



UW–Madison School of Nursing Anti-Racism Commitment

Approved by the Academic Planning Council on November 12, 2021

At the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Nursing, we strive to be anti-racist. Recent incidents of racism in our country have shed light on the harmful biases and prejudices held against members of the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) community. We understand that for some, these events were enlightening, revealing the true nature of racism; however, we also understand that many have endured the weight of racism their entire lives. The School of Nursing stands in solidarity with those of the BIPOC community and is strongly committed to eliminating all forms of racism. Nurses are healers, and for this reason, we have a responsibility to acknowledge and address racism's impact within the communities we serve. The School of Nursing presents this statement as our fervent commitment to employ strategies to support diversity, equity, and inclusion in our profession and to act against racism proactively and purposefully.

The fight against racial injustice is far from new and we recognize our responsibility to do better for our students, faculty, staff, and nurses. Nursing has a unique history with promoting all forms of justice and a strong commitment to health equity. That said, the School of Nursing acknowledges racism's past and current presence within our healthcare system. Health disparities grow more apparent every day and as a school, we must work harder to enrich our teaching, research, and workplace environments to curate a robust culture that centers health equity. These inequities are unfair, unjust, and avoidable. The time is now for the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Nursing to be a leader in addressing biases, revitalize our commitment to justice, and have intentional goals that will revolutionize healthcare.

As champions of healthcare, we must stand at the forefront of health initiatives that challenge institutionalized racism and align with our values of integrity, compassion, advocacy, and unwavering commitment to improving the healthcare and education systems. In alignment with multiple national and state-wide nursing organizations, we uphold that diversity and healthcare are inseparable, and only together can they create pathways that lead to health equity and ending racism. With that mindset in place, we will use our Inclusive Excellence action plan to continue to guide our anti-racist endeavors and our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The action plan includes current and future goals, metrics, and initiatives within the SON that ensure we uphold our commitment.

Highlights from the Inclusive Excellence plan and other recent initiatives include:

1. Health Sciences Learning Communities are an opportunity for any faculty, staff, and student to be part of monthly identity groups focused on reflection, healing, and growth around diversity, equity and inclusion issues. The identity groups will be formed based on racial/ethnic affiliations of each participant, and they are open to all.
2. Social Justice and Health Equity concepts are *required*, and concepts are also embedded throughout the curriculum to be applicable to each course.
3. Community-based and equity-centered programming continues with high profile, accessible, and accredited events like the LGBTQ+ Health Summit and the Interprofessional Diversity and Equity Series. We are building a robust faculty and staff diversity and inclusion certificate program that will include learning modules, activities, and peer learning communities tailored for faculty/staff.
4. Ongoing Holistic Admissions and Holistic Student Success training, including consultation with the AAMC (American Association of Medical Colleges) and the AACN (American Association of Colleges of Nursing). This includes not only focusing on building a diverse cohort for diversifying our nursing workforce, but also building our advising, curriculum, clinical experiences, and even alumni networks to ensure an impactful experience for every student and future nurse.
5. Metrics and evaluation such as course evaluations, employee performance reviews, faculty promotion standards, and campus and school-wide climate surveys are aligned with every area of the Inclusive Excellence action plan, so we can build a culture of accountability, trust, and move forward as a collective.

Our Inclusive Excellence Plan is embedded within our school's strategic framework and remains fluid and forever evolving as we enhance our process. These are opportunities for growth, and we will hold each other accountable, building on each other's strengths to better serve our patients and learning community. We pledge to operationalize anti-racism in everything we do: in expanding our research through critical areas, in educating for the future of care, and in partnering to improve health outcomes through innovation. We encourage all to join in this effort by challenging acts of intolerance and uplifting the voices of those who have been harmed for too long.