

**SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND FOREST SCIENCES  
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION PLAN**

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE  
March 2021**

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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A land acknowledgment serves as a reminder that - here in Washington and in so many other places around the world - we live our lives on land that was stolen from Indigenous peoples. A land acknowledgement is also a reminder that Indigenous communities have and continue to suffer from the effects of deeply discriminatory beliefs and practices. At the same time, a land acknowledgement can serve as a call to seek knowledge, understand the truth in our shared histories, and recognize the Indigenous peoples living and working among us today. We hope that all who read this reflect on the contributions and experiences of Indigenous people, past, present, and future.

*The University of Washington acknowledges the Coast Salish peoples of this land, the land which touches the shared waters of all tribes and bands within the Suquamish, Tulalip and Muckleshoot nations.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Plan Purpose and Development

In 2019, the School of Environmental and Forest Sciences (SEFS) Diversity Committee drafted a Diversity Statement. Feedback and suggestions were solicited from the SEFS Faculty and the SEFS Graduate Student Council and incorporated into the final Diversity Statement, which was voted on and approved by the SEFS Faculty and adopted in Spring 2019. The Diversity Statement is reprinted in Section 2 of this document. In Fall 2019, the newly constituted SEFS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEIC) began working on ways to put the Diversity Statement into action. The DEIC determined that a major action for the 2019-2020 Academic Year would be solicitation of input from the SEFS community on the components of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan, and development of the plan for consideration and eventual adoption by the SEFS community. This DEI Plan takes the values outlined in the SEFS Diversity Statement and translates them into actionable items across a range of time scales. Through these actions, we can collectively and continually work toward making our SEFS community an equitable and inclusive space that celebrates diversity.

This plan is broad in scope and aspirational in spirit. The goal in developing the plan was to capture a wide variety of action ideas under five pillars: (1) *Diversity Leadership*, (2) *Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body*, (3) *Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Faculty and Staff*, (4) *Establishing a Culture of Inclusion*, and (5) *Integrating Diversity and Inclusion into Scholarship and Learning*.

The DEIC aspired to create a plan that would facilitate efforts in SEFS over the long term. The plan is also designed to be a living document. The DEIC anticipates regular updating of the plan as actions are taken and new information is gained. In some cases, particular actions call for research and deliberation to determine the best path forward. Such actions are phrased in the plan as, for example, “Determine how to...” or “Explore options for...” The DEIC will be particularly interested in feedback from the SEFS community on these actions, as more details are added. In other cases, the path forward is relatively clear. With the adoption of this plan, the focus will move to implementation.

### 1.2. Plan Structure, Implementation, and Monitoring

The plan is structured around the five pillars. Within each pillar, there are subsections including categories of action. Within each subsection, the plan includes *Priorities and Action Steps* and *Metrics and Monitoring*. In *Priorities and Action Steps*, actions are listed and prioritized by the planned timeline for completion: **Immediate Goal (IG)**, **Short-Term Goal (STG)**, and **Long-Term Goal (LTG)**. Within and among pillars of the plan, the order of items does not correspond to any inherent prioritization or level of importance. Annually, the DEIC will evaluate the plan to determine if items should be added, modified, or reprioritized. Also annually, priority actions will be chosen as focal topics by the DEIC. In many cases, priority actions may be flagged for action by other groups in SEFS (e.g., SEFS Director's Office, Student Services Office, etc.).

Progress on plan elements will be captured in the DEIC's Annual Reports. In *Metrics and Monitoring*, the plan includes details on how progress will be tracked and evaluated. Monitoring will be critical for assessing progress and for evaluating which efforts are most effective. Monitoring will be undertaken and results evaluated biennially to triennially, depending on available resources, as a collaborative effort between the SEFS DEIC and other SEFS committees and offices, as appropriate.

### **1.3. Recent History of SEFS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts**

#### ***Prior to the 2019-2020 Academic Year***

In the most recent years prior to the 2019-2020 Academic Year, the SEFS Diversity Committee was co- led by Office of Student Academic Services Manager Michelle Trudeau and Associate Professor Renata Bura, and was composed of volunteer members from the faculty, staff, graduate student, and undergraduate student communities in SEFS. Meetings were held quarterly with additional meetings scheduled as needed for completion of tasks.

Information about progress on DEI priorities from prior to the 2018-2019 Academic Year is outside the scope of this plan document. However, actions taken in the 2018-2019 Academic Year included regular communication from the SEFS Diversity Committee Chairs to the SEFS community, such as email notification of DEI resources; the development and adoption of the SEFS Diversity Statement; and coordination of efforts to update wall art and photographs on halls in the three main-campus SEFS buildings to better represent the current SEFS community.

#### ***During the 2019-2020 Academic Year***

At the outset of the 2019-2020 Academic Year, the DEIC was constituted as a faculty-led committee with the following composition: two faculty members (Associate Professor Sarah Converse and Assistant Professor Brian Harvey) as co-chairs, with one or more committee representative from each sector of the SEFS community (undergraduate students, graduate students, research and administrative staff, and faculty). Also included in the committee was Associate Professor Stanley Asah, Special Advisor to the Director on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

The SEFS Director's charge for the DEIC in the 2019-2020 Academic Year was to provide input and resources to guide decisions in SEFS. Specific topics noted in the charge included providing input on hiring process guidelines to ensure equity in faculty recruitment; planning events to improve the sense of inclusion and community; making recommendations for steps SEFS should take to ensure that all students, staff, and faculty receive training in DEIC to prevent and respond to possible harassment, discrimination, and bias in both the field and the workplace; reviewing diversity-related content for the SEFS website; and developing outreach and recruitment strategies to increase the diversity of SEFS' student body.

Progress during the 2019-2020 Academic Year included the following activities

- Dedicating a section of the SEFS website for information on the DEIC, DEI activities in SEFS, and resources to support DEI.
- After the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, curating a list of resources to add to the "SEFS Together" webpage.
- Holding open meetings in winter (in person), spring (online), and summer (online) quarters.
- Holding a community listening session to provide a forum for the community to process the murder of Black Americans by police officers and the resulting national anti-racism protests in spring 2020.
- During the first week of June 2020, sending DEI resources via daily email to the SEFS community (these resources are now collected on the SEFS DEI webpage).
- Establishing a committee email address (sefsdeic@uw.edu) to facilitate communication with the committee.
- In June 2020, proposing to the SEFS Faculty a 1-year moratorium on the GRE, in light of reduced and inequitable availability of the test during the COVID-19 pandemic. This proposal was adopted.
- Appointing a faculty member of the DEIC to participate in the summer 2020 SEFS Holistic Admissions Working Group.
- Advocating for support of faculty attendance at a SpeakOut Institute summer workshop on inclusive teaching.
- Contributing to guidance on hiring procedures for faculty searches that explicitly incorporate DEI considerations throughout the search and hiring process, in an effort led by the SEFS Elected Faculty Advisory Council.
- During summer 2020, coordinating efforts to establish a dedicated student space in SEFS to support DEI.
- During summer 2020, coordinating efforts to establish an anonymous bias incident reporting system in SEFS.
- Coordinating efforts to dedicate a lactation room in SEFS buildings.
- During summer 2020, participating in weekly meetings organized by the SEFS Director on inclusive teaching practices for faculty and instructional staff.
- Working with faculty to initiate "3 minutes, 3 slides" talks at the start of every SEFS faculty meeting to increase a sense of community in the SEFS faculty. One faculty member per meeting presents 1 slide/minute on research, teaching, and life outside of work

- Initiating the hosting of a minimum of one DEIC Open Meeting per quarter where all SEFS community members are welcome to join and participate in activities designed to solicit input and facilitate dialogue around DEI efforts.
- Advising the SEFS Research Committee on updates to the McIntire Stennis internal funding evaluation rubric to include a DEI statement and DEI components of projects.
- Providing input to the review of the PMT process to incorporate DEI best practices.

## 2. SEFS DIVERSITY STATEMENT

*The following statement was adopted by SEFS Faculty on June 13, 2019. The faculty thank the UW iSchool and the UW Department of Communication for inspiration for the format of this statement.*

Respect for difference and equity is a core value in the School of Environmental and Forest Sciences. We acknowledge and embrace difference (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, age, citizenship status, and ability) as we strive to create learning environments, scholarship, mentoring relationships, and working environments that foster inclusivity and belonging in our community. To do so, we strive to promote equity and inclusion by eliminating individual and institutional discrimination.

The School of Environmental and Forest Sciences will:

- Actively recruit a diverse student body, including through nontraditional pathways like transfers, tribal schools, and veterans
- Sustain a diverse student body through mentorship, staff support, and student groups at the graduate and undergraduate levels, with a focus on retention
- Recruit, hire and retain a diverse faculty and staff who reflect the populations we serve, by:
  - Following best practices for recruiting, hiring and retaining a diverse workforce (incorporating practices into such activities as job advertisements, interviewing, requiring DEI statements in applications, hiring, onboarding, support, etc).
  - Providing regular training and workshops on equity and working with diverse populations
  - Valuing difference and equity work in our hiring, evaluation, and promotion of faculty and staff
- Support and engage an active Diversity Committee composed of faculty, staff, and students that plans and promotes DEI-related events
- Foster an inclusive research and teaching environment in our physical buildings, offices, laboratories, and field sites by:
  - Partnering with groups on and off campus that provide support and resources for creating and maintaining inclusive workplaces
  - Creating physical spaces (labs, offices, classrooms, hallways) that simultaneously honor the history of our field and celebrate the contemporary diversity of our students, staff, and faculty
  - Building a culture of transparency for all our operations, including having open Diversity Committee meetings
- Forge productive relationships with difference and equity-focused groups on campus, including GO-MAP, OMA/D, DDCSP, LSAMP, Q Center, Student Veteran Life and RSOs that engage with students from underrepresented backgrounds.

- Integrating difference and equity-related knowledge and skills into learning experiences inside and outside the classroom. These areas include:
  - Building partnerships with community organizations focused on difference- and equity-related initiatives
  - Public scholarship that foregrounds difference and equity
- Conduct reciprocal, community-engaged research in areas that have a positive impact for diverse populations.

### **3. PILLAR I: DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP**

Pillar I is focused on ensuring the sustainability of efforts to increase DEI in SEFS, by establishing a leadership structure, funding, and communication. Information on the governance structure of the DEIC is included in the SEFS Bylaws. More detailed information on governance, communications, and operations are included in a separate document, known as the “School of Environmental and Forest Sciences Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Guidelines”.

#### **3.1. Objectives**

- Establish and follow a governance structure that will ensure ongoing leadership on DEI issues in SEFS, and that will give all members of the community a voice.
- Ensure transparency in DEI leadership and actions in SEFS.
- Ensure that investments of SEFS resources in DEI activities occur in a manner that is consistent with priorities.
- Provide resources to the community through the SEFS website and ensure regular communication with the community on DEI topics.

#### **3.2. Decision-Making Structure**

##### **3.2.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- Continue to seek out approaches for increasing involvement of the SEFS community with the DEIC, with a special focus on increasing undergraduate involvement in the DEIC. [STG]
- Undertake an audit with a consultant who can review and advise on SEFS DEI efforts. Determine whether there are UW staff who may be able to lead an audit or if it should be undertaken by an independent consultant. [STG]

##### **3.2.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Annual and exit interviews will be undertaken with DEIC members by co-chairs to solicit ideas for improvement in committee function.

#### **3.3. Budget**

##### **3.3.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- Work to develop a robust budgeting approach that integrates DEIC and SEFS priorities. [IG]
- Establish an approach and aids to facilitate pursuing opportunities for external funding to support DEIC and SEFS priorities. [STG]

##### **3.3.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Track the amount of SEFS resources invested annually in DEI Plan actions.
- Develop an approach for tracking the effectiveness of resource investments, e.g., through a community survey.

### **3.4. Communication Structure**

#### **3.4.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- Develop approaches to facilitate more effective communication and collaboration between SEFS and College of the Environment/UW DEI leadership.

#### **3.4.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Track numbers in attendance at DEIC quarterly open meetings, as well as the role of attendees in SEFS (i.e., faculty, staff, grad students, undergrad students).

### **3.5. Responding to Bias Incidents and Emerging Issues**

#### **3.5.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- Work to ensure that: **[IG]**
  - SEFS institutes an anonymous bias incident reporting system, and uses the recommendations of the DEIC summer 2020 working group in creating the system. The system should be able to accommodate anonymous comments and suggestions for improvement of SEFS operations with respect to DEI.
  - The bias incident reporting system in SEFS, the College of the Environment, and University of Washington are findable on the SEFS website.
  - There is a process in place to guarantee a response from leadership to all items reported in the reporting system.
  - The goals of the anonymous reporting tool and ways to determine whether the tool is meeting its goals are identified.
- Develop an approach for facilitating listening sessions when issues emerge requiring immediate engagement with the community. Have community standards of engagement ready to share during such sessions. **[STG]**

#### **3.5.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Assess awareness of and community satisfaction with SEFS' response to bias incidents and the incident reporting system.

## **4. PILLAR II: RECRUITING AND RETAINING A DIVERSE STUDENT BODY**

Pillar II is focused on the use of recruitment strategies to increase the diversity of the SEFS student body, and on student-focused strategies that will increase DEI in the SEFS community to ensure that all students feel welcome in SEFS. This Pillar is also concerned with the development of programs that will ensure the post-graduation success of all students, by recognizing the specific needs of students from underrepresented backgrounds.

### **4.1. Objectives**

- Move toward a SEFS student body that is representative of the university student body, and - more broadly - Washington State and the United States, on multiple axes of diversity, with specific focus on gender identity and gender expression, racial identity, sexual orientation, national origin and citizenship, physical or mental disability, religion or creed, and veteran status.
- Move toward improving experiences of students in SEFS, with a focus on students from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Increase focus on successful placement of graduates in graduate school or career positions, recognizing the particular challenges faced by students from underrepresented backgrounds.

## 4.2. Recruiting Graduate Students

### 4.2.1. Priorities and Action Steps

- Consider new recruitment strategies to increase the diversity of applicants, with actions such as (see <https://grad.uw.edu/equity-inclusion-and-diversity/go-map/recruitment-and-retention-guide/> for additional ideas):
  - Encourage faculty, staff, and graduate student attendance at conferences, by covering travel fees, for purposes of graduate recruitment. Make sure faculty, staff, and graduate students go to such conferences with ample information on the SEFS programs in hand, and with ideas for how to effectively seek out students from underrepresented backgrounds. Target conferences such as the annual conference of the Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS). **[STG]**
  - Encourage faculty recruitment of current SEFS undergraduates from underrepresented backgrounds by providing information to faculty on highly qualified undergraduates. **[STG]**
  - Improve web representation of SEFS' graduate school application process and clearly state how SEFS is working to diversify our student body. **[IG]**
  - Advertise more clearly which labs are taking graduate students, e.g., put it on the graduate program page, to reduce barriers to applicants. **[IG]**
  - Provide training and resources to faculty on how to recruit from a more diverse population. **[STG]**
  - Make use of the National Name Exchange Database to recruit graduate students. Work with College of the Environment to identify students who should be contacted by SEFS with an invitation to apply. **[STG]**
  - Improve connections with the UW Graduate Opportunities and Minority Achievement Program (GO-MAP) office and provide better information to faculty on their mission and programs. **[STG]**
  - Identify listservs that reach greater numbers of individuals from underrepresented backgrounds and advertise SEFS programs on those listservs. **[STG]**
  - Add a broad DEI prompt to information required of graduate program applicants. **[IG]**
- Develop a DEI statement of commitment and action for graduate student offer letters. **[STG]**

- Develop language for the SEFS websites with more detailed information on how the graduate admissions process works and how students can have greatest success in this process. Encourage faculty to link to this information for the benefit of prospective students who visit the websites of individual faculty. [STG]
- Explore development of a program like Stanford's Ph.D. Preview to support applicants (see <https://biology.stanford.edu/academics/phd-program/stanford-biology-phd-preview-program>). [LTG]
- Consider cluster recruitment of students from underrepresented backgrounds by creating lines of communication between different labs. [LTG]
- Challenge use of exclusionary standards in graduate admittance by adopting recommendations of the summer 2020 SEFS Holistic Admissions Working Group or pushing for further changes as needed. [STG]
- Encourage faculty to consider moving the applicant review process to a single committee that has a clear focus on diversity (e.g., School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences as a model). [STG]

#### 4.2.2. Metrics and Monitoring

- Track the number and proportion of applicants and accepted graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds on the axes of diversity specified in the objectives for this pillar. Determine the best approaches for tracking applicant and student demographics, recognizing that providing this information is optional.

### 4.3. Recruiting Undergraduate Students

#### 4.3.1. Priorities and Action Steps

- Consider approaches for increasing outreach to community colleges, high schools, and community organizations with the goal of increasing the diversity of groups who are exposed to SEFS' programs. Possible approaches include: [LTG]
  - Discuss with College of the Environment the expansion of the existing student ambassador program that puts students out into the community to talk about College of the Environment programs. Consider expansion to younger students and to community colleges. Ensure student ambassadors receive pay or university credit.
  - Consider creation of a undergraduate/graduate course to provide support for students interested in taking part in outreach.
  - Consider reaching out to university recruitment programs to be sure SEFS is well represented.
  - Collaborate with outreach groups in the College of the Environment to increase exposure to SEFS for K-12 students in communities with high numbers of students from underrepresented backgrounds.
  - Explore increasing outreach to UW Math Science Upward Bound (<http://uwmsub.org/>) or similar groups.
  - Collaborate with the UW Botanical Gardens and SEFS satellite centers to encourage outreach to a more diverse population (e.g., partnering with Mount Rainier Institute at Pack Forest to reach youth from underrepresented backgrounds).

- Consider building connections with non-profit partners who work with youth (e.g., Young Women Empowered, Student Conservation Association, Washington Trails Association, Outdoor Afro, Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition, Seattle MESA).
- Reach out to the UW Veterans Education Benefits Office to advertise SEFS programs.
- Develop a plan for recruiting a greater diversity of undeclared UW undergraduate students (e.g., increase participation in Tour de Labs, reach out to student affinity groups on campus). [STG]
- Consider working with the College of the Environment to translate SEFS informational brochures to a variety of different languages for students with parents who do not speak English as a first language. [LTG]

#### **4.3.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Monitor the number and proportion of undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds on the axes of diversity specified in the objectives for this pillar. Determine whether SEFS advising office can access demographic statistics or explore the possibility of student surveys in SEFS to track number of students over time.

### **4.4. Providing a Supportive Environment for Students**

#### **4.4.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- As part of the larger DEI training program in SEFS (see *Pillar 6. Establishing a Culture of Inclusion*) ensure ongoing training on anti-racism, microaggressions, and harassment as part of SEFS 500, and look for opportunities to expand training. Training should include information on DEI resources in SEFS and the SEFS decision-making structure around DEI issues. [STG]
- Consider the feasibility of establishing an undergraduate equivalent of SEFS 500 to be offered to incoming SEFS students, to provide a forum for welcoming students to SEFS, sharing resources for student success, and providing DEI training. [LTG]
- Recognize the importance of the SEFS Office of Student and Academic Services in supporting students. Advocate for making support of students from underrepresented backgrounds an explicit part of that position's responsibilities and provide adequate support staff in the SEFS Office of Student and Academic Services to ensure success of this office. [STG]
- Create a dedicated student space designed to promote and celebrate the diversity of students in SEFS, where students from underrepresented backgrounds are made to feel at home and where conversations around DEI topics are encouraged. [IG]
- Consider initiating a 1-credit graduate seminar that meets weekly throughout every academic year for coffee and discussion with a different faculty member each week with the goal of increasing students' mentoring networks and improving the graduate student experience. [IG]
- Develop ideas for incentivizing formal or informal mentoring relationships between faculty and undergraduate or graduate students who are from underrepresented backgrounds. [LTG]
- Explore the feasibility of cohort-based mentorship to support students through courses that are degree requirements. [LTG]
- Provide better information to undergraduate and graduate students on funding opportunities (scholarships, fellowships, etc.) with specific resources for students from underrepresented backgrounds, and provide resources to support student applicants. [STG]

- Provide funds (e.g., McIntire-Stennis) to increase undergraduate work study or paid research opportunities and improve recruitment of students from underrepresented backgrounds into these positions. [LTG]
- Recommend that SEFS adopt a policy that faculty must provide a baseline amount of funding (e.g., 2 years for MS, 3 years for PhD) in order to admit students to the graduate program (excluding professional degree programs). Make full funding of all graduate students an expectation, and increase access to teaching assistantships for students with greatest need. [STG]
- Advocate for paid family leave for graduate students. [LTG]
- Increase access to support resources for students from underrepresented backgrounds, through approaches such as: [STG]
  - Providing information on relevant student clubs and organizations on campus.
  - Providing accessible information to students on individuals and organizations on campus to whom they can go to receive support on a wide variety of issues.
  - Providing resources that encourage graduate students to form peer mentoring bonds (e.g., funding for a 2-day graduate student retreat at the beginning of each academic year).
  - Holding more funded social events for students.
  - Providing support from the SEFS Office of Student and Academic Services to strengthen SEFS undergraduate and graduate student organizations.
  - Creating an undergraduate student council for SEFS.
- Improve mentoring relationships between faculty and graduate students, through approaches such as: [STG]
  - Providing training to faculty on mentorship, particularly mentoring people from a diversity of backgrounds (e.g., UW Strategic Leadership Program training is a model).
  - Providing example lab guidance documents, including Codes of Conduct, and strongly encourage faculty to develop their own lab guidance documents (several labs at SEFS already have well-developed guidance documents to serve as examples).
  - Curating DEI resources specifically for faculty to share with graduate students.
  - Developing a plan for standardizing annual graduate student reviews. Include 360-type reviews of faculty in this student review process.
  - Providing an accessible mechanism for graduate students to provide feedback on advising quality each year ahead of faculty merit reviews or faculty work planning meetings, and ensure that graduate students feel safe from retribution in providing feedback.
- Explore whether there is a feasible approach for ensuring that every graduate student in SEFS has a one-on-one meeting annually with either another faculty member or a member of the advising staff regarding their progress. This meeting would be designed to surface issues in a forum outside the graduate advisor-student relationship. Provide resources and ensure follow-up on action items after meetings. [LTG]
- Work on improving the SEFS graduate student handbook to make milestones more clear and consistent, and make sure all necessary resources (e.g., forms) are available online. [LTG]
- Explore development of a SEFS service program designed to create opportunities for SEFS students, staff, and faculty to reach out to underrepresented communities on campus and in the Seattle area. Consider the Program on the Environment capstone as a possible model. [LTG]

- Consider how to provide support resources for graduate students who want to engage in deeper and more meaningful community engagement relevant to their research. [LTG]
- Work toward a long-term tradition of student attendance at faculty meetings. [LTG]

#### **4.4.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Monitor student satisfaction through development of an annual survey instrument to assess student satisfaction and areas for improvement, and conduct intake/outtake meetings to assess student satisfaction.
- Monitor graduation rate and degree completion time from available records.

### **4.5. Positioning Students from Underrepresented Backgrounds for Success**

#### **4.5.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- Provide an actively updated list of internship opportunities for undergraduate students. An existing job/internship list that is shared via email could be better advertised, and posted on the SEFS website. [LTG]
- Organize faculty- or staff-led seminars on job market preparedness and graduate school preparedness. [LTG]
- Start a mentorship program for undergraduate students with graduate students and faculty to support them through job and graduate school application processes. [LTG]

#### **4.5.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Collect information on placement rates of students in graduate school or career positions and analyze to determine if there is equity in placement rates for students from underrepresented backgrounds.

## **5. PILLAR III: RECRUITING AND RETAINING A DIVERSE FACULTY AND STAFF**

Pillar III is focused on recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty and a diverse staff in SEFS. Strategies include those designed to increase the diversity of faculty and staff recruited into SEFS, and programs to increase DEI in SEFS, to ensure that faculty and staff from underrepresented backgrounds feel welcome and are given the greatest support possible to reach their career goals.

### **5.1. Objectives**

- Build a shared understanding of DEI values and goals amongst the SEFS faculty and staff.
- Create a welcoming and inclusive environment for faculty and staff.
- Move toward a faculty and staff that are representative of the university student body, and - more broadly - Washington State and the United States, on multiple axes of diversity, with specific focus on gender identity and gender expression, racial identity, sexual orientation, national origin and citizenship, physical or mental disability, religion or creed, and veteran status.
- Achieve retention and promotion rates of faculty and staff from underrepresented backgrounds that are on par with those of other groups in SEFS.
- Maximize faculty participation in activities related to DEI, and include recognition of these activities as part of the service component of faculty appointments.

### **5.2. Hiring a Diverse Faculty and Staff**

### **5.2.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- Develop alternative search strategies and explore ways to specifically recruit faculty that will diversify SEFS, such as opportunity hires or targeted hires of specific early career scientists identified as having the capacity to increase the diversity of faculty in SEFS and filling SEFS strategic goals in research and teaching. [IG]
- Increase faculty awareness of scholars at other institutions or agencies who are from underrepresented backgrounds, e.g., by inviting diverse speakers to deliver SEFS seminars. [IG]
- Consider adding language to the SEFS faculty hiring plan to address opportunity hires to increase diversity. [IG]
- Promote training on implicit bias for all search committee members and faculty members ahead of faculty searches. [STG]
- Advocate for including promotion of DEI in all faculty hiring rubrics and for increasing the weight of these components. [IG]
- Continue to ensure that any updates of the faculty hiring process guidelines are reviewed by the DEIC. [LTG]
- While respecting privacy requirements, involve the SEFS community in faculty and staff searches. [STG]
- Explore approaches to increasing the pipeline of applicants from underrepresented backgrounds, including encouragement of working with post-docs through the Research University Alliance (RUA). [STG]
- Develop a list of resources designed to support new faculty (e.g., ADVANCE, National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, etc.) and provide this to candidates during the interview process (and again once a new hire has accepted a position). [IG]
- Work to establish procedures for ensuring best practices in staff hiring. [STG]

### **5.2.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Monitor the composition of faculty and staff on the axes of diversity specified in the objectives for this pillar.
- Monitor the composition of candidates for all faculty and staff positions at all stages of the search process (e.g., applicants, semi-finalists, finalists) on the axes of diversity specified in the objectives for this pillar.

## **5.3. Retaining a Diverse Faculty and Staff**

### **5.3.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- Continue practices of evaluating and considering equity in the existing pay scale for raises, adjustments, and new salary offers for faculty and staff. [STG]
- Advocate for transparency in access to startup funds, lab space, and other resources for new faculty and advocate for reflection on whether there is equity in the current distribution of resources amongst faculty. [STG]
- Ensure that new faculty from underrepresented backgrounds are connected with mentors both within and external to the department, and ensure connection of new faculty with programs offered by the UW Office for Faculty Advancement (<https://www.washington.edu/diversity/faculty-advancement/>). [LTG]

- Prioritize cluster hires of new faculty within SEFS and jointly across units to help create a cohort of new faculty to foster a greater sense of camaraderie and belonging. [LTG]
- Increase the diversity of affiliate faculty members, e.g., develop relationships to recruit Tribal community members for affiliate appointments. [LTG]
- Work to ensure adequate prioritization of both DEI and intra-faculty collaboration building in the McIntire-Stennis funding call to encourage research collaborations and mentoring between established faculty and new faculty from underrepresented backgrounds. [STG]
- Work to develop practices and policies that recognize well-established racial and gender bias in teaching evaluations. [IG]

### **5.3.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Monitor retention rates and compare across groups to identify whether retention rates are indicative of equity.
- Monitor promotion rates and compare across groups to identify whether retention rates are indicative of equity.
- Monitor job satisfaction in faculty and staff and identify whether job satisfaction is indicative of equity.
- Audit pay rates across faculty and staff and identify whether pay rates are equitable.

## **5.4. Galvanizing Faculty Action on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

### **5.4.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- Incorporate recognition of faculty participation in DEI activities, including excellence in the integration of DEI into teaching and research, into SEFS promotion, merit, and tenure processes. [LTG]
- Develop a SEFS award for excellence in the integration of DEI into teaching and research. [LTG]
- Recognize and reward the work of faculty from underrepresented backgrounds in a variety of service roles that are often overlooked, such as extra peer and student mentoring, service on DEI committees and task forces, and education of community members; ensure equitable effort across service responsibilities and include this work in those assessments. [IG]

### **5.4.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Include faculty effort on DEI activities in the annual review process.

## **6. PILLAR IV: ESTABLISHING AND SUPPORTING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION**

Pillar IV is focused on the culture within the SEFS community. Strategies are designed to increase DEI, with a focus on strategies that are of general benefit to the entire SEFS community (student- and staff- or faculty-focused strategies can be found under Pillars II and III, respectively). Strategies specific to the classroom can be found under Pillar V.

### **6.1. Objectives**

- Sustain a community where everyone is physically and emotionally welcome, safe, included, and supported to reach their full potential.

- Fully integrate DEI literacy, values, and best practices into “everyday” interactions in SEFS, so that these are not apart from, but are a core part of how we interact as a community.
- Explore, propose, and support policy changes that are needed to sustain and grow a culture of inclusion.

## **6.2. Learning about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

### **6.2.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- Facilitate peer learning and affinity groups among staff, faculty, undergraduates, graduate students, and postdocs, and increase awareness of staff diversity affinity groups through the UW Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity. [STG]
- Determine needs and provide trainings, workshops, and meetings, including trainings in which students, staff, and faculty can participate together. Ensure equity in access to trainings, including at satellite campuses, either by sending a facilitator or offering a remote option. Possible trainings include: [STG]
  - Diversity 201, 301, etc. which expand and go deeper than introductory DEI trainings.
  - Active Ally Training.
  - Workshops on how to incorporate DEI best practices for field work and field internship positions.
  - Workshops on how to incorporate a meaningful DEI lens in research that is already being done, and in grant proposals for future projects.
  - Workshops that help labs develop codes of conduct, diversity statements, and commitments to collaborative community research/outreach.
- Incorporate a community feedback mechanism for all trainings offered by SEFS [STG]
- Create a DEI Library and shared resource hub where community members can share and access online and physical copies of books and other resources related to DEI. [STG]

### **6.2.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Track and report the total (and proportional) number of students, faculty, and staff who complete trainings annually.
- Initiate an anonymous DEI literacy survey to track progress on learning.

## **6.3. Fostering a Sense of Equity and Inclusion in the Community**

### **6.3.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- When appropriate, provide publicly available and easily accessible virtual options for all students, faculty, and staff at all meetings to ensure maximum accessibility. [IG]
- Explore the option of providing gender-neutral facilities in all SEFS-affiliated buildings on campus and in off-campus field stations [STG]
- Improve physical accessibility of all SEFS-affiliated buildings. [LTG]
- Develop strategies for diversifying presenters at the weekly departmental seminars, with a focus on presenters from underrepresented backgrounds. Also include DEI-specific seminars that explore intersectional research questions or individual experiences of community members. [STG]

- Include students in selection of seminar speakers, e.g., allow (undergraduate/graduate) students to nominate one speaker each quarter. [STG]
- Increase inclusion at SEFS social events, e.g., by ensuring land acknowledgments and highlighting ongoing work on DEI in SEFS. [STG]
- Create and publicly post a community code of conduct, which among other things, highlights the expectation that all community members work to create an inclusive anti-discriminatory environment. [STG]
- Hire a DEI and Community Outreach specialist. [LTG]

### **6.3.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Conduct building accessibility audits, with a collection of staff, students, faculty, and outside UW observers from entities such as the UW Disability and D/deaf Cultural Center, the UW Q Center, and the UW Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity.
- Develop and deliver once every 2-3 years a climate survey for SEFS, to assess the sense of community and inclusion.

## **7. PILLAR V: INTEGRATING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INTO SCHOLARSHIP AND LEARNING**

### **7.1. Objectives**

- Expand recognition of the importance of DEI in all aspects of SEFS' teaching mission.
- Enlarge the SEFS research portfolio to include areas of research that critically examine and incorporate the relationships between environmental science and DEI.
- Provide faculty, staff, and students with the knowledge needed to better integrate considerations of equity into discussions of environmental management.
- Codify best practices, improve SEFS' interactions with Tribal partners on research projects, and encourage further collaboration and opportunities for students to learn alternative forms of ecological knowledge.

### **7.2. Incorporating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion into the Teaching Mission**

#### **7.2.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- Establish a formal process for periodic review of courses by the SEFS Curriculum Committee and DEIC with a focus on DEI principles. The review process should consider how to generate more inclusive teaching and learning approaches. The review process should also consider whether course content recognizes the importance of DEI in the context of the course subject matter. [LTG]
- Explore how to establish a collaborative process between the DEIC and the SEFS Curriculum Committee to identify opportunities to develop additional courses that are more directly focused at the intersection of environmental science/management and DEI. [LTG]
- Consider providing opportunity for students and faculty to periodically critique course syllabi (e.g., consider the model developed by the UW Evans School) and issue recommendations for adding and/or eliminating topics from courses, with particular attention given to DEI content. [STG]

- Encourage faculty to look for opportunities to invite guest lecturers that will represent a broad scope of backgrounds and points of view from current and future leaders in forest and environmental sciences. [IG]
- Promote and consider avenues to require training in unconscious bias, anti-discrimination, and inclusive teaching practices for all instructors. [STG]
- Consider whether student psychological safety during the exam and defense processes can be increased through department-level advising, mentoring and support programs that are incorporated into SEFS 509, alongside student advising, mentoring, exam prep, thesis/dissertation/grant writing, etc. [STG]
- Consider increasing the core degree requirements to include a mandatory seminar for undergraduate and graduate students focused on critical examination of the historical role of racism in conservation and meaningful exploration of current and historical Indigenous land management practices, with a focus on the Pacific Northwest. [LTG]
- Incorporate considerations of inclusiveness and accessibility as component in peer evaluations of teaching. [STG]

### **7.2.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Create a rubric that identifies DEI-related course content, and track the course content across the curriculum on this rubric.
- Track the number of DEI-related seminars offered per year.
- Track the proportion of instructors who have received training in unconscious bias, anti-discrimination, and inclusive teaching practices.

## **7.3. Conducting Research Informed by Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Principles**

### **7.3.1. Priorities and Action Steps**

- Broadcast DEI-related funding opportunities to faculty, staff, and students. [IG]
- Offer a workshop for faculty and research staff on how to best incorporate DEI into grant proposals. [IG]
- Continue conversations between the DEIC and the SEFS Research Committee on how best to use the McIntire-Stennis funding stream to encourage research at the intersection of DEI and environmental science/management. [STG]
- Establish a SEFS (or College of the Environment) online publication series dedicated to producing publications - especially by students - exploring the intersection of environmental science/management research projects and DEI-related topics, with the goal of generating interest in new, creative, and collaborative research directions and elevating consideration of these topics in environmental science/management. [LTG]
- Consider prioritizing a faculty position focused on environmental justice in the faculty hiring plan. [LTG]
- Utilize independent study and undergraduate/graduate research courses to encourage small scale projects – possibly with small levels of funding – to explore the intersection of environmental science/management and DEI. [LTG]

### **7.3.2. Metrics and Monitoring**

- Quantify the number of research proposals and projects developed by students, staff, and faculty that incorporate DEI-related subject matter.

## 7.4. Improving Relationships with Washington Tribes

### 7.4.1. Priorities and Action Steps

- Provide education on Tribal land acknowledgments to SEFS community members, and ensure that the SEFS website includes an appropriate land acknowledgement. [IG]
- Build awareness of how sources such as Native Land Digital (<https://native-land.ca/territory-acknowledgement/>), the Native Governance Center (<https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/>), GAIA Native Land Digital data (<https://blog.gaiagps.com/deepen-your-land-knowledge-with-the-new-native-land-territories-map>) to learn about and acknowledge Tribal communities of land on which we work. [STG]
- Increase opportunities for engaging Tribal communities for the purpose of discussing research protocols and collaborations with faculty and students. [STG]
- Provide training for faculty and students on Indigenous knowledge and its incorporation into research and education. [IG]
- Provide training to faculty on how to engage with Tribal communities to reduce instances where research projects relevant to Tribal communities do not involve Tribal consultation at the outset. [STG]
- Encourage continued incorporation of land acknowledgments into all formal SEFS-affiliated presentations

### 7.4.2. Metrics and Monitoring

- Undertake periodic reviews with the assistance of SEFS-affiliated Indigenous students, staff, and faculty, or with UW Intellectual House, on ways that the SEFS community can improve relationships with Tribes.