

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism Efforts at Shenandoah University Bernard J. Dunn School of Pharmacy

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Introduction

- As part of AACP's 2021-2024 Strategic Priorities, the incorporation of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism (DEIA) initiatives within pharmacy curricula as well as recruitment of diverse students, faculty, and staff is critical. These priorities promote new ideas, cultural competence, and improving patient outcomes by an understanding and awareness of social determinants of health.
- Shenandoah University Bernard J Dunn School of Pharmacy has implemented University initiatives at the School of Pharmacy (SOP), created DEIA specific structure within the SOP, and supported grassroots efforts by faculty and staff to integrate DEIA into the classroom.

University Initiatives

- In 2018 Shenandoah University created the President's Representatives for Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (PRIDE) in order to lead climate assessments and provide consultations and recommendations to senior leadership. Through coordination with PRIDE, all faculty and staff at the SOP and University are completing Racial Justice and Anti-Racism training. This training was created by University personnel and consists of a live introductory session followed by educational modules housed within our learning management system.
- The training is comprised of modules whereby faculty discussed individual/interpersonal racism, institutional and systemic racism, social and cultural racism, microaggressions, privilege, intersectionality, and race consciousness.
- Prior to each live discussion session, the faculty reviewed the modules asynchronously, watched short educational videos, and completed a discussion board post which was further discussed during the live discussion session.
- The University is repeating its Climate Survey, last completed in 2018, in the fall of 2022.

School of Pharmacy Initiatives

DEIA SOP Taskforce and Guiding Coalition

- In the academic year 2020-2021, the School's curriculum committee (SCC) was charged to review our curricular efforts and programmatic goals that support diversity and inclusivity, and prepare our students to actively contribute to the health equity of their patients.
- In order to achieve this charge, SCC formed a DEIA taskforce, which was chaired by an SCC member and had equitable representation of the SOP's faculty, staff and pharmacy students, across both campuses.
- Upon review of the curriculum, the DEIA taskforce and SCC made four recommendations related to:
 - Continuing the work of the task force as a committee of its own,
 - Incorporating DEIA into the strategic work plan,
 - Providing standing committees appropriate charges related to DEIA initiatives,
 - Setting aside time for the faculty and staff to engage with these topics.
- In January 2021, the DEIA taskforce attended the Spring 2021 AACP EDI Institute which helped them to identify initial and long-term priorities to address DEIA within the SOP. From information gained through the AACP Institute and encouragement from AACP and administration, the DEIA task force developed three long-term goals related to DEIA with areas for action to support the goal, namely:
 - Create a culture within the School that values equity, diversity, and inclusion
 - Create a pathway that supports and develops our students to be socially responsible health care practitioners,
 - Strengthen community partnerships that demonstrate active work towards improving EDI within the community.
- In August 2021, as a continuation of the DEIA taskforce, the BJSOP Guiding Coalition for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion was created. The Guiding Coalition is intended to be the champion of the University PRIDE Engagement initiatives, and act as a steward of DEIA-related strategic planning and goals within the SOP.

School of Pharmacy Initiatives - Continued

- In Spring 2022, the members of the Guiding Coalition coordinated with University PRIDE efforts, and led a series of live discussion sessions related to the University-designed Racial Justice and Anti-Racism training modules for all our School faculty and staff.
- The Guiding Coalition:
 - Consists of ten members from the faculty, staff, and student bodies,
 - Reports directly to and collaborates with the School's Executive Committee to develop a sustainable plan to address DEIA throughout the SOP,
 - Makes recommendations related to DEIA initiatives to the Executive Committee, resulting in specific charges being tasked to the SOP's other standing committees and advisory groups.
 - Works collaboratively with other SOP committees to address DEIA-related charges; and Coalition members serve as additional resources to the SOP as we seek to improve upon our commitment to diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion; and champion sustainable initiatives that support our DEIA strategic goals across all facets of the SOP.
- Current strategic priorities for the Guiding coalition consist of short and long term goals.
 - Short term goals: Increased visibility, improved use and acceptance of pronouns, a multicultural day, and provisions of syllabi templates for courses
 - Long term goals: Development of a seminar series, incorporation of DEIA into promotion and evaluation criteria, reduction of perceived or existing silos within BJSOP.

Figure 1: Timeline of DEIA taskforce and Guiding Coalition-related activities



- Though not an exhaustive list, Figure 2 highlights some of BJSOP's strategic objectives related to DEIA and its implementation. More objectives and tactics were developed by faculty and staff at a retreat in 2021 and will be officially incorporated into the school's strategic work plan.

Figure 2: BJSOP's strategic objectives related to DEIA



Grassroots Initiatives

Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE) Topic Discussions:

- Two pharmacy faculty members, one with a Master of Public Health degree, provide topic discussions focused on Social determinants of health (SDoH) for APPE students after recognizing a potential education gap in this area. Pharmacy practice faculty preceptors are informed about the discussion when it will be available during the rotation block and are invited to include their students. Discussions center around how DEIA and the circumstances in which people are born, live, work, play, and learn affect their health.

Grassroots Initiatives - Continued

Class Sessions:

- SDoH are currently taught in the second and third years of the Patient-Centered Care (PCC) course series. In the second year, the students learn the five domains of SDoH, the impact it has on patient outcomes, and the pharmacists' roles in addressing health disparities and inequities. The students then practice identifying and assessing a patient's SDoH to provide the most appropriate therapeutic recommendations. In the third year, students learn how to overcome barriers to drug costs and assess social determinants of health with assigned cases.
- In addition, 3rd-year students learn about equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice in healthcare within the PCC course series. The students are introduced to the basic definitions of diversity and inclusion, the impact of bias in American healthcare, and how they can limit this impact as healthcare professionals. The students then complete a research assignment whereby they choose and research a topic with multiple perspectives incorporating how SDoH influences their perspective.

Residency Initiatives

Residency Teaching & Learning Curriculum Program (TLCP):

- The TLCP is a year-long program designed to enhance the teaching skills of pharmacy residents. In 2021-2022, 51 participants from 23 programs completed the TLCP, which includes monthly lectures and live discussions focused on pedagogical topics. One session is dedicated to DEIA in teaching. Prior to live discussion, participants asynchronously engage with the materials provided, such as videos, podcasts, articles, etc. They are provided an Inclusive Teaching Checklist to aid in identifying barriers and biases in course-related materials and activities.
- At the live discussion, participants complete a reflective structured dialogue (RSD), a communication tool designed to enhance conversation and understanding among participants who may have diverse perspectives regarding a topic. After introductions, three questions are used to draw individuals into conversation: 1) Share about a time where you or another student's life experiences (social determinants of health) (examples: race, gender identity, sexual preferences, culture, disabilities, etc.) impacted their educational experiences within the classroom; 2) As you reflect on the experience that you just shared, what does equity, diversity, and inclusion in the classroom look like to you?; 3) As you continue to reflect, what could you add to your learning experiences to make them more inclusive and equitable for all learners? Participants have 90 seconds to think about each question and 60 seconds to voice their response. After all residents speak, they can ask each other questions, interact, and/or make observations before moving to the next question.
- The following are examples of utilized communication agreements: respect time limits, avoid interrupting, use "I" statements, "pass" for now, and ask questions and make statements rooted in genuine curiosity. Facilitators guide the RSD, manage time, and hold participants to communication agreements, but otherwise do not actively participate.

References

- American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP). 2021-2024 Strategic Plan Priorities, Goals and Objectives. (<https://www.aacp.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/aacp-strategic-plan--2021-2024.pdf>). Adopted: July 22, 2021.

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