



Oregon State University  
College of Science



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# Embedding Equity, Access and Inclusion

Strategic Diversity Action Plan 2021-2024

College of Science - June 2021

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## Executive summary

*Embedding Equity, Access and Inclusion* is the College of Science's 2021 Strategic Diversity Action Plan (DAP). Authored by the Diversity, Equity, Justice and Inclusion (DEJI) Working Group, it is a community plan, reflecting the many priorities and values of College of Science (COS) community members deliberated in dialogue and conversation over the 2020-2021 academic year.

The DAP recognizes and centers the relationship between advancing our college's strategic mission and valuing, nurturing and engaging all members of the College of Science community, particularly and especially community members holding minoritized social identities.

**Inclusive excellence** describes an organization's capacity to thrive as a function of its ability to value and engage the rich diversity of its community members. *Embedding Equity, Access and Inclusion* provides a framework for all College of Science community members – students, faculty, staff, alumni and stakeholders – and units within the college to enhance access and diversity, create welcoming environments and a sense of belonging and strive towards inclusive excellence by embedding equity in everything we do.

Based on the *Adaptive Strategic Planning for Inclusive Excellence* framework created by Oregon State University's (OSU's) Office of Institutional Diversity (OID) and in alignment with OSU's [2019-2023 Strategic Plan SP4.0](#) and OSU's diversity strategic plan, [Innovate and Integrate: Plan for Inclusive Excellence](#), the DAP outlines a set of five key strategic goals. Each goal contains specific actions and accountability structures to be implemented at different levels of the organization – individual, unit, college.

## The DAP's five key strategic goals are:

**Goal 1:** Embed, integrate and advance inclusive excellence within all aspects of the College of Science.

**Goal 2:** Establish holistic, inclusive and equitable hiring, recruitment and retention practices.

**Goal 3:** Create a welcoming college climate to support a sense of belonging and equitable learning and training experiences.

**Goal 4:** Provide innovative, inclusive, accessible and equitable access to learning and research experiences that incorporate global experiences.

**Goal 5:** Communicate accomplishments reflecting our commitments to inclusion and mutual respect of all members while enhancing visibility of minoritized communities.

The action plan to achieve these goals is ambitious and is outlined in the report. The first, and one of the most important, actions is to hire a full time Program Director for Equity, Access and Inclusion (EAI). Concurrent with that action is to establish a COS EAI Leadership Council and one in each unit.

## Pathway to the Diversity Action Plan

The College of Science's diversity action plan arises out of an immensely challenging moment for American society with deep roots in the past, and tremendous opportunities for the future.

During 2020-2021, the COVID-19 pandemic forced the College of Science, along with the rest of Oregon State University, to move much of its teaching mission online and modify practices in research. The tremendous effort needed to change the way the college conducts its teaching and research activities amplified the presence of inequities within the college, university and society at large.

A renewed national movement arising in response to the murder of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and others during the summer of 2020 prompted reflections on our obligation to challenge systemic racism and fueled the need to re-examine systemic failures and remove structures and barriers that impede some of our community members.

On October 8, 2020 the College of Science hosted [a virtual town hall listening session](#) to give the community an opportunity to center the experiences of Black science students in the college. That event, coupled with many preceding conversations, laid the groundwork for the development of a diversity action plan which

seeks to advance anti-racist outcomes by aiming to ensure the college is a more inclusive and equitable place for Black, Latinx, Indigenous and underrepresented students, faculty and staff of color.

On the heels of the #metoo movement, we also recognize that an intersectional perspective is needed to understand the differential and exclusionary effects of systemic inequities across gender, race, sexual orientation, ability and socio-economic status, among other social identities. While challenges have beset all of us, there is unmistakable evidence that Black, Latinx, Indigenous and communities of color have and continue to suffer more with gendered racism affecting people with marginalized genders disproportionately.

Several empirical realities animate the actions that are needed in a strategic diversity action plan. The college needs to improve rates of foundational course success, retention and graduation for students holding minoritized social identities. Demographically, College of Science faculty and student populations in some cases do not proportionally represent Oregon's general population. Faculty of color are also underrepresented in some areas relative to the fraction of PhDs produced nationwide. While progress has been made in recent years, we still have work to do to eliminate barriers and unequal outcomes for our underrepresented students, faculty and staff.

## Work of the Diversity, Equity, Justice and Inclusion Working Group

It is against this backdrop that the College of Science's Diversity, Equity, Justice and Inclusion (DEJI) Working Group (WG) has deliberated our strategic diversity action plan. Over the last several years, OSU has taken significant steps to prioritize and rapidly advance the pursuit of inclusive excellence in all that it does.

In Fall 2020, the Dean of Science, Roy Haggerty, charged a COS DEJI WG to:

- Write a strategic diversity action plan (DAP) to improve outcomes for underrepresented students, faculty and staff and result in greater numbers of historically underrepresented students who go on to have similar achievement levels to other students in the college.
- Develop the DAP consultatively with the faculty, staff and students in the college as well as with the Office of Institutional Diversity (OID) and the Cultural Resource Centers.
- Align the DAP with OSU's [2019-2023 Strategic Plan SP4.0](#) and OSU's diversity strategic plan, [Innovate and Integrate: Plan for Inclusive Excellence](#).

The DEJI WG was tasked to:

- be consistent with scientific inquiry that seeks an understanding of objective reality,
- be open to constructive criticism from any reasoned point of view and
- be evidence-based.

The work of the DEJI WG proceeded with this charge in mind.

## Outcome of the diversity strategic planning process

The diversity strategic process has resulted in this Diversity Action Plan, *Embedding Equity, Access and Inclusion*, which will serve as our blueprint for ongoing, iterative organizational development and growth in the College of Science towards inclusive excellence.

*Embedding Equity, Access and Inclusion* has a charge to target policies and practices creating inequitable outcomes within the broader work of dismantling structural racism. To aid in implementation of the DAP, the college has committed an annual investment of \$150,000 in new resources.

Advancing inclusive excellence requires work that is top-down, bottom-up and inside-out (Posselt, 2020). Successful implementation of the five goals in *Embedding Equity, Access and Inclusion* will require the effort and commitment of all members of our community. Our diversity action plan calls on all members of the College of Science to challenge systemic, organizational and individual racism and implicit biases shaping our notion of who can thrive as part of a science community. We challenge the College of Science community to work collaboratively to create an inclusive and welcoming environment with opportunities for access, belonging and success for all.

These actions extend our reach beyond OSU. Our inclusive community can influence and lead efforts to close equity gaps in the U.S. health care system, both through research and well-prepared graduates. Our broad engagement on sustainability and innovation expands opportunities to discover solutions to the climate crisis, which disproportionately affects marginalized communities. Through our actions, we express the power of the College of Science to help create a just society.

In the next sections of *Embedding Equity, Access and Inclusion* we describe the goals and actions that arose from our deliberative and visioning activities.



# College of Science Diversity, Equity, Justice and Inclusion Working Group

## **Vrushali Bokil, Chair**

Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, Professor of Mathematics

## **Felipe Barreto**

Assistant Professor of Integrative Biology

## **Dustin Campbell**

Undergraduate student in Zoology

## **Terrance Harris**

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## **Dave Hendrix**

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## **Doug Keszler**

Distinguished Professor of Chemistry

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## **Kim McQueen**

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## **Xavi Siemens**

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## **Rebecca Vega Thurber**

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## Definitions

**Anti-blackness** is a two-part formation that voids Blackness of value, while systematically marginalizing Black people and their issues. This involves overt racism and covert structural and systemic racism.

**Anti-racism** is the intertwining of ideas expressing that racial groups are equals, with policies that reduce racial inequity.

**Cultural imperialism** is the valuing and enforcement of the dominant group's culture, norms and characteristics.

**Diversity** is reflected in the way unique individuals with varied perspectives, social identities and lived experiences are represented in shaping workplace values, missions and goals. All voices and viewpoints are encouraged, heard and respected for their unique contributions to inclusive excellence.

**Equity** is reflected in ALL students, staff and faculty having access to fairly distributed resources, opportunities for advancement and support to achieve their maximum potential.

**Exploitation** is the systematic transfer of resources (such as land, wealth, or labor value) from one group to another.

**Gendered racism** is a powerful collection of racist policies that lead to inequity between genders of different races and are substantiated by racist ideas.

**Inclusion** means all community members are welcomed, valued and involved in a [shared governance model](#) in which everyone committed to inclusive excellence has a seat at the table.

**Inclusive excellence** is an organization's capacity to thrive as a function of its ability to value and engage the rich diversity of its community members.

**Intersectionality** is a theory that describes the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

**Marginalization** is a form of oppression in which a whole social (racial) group is prevented or expelled from useful participation in social life, for example, the job market, health care system, public benefits program, or community activities and potentially subjected to severe material deprivation.

**Microaggressions** are small daily insults and indignities perpetrated against marginalized or oppressed people because of their affiliation with that marginalized or oppressed group.

[Minoritized communities](#) are social (racial) groups that are marginalized or persecuted because of systemic oppression. For example, Black Americans are a minoritized community.

**Minority community** is the numerically smaller community of two groups constituting a whole. For example, women in physics are a minority group.

**Oppression** refers to structural phenomena that immobilize or diminish a social (racial) group.

**People of color** are people who generally do not identify as White.

**Powerlessness** is a form of oppression that deprives a social (racial) group of the ability to make decisions about one's living or working conditions.

**Privilege** is a special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or social (racial) group because of immutable characteristics.

**Race** is a social construct of collected or merged difference used to categorize humans based on observed characteristics such as skin color.

**Racial inequity** is when two or more racial groups are not standing on approximately equal footing.

**Racism** is the intertwining of racist policies and ideas that creates and normalizes racial inequities.

**Racist idea** is an idea that suggests a racial group is inferior or superior to another racial group in any way.

**Racist policy** is a policy that produces racial inequity between racial groups.

**Shared governance** is the process by which faculty and administrators share responsibility and accountability for reaching decisions on policy and procedure.

**Social (racial) group** is a collective of people differentiated from at least one other collective by cultural forces (race), practices, or way of life.

**Systems of oppression theory** explains institutions as contextualized within larger intersecting systems of sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism, ableism and ageism that reproduce and maintain hierarchies based on gender, race, class, sexual identity, ability, among other identities.

**Underrepresented communities** consist of individuals holding identities broadly underrepresented or underserved within academic or administrative areas in the college, at OSU, within the state of Oregon and nationally in higher education. In the COS, all women and people of color are underrepresented.

For additional definitions we refer to the Office of Institutional Diversity

<https://diversity.oregonstate.edu/definitions>

## Embedding equity, access and inclusion - values, mission and goals

### Our values for embedding equity, access and inclusion

The College of Science values equitable pathways to success for all. We envision a collaborative and innovative community in which all students, faculty and staff have equitable opportunities to enable success in their endeavors at OSU. We envision shared governance through dialogue that is inclusive of all voices that aim to achieve inclusive excellence.

The College of Science values academic freedom, freedom of expression, freedom of conscience, constructive criticism, the use of evidence in reasoned arguments and free inquiry that seeks to understand objective reality. The college values diversity of thought and welcomes divergent views, including minority and unpopular viewpoints, on how to achieve inclusive excellence.

## Our mission for embedding equity, access and inclusion

We will create a multi-faceted view of what success looks like ensuring all scientists or science educators have equitable access to succeed in science. We will work to dismantle systems of oppression and embed equity in everything we do. We will create a climate of trust, understanding and inclusion that allows for productive conflict while acknowledging inequities that exist.

## Our goals for embedding equity, access and inclusion

The College of Science will adopt five goals to implement pathways to equity, access and inclusion:

**Goal 1:** Embed, integrate and advance inclusive excellence within all aspects of the College of Science.

**Goal 2:** Establish holistic, inclusive and equitable hiring, recruitment and retention practices.

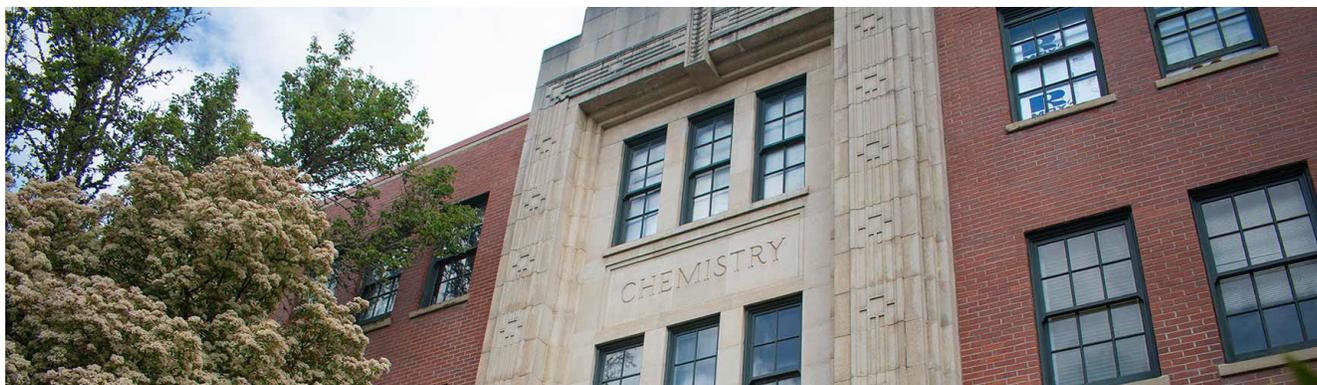
**Goal 3:** Create a welcoming college climate to support a sense of belonging and equitable learning and training experiences.

**Goal 4:** Provide innovative, inclusive, accessible and equitable access to learning and research experiences that incorporate global experiences.

**Goal 5:** Communicate accomplishments reflecting our commitments to inclusion and mutual respect of all members while enhancing visibility of minoritized communities.

## How to read what follows

We set out an ambitious agenda for embedding equity, access and inclusion in all that we do in the College of Science. Recognizing that actions must be prioritized, we indicate those actions that will be taken first with a **double asterisk\*\***. We note that we will follow an *adaptive implementation strategy* in executing this DAP in which our prioritized actions marked by \*\* may adaptively evolve in an evidence-based approach. In what follows, “unit” refers to a department, center, or research facility in the college. In addition, for these purposes, the dean’s office is also a unit.



## Goal 1: Embed, integrate and advance inclusive excellence within all aspects of the College of Science.

*Inclusive Excellence* is an organization's capacity to thrive as a function of its ability to value and engage the rich diversity of its community members.

In Goal 1, we propose actions to create a multilevel, multiscale, contextual approach to organizational development and change to embed equity, access and inclusion (EAI) in every operational aspect of our college. We consider actions that task all units in the COS to develop capacity for critical dialogue to challenge ideas, attitudes and policies that have not served their students, staff and faculty well, especially those from minoritized communities. Given the charge to improve outcomes for minoritized members of the college using scientific inquiry and evidence-based actions, we propose an ongoing process of data collection that addresses multilevel and contextual aspects of the inclusion of minoritized members, their access to resources and their lived experiences.

We propose the following actions under this goal:

### Actions

- 1.1. **\*\*Create a College of Science Equity, Access and Inclusion (EAI) Program.** Implementing EAI in the COS will require work at multiple levels. As a first action, the College of Science dean and leadership team will create the following EAI structure:
  - **\*\*Hire a full-time EAI program director** (EAI-PD) to support the coordination and implementation of the actions in support of the five goals of this DAP.
  - **\*\*Establish a College of Science EAI Leadership Council** (EAI Council) with a charge to lead, facilitate and monitor the implementation of *Embedding Equity, Access and Inclusion* in all the units in the COS and report annually on progress to the college leadership. The EAI-PD will be a member of this council.

- **\*\*Create EAI committees in all units** in the College of Science, with representation on the EAI Council, to lead the implementation of the DAP at the unit level.
- **\*\*Create a EAI Council sub-committee on Gender Equity** (GEC) to address issues and improve outcomes for COS members with marginalized genders.
- **\*\*Create a EAI Council sub-committee on Equity Data Collection** (EDCC) to facilitate an ongoing process of data collection at multiple levels to understand inclusion and access, achievement and equity gaps, attrition and other issues faced by minoritized faculty, students and staff, to inform the adaptive implementation of the DAP.

1.2. **Develop capacity for critical dialogue and leadership to guide organizational change.** The EAI Council will develop strategies for implementing interventions to bias at multiple levels of organization in the college – individual, relational, organizational, symbolic and systemic – to produce sustainable and effective change. This includes

- **\*\*partnering with OID and other internal and external partners** to oversee the scheduling of learning opportunities for all members in leadership positions in the college to grow a culture of dialogue to build productive communication and build trust.
- As tasked by the council, unit EAI committees will be responsible for scheduling learning opportunities to grow capacity for critical dialogue in their units.

1.3. **\*\*Conduct a baseline data analysis.** To inform the adaptive implementation of actions in this DAP, the EDCC will conduct a baseline data analysis of college and unit level data using SP4.0 and OID metrics related to minoritized faculty, students and staff in the COS that includes:

- **\*\*Collecting data from the past five academic years** on (1) minoritized student admissions and enrollment, retention, attrition rates and graduation rates and grades in gateway courses; (2) hiring and recruitment, retention and attrition of minoritized tenured and tenure-track faculty, instructional, research and professional faculty and postdoctoral fellows; and (3) other data related to minoritized community members' success to inform and support the actions in this DAP.
- **Collecting data on equity and achievement** outcome gaps in the teaching, research, service and outreach missions of the college that are disaggregated by race, gender, disability, among other social identities and at the intersection of marginalized identities.

1.4. **\*\*Track and report progress.** The EAI Council in collaboration with the EDCC, GEC and unit EAI committees will track and report annually on the progress of implementation of actions in this DAP. In collaboration with College of Science Marketing & Communications, this progress will be communicated to the college community as discussed in Goal 5. The EDCC will develop comparisons with other colleges at OSU as well as benchmark data with our peer institutions, by using and building on the data collected by [OSU's ADVANCE program](#) as baseline data for tracking the status of women in science and working with OID and [Institutional Research](#) to obtain data for other indicators.



## Goal 2: Establish holistic, inclusive and equitable hiring, recruitment and retention practices.

*Holistic and inclusive admissions, recruitment and hiring use strategies that consider the whole person and touch all aspects of the admissions, recruitment and hiring processes.*

In Goal 2, we propose actions to move the college towards holistic, inclusive and equitable processes in its admissions policies and in its educational and research missions so that recruitment, retention and overall outcomes for students, staff and faculty from minoritized communities are improved. We propose actions to interrupt and address biased processes in admissions, hiring, promotion, tenure and peer review. Actions under this goal will couple inclusive hiring to effective retention measures to foster individual success, well-being and work satisfaction of members from minoritized communities. These actions include enhanced mentoring for students and mentoring training for faculty to address issues around mental health and disability access for students.

Our college needs more diverse representation at the faculty level to support the educational needs of a diverse student body, as effective teaching and mentoring strategies for underrepresented students in science are affected by diverse representation in the communities. At the same time, faculty with minoritized identities cannot bear the entire burden of supporting the diverse student body. We expect all faculty to have responsibility in this regard.

We propose the following actions under this goal:

## Actions

- 2.1. **\*\*Develop holistic admissions criteria** in all student programs in the college. Holistic admissions consider the whole student, their unique experiences and non-cognitive factors associated with success, along with traditional measures of academic achievement. The EAI Council will make recommendations to the dean for adoption of policies, that result from the following actions:
  - **Addressing inclusion of minoritized students.** The council will work with unit level EAI committees to develop evidence-based strategies to improve and expand unit level admissions processes equalizing criteria and metrics for admission across units in the college for the inclusion and fair representation of minoritized communities of students.
  - **\*\*Addressing attrition** by working with the EDCC to quantify and address attrition and retention rates, equity and education gaps to inform the admissions processes.
  - **\*\*Addressing inequities** by working with the unit EAI committees to analyze and identify unit and college policies resulting in inequitable outcomes in unit admissions processes, including outreach conducted for admissions that may exclude minoritized student communities.
  - **Providing learning opportunities** by partnering with the Graduate School to provide graduate admissions committee members learning opportunities around holistic admissions (such as training in implicit bias) to create a growth mindset for applying to the admissions process.
- 2.2. **\*\*Address and increase representation among faculty and staff.** The EAI Council will analyze recruitment and hiring policies to provide recommendations to the dean to enable diversifying the college and broadening participation. This includes:
  - **Creating collaborative networks** nationwide and building relationships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) to help in recruitment and hiring of faculty from minoritized communities. Working with unit EAI committees, the council will explore opportunities for engagement and outreach through disciplinary professional networks.
  - **\*\*Ensuring equitable hiring and promotion processes** by working with unit level EAI committees to provide promotion and tenure committees and search committees with equity training such as provided by the [Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Training in the Hiring Process](#) and to include a [Search Advocate](#).
  - **\*\*Creating a college level service equity policy** that is transparent and aligned with the recently developed college workload policy to set guidelines ensuring equitable service assignments for minoritized faculty and staff. Unit EAI committees will take the lead in the refinement and implementation of this policy at the unit level.

- **Improving promotion and merit processes** by analyzing existing processes across units with an equity lens to identify systemic barriers for minoritized faculty. The EAI Council will partner with the [PTIE Group](#) at OSU to develop best practices and road maps for promotion and tenure.

2.3. **\*\*Expand support services to aid in student retention.** The EAI Council will use evidence-based strategies to continue and increase support services for students from minoritized communities and assess equity in access to these services. This includes:

- **\*\*Increasing need-based scholarships.** The EAI Council in collaboration with partners across campus, such as the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP), Educational Opportunities Program (EOP), Student Affairs (SA), Office of Financial Aid and the OSU Foundation, among others, will better align and identify avenues to increase equitable access to student support (scholarships) based on need in addition to metrics of academic merit. The EDCC will gather data, assess and report from an equity perspective how well we are serving Black, Latinx, Indigenous and other students of color in the college and, in collaboration with the GEC, how this access intersects with marginalized gender identities.
- **Creating paid tutoring opportunities** to provide more equitable educational opportunities for underserved students from minoritized groups, the EAI Council will work with campus partners to offer paid one-on-one tutoring opportunities providing help for freshmen through seniors. Focus would be directed at courses with the highest DFWU rates.
- **\*\*Creating diversity based graduate fellowships.** To improve equitable access to educational resources in the first year of our graduate programs, the council will work with campus partners and the OSU Foundation to offer equity-based educational scholarships to graduate students from minoritized communities. An example of such support is the [Prestigious Diversity Fellowship](#) offered by the Graduate School.

2.4. **\*\*Improve advising pathways and mentoring relationships** in all units in the college and in college level programs. The EAI Council will provide recommendations to the dean to create programs at the unit and college level by engaging in:

- **\*\*Improving student advising relationships** to improve student outcomes. The council will provide opportunities for professional development for all advisors by connecting to partners across campus. The goals are to help advisors develop strategies to better serve minoritized students identify a path that fits their needs, understand their lived experiences and find ways to ensure equitable treatment by reducing the asymmetrical power dynamic between and among faculty and students.

- **Providing enhanced student mentoring.** The EAI Council and GEC will partner with the Graduate School, the Office of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, OID and other campus partners to provide opportunities for all faculty serving as major advisor to an undergraduate or graduate student to receive professional development in mentoring for enhanced understanding of the issues faced by minoritized groups. This includes issues around implicit bias, disability, microaggressions affecting the lived experiences and outcomes for students from minoritized communities, mental illness among others. Unit EAI committees will take the lead in scheduling learning opportunities at the unit level.
- **\*\*Creating equitable mentoring for junior and mid-career faculty.** The EAI Council will provide recommendations to the dean to create a college level policy on assigning mentors to junior and mid-career faculty from minoritized communities as service assignments to ensure equitable access to resources for these faculty.



## Goal 3: Create a welcoming college climate to support a sense of belonging and equitable learning and training experiences.

*Climate* refers to the way that an organization is perceived and experienced by its individual members. Climate influences whether individuals feel valued, listened to, respected, personally safe and treated with fairness and dignity within an organization.

In Goal 3, we propose actions that challenge the “traditional” notion of a scientist to foster a sense of belonging for all learners, educators and researchers. Departmental climate has a significant impact on the sense of belonging and success of student education and learning as well as faculty and staff job satisfaction. We propose actions that enhance departmental climate by promoting productive and constructive dialogue and building trust and respect for all members of our community.

The actions under this goal will improve climate and create a sense of belonging, thus improving work performance, increasing job satisfaction and aiding in retaining diverse students and employees. The actions aim to boost learning, helping prepare our graduates effectively and increasing our reputation.

We propose the following actions under this goal:

### Actions

- 3.1. **\*\*Create a framework to assess sense of belonging.** Our community consists of science faculty and students and science educators who are involved in providing tools for success to our students and other researchers and staff that are engaged in OSU’s land grant mission and furthering the R1 research mission of OSU. To amplify the voices of our underrepresented students, faculty and staff in

the goals, values and mission of our college and respect their unique skills and perspectives, the EAI Council will engage in the following activities:

- **\*\*Create climate survey instruments** to annually track progress around questions of belonging and strive for continuous improvement in the lived experiences of minoritized members. Reports on how sense of belonging is assessed will be made available by the EDCC. The EAI Council will partner with OID in this effort.
- **Break down hierarchical barriers.** The EAI Council will deliberate and identify practices and current cultural norms that act as barriers to achieving a shared vision. The council will recommend an outwardly visible code of mutual respect for all roles and responsibilities in order to devise and implement measures to break down these barriers.
- **Develop welcoming and equitable classrooms.** Working with partners across campus, the EAI Council will provide support opportunities for faculty to create welcoming environments in their classroom and other spaces, by identifying systems and structures that impede student development.
- **\*\*Improve departmental climate and collegiality.** Both explicit and formal structures such as policies and procedures, as well as informal and implicit norms including symbolic elements, cultural aspects and hidden messages shape the lived experiences of minoritized community members that are frequently detrimental to engagement, career advancement and retention. The EAI Council will create opportunities for the college community to deliberate and identify problems related to work climate on an ongoing basis and develop and recommend collaborative solutions using a shared governance model.

3.2. **\*\*Broaden the ‘image’ of a scientist.** To ensure inclusion of minoritized communities that face systemic barriers to successful careers in science, the EAI Council will engage in activities that:

- **Actively promote a broader image of what a scientist looks like.** Unit EAI committees will ensure the inclusion of speakers from minoritized groups when organizing departmental seminars that span a diversity of careers relevant to the discipline. The EAI Council will ensure such inclusion in events organized at the college level.
- **\*\*Build community, respect, trust and value people.** Unit EAI committees will develop a plan for enhancing community building based on the climate assessment conducted by the EAI Council, including regular meetings to discuss EAI development at individual and unit level and scheduling unit level meetings to have open discussions on issues affecting unit level processes.
- **Develop shared learning communities.** The EAI Council will promote opportunities for groups in the college to develop shared learning communities for people to connect their identity and their lived experiences with their work.

- 3.3. **\*\*Promote learning opportunities around intersectional issues.** The EAI Council, GEC and unit EAI committees will provide learning opportunities for all faculty, staff and students in the college around systemic issues that aim to:
- **\*\*Develop disability consciousness** by partnering with the Disability Access Services (DAS) office, the Office of Student life and Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). These opportunities will aim to provide information about policies, campus support for students with disabilities and help faculty develop best practices to help disabled students in their classes and research.
  - **Develop understanding of systemic gender and sexual identity issues in science** by partnering with OI and other campus partners. The aim of this learning opportunity is for college members to understand the issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community in science and how people can provide support to improve outcomes.
  - **\*\*Combat gender-based harassment** by partnering with the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access to provide continuing education for all units. The EAI Council and GEC should assess via climate surveys how effective these learning opportunities are in improving gender-based harassment and the lived experiences of people with marginalized genders in the college.
- 3.4. **\*\*Enhance and equalize the student experience** in all aspects, including the educational experience, research and professional development opportunities available to students. The EAI Council will develop a needs and assessment survey with disciplinary focus provided by the unit EAI committees to assess student needs both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The EAI Council will make recommendations to the dean and college leadership for adapting and refining student program elements in the college. The activities in this action include:
- **Re-evaluating qualifying exams**, specifically the purpose, need and validity of timed and written qualifying exams in all units in the College of Science that offer a PhD program. For students in the college to have an equitable experience, the college needs consistency across admissions as well as retention criteria.
  - **\*\*Creating paid research, capstone and internship experiences for minoritized student populations.** The EAI Council will partner with the Science Success Center, OSU Foundation, the Office of Academic Affairs and others across campus along with industry partners to increase co-curricular opportunities for minoritized student groups for increased engagement in science, developing science identities early on in the students' programs and aiding retention of minoritized students.



## Goal 4: Provide innovative, inclusive and equitable access to learning and research experiences that incorporate global experiences.

**Engagement** reflects an organization’s commitment to advancing diversity, equity, access and inclusion internally and externally.

In Goal 4, we aim to innovate in research, education, outreach and engagement to create multiple pathways for success for our underrepresented community members. We will incorporate global experiences, increase access for all members to engage the community and augment and create fruitful partnerships within OSU, with external academic institutions, industry and government agencies.

*The Endless Frontier: The Next 75 Years in Science* recommends collaborating and sharing expertise across disciplinary boundaries, as current and future research environments require a broader set of skills than needed in the past. OSU’s strategic plan SP4.0 states that, “Our success in research, innovation, education and engagement depends on how well we value and engage the rich diversity of our entire community of internal and external stakeholders.” The actions under this goal aim to create such engagement.

We propose the following actions under this goal:

### Actions

4.1. **\*\*Establish partnerships and pipelines for minoritized communities.** The EAI Council will develop strategic ideas to establish and augment partnerships with internal and external partners to diversify our community, our research and educational portfolio and deliver public impact of our work. This includes:

- **Partnering with minority serving institutions (MSIs)** to better serve minority students, faculty and staff in our college. This could include research and outreach collaborations, writing grant

proposals with MSIs, intellectual exchange, inviting speakers and exchange students and engaging MSI faculty and students directly by offering unique facilities and equipment capabilities to advance their (MSI) research. A database of current contacts at various MSIs will be maintained.

- **\*\*Strengthening and augmenting partnerships within OSU** that the college has made with various groups on OSU campus including LSAMP, STEM Leaders, Diversity and Cultural Engagement, Center for Engagement and Leadership, EOP and TRiO to provide increased support of minoritized students, faculty and staff.
- **Establishing and augmenting support for affinity groups** that include alumni from minoritized communities, student-based affinity groups and student chapters such as the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM), Women in Science (WIS), among others.
- **\*\*Strengthening and augmenting partnerships with industry and government agencies** to provide increased access for our underrepresented students, faculty and staff to cutting edge research, innovation and entrepreneurial opportunities.

4.2. **\*\*Enhance undergraduate and graduate education.** The EAI Council will partner with the Graduate School, the Office of Undergraduate Education and other university partners to

- **Provide opportunities to strengthen core competencies and transferable skills** to our students. The Graduate School's recent [Strategic Plan for Reshaping Graduate Education](#) includes providing equitable opportunities for developing proposal writing skills, communication skills, among others.
- **Recommend evidence-based innovative educational techniques** to translate educational practices to undergraduate and graduate level courses. Unit EAI committees will provide recommendations to the EAI Council to promote guided autonomy for students in their units focusing on equitable educational innovation. As an example, recent research in active learning strategies indicates an [increase in student performance](#) in science, engineering and mathematics, and a [narrowing of achievements gaps for underrepresented undergraduate students](#).
- **Redesign foundational courses to address inequitable outcomes.** The council with recommendations from unit EAI committees will deliberate existing foundational undergraduate and graduate courses (ones for incoming undergraduate and graduate students) and provide recommendations to update the design to remove unequal outcomes for minoritized students.
- **\*\*Promote collaborative, transdisciplinary and convergence research opportunities.** The EAI Council with recommendations from unit EAI committees will design strategies to create, promote and reward collaborative and interdisciplinary research opportunities for our students that have impact on their degree programs.

4.3. **\*\*Promote research, innovation and educational activities that have public impact.** The council will create opportunities for science communication events and citizen science projects, that showcase the

public impact of education, research and innovation in the college. These include opportunities for outreach to K-12 to address gender equity in science, creating pipelines to K-12 to increase enrollment of students in our college from minoritized communities in Oregon.

- 4.4. **\*\*Enhance global perspectives and experiences.** Aligning with the goals of SP4.0, the council will create and expand opportunities for students to acquire global educational experiences including international research, education, or internship experiences. The EDCC will track and report on the availability and access of such opportunities for minoritized students.



## **Goal 5: Communicate accomplishments reflecting our commitments to inclusion and mutual respect of all members while enhancing visibility of minoritized communities.**

In Goal 5, we propose actions that provide effective communication, transparency and visibility in the implementation of the DAP. We will identify gaps in access to determine strategies for the visibility of our EAI work. Actions here involve organizing events and collecting data to amplify the success of underrepresented and minoritized faculty, students and staff, providing access to EAI literature to our community on systemic issues faced by underrepresented members and collecting feedback from the college community.

Minoritized communities face systemic barriers that have been put in place that exclude them from all metrics of success in science. For example, numerous studies show that women's scientific contributions are devalued as compared to men, resulting in underrepresentation in prestigious academic appointments such as distinguished professorships or named chairs. We need actions that alleviate inequities affecting the progress of minoritized communities by raising awareness of issues and paving the way for changing structures and practices that produce unequal outcomes.

The actions under this goal aim to contribute to the sense of inclusion for minoritized communities in science. The actions here inform and support efforts to adopt inclusive practices across multiple aspects of our work, elevating intellectual vibrancy and enhancing internal and external visibility, thereby strengthening and diversifying candidate pools of prospective faculty, staff and students

We propose the following actions under this goal:

## Actions

- 5.1. **\*\*Create a transparent implementation process of the DAP.** The EAI Council will collaborate with the college marketing and communications team to update its diversity website that includes:
  - **\*\*Providing visibility for the DAP** by providing public access to this DAP, a description of the strategic diversity process and a tracking tool, summarizing the current status of implementation of the goals and actions in the DAP, and metrics and benchmarks for success.
  - **\*\*Creating a feedback collection tool** on COS's diversity website to allow community members to provide continuous feedback to the college on EAI related matters.
  - **\*\*Providing access to EAI resources** on the diversity website providing information on evidence-based research informing the college's EAI actions for improving outcomes for underrepresented faculty, students and staff.
- 5.2. **\*\*Communicate progress and challenges.** The council and EDCC will assess the impact of communicating its accomplishments, progress and challenges regarding EAI externally and internally through modalities like IMPACT magazine, department newsletters, aligned websites, the dean's monthly newsletter and social media. The college will work with University Relations and Marketing to establish effective mechanisms for reporting faculty, staff and student work and accomplishments on EAI.
- 5.3. **\*\*Create opportunities to promote diversity in science.** To amplify the contributions of scientists from minoritized communities and to enhance public understanding of systemic issues in Science, the EAI Council will engage in the following activities:
  - **\*\*Host events focused on EAI.** The EAI Council and the GEC will partner with university and external organizations and the OSU Foundation to promote events focused on Equity, Access and Inclusion in science that relate to improving outcomes for communities underrepresented in science, especially Black, Indigenous, Latinx and other communities of color. Unit EAI committees will host smaller scale events at the unit level. An example event recently hosted by the college is the 2021 event [Women in leadership – Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world](#). The EDCC will track and report on how many faculty and students are involved in participating and organizing EAI events in science.
  - **\*\*Establish dean's annual lecture for enhanced visibility of minoritized communities.** The EAI Council and GEC will organize a dean's annual lecture honoring the significant research or educational contributions of a scientist from a minoritized community.

- 5.4. **\*\*Broaden the scope of recognition and acknowledgement.** The EAI Council and unit EAI committees will continuously engage in identifying faculty, staff and students of color to promote for awards and recognition internally at the unit, college, university level and for state, national and international awards. The GEC will serve an analogous role for college members with marginalized gender identities. The council will develop holistic rubrics for selection criteria that are available on the college website. The EDCC will track nominations and awards and publish awardee names.

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# Appendix: Collection of input from stakeholders

## A. Focus group listening sessions

The COS DEJI WG met during October 2020 – June 2021 to engage in a deliberative process utilizing the Office of Institutional Diversity’s *Adaptive Strategic Planning for Inclusive Excellence*. This framework included shared group learning, deliberation of foundational questions and the collection of vision input from stakeholders through three general focus group listening sessions open to all community members in the college, four special sessions comprising college leadership, staff, undergraduate and graduate students and a Qualtrics survey open to all community members. The COS DEJI Working Group deliberated a set of foundational questions that arose through our shared group learning. To answer these questions, our group reviewed the literature and debated the adoption of evidence-based strategies for the proposed actions in this DAP. These foundational questions were posed to the entire college community at our focus group listening sessions. We describe these activities briefly in the Appendix to this DAP. The visioning and deliberation by members of the COS DEJI WG and stakeholders informed the actions associated with each of the five goals in the DAP.

**Table 1** outlines the different sessions and the numbers of participants in each. Sessions with more than 10 participants were further divided into several groups of up to 10 participants and were moderated by a member of the COS DEJI Working Group. In addition, a note-taker either from the working group or college staff was assigned to take notes. Finally, an anonymous Qualtrics survey feedback option was provided to the entire college community.

**Table 1: Focus Group Listening Session Details**

Session Type	Number of Participants	Groups	Facilitators for each group
<b>In Person (Zoom)</b>			
General Session 1	15	2	2-3
General Session 2	12	2	2-3
General Session 3	13	2	2
Undergraduates	17	2	2
Mixed Students (Under Graduates & Graduate)	10	1	2
Professional Faculty	6	1	2
College Leadership	9	1	2
<b>Online</b>			
Qualtrics Survey	25	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>82 (In Person-Zoom), 25 (online)</b>		

These sessions were organized in February 2021. Facilitators include moderators and note-takers.

**Table 2** below gives additional details on the composition of the participants who attended the focus group sessions or participated in the Qualtrics survey.

**Table 2: Composition of the in-person and Qualtrics survey participants**

Position in College	Number (In Person Session - Zoom)	Qualtrics Survey	Total
Undergraduate Students	34	6	<b>40</b>
Graduate Students/Post Doc/RA	12	11	<b>23</b>
Classified Staff	1	0	<b>1</b>
Professional Faculty	9	0	<b>9</b>
Faculty (Instructional, Fixed Term, Tenure-Track)	18	8	<b>26</b>
Administrator	8	0	<b>8</b>
Total	82	25	107

For all the sessions that were conducted in-person (via Zoom), the participants were provided with advance material that included conversational guidelines and a set of foundational questions put together by the COS DEJI WG, for deliberation at a 90-minute focus group listening session. Our facilitators moderated these discussions and note-takers took notes of each session. These notes were compiled by the working group and broad themes and issues that emerged were summarized and collected to form part of the basis of this diversity action plan. Below we include the communication that was sent to the College of Science community including the conversation guidelines and the foundational questions. The foundational questions were modified in length to fit some of the sessions that were 60-minutes long and modified in content for the session involving college leadership to include a focus on leadership.

## A.1 Letter sent to college of science employees and students

### **Dear College of Science Colleagues & Students,**

The College of Science (COS) thanks you for volunteering to participate in our Diversity, Equity, Justice and Inclusion (DEJI) focus group sessions. The purpose of these sessions is for you, as an integral member of the college, to provide input and vision to a COS Diversity Action Plan (DAP).

The College of Science is using the “[Adaptive Strategic Planning for Inclusive Excellence framework](#)”, created by the Office of Institutional Diversity (OID), that is intended to spur sustainable, organizational change through learning and doing. A COS-DEJI Working Group was put together in Fall 2020 by Dean of the College of Science, Roy Haggerty, and charged with writing an action plan, consultatively with the faculty, staff and students in the college as well as with the OID and the Cultural Resource Centers, **to improve outcomes for underrepresented students, faculty, and staff.**

You can see a description of the Working Group and the charge to this group in our IMPACT article [Town hall centers Black experiences in the college, paves the way for action.](#)

The deliberative phase of the plan builds capacity through stakeholder engagement, visioning, assessment, and action to create measurable progress and improvement to advance inclusive excellence. In recognition of the importance of embedding equity in the functions of our organization and the processes supporting these functions, your insight and ongoing commitment are necessary to develop a strong DAP. Your input will be used in an anonymous manner, without the inclusion of any identifying attributes in the DAP. The COS-DEJI Working Group will look for broad themes and issues that emerge from the collective responses of COS members to inform actions and timelines in our final DAP.

Each focus group session will be 90-minutes long, starting with a short introduction, in which I will briefly outline the college’s process to create a DAP and introduce the session facilitators. After the introduction, pre-assigned breakout groups will deliberate a set of four foundational questions. Our facilitators will take notes of the discussion.

In the remainder of this document, you will find the following materials.

- Conversation Guidelines to be followed at our focus group sessions
- Foundational Questions to be collaboratively deliberated in breakout groups at one of our focus group sessions.

Please review these materials, reflect on our conversation guidelines and come prepared to deliberate our foundational questions.

We appreciate your willingness to engage in this process and we look forward to seeing you at one of our focus group sessions.

Sincerely,

### **Vrushali Bokil**

Chair, College of Science Diversity, Equity, Justice & Inclusion Working Group  
Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies  
College of Science, Oregon State University

# Conversation Guidelines

## COS -Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Committee

**Respect** Each of us has the right to hold opinions and beliefs that are our own. Assume good intent from everyone. Let us challenge or criticize ideas and not the person.

**Listen** Practice active listening. Each of us has the right to speak. Allow everyone their chance to speak and participate.

**Appreciate** When a person is speaking, listen deeply, courteously and with full attention.

**Speak** Share your voice, your experience and your discomfort. Be mindful of how much talking space you occupy. At the same time, be empowered to speak up when someone dominates the conversation.

**Interrogate** Have real conversations and interrogate reality. Be prepared to check your biases, to question yourself and others. Support your statements with evidence and rationale and expect the same from others.

**Recognize** Each of us possesses many identities. We do not speak to represent our race, our gender or any of our other identities. We speak for our whole unique selves.

**Advocate** Look to see who is present and who is not and be intentional in seeking out and amplifying voices that are not in the room.

**Transform** When the conversation becomes difficult, breathe. Take care of yourself. Find the source of your anger or discomfort and transform it to constructive action. Practice humility and compassion.

**Protect** Take the ideas, stories and what you have learned with you and share. Leave the names and who said what in our virtual discussion room. Maintain the privacy of our meetings.

## COS-DEJI focus group foundational questions

Deliberate the FOUR question sets below with your group using your experience, expectations and aspirations. Please follow our conversation guidelines. Below, “unit” refers to either your department, the College of Science, or some other facility in the college, or all of the above.

### Question set 1: Do you feel a sense of belonging to your unit?



**Who is a  
Scientist?**

If yes, what are the elements that contribute to a welcoming environment for you?

If no, what needs to be done to help you feel a sense of belonging?

What are elements or issues that your group described that are different from your response?

### Question set 2: What do you perceive to be the values of your unit?



**Values, Goals,  
Mission**

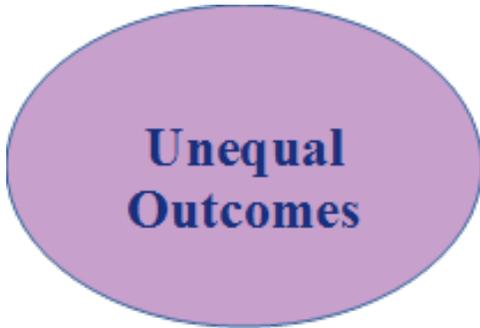
Are these values explicitly stated? Does your group agree with you?

What are goals & missions of your unit?

Does your unit’s day-to-day functioning align with these values, goals and missions?

If no, what needs to be done to align values, goals & mission with functions?

### Question set 3: How can your unit advance their mission while ensuring that no aspiring scientist is left behind?



What would successful outcomes for all students look like?

What would successful outcomes for all faculty & staff look like?

If you could change three things right now, that you perceive are hindering success for all,

what would those be?

### Question set 4: How do you define the words diversity, equity and inclusion?



What are your expectations around diversity, equity and inclusion in your unit?

Is your unit meeting your expectations? If yes, how?

If not, what needs to change? What are two things you would change now and why? Does your group agree with you?

## B. Review of draft DAP by internal & external stakeholders

A semi-final version of the DAP was circulated on May 5, 2021, with stakeholders internal and external to the College of Science. The invitation to the stakeholder group asked them to review the DAP and provide feedback via a *Stakeholder Qualtrics Survey* (see section B.1) by May 19, 2021. Extensive feedback from this second set of vision collection informed the final version of *Embedding Equity, Access and Inclusion*. The COS-DEJI committee collectively reviewed and analyzed the feedback that was received, incorporated the feedback into the DAP and presented a final DAP with recommendations to Dean Haggerty. In Table 3, we present information about the stakeholders invited to give feedback in this process. We note that, to keep all the feedback on an equal footing, the only information collected from stakeholders who responded to our Qualtrics Survey (see the requesting letter in Section B.1) was whether the stakeholder was internal or external to COS. Thus, we do not have further classifying information on who responded to our survey.

**Table 3: Details of Stakeholders Invited to Review the DAP**

Position in College	Internal to COS	External to COS	Total
Undergraduate Students (including Ecampus)	9	0	9
Graduate Students/Post Doc/RA	5	0	5
Professional Faculty	2	13	15
Faculty (Instructional, Fixed Term, Tenure-Track)	8	3	11
Executive/Administrator	9	12	21
Total (Invited)	<b>33</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>61</b>
Total (Received Feedback)	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>27</b>

## B.1 Stakeholder Qualtrics survey

The following information was sent to selected stakeholders via a Qualtrics Survey to collect feedback on a semi-final version of the DAP.

Thank you for reviewing the College of Science's 2021-2024 Diversity Action Plan (DAP), a pdf file of which was emailed to you on May 5, 2021. Please submit your feedback via this anonymous Qualtrics survey by May 19, 2021.

Sincerely,

**Vrushali Bokil**

Chair, COS DEJI Working Group  
Associate Dean, Research & Graduate Studies  
College of Science, Oregon State University

**Type of reviewer (select one)**

- Internal to COS
- OSU-affiliated, external to COS
- Other (Please write in)

The COS-DAP outlines 5 major goals with the following overarching aim:

**Aim:** To improve access, belonging and success outcomes for underrepresented faculty/staff and students in the COS.

Each goal contains several actions.

**Please provide short answers to the following questions and include any references to evidence-based research that you are aware of.**

1. Identify up to 3 of our actions that you believe will address our **Aim** effectively (see above).
2. Identify up to 3 of our actions that you believe will not be effective, be detrimental, or move us away from our **Aim**.
3. Share up to 3 actions that you would consider adding within any of these 5 major goals. For each new action, please provide a short context.
4. Please give us your general impressions on the COS 2021-2024 DAP.