

Update on the Final Decision of the School of Social Work Separation from CPHSJ

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Fri 4/1/2022 11:21 AM

Dear Saint Louis University community,

Earlier this year, the School of Social Work (SSW) submitted to me a proposal for their separation from the College for Public Health and Social Justice (CPHSJ). Per the expectations for reorganization outlined in the *Faculty Manual*, I engaged in extensive consultation with the faculty, staff and students from across the College, as well as the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. In mid-November, I informed the CPHSJ community that I agreed to the separation for the mutual benefit of our Public Health and SSW programs.

Not yet determined when I approved the separation was the long-term organizational future of the School of Social Work. Accordingly, this spring I have been engaged in a series of listening sessions to understand the needs of the SSW's programs, and whether the SSW would be best served by returning to be an independent academic unit or to merge with another college/school.

Today, I am announcing that the School of Social Work will become an independent academic unit starting in the 2022-23 academic year. Dr. Noelle Fearn, who has served as the SSW's Director, will serve as Dean of the School. The College for Public Health and Social Justice, led by Interim Dean Dr. Ellen Barnidge, will retain its current name.

The financial and operational separation of the units began earlier this spring. Between now and July 1, 2022, I will continue to work with Dr. Barnidge and Dr. Fearn to complete the separation of the two units. I appreciate their support throughout this process, and the support of all the faculty, staff and students currently in CPHSJ as they provided valuable feedback during my discernment process this year. I believe that this separation will ultimately help support the growth of both CPHSJ and the SSW, improve student outcomes, and support the overall mission of Saint Louis University.

I look forward to the future of these two academic units, and to the important work that each will continue to undertake to advance our shared mission.

Sincerely,

Mike Lewis, Ph.D.
Provost