



DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE
2022-23 Institutional Report





LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the landscape for diversity, equity, and inclusion became more complex locally, regionally, and nationally. In response to concerns expressed by our faculty, staff, and students regarding local events, our campus engaged in crucial and long overdue discussions on issues of race, gender, bias, and safety. These conversations, complemented by a series of campus events centered on diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, as well as purposeful Restorative Practice workshops, amplified previously marginalized voices and fostered meaningful connections across all areas of campus.

Ongoing assaults on regional and national diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in higher education continue, with some schools dismantling programs and relocating staff from their DEI roles. In the state of South Carolina, our state public institutions are threatened by reduced funding if they continue their efforts in these areas. The decision by the Supreme Court to end race-based admissions in higher education also raised questions about how to create equitable pathways to participate in the building of a campus community that ensures diverse perspectives and experiences are represented and valued. The complex landscape of our state politics has created a more challenging environment than just a few years ago.

To ensure a comprehensive and unified approach toward DEI on campus, a dedicated cohort was established: Dr. Lisa Knight and Robyn Andrews, co-chairs of the DEI Committee, along with Dr. Franklin Ellis, Associate Dean and Director of the Center for Inclusive Communities, and Dr. Cynthia King, Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence serve as leads in a new Shared Equity Leadership Team.

The DEI Committee added a new sub-committee: Disability & Accessibility, chaired by Judy Bagley [SOAR].

The DEI Committee consists of seven sub-committees comprised of 53 dedicated faculty, staff, and students. Together, they continue to move forward the important work of advancing our institution’s goals to foster a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable community where everyone feels a genuine sense of belonging and that they matter. This dedication and persistence are more important now than ever in the face of an ever-changing cultural and political landscape that has not been supportive of the very efforts for which this committee was formed.

As we confront the uncertainties surrounding diversity efforts in higher education, we remain committed to fostering an inclusive campus community, engaging in open and honest dialogue, continuously advocating the value and benefits of diversity for everyone, and creating a welcoming environment where our students, faculty and staff can be their authentic selves and know that they belong at Furman.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging – these aren’t merely words - they embody concepts of listening empathetically, reflection, discussion and connection.

Lastly, President Davis directed the shared DEI leadership cohort to continue the work of defining belonging at Furman. Through multiple campus conversations with faculty and staff, a theme and definition emerged:

“At Furman, we aim to value the multiple ways of forming and expressing authentic selves. We co-create a personal sense of belonging when each individual is actively engaged in listening, understanding, accepting, respecting, caring and supporting every member of our community.”

It is this aspirational goal that will sustain us as we move through uncertain and uncharted times in this academic year and beyond.

Sincerely,

Robyn Andrews, *staff co-chair*

Lisa I. Knight, *faculty co-chair*

This report attempts to provide a snapshot of the gains made across campus and beyond related to diversity, equity and inclusion. It is not an exhaustive list.



AWARDS & GRANTS

Charge:

Manage selection process of committee's awards and grants applications. Create timeline of due dates, awards, and selection and announcement processes.

Chair:

Andrew Womack

Committee:

Jordan Bounds; Caroline Davis; Megan Dodgens; Courtney Firman-Watkins

Initiatives:

- Funded grant applications from the Library, Pride Alliance, Alumni office, among others, with a focus on groups identified as most marginalized in the Campus Climate Survey.
- Reviewed nominations and selected recipients for the faculty, staff and student DEI awards.
- Created process to expand grant application window to include Fall semester.
- Created a formal rubric for assessment of grant applications, implemented Fall, 2023.
- Began creating a process to name the Staff Meritorious Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Award, to include a formal, campus-wide call for nominations.
- Revised grant application process to include a requirement for a faculty or staff mentor for student-proposed grant applications to improve quality of student applications and assist students with navigation of university procedures.
- After solicitation of nominations, the subcommittee selected the 2022-2023 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Awards. The award recipients demonstrate an emerging or sustained commitment to advancing Furman's value of diversity, inclusion, and multiculturalism.
- The Dr. Cherie Maiden Invitational Award for faculty was awarded to Dr. Savita Nair (Gordan Poteat Professor of Asian Studies and History and Director of the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program).
- The Staff Meritorious Award for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion was awarded to Jocelyn Boulware-Bruce, Assistant Director in the Center for Inclusive Communities (CIC).
- The Rosa Bodkin Award for students was awarded to Kevin Carberry '24.



President Elizabeth Davis with award recipients Savita Nair and Jocelyn Boulware Bruce. Kevin Carberry'23.

Future Goals:

- Apply rubric to award grants; perhaps create a more formal process for assessing awards applications.
- Continue process to name the Staff Meritorious Award for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.



DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Charge:

Help ensure Furman University is a fully accessible and inclusive environment, where disability is recognized as an important aspect of diversity that is integral to the campus community and society. This subcommittee will strive to:

- Create an inclusive disability culture.
- Increase awareness of barriers to access and inclusion for people with disabilities.
- Advocate for training opportunities and policy improvements focusing on disability and accessibility.

Chair:

Judy Bagley

Committee:

Adam Barton, Allison Diaz, Ryan Fisher, Sarah Gonzales, Melissa Nichols, Scott Salzman, Cate Simkins, Allison Trainer

Initiatives:

- Provided accessible shuttle on campus; students have reported improvement.
- Improved focus on physical accessibility with current and upcoming projects.
- Provided Inclusive Campus Series workshops – Digital Accessibility, focusing on making Microsoft Office documents more accessible.
- Developed and offered an Intergroup Dialogue course on disability.

Future Goals:

- Propose and offer a CLP with student group/ DEI Committee.
- Offer a Student Awareness on Access-Orientation, which would include allow sensory dining hall lunch.
- Develop a University Communications Digital Marketing Seminar on accessibility.
- Initiate a monthly accessibility campaign “tip.”
- Review Purchasing Policy with campus stakeholders.
- Monitor downtime of campus elevators.
- Promote availability of committee as an “Advisory Resource” for questions or planning related to disability and accessibility.





EDUCATION & TRAINING

Charge:

Collaborate with campus partners to develop and institutionalize a DEI education and training program for the campus community. Develop a website to highlight educational resources on DEI provided by Furman. Find and assess an online DEI programming similar to annual Title IX for the entire campus. Develop and provide educational training for faculty/staff DEI representatives and become the contact for DEI training.

Chair:

Kate Kaup

Committee:

Karen Allen, Jocelyn Boulware Bruce, Andy Coe, Kaniqua Robinson, Randy Umstead

Initiatives:

- Tested narrowing the DEI-ET committee's work to faculty programming and relegating staff education and training to the SRAT Subcommittee, with DEI-ET support as requested.
- Reviewed several online training modules July-September, finding the GetInclusive series (already available to the university community) to be high quality and useful.
- Compiled and uploaded DEI-related educational workshops and resources on the Faculty and Staff Resources webpage. The site includes links to Faculty Development Center resources, SOAR, and CREATE conversations as well as lists of whom to contact with DEI-related questions and concerns, including DEI Departmental Representatives.
- Conducted eight departmental Inclusive Search Workshops.

Future Goals:

- Develop an evaluation rubric for Inclusive Search Workshops.
- Work with SRAT to discuss developing Inclusive Search Workshops for Staff hiring.
- Partner with University Communications on the best placement of DEI-related resources on the website.



First class of the Master of Arts in advocacy and equity studies



FACULTY INCLUSION, RETENTION & MENTORING (FIRM)

Charge:

Assess faculty retention issues. Develop recommendations for promoting an inclusive culture that fosters the retention and thriving of faculty from historically underrepresented groups. Along with other faculty across campus, contribute to interviewing on-campus candidates and organize an annual gathering of new hires and interviewees. Other work as the subcommittee sees fit.

Chair(s):

Onarae Rice and Mike Svec

Committee:

Mary Fairbairn, Mai Nou Xiong, Nader Hakim, Jessica Hennessey

Initiatives:

- Identified resources for best practices to assist in improving transparency, mentoring and communication of tenure and promotion criteria and expectations.
- Based on Climate Survey results, determined there is a need to develop an annual survey for faculty and develop potential questions for entrance/exit/milestone interviews.
- Created surveys and interview questions for key milestones to gather data on potential successful practices and challenges.
- Created a document Promotion and Tenure Best Practices to help communicate expectations at key milestones in the promotion and tenure process.

Future Goals:

- Engage with department DEI representatives and offer feedback on the department promotion and tenure practices documents.
- Create a dashboard for monitoring faculty retention.
- Compile historic information on previous mentoring and recruitment efforts and determine which practices were impactful and what has happened to those efforts.
- Explore the possibility of informal programming outside of affinity groups and more formal faculty social gatherings.
- Finalize surveys and interview questions for key milestones to gather data on potential successful practices and challenges. Partner with HR and/or Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence to administer these surveys.





INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Charge:

Advise on matters pertaining to internationalization and global issues affecting the Furman community, including, but not limited to, policy development and revision, recruitment, multicultural training and education for faculty and staff. Collaborate with other entities on campus, such as the Rinker Center and Center for Inclusive Communities to supplement their work on behalf of campus internationalization.

Identify opportunities to connect diversity-rich and global experiences with existing or new courses which prepare students to live, work and contribute in a diverse globally connected world. Serve as a bridge to engage the Furman community with the broader Greenville International network. Explore opportunities for official recognition of affinity groups within employee ranks as well as web presence. Other work as the sub-committees see fit.

Chair:

Nadia Kanagawa

Committee:

Alex Akulli, Candice Chan, Nancy Georgiev, Carole Salmon, Gabby Silva

Students: Laura Pallas-Perez, Amelia Zhang

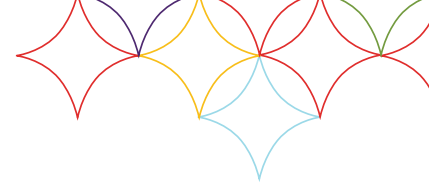
Initiatives:

- Created and updated International Affairs subcommittee webpage, including committee information, an FAQ for new international faculty, and basic statistics on international faculty and staff represented on campus.
- Partnered with university counsel Meredith Green to ensure existing guidance on incoming international faculty is appropriately shared with department chairs.
- Alex Akulli created a monthly birthday celebration for international students, and the committee agreed to submit a proposal for birthday gifts (a book) from the committee.

Future Goals:

- Offer a Lunch & Learn for international faculty and staff in consultation with Ben Haywood of the Faculty Development Center on how best to integrate the committee into new faculty orientation.
- Maintain the FAQ for international faculty on our website.
- Develop a training program for department chairs and/or the Faculty Status Committee on the particular challenges faced by international faculty (ex. student evaluations, funding opportunities, stress of immigration procedures).
- Work with Cynthia King, Associate Dean of DEIE, and Human Resources to update employee database and improve the quality of the data we have on international faculty & staff.





LGBTQ+ AFFAIRS

Charge:

Advise on matters pertaining to LGBTQ+ issues, including, but not limited to, policy development and revision, recruitment, and employee education. Promote inclusion of current scholarship on LGBTQ+ issues in curricular and co-curricular offerings. Explore opportunities to enhance the visibility of Furman’s LGBTQ+ community, including alumni. Other work as the subcommittee sees fit.

Chair(s):

Adi Dubash and Katlyn Bagley-Sepsey)

Committee:

Chad Boltz, Kevin Carberry, KC Cox, Alex Francis-Ratte, Kelsey Hample, Scott Henderson

Initiatives:

- Partnered with Student Housing and the Center for Inclusive Communities to foster inclusion and belonging for LGBTQ+ students.
- Developed a relationship with Upstate SC LGBT Chamber of Commerce and began conversations about employment and internship opportunities for LGBTQ+ students.
- Enhanced Pride visibility across campus.
- Worked with University Communications to select a brand-standard “Furman Pride” graphic that can be widely distributed and used on different forms of media.
- Continued discussion with various campus partners regarding new housing initiatives designed to improve gender inclusive and LGBTQ+ housing policies, including creating a student housing survey to collect feedback on the LGBTQ+ student housing experience.
- Met with Facilities to discuss signage for new all gender restrooms.
- Created mailing lists for LGBTQIA+ identifying faculty/staff and LGBTQ+ Allies on campus to promote LGBTQ+ events and foster community and support for LGBTQ+ campus members.
- Initiated social gatherings to foster community for LGBTQ+ faculty and staff on campus.
- Created, developed, and implemented Furman Stands with Pride Mondays.
- Designed and produced a new LGBTQ+ t-shirt campaign aimed at enhancing LGBTQ+ visibility across campus.



Future Goals:

- Distribute student housing survey, collect feedback and generate a report on the LGBTQ+ student housing experience.
- Update Out at Furman webpage to include new information and resources as well as new LGBTQ+ faculty/staff members.
- Develop and propose a new LGBTQ+ related engaged learning/living community.
- Develop and propose a new LGBTQ+ Pathways affinity group.
- Audit and create a list of single use/all gender restrooms on campus.
- Design and implement a new Furman LGBTQ+ Ambassador program, which will include selection of one faculty, staff, and student LGBTQ+ campus member who will serve as a point of contact and liaison to help answer questions for incoming students and new faculty/staff hires.
- Develop a regular sequence of social gatherings for LGBTQ+ faculty and staff to foster a sense of belonging for current campus members.
- Initiate a review of the assessment criteria provided by Campus Pride Index to identify short-term and long-term goals to enhance LGBTQ+ inclusion on campus.
- Work with Upstate SC LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce on improvement to staff procurement strategies.
- Facilitate and sponsor plans for a LGBTQ+ Gala developed by Furman Pride Alliance.

STAFF RECRUITMENT, ADVANCEMENT AND TRAINING (SRAT)

Charge:

Partner with Human Resources and other stakeholders to improve Staff experiences on campus

Chair:

Steve Hairston (2022); Bonnie Johnson (2023)

Committee:

Tina Abbott, Judy Bagley, Erika Calle-Tamayo, Rob Carson, Kendall Gallagher, Caitlynn Goodlett, Danielle Hernandez, Rod Kelley, Jeff Parry

Initiatives:

- Partner with Human Resources to review and contribute to New Hire Onboarding Orientation – created Onboarding Campus Culture DEI Powerpoint slides: New Hire Orientation Experience.
- Contributed to the collation of existing campus DEI resources – online and in-person.
- Assist Staff Advisory Council during event planning phase(s) by reviewing plans through a DEI Lens.
- Assist with reviewing incorporating DEI component into Staff annual performance reviews.

Future Goals:

- Collaborate with DEI Committee to implement Staff DEI Representatives.
- Partner with Human Resources, Chair of Education & Training sub-committee and Staff AC Chair to create and facilitate training/workshops for Hiring Managers on Inclusive Approach to Building Equitable Hiring Practices.
- Combine efforts with HR to develop DEIB Campus Culture Promotional Staff Video.
- Collaborate with Education & Training sub-committee to develop a strategic plan for Inclusive Training for Staff
- Develop a series of 1-minute videos featuring DEIB Leaders at Furman University.
- Add Subcommittee pictures and mission(s) to the Onboarding New Hire Orientation Presentation and Furman University DEI Website.



SHORT LIST OF CONTACT INFORMATION

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An organizational chart of the DEI Committee and their network of campus partners can be found here: [furman.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2021/09/DEI-Committee-2021-22-org-1.pdf](https://www.furman.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2021/09/DEI-Committee-2021-22-org-1.pdf)



The above report attempted to provide a snapshot of the gains made across campus within the scope of the diversity, equity and inclusion committee's work. Initiatives took a collaborative approach and involved many constituents. It is not an exhaustive list, despite best efforts.