Women in Science and Engineering

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan | FY 2024

Strategic Plan Overview

From being one of the first universities to admit women in 1870 to our historic defense of race conscious admission policies at the U.S. Supreme Court in 2003, the University of Michigan has had a fierce and longstanding commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This commitment rests upon our recognition of the history in the United States of racial, ethnic, and gender discrimination as well as our understanding that our progress as an institution of higher learning will be enhanced with a vibrant community of people from many backgrounds.

To further promote our mission and values regarding diversity, equity and inclusion, the University will engage in strategic planning. Each school, college or unit is responsible for overseeing a high-quality engaging planning process that results in a five-year plan for diversity, equity and inclusion covering all of the key constituents (e.g. students, staff, faculty, alumni, patients) in their school, college or unit.

Values:
- We must act with deliberateness and humility as we seek to respect and leverage diversity, ensure equity, and promote inclusion.
- We must examine and learn from the outcomes of our past efforts and work to improve them.
- We must act on our commitment, in accordance with the law, to contribute to a just society and to affirm the humanity of all persons.

Goals [Diversity Equity & Inclusion]:
Diversity – We commit to increasing diversity, which is expressed in myriad forms, including race and ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, language, culture, national origin, religious commitments, age, (dis)ability status, and political perspective.

Equity – We commit to working actively to challenge and respond to bias, harassment, and discrimination. We are committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status.

Inclusion – We commit to pursuing deliberate efforts to ensure that our campus is a place where differences are welcomed, different perspectives are respectfully heard and where every individual feels a sense of belonging and inclusion. We know that by building a critical mass of diverse groups on campus and creating a vibrant climate of inclusiveness, we can more effectively leverage the

resources of diversity to advance our collective capabilities.

Rationale [Mission, Vision, Values of WISE]:
The Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) program was created with a DEI objective – diversifying and supporting the women at University of Michigan who were pursuing STEM degrees and careers – back in 1980. Although gender diversity has improved in *some* STEM disciplines, there is ample evidence that inclusion and equity in STEM have not yet been obtained even in those disciplines. Additionally, the relative percentages of women and men in a discipline is only one metric of diversity and does not reflect the multitude of identities that STEM learners hold.

The WISE team is compelled to develop a DEI strategic plan as part of DEI 2.0 both to fulfill our fundamental objective but also to ensure that we are taking a holistic, intersectional approach to our work. The WISE leadership also recognizes that equity "starts at home," and that for the team to best support, among others, women and non-binary STEM learners at U-M, WISE must be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace.

Key Strategies & Constituencies*:
WISE is currently charged with supporting STEM learners at all levels on campus. Given that charge, our key constituencies for this strategic plan include WISE Staff and STEM learners. Our objectives aren't altered when looking at how we support undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or postdoctoral scholars, so we grouped all into the constituency group "STUDENTS."

Given the outsize role that faculty members play in the experience of students/learners on campus, WISE identified products that we could create for *faculty* that could improve the experiences of STEM learners, particularly those from marginalized communities/identity groups. One strategic objective within the Product category of distal objectives, therefore, is focused on faculty members.

The key themes of our DEI strategic plan are intersectionality and empowerment. Paraphrasing what a member of the leadership team for the Program on Intergroup Relations once said, "All power and privilege are relative. Given each of our respective sets of identities, we may sometimes need help and we may sometimes be in the position to help." Our key strategies, therefore, focus on
- ensuring our programs (which are open to all, regardless of gender identity) are inclusively and equitably supportive of, in particular women and non-binary learners in STEM, placing an emphasis on meeting students of color, first-gen students, and others with marginalized backgrounds "where they are," and
- empowering WISE staff and faculty to be advocates for STEM equity in all the contexts in which they work and live.

All strategic objectives and related actions will be pursued in accordance with the law and University policy.

Planning Process Used

Planning Lead(s):
Rachel Niemer, Managing Director of WISE, and Victoria Alden, Program Officer for WISE, were the DEI planning leads during 2022-2023.

Planning Team:
The Planning Team for the WISE DEI Strategic Plan included the entire WISE staff and one affiliated staff member from College of Engineering:
- Eric Aiken, Program Manager, College of Engineering
- Rachel Barnes, Project & Event Manager, WISE
- Melissa Gross, Faculty Director, WISE
- Ronotta Holliday, Senior Administrative Assistant, WISE

Planning Process Summary:
There were three key components to the WISE DEI strategic planning process:
1. Engage with STEM learners on campus.
   a. Utilize our Student Programming Board as one sample group of STEM learners
   b. Bring other STEM learners into the conversation via events in our semesterly programming.
2. Create opportunities for WISE staff to identify and share their ideas and concerns.
3. Synthesize themes, concerns, and opportunities brought forth by both key constituencies.

Given the small size of the WISE staff – 3.5 FTE, plus a staff collaborator from the College of Engineering and a Faculty Director from the School of Kinesiology – we were unable to collect quantitative data on staff ideas and concerns.

A similar challenge was faced when engaging learners for the planning process. WISE participants come from a range of schools/colleges/departments and developmental stages, and we want to avoid assuming students are speaking for others in their department(s) or research area(s). In lieu of quantitative data, WISE staff aggregated key themes and concerns shared with us during two events open to the campus community (November 9, 2022 and January 14, 2023) and two Student Programming Board meetings (November 15, 2022 and March 6, 2023).

The events in November and January were titled, "From Individual Action to Institutional Change." At each session, the WISE facilitator described different times in U-M history when students were able to collectively change the University in some key way. The facilitator then posed questions to the workshop participants about what aspects of the University have they, individually, identified as needing change, especially with respect to the experience of women and non-binary learners in STEM.

The March 2023 event built off the themes identified by workshop participants in the first three events. We asked the WISE Student Programming Board members to brainstorm answers to two questions:

1. What are the pain points for succeeding in STEM for women and non-binary learners right now? What supports might help those learners, among others, thrive in STEM?
2. Whose voices might WISE be missing as we engage our planning for the future?

WISE staff members discussed the answers the Student Programming Board provided to those two questions along with the themes identified at the initial three events to converge on a set of potential strategic objectives for the DEI leads to work from.

Data and Analysis: Key Findings

Summary of Data:
To preserve the anonymity and confidentiality of learners who participated in our community engagement sessions, key themes and insights were noted, without attribution, by WISE staff during the relevant Student Programming Board meetings and open community events. Additionally, WISE does not have access to climate data from or detailed demographic data about their staff. To develop this strategic plan, the DEI leads grouped similar concerns together along with similar suggestions given by event participants. We then discussed our priorities to finalize the strategic objectives.

Key Findings, Themes and Recommendations:
The key themes of our DEI strategic plan are intersectionality and empowerment. Our key strategies, therefore, focus on
- ensuring our programs (which are open to all, regardless of gender identity) are inclusively and equitably supporting in particular women and non-binary learners in STEM, placing an emphasis on meeting students of color, first-gen students, and others with marginalized backgrounds "where they are," and
- empowering WISE staff and faculty to be advocates for STEM equity in all of the contexts in which they work and live.

Strategic Objectives, Measures of Success, and Action Plans*

Introduction:
The WISE plan primarily covers U-M STEM students and our internal staff, with some consideration for how we might develop resources for faculty members to best support students, particularly women and non-binary learners in STEM. The strategic objectives needed to further the university-wide goals of diversity, equity and inclusion have been aggregated into three distal objectives determined by the University. Each of these strategic objectives is accompanied by metrics that will be tracked over time, as well as descriptions of single and multiple year actions we will take to accomplish those objectives. For additional detail on assignments, timelines, and accountabilities, see the Action Planning Table.

*All strategic objectives and related actions will be pursued in accordance with the law and University policy.

PEOPLE (Recruit, Retain & Develop a Diverse Community)

Strategies and action items for **People** are designed to bolster and extend the work of all units by introducing effective programs and procedures aimed at recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse campus community. DEI-related recruitment and retention efforts across campus reflect the varied needs and goals of specific units and groups.

STUDENTS
Strategic Objective 1:
Seek a demographically diverse population of students who participate in WISE programs and collect feedback on gaps in support that WISE could fill and that might benefit, in particular, women and non-binary students in STEM.

Metrics:
- Relative percentages of White students and BIPOC students of any gender (as identified through the LARC data set) attending WISE events.
- Relative percentages of students who self-identify as first-gen students.
- WISE meetings with units and recognized student groups focused on supporting the needs of, in particular, students of color, first-gen students, and students from other marginalized groups.
  Development of a list of perceived gaps in support for STEM success that impact women and non-binary learners, among others, that WISE might fill.

Actions:
- Action Item 1: Assess the demographics of students whom we have worked with in recent semesters to identify opportunities to increase the diversity of students engaging with WISE programming and services.
- Action Item 2: Actively connect with units who serve, among others, students of color, first-gen students, transfer students, and other student groups who are under-represented in STEM to promote WISE programming and to recruit a broadly diverse set of students to participate in WISE programs.

Primary DEI Goal: Diversity

STAFF
Strategic Objective 2:
Recruit a broadly diverse set of regular and temporary staff members for our team.

Metrics:
- Completion status (and date) of each WISE staff member or search committee member for the Implicit Bias in Hiring module.
- Number (as well as names) of channels/locations any temporary or regular staff job posting is promoted.

Actions:
- Action Item 1: When there is a need to hire, ensure all members of WISE staff (and any other

search committee members) have taken the implicit bias in hiring modules within the last 18 months.

- Action Item 2: All postings for regular staff or temporary student staff will be promoted broadly to promote recruitment of a diverse applicant pool.
- Action Item 3: Minimize any exclusive language in our job postings by utilizing the tools provided by HR Recruiting for crafting inclusive postings.

Primary DEI Goal: Diversity

PROCESS (Create an Equitable and Inclusive Campus Climate)

Strategies and action items for **Process** are designed to support and strengthen the development of policies, procedures, and practices that create an inclusive and equitable campus climate and encourage a culture of belonging in which every member of our community can grow and thrive.

STAFF
Strategic Objective 1:
WISE Staff will feel prepared and empowered to engage with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion within our unit, elsewhere on campus, and in our broader community.

Metrics:
- The percent of WISE staff attending each DEI professional development session will be tracked.
- WISE staff pre- and post-workshop self-assessments of preparation to engage with relevant issues of DEI.

Actions:
- Action Item 1: One WISE staff meeting per year will focus on conflict resolution skills and relevant conflict resolution avenues available on campus.
- Action Item 2: Annually, WISE staff will collectively determine their top 3 priorities for professional development around DEI.
- Action Item 3: WISE Leadership will arrange for (at least) three professional development sessions for the WISE team, focusing on the priority topics determined by WISE staff.

Primary DEI Goal: Inclusion and Equity

Strategic Objective 2:
WISE staff will receive preparation to advance in their chosen career path(s).

Metrics:
- An equity audit of funds spent on professional development for each staff member.
- Number and names of professional development experiences pursued by each WISE staff member.

Actions:

- Action Item 1: At least once during the year, use staff meeting time to discuss how WISE staff can identify and access professional development opportunities.
- Action Item 2: The Managing Director will check in about short-, medium-, and long-term career goals with each staff member affiliated with WISE at least twice a year. One of those check-ins will be part of the annual performance review process.

Primary DEI Goal: Equity

PRODUCTS (Support Innovative and Inclusive Teaching, Research, and Service)

Strategies and action items for **Products** are designed to integrate DEI solutions into our educational program offerings and teaching methodology, and to ensure scholarly research on diversity, equity and inclusion, and the scholars who produce it, are valued and supported.

FACULTY
Strategic Objective 1:
WISE will be a resource for STEM faculty who are interested in creating more gender equity on campus and in their fields.

Metrics:
- Using Google Analytics, we will track views of this content on the WISE website.
- Faculty advisory board survey responses regarding both the utility of faculty resource pages and suggestions for changes/additions

Actions:
- Action Item 1: Add new content to the WISE website on how faculty can become co-conspirators for equity in STEM.
- Action Item 2: This content will be shared with STEM departments and allied units on campus.

Primary DEI Goal: Inclusion and Equity

STUDENTS
Strategic Objective 2:
WISE staff will plan events and programs using inclusive and equitable design and facilitation techniques to engage all participants and to model techniques participants can use in their own lives and work.

Metrics: Responses to specific questions on event evaluations will be collected and analyzed

Actions:
- Action Item 1: Annually, every WISE program manager, program officer, and event manager will create and provide a resource (handout, presentation, etc.) to the rest of the team on a practice for event planning/design that can improve the inclusivity and/or accessibility of WISE events.

Primary DEI Goal: Inclusion

Goal-related Metrics – WISE Measures Tracked Over Time (updated May 2, 2023)

School, College or Unit Metrics:

Given the size of the WISE staff, there is no annual demographic or climate survey data provided by central administration.

Action Planning Tables with Details and Accountabilities

PEOPLE *(Recruitment, Retention & Development)*

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Associated Metrics	Detailed Actions Plan	Group/person accountable
Students	Seek a demographically diverse population of students who participate in WISE programs and collect feedback on gaps in support that WISE could fill and that might benefit, in particular, women and non-binary students in STEM.	Relative percentages of White students and BIPOC students of any gender (as identified through the LARC data set) attending WISE events .	Action Item 1: Assess the demographics of students whom we have worked with in recent semesters to identify opportunities to increase the diversity of students engaging with WISE programming and services. Action Item 2: Actively connect with units who serve, among others, students of color, first-gen students, transfer students, and other student groups who are under-represented in STEM to promote WISE programming and to recruit a diverse set of students to participate in WISE programs.	WISE Managing Director, WISE Program Officer, and WISE Project & Event Manager
		Relative percentages of students who self-identify as first-gen students		
		WISE meetings with units and recognized student groups focused on supporting the needs of, in particular, students of color, first-gen students, and students from other marginalized groups.		
		Development of a list of perceived gaps in support for STEM success that impact women and non-binary learners, among others, that WISE might fill.		
Staff	Recruit a broadly diverse set of regular and temporary staff members for our team.	Completion status (and date) of each WISE staff member or search committee member for the Implicit Bias in Hiring module.	Action Item 1: When there is a need to hire, ensure all members of WISE staff (and any other search committee members) have taken the implicit bias in hiring modules within the last 18 months. Action Item 2: All postings for regular staff or temporary student staff will be promoted broadly to recruit a diverse applicant pool.	WISE Managing Director, WISE Program Officer, and WISE Senior Administrative Assistant
		Number (as well as names) of channels/locations any temporary or regular staff job posting is promoted.		

			Action Item 3: Minimize any exclusive language in our job postings by utilizing the tools provided by HR Recruiting for crafting inclusive postings.	

PROCESS *(Promoting & Equitable & Inclusive Community)*

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Associated Metrics	Detailed Actions Plan	Group/person accountable
Staff	WISE Staff will feel prepared and empowered to engage with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion within our unit, elsewhere on campus, and in our broader community.	The percent of WISE staff attending each DEI professional development session will be tracked.	Action Item 1: One WISE staff meeting per year will focus on conflict resolution skills and relevant conflict resolution avenues available on campus. Action Item 2: Annually, WISE staff will collectively determine their top 3 priorities for professional development around DEI. Action Item 3: WISE Leadership will arrange for (at least) three professional development sessions for the WISE team, focusing on the priority topics determined by WISE staff.	WISE Managing Director
	WISE staff will receive preparation to advance in their chosen career path(s).	An equity audit of funds spent on professional development for each staff member. Number and names of professional development experiences pursued by each WISE staff member.	Action Item 1: At least once during the year, use staff meeting time to discuss how WISE staff can identify and access professional development opportunities. Action Item 2: The Managing Director will check in about short-, medium-, and long-term career goals with each staff member affiliated with WISE at least twice a year. One of those check-ins will be part of the annual performance review process.	WISE Managing Director

PRODUCTS *(Education, Scholarship & Service)*

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Associated Metrics	Detailed Actions Plan	Group/person accountable
Faculty	WISE will be a resource for STEM faculty who are interested in creating more gender equity on campus and in their fields.	Using Google Analytics, we will track views of these resources on the WISE website. Faculty advisory board survey responses regarding both the utility of faculty resource pages and suggestions for changes/additions	Action Item 1: Add new content to the WISE website on how faculty can become co-conspirators for equity in STEM. Action Item 2: This content will be shared with STEM departments and allied units on campus.	WISE Managing Director, WISE Program Officer, and WISE Project & Event Manager
Students	WISE staff will plan events and programs using inclusive and equitable design and facilitation techniques to engage all participants and to model techniques participants can use in their own lives and work.	Responses to specific questions on event evaluations will be collected and analyzed	Action Item 1: Annually, every WISE program manager, program officer, and event manager will create and provide a resource (handout, presentation, etc.) to the rest of the team on a practice for event planning/design that can improve the inclusivity and/or accessibility of WISE events.	WISE Managing Director, WISE Program Officer, and WISE Project & Event Manager

Plans for Supporting, Tracking and Updating the Strategic Plan

The WISE Managing Director and WISE Program Officer are the primary stewards of the WISE DEI Strategic plan. In addition to tracking and analyzing the necessary data to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic plan, they will engage WISE student and post-doctoral participants at least once a semester to identify possible new objectives. Each April, the current year's plan as well as any new possible objectives will be reviewed at a WISE staff meeting to update and refine the plan for the coming year.