

## **End of Year Report, Innovation in Diversity and Inclusion Grant: *CHS Diversity and Inclusion Faculty Learning Community***

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The purpose of our project was to start a Diversity and Inclusion Faculty Learning Community (DIFLC) in the College of Health Sciences to increase the capacity of our faculty to create more inclusive learning environments that would, in turn, resonate out to campus and community and translate to change. Our Innovation in Diversity and Inclusion grant supported this effort, even while we had to switch modes due to pandemic restrictions. Our DIFLC exceeded expectations on many levels and we established a solid infrastructure to continue the community and offer our efforts for others to start similar learning communities at WCU and other campuses and organizations. We successfully met our goals to meet with participants throughout the year, offer thoughtful dialogue and best practices, produce some collective documents, and bring in a guest speaker to inform our topic. Additionally, our budget stayed within our estimations and supported our activities.

The CHS DIFLC met 6 times; 3 times in Fall 2020 and 3 times in Spring 2021. We adjusted to pandemic restrictions by meeting via Zoom. Although we were concerned that this might result in participant “Zoom fatigue”, we found that for most sessions, our participants could actually have spent more time than the 2 ½ hours allotted for our sessions. For each session, participants had either reading or writing (discussion board or syllabus makeovers), and self-reflective journaling to prepare them for sessions and we sent session plans to everyone a few days before so that they could prepare. Our session plans used mixed activities to keep engaged: short presentations on various topics by diverse presenters, videos, small and large group discussions. Highlights for the year included a panel of graduate students who identified as students of color, and who work with Dr. Tammy James mentoring undergraduate athletes who also identify as students of color. There were several questions students responded to and faculty participants found the session really enlightening. Other highlights included a presentation by Dr. Tracey Ray Robinson and Meg Hazel about facilitating difficult conversations and guest speaker and workshop by Dr. Josefa Campinha-Bacote presenting on cultural competemility. Both events brought in new ideas and more space for reflection and skill-development to increase inclusive practices in the classroom for DIFLC participants.

Our DIFLC outcomes exceeded expectations in many areas. Co-facilitators established a solid syllabus and 6 session plans as a baseline for the DIFLC that could inform other learning communities across the university or in the community. Co-facilitators created a D2L site for the DIFLC with resources to help faculty. Dean Scott Heinerichs asked us to continue the DIFLC another year with a new cohort. Additionally, we had planned for 8 spaces for participants, but had more than double this in interest and expanded to 10 participants. In addition to our faculty comments about how much they learned from the student panel—the graduate students also informed Dr. James that they learned much from the interaction with the learning community. Our participants contributed to a collective bibliography that we will use in the future, peer-reviewed and worked on their own syllabus makeovers to increase inclusive practices, had dialogue about mistakes made and lessons learned while teaching, and contributed to an ongoing collective document on strategies for inclusive practices. Most importantly, they kept a running journal for themselves given question prompts for each session. These journals will serve to inform participants in their teaching, but also will inform a research project using collaborative autoethnography that will include next year’s cohort and there are already 8 participants. Finally, co-facilitators presented in April for the Nutrition and Dietetics Educators and Practitioners section of the Academy for Nutrition and Dietetics on creating a Diversity and Inclusion Faculty Learning Community. Co-facilitators plan to invite this year’s cohort and next year’s cohort to present on a panel about the learning community, and for a

video that will be on the CHS website. Co-facilitators also have plans to create a syllabus checklist of practices to promote inclusive learning environments.

Our budget expenditures are as follows:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Texts	6 texts for 12 people; 3 texts for 10 people for next year	\$1756.87	Due to changing format to online and change in guest speaker format and cost, we shifted costs to this area to provide more resources for faculty
Speaker: Dr. J. Campinha-Bacote	\$3500 for 1 hour workshop and 2 hours presentation via Zoom with Q&A. CHS paid \$1500	\$2000	Changed to Zoom presentation for WCU and community, and workshop with DIFLC due to pandemic restrictions and need to adjust budget for CHS restrictions: we spent less here
Grubhub Gift Certificates for Meals for 6 each DIFLC meetings	12 people for 6 sessions: gift certificate for guest speaker- \$10 each session for a total of \$60 each: 1 each \$100 gift certificate for guest speaker	\$820	Changed due to online status and pandemic restrictions: we spent less here
Total cost		\$4576.87	We spent \$196.63 less than anticipated due to pandemic restrictions and online status