

DEI-AB Professional Development Plan for the School of Communications

2024–2025 Academic Year

1. DEI-AB Goal(s)/Outcome(s)

The School of Communications has multiple short-term and long-term goals identified in several of its policy documents. During the 2023-2024 academic year, the unit recommitted itself to the following DEI-AB-related goals:

1. As part of the unit’s vision statement, the unit aims to “enhance educational quality” by “attracting and retaining diverse, exceptional, and highly qualified faculty, staff, and students.”
2. As part of the unit’s vision statement, the unit aims to “enhance educational quality” by “infusing the curriculum and unit activities with international and intercultural perspectives.”
3. The School of Communications includes in its bylaws an “Inclusion Plan” (section 4). In recent discussions to revise the unit’s bylaws, faculty remain committed to the following:

“The SoC values inclusion and aims to achieve a diverse representation of personnel (faculty, students, and staff) as well as a diversity of perspectives on committees, in the curriculum, and in academic programs. It is the shared responsibility of all SoC faculty and staff to pursue the School’s goals for diversity and inclusion in a way that emphasizes:

- a focus on student intellectual and social development;
- purposeful development and utilization of organizational resources to enhance student learning;
- attention to cultural differences learners bring to educational experiences; and
- support for a welcoming community that engages all of its diversity in the service of student and organizational learning.

In addition, SoC faculty and staff will be mindful of the religious calendar when scheduling meetings and events. Per GVSU’s Religious Inclusion Policy, faculty, staff and students will not be penalized for not attending meetings or classes on religious holidays.”

2. Objectives

Given the goals/outcomes listed above, it is clear the School of Communications values diversity and inclusion. Many courses include applicable readings, lessons, and assignments. Faculty have also published or presented relevant papers in a variety of outlets. Faculty have published at least 81 books, articles, or book chapters and delivered over 187 presentations. Relevant service activities are varied and many. While the unit plans to maintain its general commitments, it also wishes to engage the following objectives in the coming year:

1. Adopt a public-facing inclusion document.
2. Increase faculty participation in relevant workshops and training sessions.
3. Increase unit- and program-sponsored events focusing on inclusion.

3. Strategies

1. The unit head will allow time during meetings for discussion related to the public-facing statement and form a committee charged with the creation of the document. Members shall consist of at least one representative from each area/program in the unit.
2. The unit will compensate/incentivize contingent faculty to participate in related professional development activities. An initial participation target of 20% for all faculty will be set for the 2024-2025 academic year.
3. The School of Communications will provide opportunities for faculty, students, and staff to learn more about relevant topics. An initial target of one event per semester will be set for the 2024-2025 academic year.

4. Professional Development Activities

Faculty members will be encouraged to participate in the following professional development activities:

1. Faculty members may attend relevant workshops and/or training sessions. These may happen at academic conferences, in person on campus (e.g., FTLC Learning Communities), or online (e.g., Academic Impressions).
2. The unit will facilitate at least one relevant event per semester. Events may include unit colloquia, brown bag presentations, or invited guest speakers (e.g., someone from the Inclusion and Equity Institute for Lakers; one of the unit's named lectures).

5. Reflection on Learning

The unit will reflect on the professional development activities in two ways:

1. Faculty will be invited to either (a) submit to the unit head a brief paragraph about their workshop/training highlights or (b) share a brief report with colleagues during a unit meeting.
2. Audience members who attend a unit-sponsored event will be invited to submit their feedback. This information will be used to improve future opportunities.

6. Timeline

1. By the end of the fall semester, the unit will adopt a public-facing inclusion plan.
2. By the end of each semester, the unit will facilitate at least one applicable event.
3. Faculty members will participate in professional development activities (e.g., workshops or training sessions) throughout the year and report back to the unit or unit head as appropriate.
4. A final report summarizing the unit's new activities will be provided by May 2025.