

Actions Taken to Date (as of December 2022)

A number of strategies (suggested by interview respondents, the task force, at faculty forums, and generated by OOR staff) have been employed to address the key issues identified in the HHS OOR Equity Audit.

Improve communication, reduce microaggressions and enhance transparency

- HHS OOR devoted multiple staff meetings to enhancing EDI competence during AY 21-22 (e.g., we read/discussed articles suggested by Dr. Bettez, we watched and discussed a series of videos focused on microaggressions, we hosted a virtual workshop Understanding and Avoiding Microaggressions delivered by the Office of Intercultural Engagement and invited all staff from the Dean's Office to join us, and we met with Dr. Bettez to process the results of the equity audit and our independent learning efforts)
- Assistant Dean for Research Lisa Walker and Associate Dean for Research (ADR) Esther Leerkes are continuing to meet with Dr. Bettez during AY 22-23 to dig deeper into issues related to power, white privilege, and communication tendencies given our roles involve frequent school wide communication and decisions related to resource allocation
- Beginning in 2022 we asked faculty to declare their intent to apply for internal funding and to note needed reviewer expertise so we can invite ad hoc reviewers with needed expertise to serve on the HHS OOR internal grant review committee.
- Created and required a reviewer training in January 2022 that included recognizing/guarding against implicit bias. This will be updated over time and required annually.
- In 2022, altered the wording of the review criteria to be more inclusive of qualitative and community engaged research methods
- In 2022, invited two additional faculty members to join the HHS RAC in a deliberate effort to diversify the composition in important ways: Dr. Sharon Morrison to represent the needs of community engaged researchers and Dr. Danielle Swick to represent SWK and given a demonstrated history of advocating for greater equity, diversity, and inclusion in HHS.
- In order to facilitate transparency and communication the following have been or will be added to our website:
 - A running list of all faculty who have received funding from HHS OOR will be added to the website in spring 2023.
 - An archive of HHS OOR Update Emails to make it easier for faculty to find information shared in the past is now available on our website under the About/Reports tab. Please see <https://hhs.uncg.edu/office-of-research/about/hhs-reports/>.
 - A tab titled [Advancing Equity](#) that includes information about the Equity Audit, all resulting reports, and this summary of actions taken to date.

Clarify mission of the HHS OOR and align services

- HHS OOR personnel drafted a new statement that we believe better fits. In doing so, we considered our charge from the Dean, expectations of us from central research offices,

the primary functions of each full-time position in the OOR and the goals of the programs/initiatives we offer. In put was invited from HHS RAC and Chairs Council and the faculty. The final statement, adopted on September 21, 2022, and shared on our website and via email is:

The mission of the School of Health and Human Sciences Office of Research is to provide exceptional unit-based support services that equitably: (1) facilitate success with external grant/contract submission and management; (2) disseminate information about research-related policies, systems, and opportunities within the school, university and beyond; and (3) generate and manage resources designed to support faculty excellence in diverse approaches to research and scholarship.

Enhance support available for qualitative and community engaged researchers

- ADR Leerkes has:
 - 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, but have been delayed due to personnel shortages
 - Met with Emily Janke 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
 - Attended multi-day web conference, Campus Compact, which focused on DEI and community engagement, thanks to funding from UNCGs ICEE, to learn more about community engagement
 - Met with Interim Associate Provost for Outreach and Engagement from Michigan State University to learn about their programming and to solicit information about other models and contacts
 - Designated research/team space in the Moore building to Dr. Sharon Morrison and Dr. Sudha Shreeniwas that will be used in their ongoing community engaged research (e.g., team space for undergraduate and graduate RAs to meet and work, conference room space for meetings with community partners, etc.)
 - Co-sponsored Center for Women's Health and Wellness Fall Speaker Series and Workshop. The speaker, Dr. Sonyia Richardson is an expert is mental health disparities, specifically in relation to suicide and is a community engaged and mixed methods researcher. She shared practical tips and discussed barriers to doing this kind of work. ADR attended lunches, talk, and workshop and spoke with Dr. Richardson in a small group to gain greater insight into the needs of community engaged researchers and how to meet those needs. The Assistant Dean attended the workshop.
 - Appointed Dr. Sharon Morrison as Faculty Fellow for Community Engaged Research in AY 22

- Conducted interviews with 5 qualitative researchers in summer 2022 to better understand unmet needs, to generate novel solutions, and to get feedback on some ideas for the future
- Dr. Morrison has:
 - Crafted a mission and vision statement specific to CER research that will guide our work and is on our home page:
 - Mission: Deepen a culture of CER in the School of HHS
 - Vision: Embrace and value CER as a powerful scientific and equitable approach to advancing health and human well-being
 - Meets regularly with ADR and Dr. Emily Janke who directs ICEE; the two co-hosted a Be Here event for community engaged researchers; Dr. Leerkes and Dean Mattacola attended.
 - Created/disseminated the CER Dispatch to share time sensitive CER information with HHS faculty
 - Co-hosted a watch party for an NIH webinar on community engaged research with Assistant Dean Walker
- HHS OOR:
 - Helped plan and host an information session about [Center for Health Equity Research \(CHER\) Institute](#) and the [NIMHD Health Disparities Research Institute](#) featuring HHS faculty in November 2021; these training institutes are of high interest/value to faculty conducting community engaged and health disparities research. We are intentionally seeking out and sharing information about these and other opportunities.
 - Is identifying and disseminating information on long-standing, highly regarded qualitative research workshops
 - Is building connections with qualitative research experts in the region in hopes they will serve as consultants and reviewers for HHS faculty conducting qualitative research
 - Is actively seeking information to assist qualitative researchers in meeting the new NIH requirements about data sharing

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 shared with Provost Storrs and Chancellor Gilliam
- Lessons learned have been shared with NSF Advance Steering Committee, EDI leaders on campus, and some research network directors