

Genome Sciences DEI Committee

Annual Report 2021-2022

The Department of Genome Sciences DEI committee consists of the following members: Brian Beliveau, Andria Ellis, Shawn Fayer, Doug Fowler, Brian Giebel, Kelley Harris, Hannah Jordt, Atom Lesiak, Serena Newhall, Eva Nichols, Bill Noble, Devin Schweppe, and Abbey Thorpe. The committee met on a monthly basis during the 2021-2022 academic year, September through June. Brian Beliveau chaired the committee September through December, and Bill Noble chaired the committee starting in January.

The committee consists of four subcommittees, each with its own lead and members. We have summarized the work of the DEI committee with respect to these subcommittees, though the divisions between them are sometimes fluid.

Administration

Bill, Doug, Brian B

- We worked with Maureen Larsen and Beth Hammermeister to create gender neutral bathrooms on the ground floor and third floor of the Foege Building. As of this June, this work is nearly complete, pending delivery of a few more items for the stalls.
- We are collaborating with Prof. Mala Htun, University of New Mexico, on the development of quality of life surveys for STEM disciplines in academia. Prof. Htun has an existing NSF award in this area, and we aim to add the University of Washington as an additional study site.
- The committee submitted an application for the UW Office of Graduate School Equity and Excellence for a Graduate Excellence Award. This application was successful, and the department was awarded three quarters of funding for an incoming under-represented minority student.
- The faculty members in the DEI committee worked on revamping the appointments and promotion criteria for genome sciences, to move the text describing “Professional Conduct” and “Diversity and Equity” to the top of the document and to ensure that the text there is consistent with the department’s previously adopted mission statement. These revisions were approved at the May faculty meeting.
- Serena Newhall added language about DEI commitments to job postings, job descriptions, and appointment letters.
- The committee solicited feedback from graduate students about the recently revised format for the departmental research reports presentations and subsequent faculty feedback sessions. Some minor adjustments were made to the format, and we are planning additional revisions to be rolled out in the fall.

Education

Hannah, Shawn, Kelley, Atom

- With funding from the HHMI Gilliam Fellows program, we invited two early career scientists to give seminars at Genome Sciences, Dr. Iren Chen (MIT) and Dr. Nicolas Altamose (Berkeley).
- Two members of the committee (Bill Noble and Atom Lesiak) participated in the Facilitating Entering Mentoring training, run by the University of Wisconsin Madison Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research. The training occurred in April and consisted of six two-hour sessions. On the basis of this training, Atom and Bill co-facilitated a series of mentoring workshops for GS faculty in May. The four two-hour sessions were attended by nine GS faculty members.
- Hannah Jordt led two training sessions for GS TAs. This training was required for TAs in 361 and 371, but was open to the department and attended by other GS TAs and TAs from the MCB program, as well as department faculty, postdocs, undergraduates, and staff (31 individuals in total). The sessions focused on evidence-based pedagogy and inclusive teaching, highlighting various strategies for increasing equity in the classroom.
- The committee worked on expanding the section of the GS website that provides guidance for prospective graduate students before and during the application process. Maitreya and Brian Giebel received very positive feedback on these changes from applicants, some of whom said our program now has the most helpful website of all the programs to which they had applied.
- Members of the DEI committee received feedback from graduate students about the revisions to Research Reports format. As a result of this feedback, further changes were made, including having only one graduate student at a time in the room during faculty feedback. Several other changes will be rolled out in the fall.
- In fall of 2021 the DEI Symposia continued with two sessions discussing Beronda Montgomery's book *Lessons from Plants*.

Community

Serena, Andria, Eva

- Members of the DEI committee gave an overview of our activities at the departmental retreat, and we helped to organize a DEI activity (the "culture box") on the second day of the retreat.
- Serena Newhall continues to maintain the [Genome Sciences Anonymous Incident Report](#) system. We had one submission this year. In general, GS-AIR reports are handled by Serena and, as appropriate, discussed with the department chair or members of the DEI committee.
- The committee organized a departmental town hall meeting during winter quarter, focused on working parents and caregiving, with external speaker Christina Owen.
- The committee continues to host a weekly community-building lunch series, "Genome Sciences Community Lunches and Life Stories," on Mondays 12-1pm. One highlight was the life stories session from affiliate faculty member and Nobel prizewinner, Lee Hartwell.

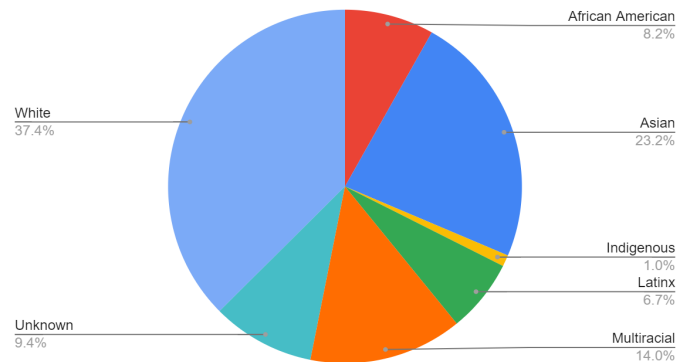
- In the spring, we initiated a monthly series of faculty-led outings (FLOs), with two birding expeditions, a bagels and bicycle tour (rained out but to be rescheduled), and more FLOs in the works.
- Members of the DEI committee began disseminating a monthly email that summarizes upcoming DEI-related events in the department and elsewhere at the UW.
- The DEI book group continues to meet twice monthly to discuss books, articles, videos, podcasts, and other media related to DEI topics.

Outreach

Devin, Brian G, Atom

- Members of the DEI committee have organized this year's Wednesday Evening at the Genome series, which is scheduled to happen in three sessions in July and August. The DNA Cafe Ice Cream Social is an immersive genomics restaurant experience in which guests learn about genomics by modeling the central dogma by expressing (and enjoying) ice cream sundae genes.
- We continue to maintain connections with Edmonds Community College (Haley Benjamins) and Heritage College (Robert Kao). We're looking to expand this to make a unified program that can be offered at multiple institutions and engage a wider group of aspiring scientists. We have 30+ members of the GS department who have volunteered to be interviewees for college students at Edmonds. The STEM 100 course has broad appeal and a diverse STEM student body:

Enrollment by race/ethnicity, Fall 2020



"I think an interview with the person who has the job that I am interested in is the most valuable activity during this quarter...The knowledge that I learned is different when I do research online by myself...the information that I got from this interview helped me to decide what I will be in the future."

As we return to in person events we will look to expand these interactions through continued one-on-one meetings as well as panel discussions and informal interactions.