



CAMPUS CLIMATE PROGRESS REPORT – FALL 2020



Since we last updated campus on UW–Madison’s diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, our campus, community, state and nation have reacted to the senseless killings of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd and the shooting of Jacob Blake in nearby Kenosha at the hands of police. As [Chancellor Blank recently said](#), “We have seen an outpouring of millions of voices demanding justice and equity for Americans who are Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC). Our university has been one focus of those demands. It is incumbent upon all of us to re-examine our commitments to racial justice and marshal the energy and resources to do more and better.”

This report shares new and expanded commitments on equity and inclusion as well as important progress on efforts that were already under way. All of these efforts continue to build on the goals (referenced below) of the campus [Diversity Framework](#) and its implementation plan, [R.E.E.L. Change](#).

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

\$10 MILLION FUNDRAISING EFFORT INITIATED: In partnership with the university, the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association is developing a fundraising initiative to raise at least \$10 million in new private gifts to recruit a more diverse group of students, faculty and staff and to build a campus culture that welcomes and retains all groups, particularly people of color.

Goal Four: *Improve institutional access through effective recruitment of diverse students, faculty, staff and through effective relationship building with the wider community.* **Goal Five:** *Improve institutional success through improved retention.*

TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM EXPANDED: 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 individuals who will enhance a department’s quality and diversity. To date, the Office of the Provost has approved 70 recruitment proposals from colleges and schools across campus and 32 faculty have been hired.

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EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE SUPPORT PROGRAM CREATED: The new [Exceptional Service Support Program](#) is designed to acknowledge and support the disproportionate service that some faculty members, especially those from historically underrepresented groups, are asked to make to the university. Such service promotes the university’s interest by having a broad range of perspectives represented on important committees, engaged in governance, and taking on roles to support the university as an inclusive institution.

Goal Five: *Improve institutional success through improved retention.*

IDENTITY AND INCLUSION

OFFICE OF INCLUSION EDUCATION CREATED: The Office of Inclusion Education was formed within Student Affairs in August 2020 to centralize and expand diversity, inclusion, and social justice education efforts and simplify the ways that schools and colleges can engage students in the effort. Inclusion Education brings together areas where inclusion work is already taking place, including [Our Wisconsin](#), [social justice programming](#), and the [Social Justice Hub](#). Creation of the new office resulted from conversations with diverse student leaders including the Student Inclusion Coalition, Wisconsin Black Student Union, and others who shared their experiences and helped develop strategies to improve the campus climate.

Goal Two: *Improve coordination of campus diversity planning.*

OUR WISCONSIN PROGRAM EXPANSION: Our Wisconsin, an online education program that encourages students to contribute to an inclusive campus community and celebrate each other's backgrounds and identities, was developed in 2016 as a series of in-person workshops for students living in residence halls. Our Wisconsin was revamped as a fully virtual experience in fall 2020, joining AlcoholEdu (alcohol awareness and prevention) and U Got This! (sexual assault and dating violence prevention) as a package of online education programs required for all first year and transfer students. The program is also being made available to schools, colleges and other campus units for use with other student populations.

Goal One: *Promote shared values of diversity and inclusion.* **Goal Two:** *Improve coordination of campus diversity planning.*

BLACK CULTURAL CENTER FUNDRAISER COMPLETED: Student Affairs launched a campaign to raise funds for the Black Cultural Center. The two-week social media effort raised \$18,411 from 269 donors to support student programming and initiatives that uplift and affirm the voices, experiences, and dynamic lives of Black undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.

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ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PLAN UNVEILED: This fall, the Athletic Department launched a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan. Priorities include establishing a framework to facilitate a diverse and inclusive culture for student-athletes, staff, coaches, administration, campus partners and community stakeholders and providing programming and support for diversity-related efforts within the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics.

Goal One: *Promote shared values of diversity and inclusion.*

TRAINING AND RESEARCH

2020 DIVERSITY FORUM PLANNED: The UW–Madison 2020 Diversity Forum — the university's premier conference on diversity, equity and inclusion — will be held virtually this year on October 27–28. This year's forum, "The Pandemic Effect: Exposing Racism and Inequities," will explore a convergence of contemporary issues from racial equity and social justice to disparities in health care and white privilege during two full days of speakers and interactive sessions. The virtual event is open to the public. On opening day, the keynote speaker will be [Robin DiAngelo](#), author of the bestseller [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism](#). On Day 2, the keynote speaker will be [Austin Channing Brown](#), author of the bestseller [I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness](#). In conjunction with the Forum, the Division of Diversity, Equity and Educational Achievement launched a campus and community wide Diversity Read Program to promote facilitated Book Club discussions across campus.

Goal One: *Promote shared values of diversity and inclusion.* **Goal Three:** *Engage the campus leadership for diversity and inclusion.*

NEW RESEARCH FUNDING: [The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education](#) is providing \$1 million in research funding in this academic year to support faculty whose research helps us understand race in America, including the public health impacts of racial, social, economic and political inequalities. Particular preference will be given to scholars who have new projects that require seed funding to make a project more competitive for outside funding, creative projects that involve interdisciplinary teams, and projects with the potential to generate real-world implications for combating racism and its adverse effects.

Goal Five: *Improve institutional success through improved retention.*

MULTICULTURAL INITIATIVES MANAGER HIRED: In September, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education (OVRGE) hired a multicultural initiatives manager to strengthen graduate student recruitment and retention for all graduate programs. This reimagined role in the Graduate School Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Funding will expand existing programs and create new initiatives focused on graduate student recruitment and retention.

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COMMITMENT TO THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY

DIVERSITY DATABASE EXPANDED: The Division of Diversity, Equity and Educational Achievement has improved and expanded the [UW–Madison Diversity Inventory](#) database by adding a new website that tracks the campus’s progress toward creating a more inclusive community. The Diversity Inventory is a centralized online database of campus diversity programs, events, and services that strives to increase awareness of existing resources, enhance coordination of activities among campus partners, and efficiently collect and report diversity-related data. It was created following recommendations from the campuswide Diversity Framework. .

Goal Two: *Improve coordination of campus diversity planning.*

COVID-19 EMERGENCY AID DISBURSED: Since the onset of the pandemic in March, UW–Madison has disbursed well over \$13M in emergency aid to students through grants. Nearly \$10M of the grant money came from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The rest came from divisions, colleges, schools and units on campus. Going forward, additional emergency aid is available directly through the Office of Student Financial Aid and through other units on campus. Most of this emergency aid is in the form of institutional loans, although crisis grants also are available. Students can find more information on emergency options at financialaid.wisc.edu/emergencysupport.

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UWPD COMMITS TO RACIAL EQUITY INITIATIVE: In June, the UW–Madison Police Department announced its [Racial Equity Initiative](#), a comprehensive plan to identify, adopt, and continually assess needed changes within the department. A core goal is to ensure that the department demonstrates its commitment to racial justice in policing in ways that are meaningful to members of the community, particularly those from marginalized groups. The plan will: solicit and collect feedback; review departmental policies and practices through a workgroup of external and internal stakeholders; share results of this review with the public; and install a long-term accountability mechanism that is transparent and easily accessible to the public.

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PUBLIC HISTORY PROJECT PROGRESS: The [UW–Madison Public History Project](#) works to uncover and give voice to the histories of discrimination and resistance on campus, a task which seems more urgent and necessary than ever. It recently finished its first full year of research. In the past year, the History Corps, comprised of graduate and undergraduate student researchers, spent more than 450 hours doing archival research, combing through 110 cubic feet of archival material. They also completed 91 oral history interviews with students, faculty, alumni, and administrators, collecting 164 hours of audio. All of this research gets us closer to understanding and reckoning with our history. Throughout the next academic year, the project will engage the campus community by participating in class visits, public presentations, and listening sessions. It will also continue to release new research through a [blog](#) on the project website and through Instagram (@uwpublichistoryproject).

Goal Three: *Engage the campus leadership for diversity and inclusion.*

ONGOING COMMITMENTS

UW–Madison’s diversity efforts touch every corner of campus – all of our divisions, schools, colleges and units are key contributors to this institutional mission. In each Campus Climate Progress Report, we highlight several examples of these successful, ongoing diversity initiatives.

PRECOLLEGE ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM FOR LEARNING EXCELLENCE (PEOPLE): PEOPLE is a precollege program designed for low-income and prospective first-generation college students. It works with students, families, teachers and counselors to provide the sustained individual attention critical for students to be prepared academically, psychologically and culturally to succeed at college. The program has grown to over 1,300 students in the pipeline ranging from 8th graders to college seniors. Ninety-four percent of PEOPLE high school graduates enroll in higher education, and 253 students from Milwaukee have graduated from UW–Madison through the PEOPLE program. .

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BUSINESS EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAM (BEL): The Business Emerging Leaders Program is a Wisconsin School of Business signature program designed to recruit and retain students from historically underrepresented backgrounds. The program, which provides full-tuition scholarships for four years, helps participants know what to expect – and how to be successful – when they begin their college careers.

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ODYSSEY PROJECT: The award-winning UW–Madison Odyssey Project takes a whole-family approach to breaking the cycle of generational poverty through access to education, giving adult and youth learners a voice, and increasing confidence through reading, writing, and speaking. In Odyssey, adults living near the poverty level are offered a chance to start college for free by taking a six-credit, two-semester English literature course in South Madison. UW–Madison faculty members introduce students to great works of literature, philosophy, history, and art and help them improve skills in writing and critical thinking. In class, students read, write about, and engage in lively discussions of Emily Dickinson, Martin Luther King, Walt Whitman, Shakespeare, Lorraine Hansberry, and more. This inspirational project has empowered more than 500 low-income adults to find their voices and get a jump start at earning college degrees they never thought possible. Some graduates of the program have journeyed from homelessness to UW–Madison degrees, or from incarceration to meaningful work in the community.

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CENTER FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE: The Center for Academic Excellence provides an enriching, inclusive community and academic support for students in the College of Letters & Science who have been historically underrepresented in higher education, including first-generation and low-income students and students of color. CAE offers a variety of engagement opportunities, including advising, tutoring programs, health and wellness events, social events, graduate school preparation and connections with high impact life-changing opportunities.

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GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLARS: Graduate Research Scholars (GRS) communities are organized by various schools and colleges within UW–Madison to provide professional development opportunities and community gatherings to underrepresented graduate students. Strong faculty and peer support augment funding provided by Advanced Opportunity Fellowship, WARF and other sources of support. GRS programs now include: Business, Education, Engineering, Environmental Studies, L&S, Nursing, Human Ecology and a Science and Medicine GRS.

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TOMORROW'S EDUCATORS FOR EQUITY IN MADISON (TEEM): In an effort to prepare students for college and careers in education, the School of Education continues to partner with the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) through its Forward Madison Collaborative to facilitate the goal of recruiting a diverse pool of MMSD students who have an interest in improving the educational opportunities for all students in MMSD. Students participate in summer and academic year programming, including tutoring and college-level coursework, and they take part in teaching internships, working to earn the Wisconsin Youth Leadership Certificate.

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THE DISCUSSION PROJECT: Engaging discussions can be rewarding and memorable activities. At the same time, classroom discussion is a challenging pedagogical undertaking, requiring an instructor to orchestrate learning among a group of students who likely do not know each other and come from a diversity of backgrounds and values. The Discussion Project draws upon the most recent research on classroom discussions in higher education, offering participants training and consultation services in the use of effective facilitation strategies.

Goal One: *Promote shared values of diversity and inclusion.*

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 9.4 percent in 2010 to 10.8 percent of the student body in 2019.
- During the same period, the presence of faculty of color has increased from 17 percent to 23 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 this world safe for all. Together, we have the power to heal, the power to work for justice, and the power to make meaningful change.