

More Than Moving The Needle: Diversity, Inclusion, and Health Equity at the University of Florida

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OVERVIEW

Efforts to advance diversity, inclusion, and health equity (DIHE) have long been part of the University of Florida College of Pharmacy's (UFCOP) values. However, in line with developing a new strategic plan, the UFCOP renewed its endeavors. Recent efforts have been grounded in four dimensions: Community, Culture, Curriculum, and Collaboration (C⁴). The objective is to describe the implementation of UFCOP DIHE practices.

SUMMARY

Expansion of DIHE efforts across the UFCOP have generated positive results. New programs have been developed to increase access to the UFCOP and promote academic success for historically marginalized populations. The UFCOP has intentionally increased curricular content on health inequities and the pharmacist's role in alleviating them. Additionally, we have developed a cultural norm that allows thoughtful, respectful, and responsible discussion of DIHE topics across the UFCOP. Contributions to DIHE are acknowledged and valued, and are now included in annual faculty reporting.

COMMUNITY: WHO IS HERE? WHO IS NOT HERE?

Pipeline Programs

- The UFCOP has several pipeline programs to introduce the profession of pharmacy to the next generation of clinicians and researchers
- These programs span multiple target audiences and are intended to broaden our student body
- Our pipeline programs are maturing, and are now showing positive effects, as multiple students currently enrolled in the UFCOP are graduates of our pipeline programs

Student Body

- Intentional actions to enhance the student admissions process have had positive effects on the diversity of our student body
 - Holistic admissions process
 - Required diversity statement for all applicants
 - Implicit bias training for all admissions committee members and interviewers
- The UFCOP student body is the most diverse at the University, and among the most diverse in the nation
 - Under-represented minorities: 34%
 - First-generation: 25%
 - Reside in a HRSA-designated medically underserved area: 50%

Faculty Recruitment

- The UFCOP has made significant strides to enhance diversity amongst its faculty
 - Appointment of equity advisors to all faculty searches
 - Implementation of inclusive hiring practices that promote broad outreach, and assessment of candidates based on pre-defined skills, traits, and experiences needed for each position
 - Faculty diversity statement required from all applicants
- As evidence of the impact of these efforts, within the past 18 months, five new faculty from racial/ethnic under-represented backgrounds were appointed

Table 1. Description of UFCOP Pipeline Programs

UFCOP Pipeline Program	Intended Audience
Gator Pharmacy Exploration Camp (GPEC)	High School Seniors
Summer Health Professions Education Program (SHPEP)	Undergraduates
Pharmacy Early Assurance Program (PEAP)	UF Undergraduates
Keys to Success	UF Undergraduates
Summer Undergraduate Research at Florida (SURF)	Undergraduates
ReTool Summer Research Program	Undergraduates
CaRE2 Cancer Health Equity Center	Post- baccalaureate
Gator Launch Summer Bridging Program	Incoming UFCOP students
Health Equity Fellowship	Post-graduate

UFCOP Diversity Rankings

- #1** URM percentage in PharmD student body among US News and World Report Top 40 Pharmacy Schools
- #1** URM percentage in overall student body among other UF Colleges
- #2** Nationally in URM PharmD student headcount

Sources: AACP Profile of Students (Fall 2021), USNWR Best Pharmacy Schools (2020)

CURRICULUM: ARE WE DEVELOPING CULTURALLY INTELLIGENT PROFESSIONALS?

- Development of summer bridging program for incoming first-year pharmacy students to provide academic enrichment and professional development opportunities to promote academic success and retention, with particular focus on historically marginalized student populations.
- Increased curricular thread of the impact of social determinants of health and structural factors which contribute to health disparities in several disease states (e.g., cardiovascular health, diabetes, mental health, cancer)
- New health disparities elective course to increase student awareness about the unique needs of multiple vulnerable population groups and the role of the pharmacist to meet their needs
- Increased co-curricular opportunities to discuss DIHE topics with local, regional, and national leaders through UFCOP DIHE Dialogues series and other planned DIHE activities
- Faculty and staff development dedicated towards developing inclusive teaching and development of an inclusive culture within UF COP
- Inclusion of DIHE data in course quality review process
- Respect for diversity statement included in each syllabus
- Addition of items on inclusive environment on peer review of teaching and faculty/course evaluations
- Establishment of UFCOP Health Equity Fellowship

CULTURE: ARE WE WELCOMING TO EVERYONE IN THE PHARMILY?

Intentional Celebration of Our Cultural Similarities and Differences

- UFCOP Diversity Week
- Cultural Celebrations (Black History Month, Women's History Month, AAPI Heritage Month, Pride Month, Hispanic Heritage Month)
- DIHE Awareness email blasts (Ramadan, Three Kings Day, St. Patrick's Day, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Diwali, Juneteenth)

Culture of Support

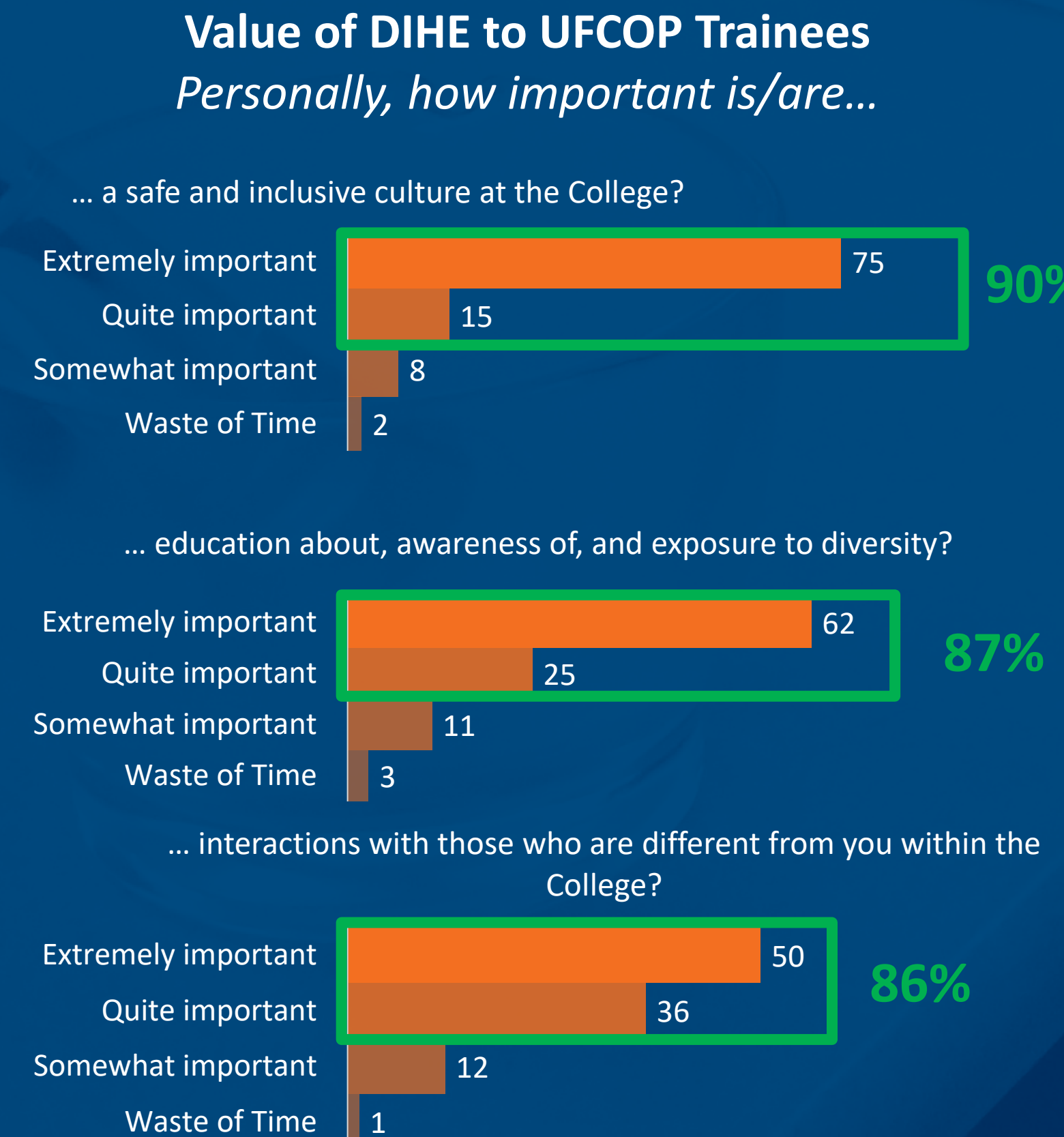
- DIHE Coordinators at each campus
- Real-time response to current events negatively impacting students through town halls and listening sessions
- Respect for diversity statement in all course syllabi

Culture of Transparency

- Development of student mistreatment report to allow for reporting of bias/discrimination incidents
- College Climate Survey with results reported to key constituent groups through town hall events

Culture of DIHE Enhancement

- Focus groups with historically marginalized student groups
- Climate Survey provided to all constituent groups
- Establishment of culturally-relevant student organizations
- Description of DIHE activities included in annual faculty report
- 2021 Insight into Diversity Health Professions HEED Award — one of three pharmacy schools to be recognized



COLLABORATION: HOW ARE WE PARTNERING TO ADVANCE DIHE?

- Developed new relationships with multiple departments and stakeholders to implement inclusive hiring processes
- Established *Excellence in Diversity Scholarships* through support from alumni, community partners, and friends of the UFCOP
- Partnership with Office of Communications to develop consistent DIHE messaging across social media and UFCOP website
- Collaborated with local SNPhA chapters to raise over \$2000 for local food banks during Hunger Action Month
- Partnered with Office of Student Affairs to facilitate increased student organization engagement in DIHE activities through Dean's Matching Funds
- Worked with the Office of Faculty Development to host workshop on cultivating an inclusive classroom environment
- Engaged with partners in Gainesville, Orlando, and Jacksonville regions to enhance health disparities research efforts
- Partnering with UFCOP Marketing and Recruitment teams to develop intentional recruitment strategies for underrepresented minorities
- Partnering with Office of Continuing Education to develop UFCOP DIHE Certificate