

Charge Statement

Committee charge. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee will promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Department of Biology at the University of Kentucky. This will be achieved in two ways: (1) through direct efforts of the DEI committee and (2) through recommendations for best practices to department administration and department committees. Specifics within each area are listed below. Furthermore, to aid in promoting recommendations for best practices within the department, at the start of each semester the DEI committee will meet with the executive committee to identify common areas to focus on in the department.

Areas the committee will be responsible for:

- Develop Biology Department DEI plan with the goal to support the success of and create a welcoming environment for all people (undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral students, staff, and faculty) in the department. Work to implement the plan and reassess the plan and reevaluate priorities on a yearly basis.
- Organize events--such as speakers, workshops, lunch and learns, journal clubs, courses, and social gatherings--related to these goals. Welcome honest and open discussions, share stories, and encourage feedback on diversity issues.
- When necessary, review and propose changes to policies and practices to enable equity, diversity and inclusion for groups that have been historically excluded.
- Developing zero-tolerance, anti-racism policies and putting procedures in place that effectively handle complaints about racism and race-related aggression. Creating a reporting system for all department members and space to have conversations about racially charged incidents. Providing support for the recipient of the bias and consequences for the person(s) responsible.
- Maintaining department DEI website.
- Nominating students and faculty for DEI-related awards.
- Collecting climate surveys (faculty, staff, postdocs, graduate and undergraduate students) every 2-3 years to determine progress and areas that need improvement.
- Work with campus organizations (such as LSAMP) that support undergraduate and graduate students who are underrepresented, first-generation, non-traditional, or disabled.
- Present DEI updates at faculty meeting.
- Create a list of and coordinate with authoritative bodies on campus related to diversity, equity, and inclusivity, and clarify the responsibilities, powers, and duties of each.

Areas the committee will make recommendations and advice on best practices to:

- Ensure diversity within the seminar series.
- Ensure diverse representation on department committees.
- Ensure a diverse pool of candidates within faculty searches.
- Ensure a holistic review of graduate applications (not just relying on GRE, GPA, and reputation of prior institutions).
- Ensure a diverse pool of graduate applications via outreach at local universities and HBCUs.
- Ensure DEI efforts are adequately accounted for in FMER scores.
- Ensure that TCE scores of faculty of color and other underrepresented groups, particularly for those faculty teaching large classes where they cannot form a rapport with students, are assessed with student biases in mind during FMER and other reviews of faculty performance.
- Ensure appropriate mentoring of junior faculty and lecturers.

- Ensure major advisors are competent in mentoring students from minority groups.
- Ensure diversity in the to-be formed BUSA (Biology Undergraduate Student Association).
- Ensure diversity in peer mentors working in the Biology Learning Center.
- Support the development of programs for targeted mentoring for undergraduate students.
- Support faculty in creating equity learning objectives on department syllabi and helping with anti-discrimination language for department syllabi.
- Support faculty to develop courses for the ethnicity/race core requirement.