

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
University Senate Resolution
on Improving Retention of Faculty, Staff, and Students of Color at UW-Eau Claire

WHEREAS, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) is a “top priority” of our campus¹; and

WHEREAS, improving campus climate will be essential to retaining students of color; and

WHEREAS, increasing our retention of students of color will be essential to meeting the Chancellor’s retention goals; and

WHEREAS, recruiting students of color will be increasingly essential to UW-Eau Claire’s long-term future as the percentage of non-Hispanic whites in Wisconsin and the United States at large continues to decline; and

WHEREAS, a significant amount of peer-reviewed research shows that having instructors/faculty of color provides unique benefits to students of color;² and

WHEREAS, instructors and faculty of color are normally called upon to invest greater time and emotional energy into mentoring students of color, creating a “minority tax” for uneven service burden (particularly for those who are the only faculty member in their program); and

WHEREAS, the principles of EDI have now been integrated into Department Evaluation Plans and are included in the evaluations of employees in reappointment, tenure, and promotion decisions; and

WHEREAS, beyond Tier 2 and 3 EDI trainings, little institutional support exists for helping faculty and academic staff integrate EDI more deeply into their teaching, scholarship, and service; and

WHEREAS, On September 30, 2019, the UWEC Student Senate unanimously passed a resolution, “In Condemnation of Racism within our Campus Community,” which “calls upon its administration to take deliberate and decisive action that seeks to provide education and resources that exposes students to diverse backgrounds and can foster an inclusive and equitable environment for its students, faculty, staff, and administration;”

¹ <https://www.uwec.edu/diversity/>

² For a discussion of this literature, see Cherng, Hua-Yu Sebastian and Peter F. Halpin. 2016. “The Importance of Minority Teachers.” *Educational Researcher*, 45, 7, pp. 407-420.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.3102/0013189X16671718>

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, the University Senate supports the addition of the following objectives to the Chancellor's Investment Framework, as described in the "Resolution in Support of the Chancellor's Investment Framework" (introduced at the October 8, 2019 meeting of University Senate):

- Strengthen our ability to retain faculty, staff, and students of color
- Create a more just, inclusive, and equitable learning environment for students of color
- Create a more just, inclusive, and equitable working environment for university employees of color

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the University Senate calls on administrators, faculty, and staff at UW-Eau Claire to invest resources and take specific actions to accomplish the above objectives, such as:

- The creation of an EDI Research and Service Fellowship, modeled on the University Research and Creative Activity (URCA) grant administered through ORSP, which would provide faculty and academic staff with time reassignment, stipends, and project support for scholarly, creative, and service work that makes significant contributions to advancing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity
- The creation of an EDI Teaching Fellowship, which would provide faculty and academic staff with time reassignment, stipends, and project support for Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) projects or pedagogical training that makes significant contributions to advancing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- The creation of a day-long Opening Convocation, or gateway experience, for all incoming first-year and transfer students during Blugold Welcome Week (prior to the start of the fall semester) that would introduce incoming students to our campus's shared values in an academic setting and that would aim to build an academic culture of inclusive excellence
- The creation of a Retention Working Group to identify barriers to retention for faculty and staff of color at UWEC
- The creation of a retention plan for faculty and staff of color
- The (cluster) hiring of additional faculty to bolster the interdisciplinary programs of American Indian Studies, Critical Hmong Studies, Latin American Studies, and Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies