

UC Irvine Department of Chemistry Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

It is our goal to be a national leader for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in chemistry, with the Department's students, staff and faculty reaching their full potential for success while representing the diversity of the USA and California. To achieve our goals and in pursuit of this ambition, we have implemented new activities and are actively committing to new ones. The Department of Chemistry Inclusive Excellence Committee will meet on a regular basis to review and evaluate our strategic goals and progress toward said goals.

**endorsed by faculty vote on March 18, 2022*

STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1: ACCESS: Advance Department diversity at all levels

We are committed to attracting diverse talent and implementing new recruiting approaches to increase the number of BIPOC faculty, students, staff, speakers and visitors in our Department.

Action Items (*continuing*):

- 1.) Take steps to reduce the impact of implicit bias in admissions and hiring practices (began 2019-20)
 - a.) [Implicit bias training is required](#) for anyone involved in hiring and admissions
 - b.) Continued efforts: Encourage department members to complete UC Implicit Bias training modules
 - c.) Future efforts: Analyze the effect that implicit bias training has on those who have taken it
- 2.) "Blind" faculty hiring practices by de-identifying applications to minimize unconscious biases in the first stage of a two-stage review of applications. (began 2019-20)
 - a.) Future action: The process needs to be reviewed and steps need to be taken in order to increase the efficiency of the blind first stage to ensure we don't wind up behind in the process, thereby reducing our ability to recruit talented applicants. Machine learning is being considered as a potential solution to this problem.
- 3.) Improve upon holistic evaluation of graduate student's applications (began 2020-21)
 - a.) Implemented use of Slate rubrics for screening applications
 - b.) Inclusive Graduate Education Network (IGEN) training completed by DECADE faculty Advisor
 - c.) Training given to committee by DECADE Faculty Advisor (began 2019-2020)
 - d.) Future efforts: Encourage formal training for the admission committee in recruitment best practices through the [IGEN program](#)
- 4.) Remove GRE requirement for graduate applicants (effective 2020-21)
 - a.) Future Efforts: Analyze the effect of this implementation
- 5.) Promote department outreach and community engagement activities on website (began 2020-21)
 - a.) Future Efforts: Increase visibility of these activities to increase transparency about who is actively participating in DEI activities

- 6.) Provide funding for participation in diversity conferences such as NOBCChE and SACNAS (began 2020-21)
- 7.) Provide funding for faculty and graduate students to give talks at HBCU/MSI/PUIs and other institutions where outreach can be impactful and encourage professors to initiate these interactions to these institutions (began 21-22)
 - a.) Booth at NOBCChE (Began 2021)
 - b.) In collaboration with SOPS hosted a workshop at SACNAS (Began 2021)
 - c.) Funding provided by request and presentation material is made available. (Began 2021)
 - d.) Future Efforts: Formalize and publicize the availability and process
- 8.) Become an ACS Bridge Partner (effective 2021-22)
- 9.) Incorporate student participation into faculty searches
 - a.) Arrange group meeting for students and faculty candidates, and offer students opportunity to provide feedback (via feedback form) to search committee (started 2021-22)
 - b.) Follow up needed: Develop an expectation form to guide participation and mentor graduate students in the development of search committees

Action Items (*future*):

- 1.) Increase the number of student-nominated seminar speakers from a diverse cohort
- 2.) Continue to apply to become an ACS Bridge Site

Goal 2: EQUITY: Support and mentor all undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and scientific staff to attain success and reach their full potential.

Implement best practices for mentoring and career development for undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and scientific staff that promote equitable opportunities for career success.

Action Items (*continuing*):

Graduate

- 1.) Implement use of [Individual Development Plan](#) to ensure students are getting feedback from their advisors at regular intervals and are making progress toward their degrees (began 2018-19)
- 2.) Support Peer mentoring programs (began 2020-21)
 - a.) Chemistry Peer Mentoring Program: ChemUNITY
 - b.) Chemistry Teaching Assistant Mentoring Program (CTAMP)
- 3.) Enhance new graduate student orientation to better empower students (began 2018-19)
 - a.) Incorporate presentation on “Becoming anti-Racist in The Physical Sciences” (began 2020-21)
- 4.) Provide clear information on website so students are empowered (began 2018-19), such as:
 - [First Year Advising](#)
 - [Advancement to Candidacy](#)
 - [Compensation information](#)
 - [Advising information \(including process for changing research advisor\)](#)
- 5.) Add modules in Chem 200 (course taken by all first-year graduate students) on implicit bias, microaggression, and racism and gender bias in the physical sciences (began 2020)

- 6.) Support student success initiatives such as the local NOBCChE chapter, Science Champs 4 Change (e.g., lead workshop discussions, provide resources as needed/available) (began 2021-22)
- 7.) Participate in and contribute to the WDTS Outreach Consortium of Livermore Institutes and Centers
- 8.) Annually collect and review data on retention, grades, time to degree and other objective measures of success with demographics (began 2023)
- 9.) Develop and administer surveys for measurement of climate within the department for graduate students (ongoing)

Undergraduate

- 1.) Continue to investigate effective means for ensuring equity in initial placement into chemistry series (started 2019, ongoing)
- 2.) [Developed a website](#) to assist students at all levels in developing prerequisite skills to assist them in their courses (started 2021, ongoing). This is especially important to transfer students who may not have taken our undergraduate courses.
- 3.) Developed preparatory summer modules for organic chemistry (started 2019, ongoing)
- 4.) Work with the school of Biology "BioEASE" to ensure integration, cohorting, and other requirements best benefit students
- 5.) Support Peer Tutoring Program (General and Organic Chemistry) to ensure students have a variety of resources to access, especially for students who may not be comfortable asking questions of faculty and graduate students
 - a.) Recently expanded to include General Chemistry Labs
 - b.) Fellow appointed to increase oversight and quality

Faculty

- 1.) Provide two faculty mentors for each Assistant Professor (ongoing)
- 2.) Support faculty career growth
 - a.) Ensure faculty have adequate time to devote to research so they progress in their careers at normative rates (ongoing)
 - b.) When needed, incorporate faculty-initiated solutions to redistribute workloads and limit use of solutions that slow down career progression (ongoing)
- 3.) Disseminate information about UCI family friendly leave policies (ongoing)
- 4.) Form a "ChemCAP" (Chemistry Council on Academic Personnel) to ensure consistency and equity in the handling of faculty AP review actions (began 2023)
- 5.) Appoint a Vice Chair for Academic Advancement (began 2023)
- 6.) Collect data on department, school and CAP decisions to ensure equitable access to promotions and accelerations (began 2022)

Action Items (*future*):

Graduate Students

- 1.) Develop a method for tracking when students leave groups to identify problems within specific advisors or groups. Demographic variables should be included.

Faculty

- 1.) Improve efforts to better promote UCI family friendly leave policies

Undergraduate Students

- 1.) Appoint task force (faculty/Student Affairs staff/student) to make recommendations to better support transfer students (perhaps look at Chem 5 as way to enhance transfer experience or better integrate transfer student into UCI) (planned)
- 2.) Continue to update and publicize Chemistry's [Knowledge Acquisition Center](#) (KnAC) database with information for classes in other departments. For example, ESS has an environmental chemistry class. Courses across the Schools of Physical and Biological Science could be included on our website, with the Chemistry prerequisites for each.

Goal 3: INCLUSION: Sustain Department diversity by ensuring an inclusive climate for all members and visitors

Action Items (*continuing*):

- 1.) Create DEI Committee (effective 2019-20)
- 2.) Maintain [DEI resources](#) on the department website and use the space as a tool to hold the Department accountable for progress being made in this area. Post this Strategic Plan, which is intended to be a living document, that specifies efforts to date and planned activities (effective 2020-21); continue to refine and advertise diversity activities in the Strategic Plan (ongoing)
- 3.) Continue support for Physical Sciences Diversity Fellowship (provides full funding for one year to a student promoting DEI initiatives in the Department) (effective 2020-21)
- 4.) Partner with School Physical Sciences via PS AOI Coordinator
 - a.) Work with new AOI coordinator in the School of Physical Sciences Dean's Office to share ideas and promote coherent efforts across the four departments that comprise the School at the level of Vice Chairs, departmental DEI Committees, DECADE reps, and Diversity Fellows
 - b.) DEI committee chair and student (undergraduate and graduate) participation on the School of Physical Sciences' Climate Council (began 2023-24)
- 5.) Support and expand Diverse Educational Community and Doctoral Experience (DECADE) program in the Department
- 6.) Create Student advisory panel (Graduate student climate advisors comprised of DECADE reps, Diversity Fellow, and other interested students) (started 2021-2022)
- 7.) Develop and publish a Departmental [Statement of Community](#) (started 2020, ratified by faculty 2022)
- 8.) Acknowledge outstanding contributions to DEI activities in the Department with awards issued at the annual Lee Event (began 2022)

Action Items (*future*):

- 1.) Foster a culture of engagement in diversity activities by encouraging, highlighting and promoting participation whenever possible (planned)

Measures of success:

When assessing outcomes, the goal is for there to be no marked difference between populations, further we want to see improvement in outcomes for every group over time.

- 1.) In order to assess effectiveness, the DEI committee will annually review:
 - Student retention data (undergraduate and graduate) (ongoing)
 - Department awards and promotions among faculty for equity (ongoing)

- Faculty merit and promotion data using an objective set of metrics (compiled and maintained in the department) (ongoing)
 - The UCI Climate survey (inclusion.uci.edu/climatesurvey/) (ongoing)
- 2.) The DEI committee shall report on findings and make suggestions to faculty based on findings (ongoing). In the longer term, once sufficient statistics have been compiled to de-identify individuals, the department will consider making these data publicly available.
 - 3.) Retention of undergraduate students through the general chemistry series will be monitored and preparation strategies will continue to be analyzed for greatest effectiveness (ongoing)

Accountability and feedback:

- 1.) The Department will maintain this Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as a living, publicly accessible document that reports on departmental DEI activities (started 2020-21, posted publicly after faculty vote in 2022)
 - a.) The department will expand the components of the strategic plan to additional documentation for larger projects to maintain accountability and transparency
- 2.) Chair will continue monitoring feedback form and will post the link prominently on website and encourage feedback as needed (effective 2020-21)
- 3.) Continued open lines of communication via student advisory panel will be encouraged
- 4.) Department and School will continue to host Town Hall Meetings as needed (started 2020-21)