
[HHS Faculty] HHS OOR Equity Audit Update

1 message

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Fri, Mar 18, 2022 at 3:15 PM

Dear Colleagues,

The purpose of this email is to update you on progress and next steps related to the equity audit of financial and other support provided to faculty via the HHS Office of Research. The following points are addressed:

- 1) Lessons learned from faculty input
- 2) Actions taken to date
- 3) Planned next steps
 - Communication (website)
 - Implementing additional strategies over time
 - Evaluation plans

Many thanks to all who have actively engaged in this process.

Best,

Esther

1) Lessons learned from faculty input (*Sources: 2 town halls; 23 faculty attended in addition to faculty who were present as notetakers, and 8 faculty responded to the anonymous survey*)

Faculty primarily agree that the 3 identified priority areas are important and warrant concerted effort to address. As a reminder these are:

- Improve communication, reduce microaggressions and enhance transparency
- Clarify mission of the HHS OOR and align services
- Enhance support available for qualitative and community engaged researchers

Faculty believe we should simultaneously address the 3 priority areas and that multiple of the named strategies can/should be enacted at the same time or overlap with one another. In other words, we should not focus on one or few at a time.

Faculty encouraged us not to conflate the needs of community engaged and qualitative researchers. Sometimes they overlap, but sometimes they do not and we should be mindful of this.

Faculty urged us to share our findings with department chairs and the Dean and to work with them in our efforts to address the priority areas and the issues noted that are beyond the purview of the HHS OOR.

Likewise, faculty remarked that other faculty/administrators should recognize and use their power to deliberately uplift faculty of color.

Faculty expressed concern with the way we combined across distinct racial/ethnic groups in our quantitative reports and by using the term BIPOC.

- *Please note:* we are revising those reports in light of this feedback. Specifically, given the current sample size, the raised issue, and the desire to protect anonymity, we will focus on the comparison between Black and White faculty for now. It is highly likely we can compare other groups quantitatively over time. In addition, we will look for opportunities to comment on the heterogeneity of experiences between and within groups in our communication so the breadth and uniqueness of experiences are at the forefront of mind.

2) Actions taken to date

A number of identified strategies have been employed already and strong plans are in place for others. To illustrate, some examples under each category are:

Improve communication, reduce microaggressions and enhance transparency

- HHS OOR is devoting multiple spring meetings to enhancing EDI competence (e.g., we scheduled an additional meeting in April and the meeting will be devoted to a workshop entitled Understanding and Avoiding Microaggressions delivered by the Office of Intercultural Engagement, we are reading/discussing articles suggested by Dr. Bettez)
- Invited an ad hoc reviewers with qualitative expertise to serve on the HHS OOR internal grant review committee in January based on the survey sent to faculty in December
- Created and required a reviewer training in January that included recognizing/guarding against implicit bias
- Altered the wording of the review criteria to be more inclusive of qualitative and community engaged research methods
- Have invited two additional faculty members to join the HHS RAC next fall; Dr. Sharon Morrison will represent the needs of community engaged researchers; Dr. Danielle Swick will represent SWK and has a demonstrated history of advocating for greater equity, diversity and inclusion in HHS. Thank you to both for agreeing to serve.

Clarify mission of the HHS OOR and align services

- Discussions and preliminary planning have begun; goal is to complete this by the end of this academic year (spring 2022)

Enhance support available for qualitative and community engaged researchers

- Have had 2 meetings to date with Terri Shelton and Kim Littlefield regarding unique needs of qualitative and community engaged researchers to clarify what supports may be offered centrally and to guide future planning; additional meetings are anticipated
- Have had 1 meeting with Emily Janke thus far about better integrating with ICEE; additional meetings are anticipated
- Publicly stated that research initiative funding is to support all types and phases of scholarship and have proactively reached out to CER researchers about which mechanisms may fit with needs they have mentioned
- Multiple actions are in the planning stage for fall 2022

Themes that extend beyond HHS OOR

- Results have been shared with HHS Racial Equity Task Force; HHS executive council (Dean, Associate and Assistant Deans) and HHS chairs
- Results also shared with Terri Shelton and Kim Littlefield to inform central research office
- Results will be shared with Provost and Chancellor once the quantitative reports have been revised based on above feedback (Likely in April)

Please see communication plan below for information on how we will update you about all actions/ progress over time.

3) Planned next steps

- Communication (website). In the coming months, we will add a section to our website devoted exclusively to our EDI efforts. It will include access to the background/history that led to the audit and all written reports. The focal point, however, will be a visual depiction of progress made to date and future plans to implement the identified strategies. We will also work to visually display data annually about how we allocate financial support. When the site is ready, I will alert you via email. In addition, updates will periodically be disseminated via email on the listserv.
- Implementing additional strategies over time. We will continue to implement additional identified strategies over time as resources (both time and money) allow. Advice on the timing/order will be sought from the Equity Audit Working Group, the HHS Research Advisory Committee, and department chairs. Input from all faculty is invited and welcome. Faculty may reach out to any of the above identified groups or directly to me to share their thoughts over time.
- Evaluation plans. We will continue to collate internal data about faculty applications/awards and other sources of support, and we intend to share data annually on the website. In three years, we will replicate the quantitative analyses and collect additional qualitative data to see if our efforts are beginning to move the needle and to identify needed course corrections. At that time, we will lay out the longer-term evaluation plan.

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