



CAMPUS CLIMATE PROGRESS REPORT – FALL 2021



UW–Madison is committed to creating an inclusive environment that enables all students, faculty, and staff to thrive. Individuals and groups from across campus have embraced this challenge and devoted significant time and energy to moving the campus forward. These efforts build on the campus [Diversity Framework](#) and its implementation plan, [R.E.E.L. Change](#).

DIVERSITY FRAMEWORK GOALS

Goal 1: Promote shared values of diversity and inclusion.

Goal 2: Improve coordination of campus diversity planning.


Goal 3: Engage the campus leadership for diversity and inclusion.

Goal 4: Improve institutional access through effective recruitment of diverse students, faculty, staff and through effective relationship building with the wider community.

Goal 5: Improve institutional success through improved retention.

NEW CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER NAMED: [LaVar Charleston](#) is UW–Madison’s new chief diversity officer, also holding the titles of deputy vice chancellor for diversity and inclusion, vice provost, and Elzie Higginbottom Director of the [Division of Diversity, Equity and Educational Achievement](#) (DDEEA). In his new position, Charleston will provide overall leadership for the university’s efforts to create a diverse, inclusive, and successful learning and work environment for all students, faculty, staff, alumni, and others who partner with the university. As associate dean for equity, diversity, and inclusion at UW–Madison’s School of Education, Charleston provided leadership to faculty, staff, and students in developing and implementing strategic initiatives that promoted the School of Education and UW–Madison’s mission for diversity, equity, and inclusion. He also serves as a clinical professor of higher education in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis. Charleston earned a master’s degree and a Ph.D. from the department in 2007 and 2010, respectively. He came to UW–Madison in 2005 and has a long affiliation with the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, where he helped found Wisconsin’s Equity and Inclusion Laboratory (Wei LAB) and held several leadership positions. His research focuses on diversity, access and inclusion within the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. He will partner with schools, colleges and other administrative units across campus while overseeing the units that comprise the DDEEA.

Goals One, Two, Three, Four and Five



The **2021 DIVERSITY FORUM**, “[Rising Above and Reshaping our World in the Image of Justice](#),” will be held Nov. 2–3 as a hybrid in-person and virtual conference. The Diversity Forum is the University of Wisconsin–Madison’s premiere two-day conference focused on updating, educating, and activating attendees on the most pressing issues of the day. [Dr. Russell Jeung](#), a professor of Asian American Studies at San Francisco State University and co-founder of the [Stop AAPI Hate](#) reporting center, will provide the Day 1 keynote address. A highly respected sociologist, Dr. Jeung has emerged as a powerful advocate and voice in the media for revealing and countering racism, xenophobia and hate directed at people of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) descent during COVID-19 in the United States. [Steven Canals](#), co-creator and executive producer of the celebrated FX television series “[Pose](#),” will provide the keynote address on Day 2 of the Diversity Forum. His talk will address the importance of centering intersectional stories in the LGBTQ+ community and will be followed by a student panel discussing the show’s significance for Black, Latinx, and other LGBTQ+ students on campus.

Goals One, Two, and Three

NEW DEI PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNIT: DDEEA is launching a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Education and Professional Development unit for UW-Madison faculty, staff, and graduate student employees. The new unit will work with campus stakeholders to offer diversity programming on issues such as recognizing and reducing implicit bias, preventing microaggressions, and engaging across difference. The search for a director is underway with an anticipated fall start date, and the unit will also include an Education Specialist who will develop professional development opportunities for graduate students.

Goals One, Two, Three and Five

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FACULTY AND STAFF: The Campus Committee on Diversity Education and Training formed in fall 2020 with a charge to expand faculty and staff learning around our shared values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The committee proposed an outline and platform for broader integration and expansion of diversity-related professional development. This fall, the Offices of the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion, Provost, and Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration will partner to implement foundational and advanced learning opportunities for faculty and staff to deepen personal engagement with diversity and build an inclusive campus community. Through behavioral, affective, and cognitive learning modules, campus faculty and staff will explore inclusive communication, the influence of unconscious bias, and benefits of engaging diversity.


Goals One, Two, Three and Five

TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM: TOP began in [2018](#) as a component of the broader [Faculty Diversity Initiative](#), which provides departments with increased financial support from the central administration to pursue and hire outstanding faculty who will enhance a department’s quality and diversity. To date, the Office of the Provost has approved 103 recruitment proposals from colleges and schools across campus and 39 faculty have been hired. We now have TOP hires across most of our schools and colleges and these faculty are doing outstanding work. Funding for this important program continued even with COVID-19 budget constraints.

Goals Four and Five

OUR WISCONSIN PROGRAM: [Our Wisconsin](#) is an inclusion education program created to raise awareness of the diversity within our student population and to encourage an environment in which students can share their experiences and identities. The program will continue to feature an online interactive module required for all incoming degree-seeking undergraduate students. With support from a newly established Our Wisconsin Leadership Council, composed of staff and student facilitators as well as the Office of Inclusion Education within Student Affairs, the Our Wisconsin team will also offer additional in-person programming for students during the fall 2021 semester that focuses on topics of diversity, inclusion, and belonging at UW–Madison. More than 8,800 students completed the mandatory online Our Wisconsin program in the 2020-21 school year.

Goals One and Four



CHAMBERLIN ROCK REMOVED: The University of Wisconsin–Madison moved the former [Chamberlin Rock](#) to a site off the main campus on August 6. The 42-ton boulder, a painful symbol of racism to many students and alumni because of its association with a deeply offensive racial slur, had been sited at the crest of Observatory Hill since 1925. The Wisconsin Black Student Union, in partnership with the Indigenous student group Wunk Sheek, led the effort to relocate the rock to a less prominent location to minimize further harm to students of color. The rock remains available for research and educational purposes on university-owned land southeast of Madison near Lake Kegonsa.

Goals One, Two, and Three

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR: In response to a clear need to improve access to mental health services for Black, Indigenous, and other students of color on campus, [University Health Services](#) hired three new mental health providers prior to fall 2021. They joined eight providers already serving in this role. In addition to increasing access to counseling for underrepresented students, the new providers will enhance programming across campus aimed to support our students.

Goal Five

NEW POSITIONS TO SUPPORT NATIVE AMERICAN/INDIGENOUS STUDENTS: The Division of Diversity, Equity and Educational Achievement welcomes [Laura Hiebing](#) as the Indigenous Student Services Coordinator with Academic Coaching and Tutoring Services. [Omar Poler](#) serves as Indigenous Education Coordinator in the Office of the Provost and the School of Education. He supports the integration of American Indian topics in education, including the histories, cultures, and tribal sovereignty of the 12 First Nations of Wisconsin. Student Affairs also created a new Native/Indigenous program coordinator position within the Multicultural Student Center to provide dedicated on-campus support for students.

Goals One, Two and Five

DIVINE NINE GARDEN PLAZA: Student Affairs is halfway to the \$250,000 fundraising goal to support the creation and construction of the [Divine Nine Garden Plaza](#). The plaza will recognize the contributions of the National Pan-Hellenic Council chapters (historically Black Greek organizations) to campus.

Goal One

NEW CAMPAIGN SEEKS SUPPORT FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION: In March, the university and the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association announced a historic addition to the All Ways Forward campaign. The [Raimey-Noland Campaign](#) will provide resources to diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts across campus and create a new fund allowing the chancellor to support broad initiatives. The campaign is named for the first known African American woman and man to graduate from UW–Madison, [Mabel Watson Raimey](#) (graduated 1918) and [William Smith Noland](#) (graduated 1875). Generous donors have committed more than \$48 million so far with the goals of:

- Increasing the diversity of the student body
- Increasing faculty and staff diversity
- Enhancing students' academic success and career readiness
- Supporting an inclusive, welcoming campus community
- Investing in research addressing social and racial injustice

Goals One, Three, Four and Five



DEI OFFICERS ACROSS CAMPUS

[DeVon Wilson](#) has been named the associate dean for diversity, equity and inclusion in the **College of Letters and Science**. [Jenni-fer Sheridan](#) has been named interim associate dean for inclusion, equity, and diversity for the College of Engineering and [Percival Matthews](#) has been named the interim associate dean for equity, diversity, and inclusion for the **School of Education**. Other administrators in strategic diversity leadership roles across campus include the following:

[Michael Jackson](#) Athletics

[Sarah Korpi](#) Continuing Studies

[Dominic Ledesma](#) Division of Extension

[Christopher Yue](#) Graduate School

[Marianne Bird Bear](#) International Division

[Janean Dilworth Bart](#) School of Human Ecology

[Mel Freitag](#) School of Nursing

[Lisa Imhoff](#) School of Pharmacy

[Richard Barajas](#) School of Veterinary Medicine

[Gabe Javier](#) Student Affairs

[Binnu Palta Hill](#) Wisconsin School of Business

The **School of Medicine and Public Health**, **School of Law**, and **College of Agriculture and Life Sciences** are conducting searches for DEI officers.

Goals One, Two, Three, Four and Five

SHARED GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE UPDATES

The [Committee on Disability Access & Accommodation](#) updated UW–Madison’s policy on student accommodations, including non-credit activities and clarifying how faculty should work with the McBurney Disability Resource Center to implement recommended accommodations. Now the committee is developing a similar policy for program participants, visitors, and guests, proposing a central funding model for accommodations, and revising the university’s campus digital accessibility policy.

Goals One and Two

The [Campus Diversity & Climate Committee](#) supports the development of structured, evidence-informed DEI education and training for employees and students. The committee recommends integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion goal setting into performance management conversations to foster individual engagement and growth, help develop more informed and committed future leaders, and improve accountability.


Goals One, Two, Three and Five

The [LGBTQ+ Committee](#) focused on immediate concerns compounded by COVID-19, including several efforts to create more inclusive online environments. The committee also updated its name (formerly it was known as the Committee for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer People in the University) to reflect more current language preferences.

Goals One and Two

The [Immigration & International Issues Committee](#) considers how immigration and international policies impact UW–Madison students, faculty, and staff, and provides guidance to campus leadership. In 2020-21, the committee heard student concerns and drafted a resolution in support of students living in the country without legal permission. The committee also drafted recommendations for sharing information and increasing awareness about international issues with advisors and other staff.

Goals One and Two



To increase enrollment of admitted students from historically underrepresented populations, the [Committee on Undergraduate Recruitment, Admissions, and Financial Aid](#) recommended that UW–Madison more explicitly advance campus-based diversity and inclusion initiatives that improve quality of life and the student experience. In particular, the committee recommended expansion and long-term support for programs serving Native American students.

Goals One, Two and Four

Between Spring 2020 and Fall 2021, the [Committee for Women in the University](#) surveyed UW–Madison employees to identify challenges for women employees and inform the committee’s near and longer-term efforts. Respondents ranked childcare, compensation, gender and racial climate, and promotion/advancement as top concerns. In response, the committee advocated for creation of an ad hoc Committee on Caregiving and initiated discussion about how the Title & Total Compensation Project will achieve pay equity and maintain parity.

Goals One and Two

OTHER COMMITTEE WORK: [Equity and Diversity Committee](#): In 2020-2021, the campus level EDC welcomed several new members and discussed how to expand and grow the group further. The EDC, made up of members that chair their local school, college, division, or unit EDCs, plan to establish subcommittees in 2021-2022 to explore issues relevant to local EDCs, including professional development for new and veteran EDC chairs and members.

Goals One, Two, Three and Five

Last spring, the university’s [Multicultural/Disadvantaged Coordinators](#) proposed a new name, [DEI Representatives](#), to reflect its focus on supporting the chief diversity officer and collective efforts to enhance student diversity, recruitment, retention, and campus climate. DEI representatives assist with ensuring student needs are met and facilitating affinity groups, book club sessions, and campus-wide listening sessions in response to local and national events affecting communities of color. They also provide nominations for the Regents Opportunity Scholarship and host online programming, including graduation celebrations, to facilitate and maintain a sense of community for students.

Goals One, Two, Three and Five

IMPACT

All of these actions build on steps UW–Madison has taken over the past several years to expand need-based aid and improve the recruitment and retention of students of color and other underrepresented groups. Evidence of the impact of our efforts includes:

- Over the last decade, the presence of underrepresented undergraduate students of color on campus has grown from 9.9 percent in 2011 to 11.7 percent of the student body in 2020.
- During the same period, the presence of faculty of color has increased from 18 percent to 25 percent of the university’s faculty.
- The retention rate (freshmen returning for a second year) for underrepresented domestic students of color is 95.9 percent. This is the highest it has ever been and above the retention rate for UW–Madison students as a whole (95.2 percent). The 2020 freshman class includes 989 underrepresented domestic students of color who identify as African American, Hispanic/Latinx, American Indian, or Southeast Asian American. This number is up 19.8 percent, from 825 the prior year, and represents 13.5 percent of the freshman class.

Now is the time to come together around our mutual resolve. Let’s make this campus and world safe for all. Together, we have the power to heal, the power to work for justice, and the power to make meaningful change.