

SAFS Diversity Specialist Annual Report

2019-2020 Academic Year

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The Diversity Specialist work plan included activities that extended through five goals of the SAFS DEI Strategic Plan 2018-2020:

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.
6. Develop mechanisms to effectively communicate internally and externally (with the College of the Environment and other UW units).

The initiatives listed in this report were developed and implemented with an equity lens, and with the aim of enhancing the working environment of all peer groups at SAFS.

1. DEI Strategic Plan

The SAFS [DEI Strategic Plan 2018-2020](#) was written with the [2017-2021 UW Blueprint](#) in mind and aligned to the SAFS 2017 academic plan. The plan stresses the importance of creating a sense of community and inclusion for all peer groups.

The plan was sent to all SAFS listservs, and it is easily accessible and public on the [SAFS DEI page](#).

2. Staff and Postdoc Lunches

Together with staff (Lisa Cantore) and postdoc volunteers (Staci Amburgey and Claudio Castillo), organized the Autumn quarter postdoc and staff lunch. The lunch was in the format of a potluck, where about 30 attendees (administrative and research staff, and postdocs) shared and voted for their favorite savory and dessert dishes. The winners were given surprise prizes.

For the Winter quarter, Jan Ohlberger, Jennifer Gosselin, Cheryl Barnes, and Joana Dias joined the organizing team of Lisa Cantore and Isadora Jimenez Hidalgo. But due to COVID-19 the lunch had to be cancelled, and since the pandemic continued no Spring quarter lunch was scheduled.

3. SAFS DEI Library

During the Autumn quarter a [DEI library](#) was established; it has 19 titles divided in six categories:

1. Race
2. Bias and Stereotypes
3. Oppression
4. Native American
5. Workplace
6. Science

The books are checked out for one quarter with the option of renewing them for an additional quarter, this is coordinated with the Diversity Specialist.

Any books borrowed from the SAFS DEI library or for the SAFS Book Series are registered on an Excel spreadsheet.

4. SAFS Book Series

The SAFS Book Series was implemented to broaden SAFS members cultural fluency, and to have conversations about books that challenge our individual perspective and mindset. For this initiative to be successful, it was necessary to have some books available for people to borrow. Each quarter five books of the same title were bought and made available to SAFS by emailing all listservs.

Prior to COVID-19, interested readers contacted the Diversity Specialist to coordinate the check out and return books. After COVID-19, the books were mailed to the reader's home.

The titles read during the 2019-2020 academic year were:

- Autumn quarter - *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo.
- Winter quarter - *Blindspot* by Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald.
- Spring quarter - *Rage Becomes Her* by Soraya Chemaly.
- Summer quarter – *Native Seattle* by Coll Thrush.

The SAFS Book Series was very well received by the community, the comments in Appendix 1 highlight the participants feedback and opinions.

A summary from the Autumn, Winter and Spring books was sent to all SAFS listservs, see Appendix 2.

5. Mental Health during GSS

Coordinated one of the two workshops during the GSS 30th Anniversary. Andrea Salazar-Nuñez from UW Counseling Center facilitated the workshop on mental health and sense of belonging.

6. Teachers Workshop

The [SeaDoc Society](#) and [Students Explore Aquatic Sciences](#) (SEAS) hosted a [hands-on educators workshop](#). Thirty-seven K-12 teachers and informal educators from the greater Seattle area spent their Saturday learning about the Salish Sea while incorporating the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Various organizations participated in the resource fair:

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),
- [Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team \(COASST\)](#),
- [Washington Sea Grant](#),
- [Students Explore Aquatic Sciences \(SEAS\)](#), and
- the [Burke Museum Ichthyology Collection](#).

7. SAFS Chitchat

To continue fostering a sense of community a Pechakucha style gathering was organized together with Cheryl Barnes (postdoc) and Samantha Scherer (staff). The objective of the Chitchat was to learn more about SAFS members personal interests and background. The first ever SAFS Chitchat was in the Winter quarter. Mark Sorel, Amy Fox, Samantha Scherer and Nicole Baker inaugurated the event.

A second SAFS Chitchat was planned but had to be cancelled due to COVID-19.

8. Lightning Talk

As part of the prospective student days, gave the longest lightning talk named “The Other Side of SAFS.” The talk covered [Students Explore Aquatic Sciences](#) (SEAS), SAFS DEI efforts, and the work and life of staff and postdocs.

9. UW Diversity Seed Grant – workshop to plan a Professional Development for Postdocs and Graduate Students

In collaboration with the SAFS Equity and Inclusion Committee a [UW Diversity Seed Grant](#) proposal was submitted. The proposal is for a two-day workshop to create a framework for a professional development certificate for postdocs and graduate students. See [item four in section 2.4 on the E&I Committee’s Annual Report 2019-2020](#).

10. BIPOC Circle

A second Circle for people that identify as Black and Indigenous and other People of Color (BIPOC) took place during the summer. This circle created a space for conversation. It was attended mostly by students but it was opened to any peer group, staff, postdocs or faculty. The meeting information was public and advertised widely.

11. Land Acknowledgement

A guide was written to honor Indigenous Peoples as wardens of a geographic area, to recognize their enduring relationship with their traditional lands, and to raise awareness of the colonial history of the land where the City of Seattle, and the University of Washington are located. It also provides facilitative instructions on how to craft an attentive land acknowledgement.

The guide includes a land acknowledgment specific for SAFS. This acknowledgment is intended to be used as an opening remark in any SAFS events.

A first review of the guide was done by SAFS E&I committee's co-chairs Jennifer Gosselin and Eleni Petrou. It was also reviewed by Lisaaksiichaa Ross Braine UW tribal liaison.

The guide was reviewed a second time by SAFS E&I committee's co-chairs Jennifer Gosselin and Eleni Petrou, and SAFS E&I committee graduate student representative Mark Sorel. Two more reviews are needed by the E&I SAFS committee, and by Lisaaksiichaa Ross Braine UW tribal liaison, before making it available to the SAFS community in the SAFS intranet. Once reviewed and approved the land acknowledgment for SAFS could be public on the SAFS website.

12. CAMP

During the Summer quarter, in collaboration with Corinne Klohmann, Miranda Roethler, Tanya Brown, and Helena McMonagle designed on-line activities for the Dare to Dream Science Academy part of the College Access Migrant Program (CAMP).

SAFS members taught and answered questions related to fisheries and marine life, from high school and college students participating in the Science Academy. The event was bilingual in Spanish and English.

13. External Consultant Proposal

Together with Staci Amburgey, Lisa Cantore, Natalie Lowell and Ashley Townes, prepared a proposal to have an external consultant audit SAFS with the aim of improving the working climate at the School. The proposal was distributed among all listservs in late August 2020.

14. Other

- The Diversity Specialist offered support to the SAFS community in various ways during the academic year:
- Met with graduate students to support their work and helped them find resources relevant to DEI.
- Met with graduate students to obtain feedback on onboarding materials. Shared this information with graduate student advisor.

- Met with postdoctoral researchers to assist them with course content, outreach opportunities or DEI topics.
- Distribute and communicate various DEI related events happening at UW, CoEnv and elsewhere, in person or online.
- Populated the SAFS intranet diversity page with relevant resource documents, and included DEI events on the SAFS calendar.

15. E&I Committee

The Diversity Specialist worked closely with the E&I committee on:

- DEI Seminar with Ivan Arismendi.
- Hiring tool – Next steps: Ebonee Anderson from UW Total talent management, to give a presentation on hiring processes, and Chad Allen and Simone Willynck to provide best practices training on faculty diversity, search committee processes, bias training, and more.
- Listening sessions
- SAFS Competencies – not included in the report but are in review by the curriculum committee. Juno O’Neil, Mark Sorel, and Kimberly Yazzie are part of the working group. The competencies are based on the undergrad and grad information. We tried to make them more accessible by splitting them in categories and add some DEI components.

The overarching goal was to modify them through a DEI lens and align them to the Strategic plan in terms of broadening student recruitment.

Refer to the [SAFS E&I committee’s annual report](#), section 2.4.

Appendix 1

Book Series Comments

Autumn quarter: *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo

"I loved that the book broke down common phrases that surface when discussing and combating racism, like "I don't see race" or "It has nothing to do with race." I also liked that the author broke down day-to-day interactions and demonstrated that our individual perspectives shape our experiences and interactions with others. Rather than reacting in angry or accusing others of being oversensitive, we should be curious of others feelings and recognize that a negative reaction may indicate our lack of knowledge or understanding. "

Graduate student

"I thought the book was invaluable because it stretched my perspective while also giving me a path forward. I think it's important to make time & space for these kinds of learning experiences to grow and improve as a human as well as scientist while in grad school."

Graduate student

*"I just finished reading *White Fragility* and it was mindset-altering. I really appreciate the reading list and discussion groups even if I can't quite keep up and attend."*

Faculty

"I think the thing that stuck out for me was that saying you are race blind or unaware of race is actually super harmful to people of color."

Faculty

Spring quarter *Rage Becomes Her* by Soraya Chemaly

"...I had more energy and a brighter outlook the day after the seminar, and attribute it to the discussion. So I think topics like this, and white fragility, need to be discussed at least yearly and in different ways. For me, it is easier to have the discussion through a book seminar. But maybe a follow up discussion to a speaker like Ivan Arismendi or a video could work."

"Also, from the book seminar it is clearer to me why women aren't equal to men in fisheries. And it is clear there is a problem, even at a great place like SAFS. For productivity and collaboration improvements, the UW leadership needs to be aware of professional behaviors

that contribute to the inequality —rage ok for males but not females and tearing people down instead of building them up.”

Anonymous

“I thought this discussion was SUPER valuable and fortifying... I really enjoyed our discussion about "where to go from here." I like the idea of some kind of "mini emotional awareness curriculum" "or "emotional awareness contract" for labs.”

Anonymous

“It was a GREAT book and I am really glad I had the opportunity to read it with this group. Thank you so much for organizing the meetings! And looking forward to our next book.”

Anonymous

“I'm really grateful for the library you put together and this reading group!”

Anonymous

“Last week's talk was wonderful and I'm really grateful to everyone for sharing their personal stories.

It helps to see that we've all struggled with similar situations details aside, and that it's all a work in progress, from acknowledging the feelings to figuring out how to manage them in the best possible way.”

Anonymous

Appendix 2.

Book Series Summary

I want to thank everyone for participating in the book series during this academic year. We kick-off the book series in the Autumn quarter with *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo. We read *Blindspot* by Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald during the Winter quarter and ended with *Rage Becomes Her* by Soraya Chemaly this Spring quarter.

Our conversations on the books covered multiple topics that involved race, bias and gender:

- o Microaggressions and their impact on people,
- o Messages that reinforce stereotypes,
- o Discrimination that affect people differently based on their race and gender,
- o Unconscious bias towards people that differ from our group traits,
- o How society preserves those bias,
- o Gender roles and power dynamics,
- o Anger, gender and well-being,
- o People's perception of attributes based on gender.

The book discussions not only served as a forum to share experiences and perspectives, and express opinions but also as a space to share resources. Some of these resources are available to borrow at the SAFS Equity and Inclusion Library.

The list of resources cited in the book sections: Resources for Continuing Education in *White Fragility*, and Note on Sources in *Rage Becomes Her* are attached. Some videos suggested by participants are listed below.

Videos

- o [PBS Amanpour and Co](#) - Robin DiAngelo on White Fragility
- o [Mahzarin Banaji](#) – Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People
- o [Soraya Chemaly TED talk](#) on Rage Becomes Her

Strong women

- o Nikki Giovanni and James Baldwin, [a conversation](#)

Reading Guides

- [White Fragility](#)
- [Blindspot](#)
- [Rage Becomes Her](#)

At the last book discussion we decided to read *Native Seattle* by Coll Thrush during the Summer quarter.

Rage Becomes Her by Soraya Chemaly

Resources listed on **Notes of Sources**

- The Cultural Politics of Emotion by Sara Ahmed
- Gender, Emotion , and the Family by Leslie Brody
- The Anger Advantage: The Surprising Benefits of Anger and How It Can Change a Woman's Life by Deborah Cox, Karin H. Bruckner and Sally D. Stabb
- Anger: The Misunderstood Emotion by Carol Tavris

In Political theory

- Andrea Miller and Eugene Borgida's academic work, The Separate Spheres Model of Gendered Inequality
- Raised to Rage by Michael A. Milburn and Sheree D. Conrad