

## Text for Spring 2022 Update Email

Subject: Update from the Nutrition Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee

Dear Nutrition faculty, staff, and students,

The department's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee would like to begin communicating formal updates about the committee and the department's efforts. **The 2020-2021 DEI Committee** created a complete Action Plan with 16 recommendations (Action Steps) to support the diversity and climate of inclusiveness within the Department of Nutrition. The Action Plan is located here: [DEI-Action-Plan-Report-January-2022.pdf \(unc.edu\)](#).

**The 2021-2022 DEI Committee** voted on the top 3 specific recommendations to address in this academic year. Based on the results, three workgroups were created to address these priorities. Each member of the DEI Committee selected into one workgroup.



### **TRAINING (RECOMMENDATION #1)**

*Promote opportunities for faculty, staff and students to be prepared to talk about race, racism, and how to dismantle racist cultures and structures.* This workgroup is currently developing a plan to improve staff, student and faculty's ability to understand, talk about and teach about racism while creating a supportive and inclusive environment. Proposed steps include planning faculty discussions to have conversations about recent anti-racism trainings and identified relevant literature. There is a larger question of needed resources available to fund trained facilitators to hold trainings, workgroups, and/or moderate conversations. A proposal for departmental funding is being developed to obtain outside training in the early Fall.



### **CREATING COMMUNICATIONS PIPELINE (RECOMMENDATION #7)**

*Establish a communication pipeline for all DEI related efforts.* The initial goals of this workgroup are to increase the transparency of the work of the DEI committee and workgroups on advancing the anti-racist goals of the department to students, faculty, staff, and external entities. To do this, this workgroup enhanced the information provided on the Nutrition DEI website, initiated a process for sending recap emails that communicate the work of the DEI committee to the department, and recommended the establishment of a communications officer (or multiple) to facilitate communication each academic year, particularly as workgroups change in future years.



### **LOWER FINANCIAL BARRIERS (RECOMMENDATION #13)**

*Lower financial barriers to applicants to the nutrition department degree programs.* The primary goal is to establish a way to eliminate the financial burden of the application fee for many applicants. This workgroup has started a Fee Scholarship for the PhD application fee that has been implemented for the 2022 Academic Year application pool. Applicants who are approved for the Fee Scholarship have the fee waived prior to submission, such that they do not incur any costs. Future steps will include sharing the success of this scholarship with school leadership so that efforts

## DEI Committee Monthly Recaps

might be made to establish a scholarship for MPH application fees, which must be undertaken schoolwide.

We will share the final results of each workgroup at the end of this academic year, in addition to the next actions steps that will be addressed in the next academic year. We welcome feedback at any time. You can always reach out to us by emailing: [nutr\\_dei@office.unc.edu](mailto:nutr_dei@office.unc.edu)

### **Providing Anonymous Feedback:**

The Office of Student Affairs at Gillings School of Public Health has created a centralized student feedback and equity concerns form. This [form](#) can be used to provide any student feedback on your experience as a student at Gillings or concerns relating to any incidents in which racial or equity-related bias (microaggressions) occurred. Once submitted, the form will be first directed to the staff within the Office of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Affairs team will then be responsible for directing the feedback or concern to the appropriate department(s). In the context of the Nutrition DEI Committee, any feedback or concerns can be submitted through this form which will be directed to the Department Chair and the Co-Chairs of the Nutrition DEI Committee. This form may be submitted anonymously.

The Nutrition DEI Committee

Chairs: Delisha Stewart, Kimberly Truesdale, Molly De Marco