

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan

2022–2027

UW School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences

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DEI Mission

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategic Plan 2022–2027 of the School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences (SAFS) is created with the purpose of better serving the members of the SAFS community in accomplishing our DEI goals. The DEI plan aligns with the recommendations of the [2021 SAFS DEI Assessment](#)¹ and the goals of the [2022–2026 UW Diversity Blueprint](#).

This plan outlines specific actions to support the SAFS diversity commitment:

The School of Aquatic and Fisheries Sciences (SAFS) values the strengths and professional experience that students, faculty, and staff bring to our community. We are committed to providing an excellent education to all of our students, regardless of their race, gender, class, nationality, physical ability, religion, age, or sexual orientation. We are proud of the different roles that our students, staff, and faculty play in the community of the School and the College of the Environment. We also recognize that science is richer and the SAFS community is more vibrant when a diverse group of people participate in research.

We envision a future in which SAFS supports and celebrates a diverse, vibrant scientific community; actively advances equity with clear and consistent policy; and is deeply interconnected with other organizations, communities, and institutions who are connected to the work we do. To this end, we pledge to increase diversity and equity among our students, postdocs, faculty, and staff and create a welcoming, supportive, and accessible environment for learning and discovery.

The DEI Strategic Plan lays out six broad goals, each with its own more specific strategies. It is an imperfect document. It is a rough map of a territory we have not fully explored. To make progress, we will need to take action, and try new things, and make some mistakes, and learn from our experiences, and change, and try again.

The DEI plan will guide the SAFS Equity and Inclusion (EI) Committee in its work to advance equity across all areas of the School, but this work should not be restricted to only a few members of the community. Members of SAFS hold many roles: classroom instructors, students, principal investigators, supervisors, committee members, mentors, researchers, social organizers, and more. The next step is for SAFS to engage its entire community in determining how to take action to achieve these goals. It is also our sincere hope that individuals and groups within the School will also use this plan as a guide in their own work to improve the spaces where they have influence, however small. Advancing equity within an institution takes effort from leadership and from the grassroots.

The journey toward becoming a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive institution never ends—but we can always make progress, and grow again and again into a better version of who we are.

¹ Also referred to as the SAFS “Equity Audit”.

Process

The SAFS DEI Strategic Plan 2022–2027 follows the [SAFS DEI Strategic Plan 2018–2021](#), written by Isadora Jiménez-Hidalgo. This plan also draws heavily from the recommendations from the [2021 SAFS DEI Assessment](#), which was conducted by WhitworthKee Consulting during the spring and summer quarters of 2021. WhitworthKee released their report to the SAFS community and presented their findings in November 2021.

In the weeks following the release of the DEI Assessment report, the SAFS EI Committee held discussions with each of the main peer groups in SAFS: undergraduate students, graduate students, postdocs, staff, and faculty. EI Committee members facilitated these meetings for the specific peer group they were part of so that the meetings remained private for each peer group. Individuals shared their initial feelings, observations, and reflections during these sessions, and the Diversity Specialist used the facilitators' notes from each group discussion to identify [three main themes](#) for SAFS to prioritize its growth: community, communication, and consistency.

In January 2022, the EI Committee then held four more discussion and brainstorming sessions to gather input for action steps SAFS could take to improve across these three areas. The sessions were for students, employees, people of color, and LGBTQ+ individuals in SAFS; members of the EI Committee facilitated sessions for groups they were part of. The Diversity Specialist used the collected questions, suggestions, and concerns (as well as the three themes noted above) to develop the six main goals of this plan. The Diversity Specialist then shared the [initial draft of these goals](#) at the All Hands meeting in February 2022, and community members had the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback.

The Diversity Specialist and other members of the EI Committee spent the remainder of the winter and spring quarters drafting the bulk of the DEI Strategic Plan. When UW released its updated [Diversity Blueprint for 2022–2026](#), the EI Committee ensured the University-wide goals and potential actions were reflected in the draft plan. The draft DEI Strategic Plan was open to members of SAFS for “public comment” for the month of June 2022. Two separate files were made available for SAFS members to comment on: one for faculty and one for SAFS staff, postdocs, and students. The Diversity Specialist reviewed the comments from each file and shared an update about how the EI Committee was using the community feedback to revise the draft plan.

With input from the SAFS Director and the EI Committee Chair, the Diversity Specialist made final revisions to the DEI Strategic Plan over the remainder of the summer quarter. The Director and EI Committee approved the completed DEI Strategic Plan, and the committee then distributed it to members of SAFS for final comment during autumn quarter 2022. The DEI Strategic Plan was finalized at the end of the quarter and posted to the SAFS website in December 2022.

Comparison of DEI Goals

As stated previously, this document was informed by earlier recommendations from the SAFS DEI Assessment, the three themes that came out of discussions following the assessment, and the goals from the UW Diversity Blueprint. The following tables illustrate which goals in the SAFS DEI Strategic Plan are connected to each of the recommendations from prior documents.

DEI Assessment Recommendations (paraphrased)	SAFS Goals	
Allocate resources to advance diversity in all roles	1	2
Establish clearly defined and shared DEI goals for all roles and monitor extent to which goals are met annually	3	
Implement ongoing practices to assess the effectiveness of programs to advance DEI	3	
Establish recruitment practices to identify candidates from diverse communities	1	2
Review national candidate data for roles/positions to use as a benchmark for SAFS recruitment pools	1	2
Offer specialized professional development to leadership to improve equity across roles	3	
Offer specialized professional development to individuals who work with students to improve equitable advising practices	3	
Provide an annual, required series of professional development opportunities for all roles to increase DEI understanding	3	
Expand awareness of discrimination and harassment within SAFS, including frequency and factors; address these issues	4	
Regularly remind the community of reporting processes, offer transparent reporting pathways	4	
Develop a process for ongoing review of SAFS policies that may reinforce systemic discrimination	5	

Main Themes from Discussions of the DEI Assessment	SAFS Goals		
Community	1	2	6
Communication	3	4	5
Consistency	3	4	5

UW Diversity Blueprint Goals	SAFS Goals		
Cultivate an accessible, inclusive, and equitable climate	3	4	5
Attract, retain, and graduate a diverse and excellent student body	1		
Attract and retain diverse academic personnel	2		
Attract and retain diverse staff	2		
Develop place-based education and engagement to advance access, inclusion, and equity	6		
Improve accountability and transparency at all levels	3	4	5

Strategic Goals

Our six strategic goals address three main areas: our people, our policies and practices, and our connection with the communities around us:

People

1. Attract, retain, and support students from diverse communities and backgrounds.
2. Attract, retain, and support faculty, staff, and postdocs from diverse communities and backgrounds.

Policies and Practices

3. Develop community competency in knowledge and skills connected to equity and inclusion.
4. Implement best practices to create and maintain the safety, health, and wellbeing of members of SAFS.
5. Create and implement equitable practices with clear and consistent policy.

Communities Around Us

6. Establish and improve non-extractive relationships with Indigenous groups and communities of color with whom SAFS works and conducts research.

Goal 1. Attract, retain, and support students from diverse communities and backgrounds.

The SAFS student body is composed of people with diverse social identities and from diverse personal and professional backgrounds, which enriches the environment, experience, and work

of the School. Maintaining and expanding this richness is necessary to advance equity in the School and in scientific disciplines more broadly. While recruitment of individuals from historically excluded groups is important, it is critical to support them once they have become part of our community. This goal will focus on creating networks of people and resources as well as creating or improving policies to support students.

Strategies

- a. Recruit students from communities that have been historically excluded from STEM fields.
- b. Increase transparency and consistency in graduate student admissions².
- c. Increase support for SAFS students from underrepresented groups by creating additional support structures and programs.

Goal 2. Attract, retain, and support faculty, staff, and postdocs from diverse communities and backgrounds.

The postdocs, research and administrative staff, and faculty of all types who work at SAFS hold diverse social identities and come from a range of personal and professional backgrounds, which enriches the environment, experience, and work of the School for students and employees alike. Maintaining and expanding this richness is necessary to advance equity in the School and in scientific disciplines more broadly. While recruitment of historically excluded individuals is important, it is harmful to recruit individuals into an environment that does not support them. Therefore, it is critical we increase our retention and support efforts. This goal will focus on creating networks of people and resources as well as creating or improving policies to support SAFS employees of all roles.

Strategies

- a. Recruit faculty, staff, and postdocs from communities that have been historically excluded from STEM fields.
- b. Increase transparency and consistency in hiring processes.
- c. Increase support for SAFS employees from underrepresented groups by creating additional support structures and programs.

Goal 3. Develop community competency in knowledge and skills connected to equity and inclusion.

Members of SAFS who voluntarily use their time to engage in DEI-related professional development or activities often feel their efforts are undervalued. Additionally, the burden to

² SAFS is only directly involved in the admissions process for graduate students. Undergraduate students apply through the centralized UW Admissions process.

educate and support the community disproportionately falls on the shoulders of individuals who are already marginalized in STEM. By creating structures that explicitly value DEI work and education—and that celebrate peoples' cultures and experiences—SAFS can improve the cultural competency of its employees and students, which subsequently can improve the school climate for historically excluded groups.

Strategies

- a. Incorporate and value DEI skills as a necessary part of professional work and graduate professional training and education.
- b. Plan and implement professional development opportunities and incentives related to DEI fluency.
- c. Cultivate an atmosphere that celebrates and supports diverse cultures, experiences, practices, and knowledge systems.

Goal 4. Implement best practices to create and maintain the safety, health, and wellbeing of members of SAFS.

Caring for the diverse community at SAFS represents an opportunity to create a culturally fluent, psychologically safe, and accessible work environment, where inclusive and respectful behavior expectations are the norm. It is a responsibility of the School to provide a professional and workplace for all its members. Thus, the safety, health, and wellbeing of the entire SAFS community, from both a mental and physical standpoint, should be of paramount importance. Without these hallmarks of a strong, resilient, and vibrant community, it is difficult for all individuals to share their knowledge, undertake their research, and communicate their findings and concerns to others without fear of retribution. There are a variety of strategies, which we outline below, whereby we can help ensure that everyone feels safe, valued, and empowered to voice any concerns they might have.

Strategies

- a. Incorporate the SAFS Code of Conduct into SAFS culture and practices.
- b. Improve safety and accessibility practices in the field, lab, and classroom.
- c. Increase transparency of reporting pathways for discrimination/harassment.
- d. Address harm via restorative, community-centered practices.

Goal 5. Create and implement equitable practices with clear and consistent policy.

Policy changes are necessary for advancing equity within an organization, as is regular and clear communication. Better communication practices reduce uncertainty and anxiety and allow all parties to be involved in decision making processes inherent to their success. Policies and practices involving promotion, evaluation, and feedback must be consistent within peer groups

and clear to all parties involved. Communication regarding these processes should be transparent and proactive to ensure understanding and adherence. Codifying opportunities for career planning and feedback can ensure mutual agreement in setting goals and responsibilities. Regular review of these practices and solicitation of feedback should encourage accountability to these practices.

Strategies

- a. Distribute information clearly and consistently across SAFS.
- b. Create feedback and accountability structures.
- c. Establish and/or clarify promotion/advancement processes.

Goal 6. Establish and improve non-extractive relationships with Indigenous groups and communities of color with whom SAFS works and conducts research.

The research, teaching, and mentorship work being done by members of SAFS impacts local and global communities and does not occur in isolation. This work directly occurs on the traditional and ancestral lands of many Indigenous groups globally and impacts entire communities, including communities of color that are already disproportionately impacted by systemic injustices. Therefore, SAFS members conducting research locally or internationally should educate themselves and demonstrate cultural competency in their research and public engagement to ensure respectful and equitable relationships are created. This includes the creation of opportunities that center the voices and concerns of communities who have been historically excluded from environmental decision-making.

Strategies

- a. Expand capacity to engage in culturally competent collaborative research.
- b. Expand capacity to conduct outreach to local communities.
- c. Collaborate with local scientists and community members in countries outside of the US.

Implementation Guidance

Action Timeline

All of the goals in this plan are ongoing commitments. SAFS has been doing some work in each of these areas already, and the School should continue to engage broadly and consistently across all six main goals. However, it is helpful to determine some sense of priorities, and

because the goals are interlinked, setting a particular order in striving for the goals will help SAFS better achieve these goals overall.

The recommendation of this plan is to begin with Goal 5, as clear and consistent policy is foundational to all areas and implementation can proceed relatively quickly. SAFS should then concentrate efforts on advancing Goals 3 and 4: improving DEI competency among its members and promoting community safety and wellbeing. Only after taking steps to make institutional changes for greater equity, should Goals 1 and 2—recruitment and retention of a diverse body of students, postdocs, staff, and faculty—be the School’s main priority. Goal 6 can initially be carried out by particular individuals and teams at SAFS at the same time as the other goals, as relationship-building with local communities and groups does not necessarily require school-wide implementation. Briefly, the order in which to focus on each of the goals is:

Goal 5 → Goals 3 and 4 → Goals 1 and 2 → Goal 6

The following table provides a cursory and incomplete overview of which strategies already have organized initiatives in progress. “Yes” indicates that SAFS is already making coordinated efforts (such as policies or programs) that align with the strategy. “Partially” indicates that individuals or small groups are engaging in relevant work to some extent, but there is less structure, organization, or awareness across the School. A blank cell indicates that no or only very minimal efforts are currently in progress.

Overview of Existing Efforts on Strategic Goals	
<i>Goals and strategies</i>	<i>Initiatives in progress?</i>
Goal 1. Attract, retain, and support students from diverse communities and backgrounds.	
a. Recruit students from communities that have been historically excluded from STEM fields.	Partially
b. Increase transparency and consistency in graduate student admissions.	Yes
c. Increase support for SAFS students from underrepresented groups by creating additional support structures and programs.	Yes
Goal 2. Attract, retain, and support faculty, staff, and postdocs from diverse communities and backgrounds.	
a. Recruit faculty, staff, and postdocs from communities that have been historically excluded from STEM fields.	Partially
b. Increase transparency and consistency in hiring processes.	Yes
c. Increase support for SAFS employees from underrepresented groups by creating additional support structures and programs.	Yes

Goal 3. Develop community competency in knowledge and skills connected to equity and inclusion.	
a. Incorporate and value DEI skills as a necessary part of professional work and graduate professional training and education.	
b. Plan and implement professional development opportunities and incentives related to DEI fluency.	Yes
c. Cultivate an atmosphere that celebrates and supports diverse cultures, experiences, practices, and knowledge systems.	Partially
Goal 4. Implement best practices to create and maintain the safety, health, and wellbeing of members of SAFS.	
a. Incorporate the SAFS Code of Conduct into SAFS culture and practices.	
b. Improve safety practices in the field and lab.	Yes
c. Increase awareness and transparency of reporting pathways for misconduct.	Yes
d. Address harm via restorative, community-centered practices.	
Goal 5. Create and implement equitable practices with clear and consistent policy.	
a. Distribute information clearly and consistently across SAFS.	Yes
b. Create feedback and accountability structures.	Yes
c. Establish and/or clarify promotion/advancement processes.	Yes
Goal 6. Establish and improve non-extractive relationships with Indigenous groups and communities of color where SAFS works and conducts research.	
a. Expand capacity to engage in culturally competent collaborative research.	
b. Expand capacity to conduct outreach to local communities.	Partially
c. Collaborate with local scientists and community members in countries outside of the US.	Partially

Strategy Team

The following table provides suggestions on who in SAFS will need to lead the work of developing and implementing the goals and strategies laid out earlier in this plan. Other stakeholders can and should be invited to participate and give input.

Initiative Leads for Strategic Goals	
<i>Goals and strategies</i>	<i>Initiative leads</i>
Goal 1. Attract, retain, and support students from diverse communities and backgrounds.	
a. Recruit students from communities that have been historically excluded from STEM fields.	Student Services Staff, SEAS, RASC, Faculty-at-large
b. Increase transparency and consistency in graduate student admissions.	GPC, GPA ³ , RASC
c. Increase support for SAFS students from underrepresented groups by creating additional support structures and programs.	Student Services Staff, Diversity Specialist
Goal 2. Attract, retain, and support faculty, staff, and postdocs from diverse communities and backgrounds.	
a. Recruit faculty, staff, and postdocs from communities that have been historically excluded from STEM fields.	Director, HR Manager, Supervisors, Search committees, Faculty
b. Increase transparency and consistency in hiring processes.	Director, HR Manager
c. Increase support for SAFS employees from underrepresented groups by creating additional support structures and programs.	HR Manager, Diversity Specialist
Goal 3. Develop community competency in knowledge and skills connected to equity and inclusion.	
a. Incorporate and value DEI skills as a necessary part of professional work and graduate professional training and education.	Director, HR Manager, Supervisors, Curriculum committee
b. Plan and implement professional development opportunities and incentives related to DEI fluency.	Diversity Specialist, EI Committee, Everyone
c. Cultivate an atmosphere that celebrates and supports diverse cultures, experiences, practices, and knowledge systems.	Advisors, Supervisors, Instructors, Everyone
Goal 4. Implement best practices to create and maintain the safety, health, and wellbeing of members of SAFS.	

³ Graduate Program Coordinator, Graduate Program Advisor

a. Incorporate the SAFS Code of Conduct into SAFS culture and practices.	Administration, Principal Investigators (PIs), Diversity Specialist, EI Committee
b. Improve safety practices in the field and lab.	PIs, Supervisors, Instructors
c. Increase awareness and transparency of reporting pathways for misconduct.	Administration
d. Address harm via restorative, community-centered practices.	Director, Diversity Specialist
Goal 5. Create and implement equitable practices with clear and consistent policy.	
a. Distribute information clearly and consistently across SAFS.	Administration, Everyone
b. Create feedback and accountability structures.	Administration, PIs
c. Establish and/or clarify promotion/advancement processes.	Director, HR Manager, Administration
Goal 6. Establish and improve non-extractive relationships with Indigenous groups and communities of color where SAFS works and conducts research.	
a. Expand capacity to engage in culturally competent collaborative research.	Director, PIs, Diversity Specialist
b. Expand capacity to conduct outreach to local communities.	Director, PIs, Diversity Specialist
c. Collaborate with local scientists and community members in countries outside of the US.	PIs, Researchers

Evaluation of Objectives

It should be regular practice to review processes and outcomes of initiatives at least annually. For single events, it is good practice to hold a post-event debrief and make recommendations for future iterations of the event. For recurring activities (such as a weekly discussion group), organizers can gather participant feedback via annual or even quarterly surveys and then make adjustments accordingly. It can be harder to assess progress on other goals, such as culture shifts or changes in general practices. Indeed, the identification of robust performance metrics will be an ongoing process of experimentation and learning. The table below makes some suggestions for potential evaluation processes and/or performance measures. The SAFS EI Committee will compile evaluation information from initiative leads and the broader community annually and make this information available to members of SAFS. These evaluation metrics will be adapted as the community learns which are reliable and feasible.

Finally, it is the recommendation of the Diversity Specialist that SAFS complete a full-scale DEI Assessment and use the findings and community input to update future DEI Strategic Plans on a

five-year cycle. Based on this plan, SAFS should conduct its next DEI Assessment in 2027 and the EI Committee should release the updated DEI Strategic Plan in 2028.

Evaluating Progress on Strategic Goals	
<i>Goals and strategies</i>	<i>Potential evaluation metrics</i>
Goal 1. Attract, retain, and support students from diverse communities and backgrounds.	
a. Recruit students from communities that have been historically excluded from STEM fields.	Review national student data to use as a benchmark for SAFS student recruitment
b. Increase transparency and consistency in graduate student admissions.	Give process survey to newly admitted graduate students
c. Increase support for SAFS students from underrepresented groups by creating additional support structures and programs.	Conduct twice-annual surveys on belonging for students, conduct exit surveys with all departing or graduating students
Goal 2. Attract, retain, and support faculty, staff, and postdocs from diverse communities and backgrounds.	
a. Recruit faculty, staff, and postdocs from communities that have been historically excluded from STEM fields.	Review national faculty, staff, and postdoc data to use as a benchmark for SAFS recruitment
b. Increase transparency and consistency in hiring processes.	Give process survey to newly hired employees
c. Increase support for SAFS employees from underrepresented groups by creating additional support structures and programs.	Conduct twice-annual surveys on belonging for employees, conduct exit surveys with all departing employees
Goal 3. Develop community competency in knowledge and skills connected to equity and inclusion.	
a. Incorporate and value DEI skills as a necessary part of professional work and graduate professional training and education.	Create evaluation guides for all roles
b. Plan and implement professional development opportunities and incentives related to DEI fluency.	Annually review trainings offered and participation data, survey community on training needs
c. Cultivate an atmosphere that celebrates and supports diverse cultures, experiences, practices, and knowledge systems.	Conduct annual climate surveys

Goal 4. Implement best practices to create and maintain the safety, health, and wellbeing of members of SAFS.	
a. Incorporate the SAFS Code of Conduct into SAFS culture and practices.	Conduct annual climate surveys, update the Code of Conduct based on feedback
b. Improve safety practices in the field and lab.	Survey field station supervisors on policies and training practices, conduct “exit surveys” when members of SAFS return from field work
c. Increase awareness and transparency of reporting pathways for misconduct.	Review reporting data annually, release anonymized report to SAFS
d. Address harm via restorative, community-centered practices.	Establish a relationship with outside experts, designate leads within SAFS and provide training
Goal 5. Create and implement equitable practices with clear and consistent policy.	
a. Distribute information clearly and consistently across SAFS.	Establish a central hub for SAFS documents and data, regularly update information and improve navigation
b. Create feedback and accountability structures.	Create easily accessible documentation
c. Establish and/or clarify promotion/advancement processes.	Create easily accessible documentation for all faculty and staff roles
Goal 6. Establish and improve non-extractive relationships with Indigenous groups and communities of color where SAFS works and conducts research.	
a. Expand capacity to engage in culturally competent collaborative research.	Hold workshops with outside experts, gather information from PIs on community collaborations, survey collaborators where possible
b. Expand capacity to conduct outreach to local communities.	Establish connections with supporting organizations, review data on outreach activities annually
c. Collaborate with local scientists and community members in countries outside of the US.	Gather information from PIs on local/international collaborations, survey collaborators where possible

Documents from the Planning Process

Goals from the 2018–2021 SAFS DEI Strategic Plan and Notes on Progress

1. Recognize critically the value of diversity within the SAFS community, and increase the recruitment and retention of diverse students, staff and faculty.
2. Create a culturally fluent and safe work place environment.
3. Maximize student success in cultural fluency, communication, and leadership.
4. Create a website that mirrors the SAFS community.
5. Reinstate the diversity committee.
6. Develop mechanisms to effectively communicate internally and externally (with the College of the Environment and other UW units).

[The full text of the 2018–2021 SAFS DEI Strategic Plan can be found on the SAFS Sharepoint.](#)

NOTES: As a result of this plan, the following strategies were initiated to address these 6 goals:

- 1.d. Create best practices for support and advancement of staff, students and faculty.
- 2.c. Modify institutional culture towards transparency and inclusivity.
- 2.d. Increase safety (well-being and professionalism) in the workplace.
- 3.a. Plan and implement professional development opportunities and incentives related to cultural fluency.
- 6.b. Establish workflows for communication and collaboration with Dean's office personnel.

The following strategies are ongoing:

- 1.b. Develop community engagements amongst peer groups.
- 1.c. Create recruitment and hiring materials that value diversity.
- 2.b. Increase cultural awareness at the workplace.
- 4.a. Design a website that is inclusive and representative of the SAFS community.
- 6.a. Review and update existing communication processes.

The following strategies were completed:

- 1.a. Recognize the location of SAFS on the Salish Sea peoples' land.
- 2.a. Create a code of conduct that applies to all SAFS groups
- 2.e. Assess SAFS working climate.
- 5.a. Establish a diversity committee with representatives of all peer groups to steer actions related to diversity, equity and inclusion.

Excerpt from the 2021 SAFS DEI Assessment: “Recommendations” (November 2021)

- Continue to increase diversity in SAFS by allocating resources to advance diversity for administrators, staff, faculty, post-doctoral scholars and students
- Establish clearly defined and shared goals for DEI for administrators, staff, faculty, post-doctoral scholars and students, and monitor the extent to which these goals are being met on an annual basis
 - a. For example, delineation of the percentage of racial minorities, persons with disabilities etc. across students, faculty and staff groups
 - b. As part of these efforts, SAFS should also implement ongoing practices to assess effectiveness of programs designed to advance DEI
- Establish intentional recruitment practices to identify potential staff, faculty, post-doctoral scholar, and graduate student candidates from diverse communities
 - a. For example, review relevant national candidate data for respective roles and positions to use as a benchmark for what the SAFS recruitment pool should look like
 - i. If SAFS’s pool is narrower than the availability data suggests, additional outreach should be conducted
 - ii. Examining past applicants to assess if diverse candidates were overlooked, and discuss how this might have happened and how to avoid this in the future
- Offer specialized professional development and capacity building to persons in senior positions on how to improve equity and equal treatment across job positions
 - a. The training should be focused on raising the personal cultural competency of persons in supervisory or student advisory roles, as well as providing tools and resources to create an equitable workplace environment
 - b. Supervisors and advisors who work closely with students should also be offered professional development and capacity building to improve equitable supervising and advising practices
- Prioritize the development of a series of professional development learning opportunities and/or forums for students, staff, post-doctoral scholars and faculty to increase understanding and awareness of equity, diversity, inclusivity, discrimination, harassment and intimidation
 - a. These professional development learning opportunities and/or forums should be conducted consistently at all levels annually
 - b. Potential topics could include: racial and ethnic identity; gender, gender identity and gender expression; discrimination, unconscious and implicit bias; cultural competency; and interpersonal and power differential
 - c. These professional development learning opportunities and/or forums should be required/highly expected for all community members in order to ensure institutional engagement and greater accountability
- Expand awareness and understanding of the frequency and factors associated with perceived experiences, and/or observations of incidents related to discrimination and

harassment, that are occurring on the SAFS campus and take necessary steps to address these issues

- a. Issues can be addressed through Title IX/sexual misconduct awareness training and accountability
 - b. All members of the SAFS community should be reminded on a regular basis the reporting process of discrimination and harassment
 - c. Offer a transparent method to report discrimination within SAFS and continuously remind the community of the reporting process throughout the academic year
- Develop a process of thorough and ongoing review of SAFS policies that may reinforce forms of discrimination and systemic oppression
 - a. This process would allow SAFS to assess shared goals for DEI and monitor the extent to which these goals are being addressed in policy and practice

[The full text of the 2021 SAFS DEI Assessment report can be found on the SAFS Sharepoint.](#)

Excerpt from announcement: “Main Themes from Discussions of the Equity Audit” (December 2021)

After completing the Equity Audit in the Autumn 2021 quarter, members of the SAFS Equity & Inclusion Committee held peer group discussions where individuals could reflect on the findings: Do you feel your experiences were reflected in the assessment? What issues or actions are most important to you? What do you think SAFS should focus on going forward? The themes and suggestions for action that came from these discussions will guide our upcoming DEI initiatives, including the new SAFS DEI Strategic Plan. Three main areas for growth emerged from these discussions: communication, community, and consistency.

Almost universally, communication was named as an issue both within and between peer groups. The main exception seems to be grad students, who feel they communicate fairly well within their peer group. Impacts of poor or nonexistent communication affect community building and sense of belonging, collaboration, clarity and consistency of policy, accountability, access to resources and opportunities, etc.

Additionally, the general observation is that peer groups don't have strong cohesion and individuals feel like they lack community at SAFS. Faculty, staff, postdocs, and undergrad students feel disconnected from others in their peer group (the one exception again being grad students, who seem to feel more connected to each other). Regardless of peer group, people who hold non-dominant identities tend to feel a lack of belonging within both their peer group and SAFS more broadly.

Finally, it was pointed out by every peer group that there is huge variation across labs in terms of expectations, training, DEI work, clarity of policy, enforcement of policy, physical and emotional safety, supervisory relationships, etc. One's experience in SAFS is greatly determined by the lab environment one is a part of. People who are not connected to a lab (undergrads, for example) feel that joining a lab is necessary for finding community or accessing DEI training. The

inconsistency in policy and experience limits the work SAFS does and our ability to meet our institutional goals.

These issues affect everyone at SAFS, regardless of identity or access to institutional power. However, it is critical to understand that members of our community who have less institutional power and/or belong to groups that are systemically underrepresented in STEM are most negatively impacted by these dynamics. For example, a failure in communication that delays the start of a project may be inconvenient to tenured faculty with a stable income, but that same delay could be catastrophic for a graduate student on a strict timeline, an immigrant who is dependent on visa sponsorship, or someone without financial support who will only get paid once the project starts.

As we continue the work to advance equity at SAFS, it is imperative that we center our work on supporting and uplifting the members of our community with the least privilege and power. This is the way to create the greatest impact both for individuals and for the School as a whole.

[The full text of this announcement can be found on the SAFS Sharepoint.](#)

Presentation: “What’s happening with the Equity Audit & DEI Plan?” (February 2022)

[The slide deck for this presentation can be found on the SAFS Sharepoint.](#)

Goals from the 2022–2026 UW Diversity Blueprint (March 2022)

1. Cultivate an accessible, inclusive, and equitable climate
2. Attract, retain, and graduate a diverse and excellent student body
3. Attract and retain diverse academic personnel
4. Attract and retain diverse staff
5. Develop place-based education and engagement to advance access, inclusion, and equity
6. Improve accountability and transparency at all levels

[The full text of the 2022–2026 UW Diversity Blueprint can be found on the UW website.](#)

Email from the Diversity Specialist: “SAFS DEI Strategic Plan Update” (August 2022)

Hello SAFS, I wanted to send out a quick update on where we are with the SAFS DEI Strategic Plan. Thank you to everyone who left comments on the first draft: faculty, staff, postdocs, and grad students all shared their feedback. Your questions, suggestions, and requests for clarification were very useful! Based on the comments we received, we have:

- Clarified several terms/concepts that readers were unfamiliar with (e.g., restorative practices, 360 feedback)
- Changed some imprecise wording (e.g., “diverse students” to “students from diverse communities”)
- Included new wording and some whole new action steps to reflect things that were missing (e.g., accessibility in fieldwork)
- Revised sections that were based on misunderstandings of how some processes work (e.g., hiring)
- Made more explicit connections to the recommendations we received as part of last year's equity audit

In addition, it was very helpful to know where some of this work is already being done by members of SAFS. We’ve adjusted some language to reflect that some action steps are already in progress. Also, I'll likely come knocking on your door later this year to learn more about what you/your lab has been doing to advance equitable practices and how we can build off of that.

Finally, we received lots of questions and suggestions that will help us with implementation. Since the strategic plan is meant to be such a high level document, setting a direction for SAFS to go in, it's not feasible at this point to dig into all of the details that are necessary for putting ideas into action. After the plan is finalized, though, we will start to identify other UW units who are doing some of the work we want to engage in, find training opportunities, and sort out logistics for tracking all of the ambitious things we want to do.

Thank you again for your thoughtful questions and suggestions. Your input as members of SAFS is instrumental to this work, and there will be plenty of opportunities to continue getting involved as this process creeps forward.

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