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INCREASING OUR  
***KNOWLEDGE***



CHANGING OUR  
***BEHAVIORS***

RECASTING OUR  
***IDENTITY***

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## THE NICHOLAS SCHOOL'S ANTI-RACISM PLAN: A RESPONSE TO THE RACIAL INEQUITY PETITION

Update 9.30.21 | All DEI Accountability Meeting updates can be found [here](#)

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*Please note that this is a living document that reflects the Nicholas School's on-going anti-racism work. You may notice differences in tenses and structure in the document; these reveal the ways that our anti-racism work has evolved and continues to evolve.*

**Context for NSOE's Anti-Racism Plan.** In the early summer of 2020, I received [a petition](#) from a group of students, past and present, as well as faculty and staff—those representing the collective community that care about the Nicholas School of the Environment (NSOE). The petition outlined seven steps we could take to achieve greater racial equity by addressing systemic racism within our School and putting us on a more deliberately anti-racist path. These are worthy goals, befitting a School that seeks to create knowledge and leaders of consequence for a sustainable future.

What we desire is a community that better represents the diversity of the world in which we live—including Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC)—and the important perspectives born of these diverse experiences. We also want our entire community to feel a collective sense of belonging. This means tackling the individual, institutional, and structural obstacles that prevent us from realizing this vision.

Achieving this vision of human dignity for all is important for pragmatic, social, and moral reasons. First, greater diversity will allow us to have greater impact in a world where we seek to find meaning and purpose. Greater diversity leads to diverse perspectives, insights, and ideas which in turn leads us to greater innovation, creativity, and excellence. Greater diversity will generate better and more equitable science, teaching, and outreach. This will help us achieve the ambitions we have as researchers and instill the values of diversity and excellence in the next generation of environmental leaders. We will be better scientists, managers, practitioners, and people. Second, we need to be socialized into a professional and personal world where we can function effectively. In an increasingly diverse society, we need skills and strategies that allow us to recognize and address bias, gain awareness of power and discrimination and learn how to collaborate, interact, and resolve conflict constructively. We cannot do this in a vacuum. We need a diverse community so we can learn how to thrive and embrace complexity together. Finally, it is the right thing for us to do as individuals and as a School.

To make progress on this vision, below I address many of the actions proposed in the initial petition, and I offer a framework for making longer-term progress for us as a School. The following sections are outlined to help us increase our ***Knowledge***, change our ***Behaviors***, and recast our ***Identity***. These are interdependent. Without a sustained effort to continue to educate ourselves and change our behaviors, we will not achieve the diverse identity we seek to be truly excellent as the Nicholas School of the Environment.

I see my response to this petition as an important next step in demonstrating that you have been heard as a community, and for us to join together in further dialogue and action for the greater good of the Nicholas School. In my response below, I have, in some cases, identified new actions we will take. In other cases, I am making more transparent actions we have already taken so we all know what has taken place and can assess what is and what is not working as well as we would like. In other cases, I have identified additional actions not requested in the petition. It is clear to me, as I am sure it is to you, that we will need to engage in more work together to chart a meaningful path to change.

Importantly, the work we do through the response to this petition will complement the existing work undertaken by the NSOE Actionators and the recommendations in our 2016 D&I Strategic Plan. In 2017, the Nicholas School created a team of folks, the Actionators, committed to furthering diversity and inclusion in our community. This team of mostly staff and increasingly a few faculty has met weekly and coordinated numerous trainings, lunch and learns, deep-dive discussions with visiting faculty, community events and more that have created community within the School and worked to address concerns by many marginalized groups. Some examples of their work include multiple Nicholas School specific trainings from Duke's Office of Institutional Equity, Theater Delta diversity and inclusion trainings for faculty, staff and students, our regular community coffees, Nicholas School PRIDE parade contingency, Lunar New Year celebrations and more. This team must continue to "actionate" by serving as a community of support and implementing activities that foster diversity, equity and inclusion, coordinating with faculty leaders and student groups, serving as a sounding board for new initiatives, and reviewing funding proposals for new diversity initiatives.

Finally, a series of reports and studies has been created over the years in the School. Over the past two years Nicki Cagle has created for us a series of pathway programs, including "K-12 Diversity Pathway Program Report 2020", "Undergraduate Research Mentoring Curriculum 2020" and "NSOE Undergraduate Diversity Strategic Plan 2019". A Strategic Planning committee for Diversity and Inclusion was charged in 2016 and chaired by Meg Mullin ad Gaby Katul and included faculty, staff and students. This report was preceded by "Accelerating Diversity and Inclusion at the Nicholas School: New Beginnings," prepared by the Administrative Leadership Team along with Emily Klein in 2013; a 2014 report on pipeline programs prepared by Christine Erlien and Yasmin von Dassow for the NSOE Diversity Committee; and the Targeted Student Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Program Proposal prepared by Liz Shapiro-Garza, Melanie Allen, and Justin Lindenberg in 2016. In short, the work we continue today as part of the response to the petition is also part of a broader response within the School.

To follow through on this work described below, I created an Accountability Committee and meet with them every 3-4 weeks to update them on the Nicholas School's progress. I meet with student, faculty, and staff representatives and they provide me with advice and feedback as we seek to create realistic, sustainable and meaningful change.

**Progress on NSOE's Anti-Racism Plan – Year 1 Update.** Since I crafted the initial Racial Equity Plan in 2020, the Nicholas School has made progress on the activities listed below, while also recognizing that we continue to have weaknesses we must address.

Notable accomplishments include completing or making substantial progress on many of the items we committed to in our petition response (see below for details). For example, the Nicholas School offered and created anti-racist and equity-focused educational and training opportunities, including Faculty, Staff, and Student Racial Equity Learning Arc cohorts, Racial Caucuses, a Summer Community Reading Group, Title IX Training, Orientation Presentations and more. The Nicholas School also crafted a clear reporting structure for students, staff, and faculty to voice concerns and complaints, which now resides in a permanent home on the graduate school website. The School has also initiated curricular change to decolonize coursework through a series of workshops and JEDI curriculum support for faculty. Other efforts can be seen below.

Additional important changes that have taken place. For example, **Dr. Nicki Cagle was appointed Associate Dean of DEI for Nicholas**. This position will support NSOE faculty, staff, and students in developing a community of inclusion, recognizing that doing so is a team effort. In particular, this position will help:

- move NSOE DEI initiatives from the planning phase to the implementation phase,
- increase the diversity of students, staff, and faculty from under-represented backgrounds,
- infuse the core values of DEI into education, research, and practice at NSOE,
- steward ongoing and novel efforts in community building and DEI,
- maintain and share expertise on DEI best practices; and
- benchmark the outcomes of DEI initiatives within the NSOE.

This new position is consistent with recommendations from NSOE strategic plans, the 2020 NSOE Actions for Racial Equity Student Petition, Faculty Council, and Duke University's Anti-Racism Plan School-level review. The new Associate Dean of DEI also will sit on the Executive Leadership Committee to ensure we fully consider DEI aspects in all we do.

Additional successes include:

- **Duke University Marine Lab DE&I Committee formed**
- **The diversity profile of our faculty has started to change some for the better** (See Appendix 1)
- **NSOE Draft DEI Implementation Plan.** The AD of DEI is currently working on a draft DEI implementation plan for the school. This will be reviewed by students, staff, and faculty through an inclusive process using a combination of focus groups (See Appendix 2)
- **DEI Student Advisory Committee.** The AD of DEI has formed a DEI student advisory committee to guide efforts around the DEI Implementation Plan. This newly form group supplements the guidance provided to the AD of DEI by the Actionators and the new Duke University Marine Lab DE&I committee.

In addition, I recognize we have additional work to do related to creating a more inclusive environment in NSOE among our students, staff, and faculty and also to using practices that support the recruitment and retention of staff and faculty from a variety of backgrounds. Notably, the diversity among our staff trended downwards this past year for a second year in a row (Appendix 1).

To address these weaknesses and our need to forge a more inclusive and diverse school, we have added new goals to our DEI Implementation plan, which is currently in draft form (Appendix 2). We view this petition response and all of our DEI and anti-racism work as a work in progress and look forward to the continued investment in these worthy activities over the coming year.

# NSOE's Anti-Racism Plan (updated 30 Sep 2021)

## Increasing our KNOWLEDGE

- Pursue continued anti-racist and other equity-focused educational and training opportunities.

Creating awareness, engaging in critical analysis, strategizing action to advance equity, and developing personal and collective accountability will be most effective if we continue to educate ourselves as community. **THESE ACTIVITIES WERE COMPLETED.**

- We will hold voluntary trainings in AY 20/21 for students, faculty and staff to pursue the Racial Equity Learning Arc. We are completing a contract with Alexa Broderick to hold two cohorts of 30-40 participants each: one for faculty/staff, and one for students. These will be six-week programs.
  - Faculty/Staff Learning Arc (6 sessions): • 10/16/20 • 11/20/20 • 12/11/20 • 1/8/21 • 2/26/21 • 3/19/21
  - Student Learning Arc (6 sessions) • 10/2/20 • 11/6/20 • 1/22/21 • 2/12/21 • 3/5/21 • 3/26/21
- We will continue our caucuses throughout the AY 20/21. **These continue.**
- The Summer Community Reading Group, organized by Danielle Wiggins and Melissa Kotacka, will continue in some capacity through AY 20/21 with their reading/discussion group focused on equity. **This continued through 21/22.**
- The Actionators will pursue an anti-harassment information session in AY 20/21 to educate our community in the changes to Title IX related regulations and their implications for reporting.
  - **Title IX Training—**  
Scheduled for February 11th 2021 (Post Docs, Research Scientists, Faculty and Staff).  
Scheduled for February 12, 2021 (Students).  
Training by OIE - Cynthia Clinton, AVP of Compliance, and Ericka Lewis, Deputy Title IX Coordinator (added as co-hosts on zoom). These trainings will include recent updates to Title IX at the University level as well.
- Deb Gallagher will hold a series of co-curricular opportunities in AY 20/21 “Leading for Change” to address issues related to becoming a sustainability leader, navigating diversity and inclusion, environmental justice writ large (with Liz Shapiro-Garza), and reducing consumption, all in the context of environmental leadership and change. **This was completed.**
- **Orientation Presentations.** Members of the NSOE community gave several orientation presentations emphasizing the NSOE’s values of diversity and belonging. In particular, the Actionators gave a presentation that explored the history of Durham and Beaufort through the lenses of multiple identities and provided an overview of initiatives in NSOE that support students from a variety

of backgrounds. Dean Steelman gave an overview of her expectations, including the rights and responsibilities for all students and a preview of DEI work in NSOE ahead of the Actionators more fulsome presentation.

- **Make more transparent our reporting structures, pathways and consequences for actions taken when students, faculty and staff have concerns or complaints. THIS WAS COMPLETED AND NOW RESIDES IN A PERMANENT HOME ON THE GRADUATE SCHOOL WEBSITE: <https://projects.gradschool.duke.edu/reporting/>.**

We will pilot and refine a new, interactive approach to how we can report workplace, gender-based, race-based, or sexual harassment and discriminations as well as problems with mentors, co-workers, supervisors and managers. Created by doctoral student Kirsten Overdahl through a funded RA-ship, this process is student-centered and more user friendly than our previous approaches to helping students understanding reporting within NSOE and Duke.

- **Highlight BIPOC excellence throughout the School by increasing the visibility of our BIPOC students, staff, alumni and faculty. THIS WAS DONE AND IS ONGOING.**

I will work with our communications staff to publish and promote at least one story a month highlighting BIPOC excellence.

- **Develop new workshops for alumni that focus on racial inequities and injustice and what we can do about it. WE DID NOT HOLD A WORKSHOP BUT WE DID HOLD SESSION FOR OUR ALUMNI ON DEI WORK IN NSOE AND A READING GROUP.**

I will work with ODAR staff to identify a workshop we can conduct in AY 20/21 for alumni. We will find ways to support the current Duke Alumni Association/Duke Black Alumni series exploring topics at the intersection of economics, public policy, government, sociology, culture, sports, etc.

- **Reckoning with Race Reading Group.** Charlotte Clark recently facilitated an alumni reading group on Ted Segal's (Trinity '77) book that just came out (2021) "[The Reckoning Point: The fight for racial justice at Duke University](#)". Ted Segal attended the discussion, and the book is available for free at Duke Libraries.

## Changing our BEHAVIOR

- **Decolonize the curriculum by updating the core courses to recognize and address generations of oppression. THIS WAS INITIATED AND COMPLETED LAST YEAR AND WILL BE ONGOING.**

Providing culturally inclusive education to our students is of paramount importance. I have worked with Nicki Cagle to provide faculty training in culturally inclusive pedagogy in July 2020 ahead of our Fall 2020 start, and I have required all faculty to participate. We had 100% of our faculty participate in this effort. In addition, Dr. Cagle will be offering a series of culturally inclusive teaching workshops to faculty and students throughout this AY 20/21.

- **Updates to *How to Create a Culturally Inclusive Classroom*.** Nicki Cagle has been continually updating the [How to Create a Culturally Inclusive Classroom](#) guide for Nicholas School faculty, staff, and students. Recent additions include sections on "Creating Inclusive Organization and Leadership" derived from Brene Brown (see p33), resources from [CIRTL INCLUDES](#), and an evaluation of DPHS's 1st Year Master's program (see p58).
- **Centering Marginalized Voices in the Classroom—**  
September 3, 2020     faculty training with Nicki Cagle.
- **Handling Uncomfortable Moments in the Classroom Training – Tuesday, February 9 – 10:00am-12:00pm ET.**  
A workshop for NSOE TAs and graduate-students addressing how to handle uncomfortable moments (e.g., times when implicit bias, microaggressions, & student resistance show up in the classroom). Facilitated by Nicki Cagle with RCR approval and credit (thanks to Danielle Wiggins).
- **Teaching for Equity Fellows Program—**  
Five faculty are being supported by NSOE to take this training. This cohort was created especially for university faculty to help them address racial inequities in their classrooms, clinics, and other learning spaces. The workshops are designed to tackle a number of teaching and mentoring topics that may arise around race and identity. Faculty fellows gain skills and strategies that improve learning for all Duke students.
- **Teach. Equity. Now. DUML—**  
(at Duke University Marine Lab, *Spring 2021*) – A four-part workshop series designed to ground participants in a shared language, a shared framework, and a shared history to inform strong racial practice; workshop 1: Community Building & Defining Racism, workshop 2: The Three Expressions of Racism, workshop 3: History and Lessons for Today, and workshop 4: Application
- **Evaluating our progress in the curriculum**  
Student evaluations and questions on culturally inclusive pedagogy were reviewed last year and no additional recommendations came forward.
- **JEDI Curriculum Support for Faculty**

Librarians Janil Miller (Marine Lab) and Jodi Poster created the [How to Create a Culturally Inclusive Syllabus](#) document in conjunction with a new library initiative to "provide curricular support for faculty interested in bringing diverse scholarship to their courses, syllabi, reading materials, and assigned datasets"

- **Create a neutral third-party process, in conversation with OIE and Duke's ombudsperson, for reporting issues of discrimination and other racist behavior aligned with principles of transformative justice. THIS IS INCOMPLETE.**

Clear processes are important to redress racist and other forms of discriminatory behavior. Consistent with #2 above, we will pilot a new process for reporting and assess how best to address issues that fall outside of formally reportable incidents. I would like us to find ways to hold members of our community accountable through individuals in the school and outside of the school.

- **Office of Civil Rights Meeting.** Dean Steelman attended on June 17<sup>th</sup> a meeting called by the Office for Institutional Equity to enhance the sharing of concerns or incident of harassment and/or discrimination. Pursuant to a resolution Duke reached with the Office of Civil Rights ("OCR"), Duke held a virtual meeting on June 17, 2021 to provide an opportunity for members of the community to share such concerns. OIE is interested in hearing from students, faculty and non-faculty staff regarding any concerns or incidents of harassment or discrimination prohibited under the Policy. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment, harassment or discrimination based on race, anti-Semitic harassment or other harassment or discrimination based on religion, national origin, age, color, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or veteran status.
- **Provide mandatory anti-racism workshops for all incoming students, staff and faculty by Fall 2020 as well as yearly refresher training for all faculty/staff. THIS HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND WILL BE ONGOING.**

We recognize the importance and necessity of providing anti-racism training to all incoming students and refreshers for staff and faculty. The Actionators provided a 90-minute mandatory DEI introduction and foundation for all incoming professional MEM and MF students during orientation. Beginning this year, we will hold a mandatory training for all students, faculty and staff in September. This mandatory training will serve as a lead in for students to engage in additional training from the Mary Lou Williams Center and a specifically designed NSOE Racial Equity Arc program that will run throughout the school year.

#### Mandatory Anti-Racism Training—

September 18, 2020 for all students (Actionators).

Topic: Reckoning with Race by the Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture. Survey feedback below:

- 68 students responded to post-training survey
- 81% found it very or extremely helpful in increasing their knowledge of race and/or racism
- On a scale of 0 (not at all) - 10 (agree very strongly)

- Thought it was relevant and important: 9.76
  - Met or exceeded expectations: 9
  - Felt better equipped to discuss the subject matter: 8.12
  - Have a greater understanding of history and racial inequality: 8.48
- 87% agree or strongly agree that they plan to continue learning more about race and racism
- 91% agree or strongly agree that the training helped them think about their role in ongoing discussions on the topic

Training for 2021 was scheduled but has been delayed due to staffing issues in the Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture.

- **Create new processes for structuring doctoral student advisor-advisee relationships to create more consistent expectations for behaviors. **THIS HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND WILL BE ONGOING.****

Over the summer, doctoral student, Amelia Johnson, worked to create a new Individual Development Plan (IDP) that will structure conversations and agreements between advisors and advisees. Our hope is that we will pilot this new tool this year with an eye toward refining it to meet our purposes to create greater transparency in expectations for behavior and provide a more pro-active way to address power-based dynamics for doctoral students and create a healthier working environment for all.

- **RiDE Individual Development Plan—**  
rolled out to doctoral students and faculty advisors, early September. (Amelia Johnson/Nico Cassar/Danielle Wiggins/Jim Hench). The IDP Program requires that each student meets with their advisor at the start of the academic year to discuss the IDP. All IDPs are due to the student's DGSA by **Wednesday, October 30<sup>th</sup>.** Students responsibility to reach to advisor.
- **RiDE Fellowship: Mentoring Guidelines.** This summer 2021, RiDE fellow Chainey Boroski and others develop draft guide to writing mentoring guidelines for doctoral programs in the Nicholas School.
- **RiDE Fellowship: Professional Development for Doctoral Students.** This summer 2021, RiDE fellow Sarah Roberts and others develop strategies for professional development for doctoral students in the Nicholas School.
- **Hold a mandatory training on workplace power dynamics that will help us better understand how unhealthy power dynamics hinder our academic and research potential. **THIS WAS COMPLETED. UNCLEAR IF IT WILL BE ONGOING. DIBS HAS A POWER DYNAMICS TRAINING THAT WE ARE PROMOTING.****
- **Mandatory Power Dynamics Training—**  
Inclusive Mentoring Part II: How Privilege and Power Get in the Way  
Tuesday, January 26, 2021 - 3:00pm-5:00pm ET  
Facilitated by the [S\\*Marts Consulting](#)  
*Mandatory for all faculty who serve in a PhD advisor or mentor role.*

- **Amplify Black, Indigenous, and POC voices in the greater Durham community and more broadly engage with the Durham community. WE INITIATED THE DEEP COLLABORATIVE AND IT WILL BE ONGOING.**

We will continue to develop long-standing working relationships with Durham and Beaufort organizations working at the intersection of DEI, environment and education through our DEEP network, STEM pathways work, marine debris and water quality curriculum (for schools and teachers across NC), Eastern Carteret County Community Collaboration and other initiatives. This work has been spearheaded by Nicki Cagle in Durham and Liz Demattia in Beaufort. We will also continue to support the community partnerships that faculty and staff have already created, including meaningful work with under-served populations through collaboration with Durham Public Schools, Carteret County Schools, the North Carolina Museum of Life and Science, the diversity program at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, and many local non-profits in both Durham and Beaufort.

We also will do the following to further advance this work:

- CPDC is working to revise its website and resources to further encourage best practices of diverse recruitment and career advising.
- We recommend that faculty center BIPOC voices in their classes through a variety of curricular options.
- We will work to more intentionally support Black-owned businesses. As we are a non-profit ourselves, we are not able to make donations to other organizations.
- Provide funding opportunities to faculty to address issues related to environmental and climate injustice in our Durham and Carteret County communities.
- **DEEP (Diversity and Equity in Environmental Programs) Collaborative--** Since 2017, The Diversity and Equity in Environmental Programs (DEEP) Collaborative - spearheaded by Nicki Cagle - has brought together local community organizations and university-led initiatives that address diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), K-12 education, and the environment. In Spring 2021, the DEEP Collaborative convened a 4-part Racial Equity and the Environment workshop series for nearly 200 community members representing 30 organizations on Jan. 19, Feb. 2 & 16, and Mar. 2. Funding for this has moved forward to sponsor four sessions for two cohorts, with co-sponsorship from NSOE, the Burt's Bees Foundation and several community organizations. Work has continued and in Fall 2021, the DEEP Collaborative, and the Durham Environmental Coalition (DEC) offered one field trip in September emphasizing intersectional environmentalism through a case study of Maplewood Cemetery. DEEP/DEC will be offering three follow up meetings to the Race and the Environment training this fall in September, October, and November. Learn more at: <https://sites.duke.edu/deepcommunity/>

- **Dean Steelman will report out annually on progress made on DEI initiatives, including successes and areas in need of greater action. WE HAVE A REPORT EVERY 4-6 WEEKS.**
  - I will ask all faculty to report out in their annual reports about what they are doing to advance DEI efforts. I will request reports from each of our Divisions and staff units to elaborate on what they are each doing to improve DEI within their respective areas.

*Additional Work.* In addition to implementing the original aims of our anti-racism plan, the Nicholas School has also been pursuing actions that are consistent with inclusivity and diversity in other areas and support anti-racist educational efforts (see Appendix 2). Some of those associated activities are listed below.

**Staff Training on Culturally Inclusive Communication in the Workplace**

October 15<sup>th</sup> held by Nicki Cagle, as a follow up to the training in September.

**Center for Rural Enterprise and Environmental Justice//Pamela Rush Memorial Internship**

Environmental Injustices in Lowndes County, Alabama. ODAR is working on securing funding for this internship for next summer. The overall goal is to continue technical and social science research with the Center for Rural Enterprise and Environmental Justice (CREEJ, previously the Alabama Center for Rural Enterprise) to understand the technical and social dynamics of and barriers to the adoption of novel technological solutions wastewater access in Lowndes County. Through the internship, students will help develop a better understanding of the interlaced physical/technical, political, and legal barriers to sanitation access and evaluate potential technical and policy solutions. The students will also investigate how climate change could impact various technology choices. This internship/project will enable us to strengthen the Nicholas School's connection with Lowndes County.

**Inclusive Online Discussion & Meeting Guidelines.** Nicki Cagle has compiled resources and best practices for inclusive online discussions and inclusive meetings. Some of these practices are now being implemented in faculty meetings. Training will be provided for staff at a future date.

## **Recasting our IDENTITY**

STUDENT POPULATION—Creating a more diverse undergraduate, professional and doctoral student population begins with students we attract, and the potential barriers we put in the way for application to our programs. Once students are here, a more inclusive culture is essential to retaining students and ensuring their success. Financial incentives, including scholarships, are also important recruiting and retention tools.

- **Removing GRE Requirement for entry into our programs. THIS REMAINS UNDER CONSIDERATION, BUT WAS IMPLEMENTED IN 2021.**

Faculty leaders of the professional programs and our PhD programs have eliminated the GRE for professional students and made the GRE optional for doctoral students for the Fall 2021 incoming class. All PhD programs are required by Duke Graduate School to develop an application rubric for holistic reviewing. Program chairs and DGSs are further considering whether they will recommend making these changes permanent in subsequent years.

- ITEHP- GRE optional for next three years and then re-evaluate
- UPE - Yes for GRE optional permanently
- UPEP - wait to make decision after fall 2021 cohort
- EOS - wait to make decision after fall 2021 cohort; final decision in Spring 2022
- ENV - wait to make decision after fall 2021 cohort
- MSC - per Rachel, faculty are not planning to make that decision now
- Professional Programs— wait to make decision after fall 2021 cohort

- **Waiving application fees. THIS WAS COMPLETED AND IS ONGOING.**

- We will continue to waive professional master's degree application fees for Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, City Year, Teach for America alumni, active duty military and veterans, and recipients of GRE Fee Reduction vouchers.
- In the 2019-20 cycle, we expanded fee waiver eligibility to include recipients of GRE Fee Reduction vouchers. We cannot use race as a criterion as this would be a TitleVI violation.
- We have integrated the fee waiver request form into the application itself for Fall 2021. Previously, students had to complete a separate request form outside the application system.
- During this coming year, we also offer waivers to other populations, including Pell-eligible students, Gates Millennium Scholars, NSF, Fulbright Scholars and McNair Scholars. A decision will need to be made by September 15 for implementation in AY 2021/22. See here:  
<https://nicholas.duke.edu/admissions/how-apply>

- **Require implicit bias and other training for admissions staff. THIS WAS COMPLETED. WE ALSO COMPLETED THIS FOR FACULTY THAT SERVE ON PHD COMMITTEES AND HIRE STAFF.**

All application readers will continue to be required to take implicit bias training.

Training has been and will be conducted by OIE. We are exploring options for additional training (within NSOE and Duke and through external organizations) to give depth and breadth to our training and will explore options to implement for the winter 2021 application reading season. This will include calibrating our rubric and review process for the lack of GRE scores and ensuring equity in review.

- **Implicit bias training— (coordinated by Actionators)**

Inclusive Mentoring Part I: Understanding and Addressing Implicit Bias during PhD Program Application Review and after Student Matriculation

Thursday, December 3, 2020 OR Thursday, January 7, 2021

Facilitated by Pam Bivens, Assistant Director for Diversity and Inclusion, Duke University

*Mandatory for all faculty who serve on PhD admission committees or faculty that hire staff.*

- **Establish a scholarship fund for Black students. THIS IS NOT LEGALLY FEASIBLE, BUT WE DO PURSUE WAYS TO INCREASE DIVERSITY IN OUR STUDENT POPULATION.**

Scholarship funds are an important mechanism for attracting and supporting a diverse student population, but we must be careful in how we approach these issues so as not to put ourselves at legal risk. I want to be clear: We are committed to raising additional funds to attract and support a diverse student population.

Importantly, race cannot be used as a criterion for selection of scholarships. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 indicates “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

We provide an area on the application where students can provide a statement of diversity that they would bring into the program.

We have used unrestricted financial aid resources very broadly for our own recruitment goals (e.g. to increase diversity, etc.). There is approved language allowed by Duke for endowed scholarship agreements that helps us address this such as: *“The \_\_\_\_\_ scholarships are provided to students who – by reason of their background, culture, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, work and life experiences, contribute to a fuller representation of perspectives with the academic life of the University.”* NSOE currently uses this language.

We link to outside/external scholarship resources on our website that are tied to identities.

We have created the following scholarship programs to help encourage more diversity in our professional student body and remain committed to continuing to seek funds to expand opportunities for diversifying our student body:

- The Nemergut Scholarship, created for and named after former Dean Townsend's wife is a scholarship fund for students to increase diversity in the Nicholas School.
- The Tanaka Merit Scholarship is designated for “non-US citizen” or “applicant with international experience or perspectives”.
- The FUNED Scholarship - In partnership with Fundación Mexicana para la Educación, la Tecnología y la Ciencia (FUNED), this scholarship supports students with Mexican citizenship.
- The COLFUTURO Scholarship - In partnership with the Fundación para el Futuro de Colombia, this scholarship provides tuition to eligible admitted students with Colombian citizenship.
- The Nicholas Scholars program, our largest merit scholarship program, provides merit scholarships based on a number of criteria: academic excellence; diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives; and leadership potential.

In 2016, we instituted a need-based aid scholarship program for our professional programs, setting aside several hundreds of thousands of dollars to support students who demonstrate need.

We have raised \$17M out of \$25M target for financial aid for students to make our degrees more financially accessible and this continues to be a top priority for fund raising. Some of this fundraising is in the form of planned giving and may not be immediately accessible.

- **Financial aid information for our professional students**

MEM Student Financial aid is distributed in multiple ways, including merit aid, student assistantships (compensation), federal work study and need based aid. For any one student these packages are combined in multiple ways, generally we review Merit and Student Assistantships within the financial aid committee and work study is allocated by formula. Need based aid is offered based on Expected Family Contribution only, without regard to any of the other aid packages. In 2020-21, approximately \$3.6M was spent on financial aid.

- **Start chapters for professional societies with programming geared towards increasing racial and other forms of diversity. **THIS WAS NOT COMPLETED.****

NSOE is committed to creating a more inclusive environment for our students who are already in our programs and who may be interested in our programs by demonstrating connection to professional society initiatives with focus on diversity and inclusion efforts.

Existing efforts in this area include:

- DICE— Diverse and Inclusive Community for the Environment
- BLC – Black and Latino Club
- NQN – Nic Queer Network
- WGELA—Working Group for the Environment in Latin America
- Environmental Justice Network

To further this goal, I will also:

- Ask the DGS of Ecology to consider establishing an ESA Seeds Program.  
<https://esa.org/seeds/>
  - Ask the DGS of Earth and Ocean Sciences to consider participation in AGU's Bridge Program <https://www.agu.org/bridge-program>.
  - Follow up with the Provost about Duke's participation in the SEA Change program <https://seachange.aaas.org/>. It is not clear if this would be a Duke- or NSOE-level initiative.
  - Investigate whether Conservationists of Color is a member-oriented organization.  
<https://conservationistsofcolor.wordpress.com/>
- **Research experience for undergraduates in Durham and train and recruit minorities.**

We know that creating opportunities for social and scientific research is important to attract minority students into career paths relevant to environmental work. I will work with our

Divisions and DUSs to assess and evaluate current opportunities for training and where we could do more to train and recruit minority students.

- **CAIRNS Program Mentoring Launch.** The Career and Academic Innovation and Research Network of Scholars (CAIRNS) Program provides Duke undergraduates from a variety of backgrounds with vertically integrated opportunities to develop academic skills and career readiness, while offering the social support needed for students to have a meaningful, valuable and successful experience in environmental fields. This Fall 2021 the program launched with 10 undergraduate student participants, 9 professional student mentors, and 5 alumni mentors. Learn more at: <https://sites.duke.edu/cairns/>
- **PEACH: Partnership Effort for the Advancement for Children's Health.** This initiative is focused on elimination of lead from housing. This Summer '21, a Superfund intern developed a curriculum using Durham Neighborhood Compass, which was piloted with Durham high school students, on lead remediation.
- **ECOE CLUB & ELEMENT.** The Environmental Communication, Outreach, and Education Club is set to take on ELEMENT when Duke has given us the green light to work in-person with minors again. ELEMENT is NSOE's K-5 environmental mentoring program in which NSOE undergraduate and graduate students serve as after school mentoring and offer lessons to K-5 students in after school program at 2-3 high-need Durham Public elementary schools. This program was developed in close collaboration with DPS advisors to meet student needs.
- **HackBio.** HackBio is a week-long program created in partnership with NSOE and DUML to engage Durham high school students from traditionally underserved populations in experiential learning and team-based activities. The program introduces students to global human health challenges related to environmental exposures. It also includes professional development modules to demonstrate possible pathways to STEM careers. High school students are mentored by Duke University Marine Laboratory Scholars. HackBio programs are hosted each semester, and they have transitioned to an online format during the pandemic.
- **Duke BioSTEM.** Duke BioSTEMs is a STEM-themed mentoring program hosted by the Duke Marine Lab Scholars Program. It was created in 2021 with the mission to promote academic and professional success in high school students by fostering positive, long-term relationships with Duke undergraduate mentors. In Spring 2021, the program worked with 10 Durham Public Schools high school students. Duke undergraduate mentors met with the high school students every other week to do different STEM and college/career prep activities and host guest speakers. Some of the activities included a “designer fish” activity (we taught students about fish morphology as it relates to movement and had them design their own fish), a citizen science activity using iNaturalist, meeting with a Duke admissions officer, and having a panel about STEM careers. We also had small group mentoring sessions where the high schoolers can get more personalized mentoring from a pair of undergrad mentors. We also formed an Executive Board of Duke undergraduates. The program has re-launched this Fall 2021, after undergraduate mentors were trained in culturally inclusive mentoring techniques.

- **Community Science Initiative/Fall Minors Program (DUML).** Students who completed the Resiliency Training (see above) are now preparing to be mentors in our community (through the Boys and Girls Club). In Spring 2021, the Community Science Initiative is creating a high-school version of the Resiliency training for the STEM Pathways program (see below), a mentoring/youth development program at DUML. This program is also working to increase students' multicultural awareness to help bridge any potential cultural differences while working with our community partners.
- **DPS Events**  
Meagan Dunphy-Daly and others have been participating in "It's Environmental" and "Biologically Speaking" with Durham Public Schools. These are weekly seminar series geared for DPS students with a focus on STEM fields. They also provide an opportunity for DPS students to talk with experts. Nicki Cagle has also been participating in DPS STEM teacher professional development with the Museum of Life and Science.
- **DUML REU DEI training for participants and faculty mentors (Melissa Kotacka & Tom Schultz)**  
On June 9, Melissa Kotacka conducted a DEI session for the DUML REU summer 2021 cohort (9 undergraduate students, 10 faculty mentors). Session centered on establishing group norms for creating an inclusive experience in a research-centered community experience.
- **Growing Equity in Science and Technology Program.** DUML is planning our GEST at IMS (formerly Girls Exploring Science and Technology), to take place on Saturday October 16th, 9 AM – 4 PM at UNC Institute of Marine Sciences. This is a STEM outreach event for local high school students of underrepresented communities in STEM. Students will participate in hands-on activities relevant to our volunteers' fields of research and work and will spend the day exploring and having fun with their group leaders/mentors.
- **Recruit professional and doctoral students from HBCUs, HSIs, tribal colleges and public universities that serve Black and brown communities. THIS IS PARTIALLY BEING ADDRESSED.**  
Our admissions staff will continue their outreach and recruitment efforts at HBCUs and other institutions serving diverse populations of students. Nicki Cagle will continue her focus on developing diverse pathways to environmental science for students from under-served and minoritized backgrounds in public schools through her work on K-12 and undergraduate program. We will further investigate opportunities for transfer of students from HBCUs and community colleges.
- **Strengthen systems of financial support for students, faculty, and staff to help support and retain Nicholas School community members. THIS WAS COMPLETED.**  
Our student services staff will ensure we provide financial planning sessions for students each spring.

*Additional Work:*

- **DGSA Health and Wellness Coach** - February 23-June 8, 2021.  
Danielle Wiggins (from Durham Campus) and Rachel Lo Piccolo (from DUML) underwent training to become NSOE Health and Wellness Coach for doctoral students. Professional training program.
- **NSOE Participating in a University-wide NIH FIRST** – This was submitted March 5th (Faculty Institutional Recruitment for Sustainable Transformation) grant proposal for early career faculty recruitment (Pratt, SoM, NSOE and A&S). The NIH FIRST program aims to enhance and maintain cultures of inclusive excellence in the biomedical research community. The program also seeks to have a positive impact on faculty development, retention, progression, and eventual promotion, as well as develop inclusive environments that are sustainable. The Dean attended the first two meetings and is on the University-wide Advisory Council; Shila Nordone and Joel Meyer work on the advisory committee.  
<https://commonfund.nih.gov/FIRST>. TAS attended two meetings.

FACULTY AND STAFF—We will seek and support a diverse community of staff and faculty through robust workforce development and pathway programs for underrepresented populations. Creating a more diverse faculty and staff begins with our recruitment processes and ensuring we eliminate bias in our recruitment, hiring and promotion processes is important to creating a more inclusive culture and successful School. We make transparent our current practices so that we can re-evaluate and improve our practices in these areas.

- **Minimizing bias in recruitment, hiring and promotion processes.** **IN 2021 WE SAW A DECREASE IN DIVERSITY AMONG STAFF (Down almost 10% from two years ago), AN INCREASE IN STUDENT DIVERSITY, AND IN INCREASE IN FACULTY DIVERSITY (See Appendix 1). WE NEED TO INVESTIGATE FURTHER AND WORK ON THIS OVER THE COMING YEAR.**

Currently we encourage supervisors and search committees to be cognizant of implicit bias with staff hiring. Faculty search committees participate in mandatory training. We also use best practices for advertising and recruitment through sites that target diverse audiences. We have seen our staff diversity increase by 12% in the last five years. We are committed to further reviewing this area to identify where we can improve our internal policies and best practices.

Specifically, in regards to recent faculty searches, we have experimented with broad outreach efforts to target diverse pools of candidates. Applicants for faculty positions are asked to include statements about DE&I in their cover letters. Also, we've attempted to structure our recent faculty search in a way that would give us the best chance possible for including more diverse candidates in the pool by advertising in 4 disciplinary areas for 2 potential hires.

I will explore providing service awards this year as a way to acknowledge diversity efforts by faculty and staff.

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

I want to close this by thanking the students and other community members who led the process of creating the petition and putting into action the process of change—while many have been involved, I am especially indebted to the leadership exercised by Renata Poulton Kamakura and Rani Kumar. Thank you.

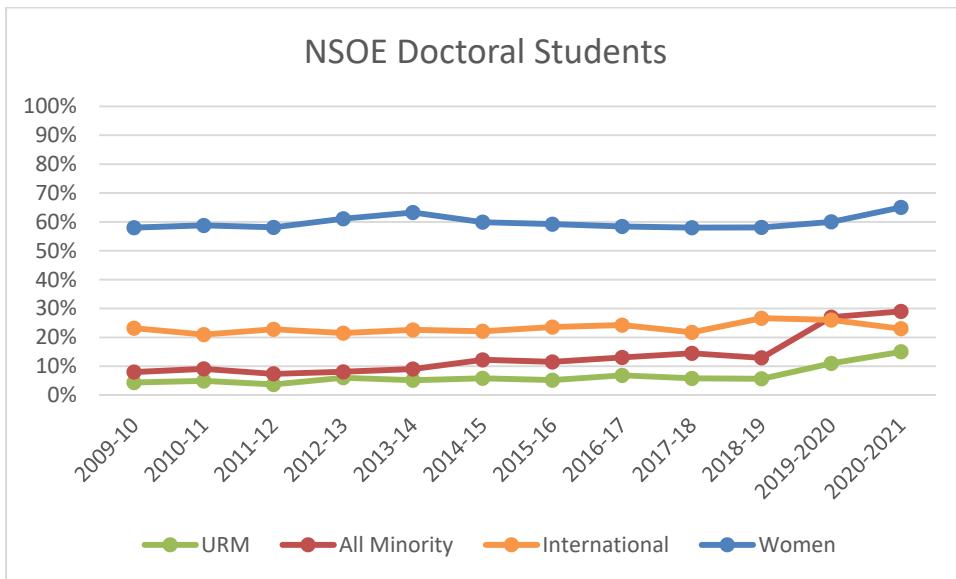
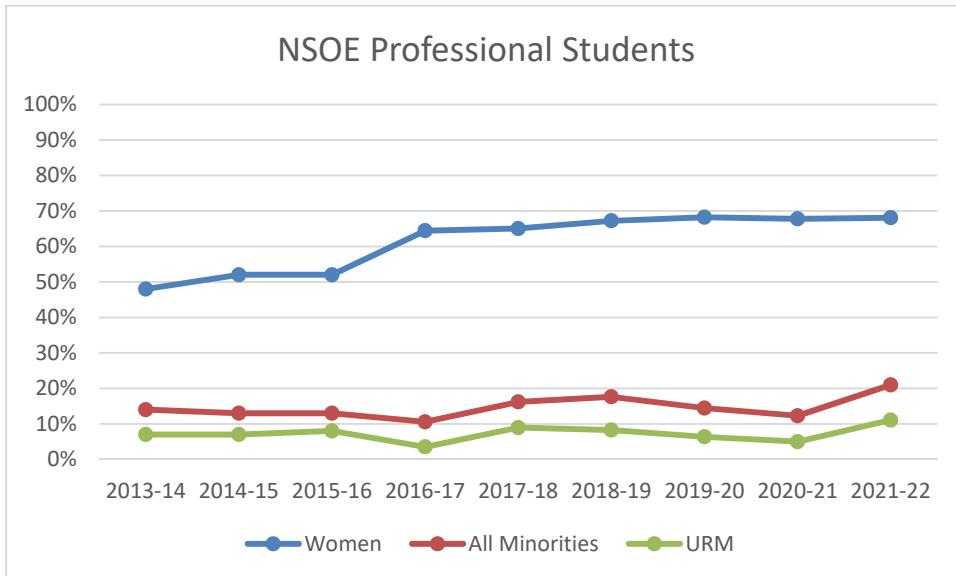
In the end, we all want the same things -- a School of which we can all be proud and to which we all feel we belong. I look forward to moving closer to this vision with all of you.

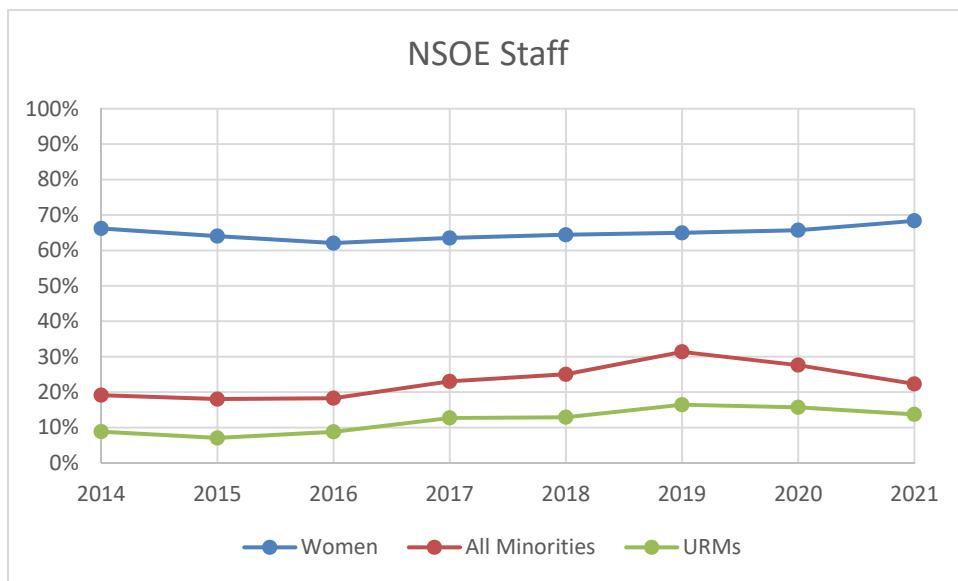
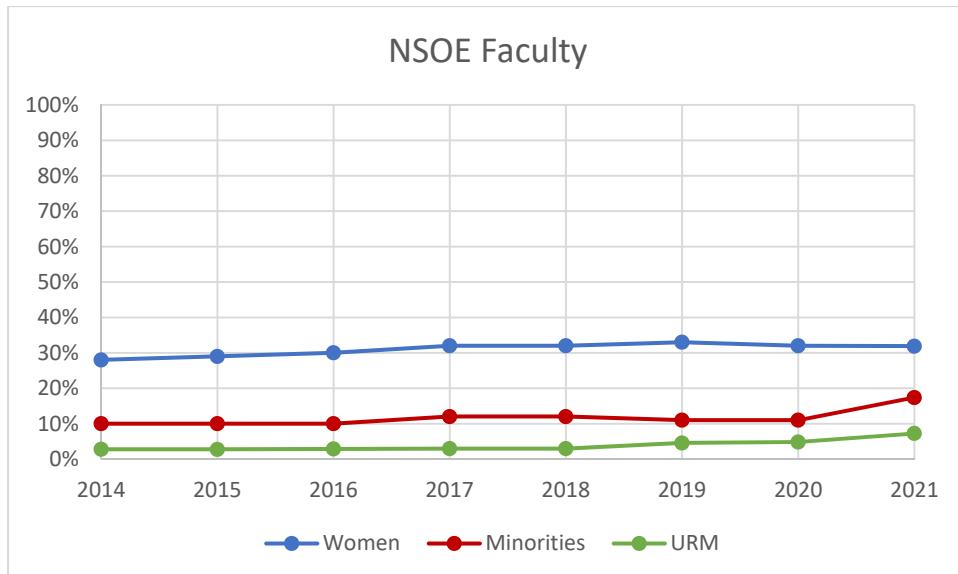
Sincerely,



Toddi Steelman  
Dean of the Nicholas School of the Environment

## Appendix 1. The Nicholas School's Student, Staff, and Faculty Diversity Metrics





## Appendix 2. The Nicholas School's Draft AY 2020-2021 DEI Implementation Plan Activities

### Goal 1: To create a climate of inclusivity at the NSOE among students, staff, & faculty.



Objective 1a: All students, staff, and faculty will feel like they are a valued part of the NSOE Community



#### Activities

| Students   | Faculty  | Staff   |
|--|--|---|
| Communicate the formal & informal routes for students, staff, & faculty to address non-inclusive behavior.           |  |   |
| Conduct staff, faculty, and student meetings using the best practices of inclusive team process.                     |  |   |
| Provide mandatory anti-racism workshops to all in-coming students, staff, & faculty.                                 |  |   |
| Celebrate DEI successes and activities in the Nicholas School.   |  |   |
| Ensure that all NSOE community members have voice in hiring high-level faculty and staff.                            |  |   |
| Engage with & amplify BIPOC voices in the Durham community.  |  |   |
| Provide support for D&I related student groups.  |  |   |
| Offer regular undergraduate & graduate-level workshop on academic skills, careers, & discrimination                  |  |   |
| Offer regular, student workshops on academic skills, careers, and discrimination.                                    | Provide training on culturally inclusive teaching and course design to NSOE Faculty.       | Give the CPDC resources to support undergraduates in career counseling & internship acquisition |
| Decolonize the curriculum by updating core courses to address systems of oppression.                                 |  |   |
| Create a vertically integrated undergraduate-graduate-alumni-faculty mentoring program.                              |  |   |
| Facilitate an academic learning community and tutors for students enrolled in NSOE courses.                          |  |   |
| Create opportunities for off-campus retreats to support URM students.  | Develop regular team building activities to promote collaboration among faculty and staff. |   |
| Create committee or assign the task of ensuring equitable distribution of service and tasks among faculty and staff. |  |   |



Metric: Results from the annual NSOE Community Inclusion Survey

**Goal 1: To create a climate of inclusivity at the NSOE among students, staff, & faculty.**



**Objective 1b: All students, staff, and faculty will feel like they are treated fairly.**



**Activities**

| Students  | Faculty  | Staff                             |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Communicate resources to support students, staff, and faculty in understanding and meeting DEI expectations.                      |  |                                   |
|   | Evaluate division chairs regularly.                                    | Evaluate staff leaders regularly. |
|   | Share & clarify expectations for faculty at different ranks regularly. |                                   |
| Ensure that staff and faculty are evaluated annually by their supervisor or division chair.                                       |  |                                   |
| Ensure that course evaluations address fair treatment & culturally inclusive teaching practices, and that problems are addressed. |  |                                   |
| Conduct regular syllabus reviews to ensure equity in teaching practices.  |  |                                   |



**Metric: Results from the annual NSOE Community Inclusion Survey**

**Goal 2: To attract and successfully recruit students, staff, & faculty from all backgrounds to NSOE.**



**Objective 2a: The Nicholas School uses practices that support the recruitment and retention of staff and faculty from a variety of backgrounds.**



**Activities**

**Faculty**

**Staff**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Establish practices that ensure equity in the selection and hiring of staff and faculty.   |  |
| Prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion in staff, faculty, and dean-level hiring.  |  |
| Create a comprehensive NSOE D&I Online Toolkit with a compilation of resources and best hiring practices. that ensure equity in the selection and hiring of staff and faculty. |  |
| Add values statements to job advertisements.   |  |
| Appoint women and URM faculty/staff to search committees.  |  |
| Provide visible opportunities for leadership from staff and faculty from historically marginalized communities.  |  |
| Establish a set of practices that ensure the advancement and growth of each faculty and staff member.  |  |
| Use cluster hires to recruit faculty from under-represented backgrounds.   |  |
| Develop a visitor/sabbatical host program targeting URM faculty working in areas that intersect environmental sciences and major research initiatives at Duke.                 |  |
| Develop a prestigious postdoctoral fellows program that brings minority scholars to campus.  |  |
| Designate a faculty diversity chair.   |  |
| Promote collaborative engagement among faculty.  |  |
| Provide financial support for all assistant professors to build networks with other academics and practitioners internal and external to NSOE.                                 |  |
| Show support for faculty research involving the populations with which they identify.  |  |



**Metric: Results from the annual NSOE demographic data.**

**Goal 2: To attract and successfully recruit students, staff, & faculty from all backgrounds to NSOE.**



**Objective 2b:** The Nicholas School uses practices that support the recruitment and retention of students from a variety of backgrounds.



| Faculty  | Activities  | Staff |
|--|---|-------|
|  | Recruit students from college and diversity fairs.  |       |
|  | Recruit students into the MEM program from HBCUs and minority-serving institutions.   |       |
| Start chapters for professional societies with programming geared towards increasing racial and other diversity in environmental sciences.   | Review the admissions and enrollment process for bias, clarity, and efficiency.   |       |
| Provide paid research experiences for students in the Nicholas School.   | Require staff members involved in admissions to complete implicit bias training and one additional class in an area such as ethics or how to effectively recruit underrepresented students. |       |
| Expand the number of cross-listed NSOE courses (including Writing 101 and first year seminars) and minimize conflicts with popular and required courses both within and outside of NSOE. | Remove the GRE requirement for graduate student applicants.   |       |
| Make more classes available on the Durham campus over the summer.  | Establish scholarship funds for students from under-represented backgrounds.  |       |
| Show how NSOE's curriculum is directly relevant to careers in the environment.   | Waive application fees for low-income students.   |       |
| Offer additional concentrations (e.g., environmental education, climate change, and ecology).  | Strengthen financial support systems for NSOE students.   |       |
| Develop pre-Freshman year summer bridge programs.  | Send out lists of available courses each semester to all students.  |       |
| Develop a professional school boot camp program.   | Share NSOE opportunities for undergraduates outside of NSOE, including work-study opportunities.  |       |
| Continue K-12 outreach programs.   | Increase advertisement of 3+2 degree program, minors, and certificates with first-year students.  |       |
| Connect the K-12 programs to the vertically integrated mentoring programs for Duke students & faculty.   | Use preferred student media to advertise to students.   |       |
| Train high school guidance counselors about environmental careers.   | Open NSOE's Career and Professional Development center to undergraduate students  |       |
| Train and encourage faculty to use culturally inclusive pedagogy techniques.   | Showcase lucrative career opportunities available with an NSOE degree.  |       |
| Integrate Environmental Justice into the curriculum.   |   |       |



**Metric:** Results from the annual NSOE demographic data.