability to respond to demands for greater coherence, deliberate attention to social justice and a sense of belonging for all.

The academic strategic plan articulated in this document acknowledges that work to achieve these recommendations is ongoing and essential to SOE’s ability to thrive and integrate University-wide goals and themes with School-specific priorities.

Although we drew on data and documents from previous planning to ensure clear linkages to that work, we deliberately convened a new Academic Strategic Planning committee that did not begin meeting until after the Re-design vote. The ASP committee re-used approaches from the Re-design phase, such as breakout sessions during Assembly meetings, to elicit input. We were more intentional, however, about involving constituencies such as staff, students, and alumni who were less well represented than administrators and faculty in our earlier process. Consequently, we created an online portal for ongoing data collection, hosted multiple Zoom and in-person sessions by constituency, and experimented with data-gathering formats such as anonymous graffiti boards. That SOE had eight representatives serving on University work groups—an impressive number given our small unit size—provided useful insights into campus-wide thinking that informed our work early on, requiring fewer adjustments when the University framework was released.

## Vision and Strategy

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In five years, the School of Education will be respected and recognized on campus and beyond for impactful contributions in our three signature areas: inclusive and antiracist pedagogy and practice, digital pedagogy and practice and experiential pedagogy and practice.

Faculty and staff will work comfortably in a “one school” configuration that promotes equity, sustainability, interdisciplinarity and a sense of belonging. SOE will be financially stable enough to make our own decisions without significant institutional intervention, allowing us to incentivize innovation and improve supports and compensation for faculty and staff.

Our strategy to achieve this vision has the following prongs, each intended to increase our visibility, appeal and impact:

### **1. Coalesce intentionally around three signatures that we see as areas of distinctive excellence**

SOE has long been on the cutting edge in disability and inclusive education, and we continue to lead in this area, although other competitors have adopted some of our approaches, such as dual certification in general and special education for teachers. Few institutions have committed to the intentional fusing of antiracist and inclusive perspectives, which we are working to enact in more robust ways. In addition to our inclusive and antiracist signature, which serves as a touchstone for all we do across the School, we have notable expertise in both digital pedagogy and practice and experiential pedagogy and practice. We believe that investing time, attention and resources in those three areas—particularly in initiatives and projects at their intersections—will promote greater coherence and impact than would be achievable with a wider range of foci. We intend for these signatures, discussed more fully in the following section, to attract positive attention from external constituencies and serve as unifying forces for internal ones.

## **2. Create synergy by organizing our unit more collaboratively, across disciplines**

We intend to pursue research and teaching innovations in new configurations and, where possible, expanded scales. We believe that working in teams across our previously separate departments will engender new insights about complex problems, strengthen our ability to attract students to our programs, and present more equitable funding opportunities to both faculty and students. Emphasizing signature-focused efforts by collectives, rather than individual activity, will enable us, as a relatively small unit, to reap more benefits for the resources we commit.

## **3. Re-establish ourselves as the All-University School of Education**

In the spirit of Harry Ganders' early reconceptualization of SOE, we want to be known as a campus-wide resource around our signatures. We seek to be a go-to partner for technical assistance and collaboration for other schools and colleges, as well as for other support units such as the Shaw Center for Public and Community Service and the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence. We intend to influence the design and focus of University resources and services related to teaching, learning and research, including pilot programs, such that those resources will benefit us most effectively and efficiently and others can benefit from our expertise, particularly as it relates to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA). We will duplicate services sparingly to preserve resources for other purposes and explore cost sharing where it is strategic (e.g., graduate assistantships to serve University needs, jointly sponsored undergraduate research grants for our centers with SOURCE).

## **Inclusive Areas of Distinctive Excellence: SOE Signatures**

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In this section, we delineate the three signatures that we see as areas of distinctive excellence for SOE. Each signature is articulated around both pedagogy and practice to acknowledge the breadth of contributions made by SOE faculty, staff and students. "Pedagogy" refers to teaching and learning in contexts such as K-12 and postsecondary classrooms, while "practice" is intended to signal the applicability of these signatures to activities such as academic advising, mental health counseling, community partnerships, curriculum development and consulting that take place in other settings. In the remainder of this section, we define each signature, provide examples of how it plays out in our current work and offer recommendations for how we intend to enhance our work in the next five years. Of particular importance to our future success are the cross-cutting recommendations—applicable to all three signatures—that appear at the end of the section.

### **Inclusive and Antiracist Pedagogy and Practice**

The School of Education defines inclusive and antiracist pedagogy and practice as intentional, deliberate actions that center minoritized perspectives and experiences and decenter

whiteness and ability. We view inclusion as a basic human right and work from the assumption that when we design and plan for those most at risk of exclusion or marginalization, we end up with a more welcoming and inclusive educational environment for all. To be inclusive and antiracist is to refuse deficit thinking that leads to harsh and exclusionary forms of discipline and results in diminished learning opportunities for all. Embracing unconditional belonging, we view diversity and difference as our greatest asset and strength, and we consider each individual essential and integral to the whole. We recognize segregation and exclusion as damaging to both the individual and the community and solidarity as the foundation of relationships across difference.

Our long-held commitments to these ideas take, and have taken, various forms. We offer courses on topics such as disability, race, ethnicity, linguistic diversity, gender and sexuality in multiple degree programs, and we explore ideas and issues at their intersection, including the impact on multiple marginalized individuals. We provide different kinds of financial support and affinity groups aimed to recruit, retain and offer leadership development to underrepresented students, including Baldanza Fellows, the Orange Holmes Scholars and the Engaged BIPOC Scholar-Practitioner Program. Our faculty, staff and graduate students have been prominent among those who volunteered to serve as instructors for the University's First-Year Seminar course—a key facet of SU's plan to increase students' cultural competence, campus-wide. All three of our centers have sponsored faculty research with inclusive and antiracist foci.

We see this signature as well aligned with the University's aspiration to be a place that is "welcoming to all" and with the University framework's emphasis on global diversity, engaged citizenship and, especially, human thriving. Our expertise in the affordances of assistive and augmentative technology also implicates the area of distinction in emerging technologies. Finally, we see opportunities for SOE to lead in the University's stated desire to go "beyond compliance" related to accessibility—a movement to which many of our faculty, staff and students have contributed over the years on our campus as well as in the various contexts they influence across the globe.

Our recent efforts related to this signature have featured deliberate moves related to staff representation, including 1) the revision of hiring proposals to better signal organizational commitments to inclusion and antiracism and interest in attracting a pool of applicants from underrepresented groups and 2) instituting search committees for staff positions to elicit a wider view on candidate qualifications.

Before our Re-design work, we also disbanded our standing committee on diversity and distributed members with interest and expertise in that area across multiple work groups and committees. This was intended to promote the infusion of perspectives on DEIA across all that we do, and we were gratified when the University's strategic planning leaders cited our example as inspiration for their identification of DEIA as a cross-cutting theme, rather than a separate pillar in the campus-

wide framework. We are also revising our undergraduate teacher education programs to provide dual certification in special education to our adolescent education majors, in parallel with our elementary-focused program. This move will permit us to share more courses across both pathways, enriching the student experience for both, leaning into our distinctive history with inclusive education, and helping to address the persistent teacher shortage in special education nationwide.

Building on these strengths, over the next five years we will:

- Establish the Center on Disability and Inclusion as the University's hub and locus of leadership for achieving its goal of top 5 status nationally in disability and inclusion.
- Commit resources to achieving internal and external renown for deep and sustained integration of inclusive and antiracist commitments.
- Increase accountability around enacting those commitments as part of our evaluation of faculty and staff and our assessment of students.
- Recruit and retain faculty, staff and students from underrepresented and minoritized groups and ensure that we support their sense of belonging and centrality to SOE (e.g., by creating opportunities for expertise sharing by CAASD staff with other community members).
- Review and revise internal policies and procedures, as we have already begun to do around promotion and tenure, to make sure they are inclusive and reduce potential harms to minoritized community members.

### Digital Pedagogy and Practice

The School of Education defines digital pedagogy and practice as the use of digital technologies to enhance and transform research, teaching, learning and service across educational settings. We aim to integrate technology to create inclusive, engaging and experiential learning that is accessible and useable for all learners, as well as responsive to local and global contexts. A key component of this signature for SOE is that not only do faculty and staff use digital technologies to support the learning and success of our own students, we also teach our students to do the same in their own pedagogy and practice. We prepare them to be contributing digital citizens and game changers able to thrive and lead in a complex and rapidly changing world.

SOE has a long history of using technology and media effectively, critically and innovatively—and of studying that use. We offered, for example, one of the first fully online graduate programs in the University and our faculty were early adopters in the study of reading comprehension in digital environments. Such efforts tended to be clustered in a handful of programs, however. Our online pivot during Spring 2020 and our subsequent attempts to minimize COVID risk forced many faculty to question their assumptions about the appropriateness of digital pedagogies for a number of disciplines, as well as prompted both faculty and staff to acquire new technical skills on an accelerated timeline for instruction as well as student support. We thus have more interest and bandwidth in this signature than before, including

from individuals with deep commitments to inclusion, equity and access that were not previously applied to digital contexts.

We see our digital signature as well aligned with the University's emphasis in its long-range planning on what the Chancellor calls "technological agility" and what the draft framework for the Academic Strategic Plan calls an area of distinction in emerging technologies such as virtual reality, simulation, gaming and makerspace. We are particularly excited that this area of distinction explicitly attends to social, cultural and critical aspects of technology use, which will help us integrate multiple areas of interest and strength within SOE.

Our recent efforts related to this signature have included 1) the approval of online delivery modes for several Certificate of Advanced Study programs with appeal for busy professional learners beyond the Central New York region and 2) the approval of hybrid work proposals from support units that allow the kind of flexibility for staff that was previously only available to faculty. We are the only school or college to have retained Zoom for meetings of our governing body, the SOE Assembly, because the online format yields about 40% more attendees than our in-person version pre-COVID. And we negotiated a five-year cost share with the Vice President for Research for the online system that SOE uses for both clinical simulations and counseling supervision—a technology that we intend, under the terms of that agreement, to model for consideration by the rest of campus.

Building on these strengths, over the next five years we will:

- Increase the presence of SOE personnel in technology-related initiatives on campus, with a particular focus on research clusters.
- Expand our expertise with emerging technologies and our use of online and hybrid instructional formats to improve our capacity to serve a wider swath of constituents globally, including but not limited to military-connected individuals.
- Identify staff and/or faculty positions that can be adjusted to be fully or primarily remote, to increase and diversify the pool of potential applicants.
- Develop market-sensitive online undergraduate programs (e.g., critical and cultural studies in education, inclusive instructional design) in collaboration with the College of Professional Studies.
- Develop digital badges and online certificate programs in marketable areas of SOE expertise (e.g., transition planning for disabled individuals).

### Experiential Pedagogy and Practice

The School of Education defines experiential pedagogy and practice as providing, supporting and researching authentic learning opportunities that simulate, model and/or anticipate professional practice. To encourage optimal outcomes, the development of experiential learning is informed by data collection, research and assessment. We believe experiential pedagogy should assist students in putting theory into practice, allow for a gradual release of responsibility from experts to

novices and engage the instructor in learning and inquiry alongside students. SOE's experiential practice is rooted in campus and community partnerships and we assert that these collaborations should be mutually beneficial and reciprocal.

Among our several undergraduate and graduate experiential learning modalities, SOE engages in mediated field experiences in diverse and inclusive environments for pre-service teachers; clinical simulations for pre-professional teachers, counselors and school leaders using a model which we innovated; lesson and learning study in K-12 school contexts; study abroad in Europe, the Americas and Africa; study away for student teachers in New York City elementary schools; and long-term service learning internships and practicums in which students provide supervised professional services to clients, including counseling, psycho-educational assessments and program evaluations for University offices.

We see our experiential signature as well aligned with the University framework's areas of distinctive excellence in both experiential inquiry and engaged citizenship. We expect that we can be a model and source of support for others on campus who are new to experiential approaches, as well as research partners for those who want to investigate the effects of such innovations over time. Our CEPP is well positioned to orchestrate and coordinate such work within and beyond SOE.

Our most recent efforts related to this signature have included 1) revising our undergraduate teacher education programs to accommodate study away in New York City and, potentially, Washington, D.C., as an option for all students; 2) devising clearer processes for awarding donor-supported supplemental funding for SOE students seeking to study abroad; 3) expanding efforts to recruit general and special education teachers and counselors from under-represented backgrounds, including those from the neighboring Onondaga Nation, to serve in urban and rural schools; 4) piloting new clinical simulations for student veterans, counselors, art therapists, financial advisors and others; 5) developing new campus and community partnerships to operationalize inclusive and antiracist pedagogies, such as studying the history of the Syracuse I-81 Corridor through mathematics learning.

Building on these strengths, over the next five years we will:

- Increase opportunities for students' experiential learning that are connected to our three centers, including as research team members.
- Develop additional collaborations among School units and campus and community partners, with a focus on those that center inclusive and antiracist practice.
- Provide faculty, staff and students the resources they require for effective experiential learning, such as field experience management software and digital research platforms.
- Lower barriers to experiential learning encountered by students from underrepresented groups, including disabled students.
- Tie experiential learning to the recruitment of non- and post-traditional students, so that opportunities to study abroad and

away meet students where they are physically, geographically and professionally.

- Expand study away opportunities, including leveraging the Board of Visitors and other alumni to provide opportunities and networking in their markets, industries and businesses.

### Cross-Cutting Recommendations

In addition to the recommendations described above, we will engage in the following actions with the potential to elevate all three signatures, sometimes in combination with each other:

- Review and revise our undergraduate and graduate curricula systematically, on a planned, multi-year rotation, to ensure that all degree programs feature up-to-date opportunities for signature-focused learning. The assistance of a colleague in a newly proposed School-wide staff role, Curriculum Specialist, will be central to organizing this endeavor.
- Center our signatures in our recruiting materials and procedures to ensure that we attract students, especially in the graduate realm, whose interests align with them.
- Prioritize faculty hiring at the intersection of our signatures, student interest and market demand.
- Make alignment with the signatures a key evaluation criterion for proposals such as internal grants and sponsorship requests, to encourage SOE community members and others at the University to engage with them.
- Use the signatures as reporting categories to increase their familiarity and visibility in internal and external communications.

### Additional Schoolwide Commitments

In addition to coalescing around our three signature areas of distinction, we have identified the following additional School-level commitments that will facilitate our work, enhance our visibility, and heighten our impact on the constituencies and contexts that matter to us.

#### 1. Increase resources for research and creative work

SOE values a balance of research and creative work, teaching, service and public advocacy and has historically done so. That said, the data we collected suggest that our community members crave additional opportunities and support for research and creative work, defined broadly. Faculty want to focus more on their scholarship. Undergraduate students want to conduct mentored research in addition to pursuing culminating experiences such as student teaching and internships. Graduate students want to participate, earlier in their programs, on teams pursuing larger-scale research to apprentice them into skills and ways of thinking they can apply later to independent inquiry. The current tightness of our budget prevents us from applying large sums of money to this goal immediately, but we have already made some small but significant moves in this direction, reviving an internal grants program for faculty, co-sponsoring a graduate research symposium with the leadership of the SOE Graduate Council

and beginning to streamline administrative and committee obligations to free up more time for scholarship.

We have also begun to plan more directly for our three centers to serve as hubs of connection and collaboration around larger-scale, more ambitious, and better funded research in which students can be included. In the future, we can also reduce the labor costs of teaching and service done in isolation by researching our own innovations in educational excellence more systematically and collaboratively, including with more rigorous designs. And, finally, we intend to conduct research in collaboration with other University units on initiatives of shared interest such as central efforts to expand experiential inquiry and global engagement.

## **2. Make choices with a full understanding of their fiscal consequences to inform necessary tradeoffs and achieve firmer footing in the future**

We seek to be financially stable enough in five years that we can make our own values-driven choices about where to invest without requiring significant institutional support. We will be better positioned to achieve this goal when more of our personnel understand the University's budgeting model and our own position. We have made strides in this direction already by developing an SOE budget primer, offering central trainings to all staff and faculty members, and providing program-specific financial data to groups working on curricular revisions.

We know that the most straightforward way to improve our sustainability is to enroll and retain more students in more efficiently run programs, particularly at the graduate level where we are not subject to externally set enrollment caps. We also intend to increase our submission of grant proposals to funders with more favorable indirect cost rates; pursue executive education opportunities in collaboration with the College of Professional Studies; and explore fee-for-service arrangements, particularly related to DEIA, through CDI and CEPP.

## **3. Enhance and expand our collaborations with community partners as part of a University-wide strategy to increase impact**

Our academic programs and research depend heavily on collaboration with other entities within and beyond the University, including K-12 schools, other postsecondary institutions and community agencies. Some of those relationships are strong and robust, while others are frayed and in need of attention. Our pending adoption of Tevera, an online platform to track and promote communication around our students' field placements and internships, will help us with this goal, as will our pending hiring of a full-time Director of Experiential Learning and Partnerships.

Our efforts will be further amplified if they are pursued in coordination with others on campus that share our interests, including colleagues in Government and Community Relations, Academic Affairs, and the Engaged Humanities Network. We seek to be at the table for decision making

around University initiatives related to Micron's investment into Central New York, the revitalization of the I-81 corridor, and the expansion of study abroad and collaborative research opportunities beyond Western Europe. We are committed to pursuing the kind of mutually beneficial, respectful and humble partnerships that were surfaced as a priority by the Public Impact work group and discussed further in the Engaged Citizenship section of the University framework.

## **4. Plan for an expanded footprint in Huntington Hall**

A key element of our Re-design plan involves bringing as much of our enterprise back under one roof as possible. Our more specific goals include relocation of Counseling and Human Services programs from Sims Hall; expanded and upgraded space for CDI, including InclusiveU; new space for CEPP, eliminating our need to pay for Upstate Medical University facilities to implement clinical simulations; the development of a space strategy for CAASD and Intergroup Dialogue that acknowledges their all-campus impact; and shared workspace for part-time instructors and graduate students. We acknowledge logistical and financial challenges associated with renovation and maintenance of a historic and unusually configured building, but we also welcome the chance to think creatively about how to use our space in ways that better reflect our values and our goals.

## **5. Strengthen our sense of community and belonging**

Our data indicate that many SOE citizens feel the same desire to break down barriers and bridge silos that was articulated in the University framework. Faculty, staff and students want to feel a sense of belonging so they can experience joy and satisfaction from being a part of our work. We must prioritize the promotion of belonging, even as we navigate changing expectations about the nature of work and the lingering effects of the pandemic. The latter continues to have differential effects on individuals managing chronic health risks, as well as on those who joined us recently, when many activities were online or hybrid.

Our efforts to move away from six discrete departments toward a "One School" ethos are intended, ultimately, to help individuals to feel like they belong to—and can contribute to—a greater and more purpose-driven entity. In the short term, we must act intentionally to forge connections across the enterprise. We must continue to confront and interrupt the reality, raised compellingly in the FREE document, that some community members feel less welcome in SOE than others, and that those patterns often implicate other forms of privilege. We need to sponsor activities in varied formats and configurations to better engage each other, develop trust and move forward together.