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Overview

The Cornell in Washington DEI Strategic Plan includes a statement of our overall vision and strategic goals (Part I) and eleven Action Areas, each with several Action Items (Part II). Each Action Area specifies its strategic objective, person primarily responsible (often in collaboration with other staff), measures of success, anticipated actions and how each Action Area contributes to the 3 overall DEI goals and the 4 CIW domains. Appendix 1 provides a brief description of the CIW Program, for those not familiar with the program. Appendix 2 is a progress tracker with entries for each of the eleven Action Areas and each of the corresponding Action Items.

This plan will remain a work in progress during 2021 as we gather input from a range of CIW stakeholders, as the new CIW Director is identified and as CIW transitions into the School of Public Policy. That said, work has already begun on some of the Action Items as indicated in the Progress Tracker.

Part I: DEI Vision and Strategic Goals

A. Vision

Cornell in Washington is committed to creating an equitable and inclusive academic, living, and experiential learning environment, through actively recruiting a diverse student body, faculty, and staff. We strive to ground all of our policies and practices in social justice in order to create a learning environment where all students can thrive, regardless of their race, cultural background, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, academic discipline, and ability status. Students will become social-change agents, promoting equity and social justice throughout the rest of their lives, by engaging with world-renowned faculty in a variety of world-class courses; participating in a unique and dynamic internship in one of the most influential cities in the world; and living and actively engaging with their peers, the DC community, and a robust network of diverse alumni and leaders.

Academic Strategic Goal

Cornell University has long emphasized its ambition to be a place where any student can find study in any subject. The university aims to be inclusive rather than exclusive. There has been a growing recognition that such a goal requires careful attention to creating and sustaining a diverse, equitable and inclusive community and environment. For Cornell in Washington, such a goal is even more critical, as the program seeks to give students the kind of integrated academic and practical experience that will set them up effectively to be active citizens of their country and their world. The core intellectual part of that program, academics, must incorporate and live the values of Cornell’s motto and offer accessibility and inclusiveness throughout. This includes not only the course offerings, but the community of faculty and staff that creates and delivers the courses. The academic program should ensure that careful attention is paid at every stage of the academic program – from development to execution to outcome—to engaging with, developing, and supporting a diverse set of ideas, communities, and approaches.

Internships and Professional Development Strategic Goal
Professional development and practical experience are critical components of a student’s college career. The internship program at Cornell in Washington is aimed at giving students such a valuable experience, making it an integral part of the program as well as a pivotal development opportunity for student participants. Internships are where students gain real-world career experience, make invaluable networking connections and mentorships, and explore different career paths. Because it is such a fundamental part of the student experience at Cornell in Washington, CIW should ensure that internships are accessible and sustainable to all students. That means giving them the resources and support they need to search for an internship, preparing them to handle the internship they select, and supporting them during and after the internship experience.

**Community Engagement Strategic Goal**

On average, college students spend about 70% of their time outside of the classroom, and Cornell in Washington is no different. One of the core components of Cornell in Washington is the set of opportunities for students to engage with the program, their cohort, Cornell’s alumni, and the greater D.C. community. Cornell in Washington students have the unique opportunity to live in the heart of Washington, D.C., in the trendy historic Dupont Circle neighborhood. One of the major priorities of Cornell in Washington is to create an environment at the Wolpe Center, where students feel valued, respected, and included.

In order to support all students’ holistic development and maintain both physical and mental well-being, it is important that Cornell in Washington provide opportunities for students to learn about and celebrate each other, as well as the history and diversity of Washington, D.C. This includes providing more multicultural programming; creating opportunities to challenge and support students’ identity development, creating dialogues around social justice; partnering with businesses that are owned and operated by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; and working with community organizations for Cornell in Washington students to be part of civic and service projects, with a focus on root causes of inequity.

**Faculty and Staff Development, Diversity and Retention Strategic Goal**

The faculty and staff at Cornell in Washington are integral to the success of the Cornell in Washington program and to the success of the DEI strategic plan. As individuals, they bring with them their unique life experiences within systems of power, privilege, and oppression. These diverse experiences can bring about clarity and understanding, but also implicit bias and trauma. As such, it is important that all Cornell in Washington faculty and staff are challenged and supported to reach the same level of understanding and action when it comes to diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion. While this work of unlearning harmful biases and behavior is mostly done on a personal level, there are many ways in which Cornell in Washington and Cornell University at-large can support this personal and professional development. This includes mandated diversity and inclusion training from HR for all faculty and staff; yearly trainings or workshops in areas of DEI for Cornell in Washington faculty and staff; frequent dialogue around DEI at Cornell in Washington; and professional development opportunities around DEI throughout the year.
B. Our Understandings and Commitments

We recognize how racism intersects with all other minoritized social-identities and systems of oppression and that there are national conversations and actions taking place around racism and how it permeates our society, following the unjust murders of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and Ahmaud Arbery in 2020. Cornell in Washington faculty and staff acknowledge that we must play a role in taking anti-racist action. In creating this DEI plan, we understand that the goals of diversity, equity and inclusion have been and continue to be undermined by a combination of systemic and structural dynamics at national and institutional levels as well as unconscious biases within each of us. We commit ourselves to identify and address these dynamics to the greatest extent possible, knowing that some are within our control while others are not; knowing that some can be addressed immediately while others cannot; knowing that we are not yet aware of the full range of dynamics that will require attention; and knowing that we, as individuals and as a program, will make mistakes and experience delays or roadblocks along the way. For these reasons we view this as a living document to be updated and improved as we engage with our many stakeholders and gain experience in implementing this plan. As such, we place special emphasis on two of the eleven Action Areas presented in the next section of this plan: Action Area 1 (DEI Plan Updates) and Action Area 11 (Accountability and Evaluation).

PART II: ACTION AREAS AND ACTION ITEMS

1. DEI Plan Updates

Primary Responsibility: CIW Director

Strategic Objective: Ensure that the diversity targets and the overall strategic plan are informed by an understanding of the current and historical composition of CIW student cohorts, the climate these cohorts have experienced and the goals and perspectives of key stakeholder groups and offices on campus.

Measures of Success:
1. The CIW DEI plan is viewed positively by all relevant stakeholder groups and approved by the responsible university offices

Anticipated Action Items:
   a. Request and analyze historical data from CU’s Institutional Research and Planning to understand the social and demographic characteristics of CIW’s students over the previous 5-10 years
   b. Consult with university administrators to develop appropriate five-year diversity targets and the means to achieve those targets
   c. Develop a retrospective climate survey and administer it to recent cohorts of CIW students
   d. Solicit feedback on the interim DEI strategic plan from all current faculty and staff, the SCE, the CIW Steering Committee, the university D&I Office, CIW alums and other stakeholders.
   e. Revise the DEI Strategic Plan based on the above inputs and experience gained in implementing the current plan during the first year

Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in All CIW domains

2. Faculty and Staff Development
Primary Responsibility: CIW Director

Strategic Objective: Create and maintain a CIW culture in which all faculty and staff are committed to the university’s diversity, equity and inclusion goals and have the opportunity, motivation and support to do the individual and collective work needed to achieve those goals.

Measures of Success:
1. Participation in the DEI training and development activities
2. Results in the CIW climate surveys (involving students, staff and faculty)
3. Results on the DEI-related items in other CIW surveys (involving students)

Anticipated Action Items:
  a. Work with campus partners to identify training and workshops for faculty and staff.
  b. Establish a schedule for all faculty and staff to complete the six modules of Cornell’s training (Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Cornell) and monitor the completion of those modules.
  c. Provide resources for staff and faculty to do meaningful self-work in unlearning harmful stereotypes and biases around issues of marginalization
  d. Support staff and faculty through this process by setting aside times for dialogue around what folks are learning and unlearning
  e. Provide some hours during the work week to allow staff to read a common read or to journal, reflect, and engage with self-work
  f. Provide semesterrly faculty trainings on creating an inclusive learning environment in the classroom.
  g. Develop a standard operating procedure (SOP) for responding to concerns or complaints reported by students or bystanders

Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in All CIW Domains

3. Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention

Primary Responsibility: CIW Director

Strategic Objective: Increase and maintain representation of underrepresented groups among CIW faculty, staff and graduate students.

Measures of Success:
1. Diversity in each of the three categories (faculty, staff, graduate students)
2. Results in the CIW climate surveys (involving faculty, staff and graduate students)

Anticipated Action Items:
  a. Develop and deploy a search and recruitment strategy that yields a diverse CIW staff, including graduate student and regular staff members
  b. Develop and deploy a search and recruitment strategy that yields a diverse faculty and brings diversity into course offerings and course content
  c. Urge the university to deploy a search and recruitment strategy that brings diversity to the CIW Director position

Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in All CIW Domains
4. The Academic Program

**Primary Responsibility: Associate Director**

**Strategic Objective 1:** Diversify course offerings to bring topics, ideas, and communities that have been marginalized or ignored into the academic program in order to promote underrepresented ideas and intellectual dialogues.

**Measures of Success:**
1. Increased numbers of courses that engage with topics, ideas, and communities that have been marginalized or ignored.
2. Demonstrated effort to develop such courses.

**Anticipated Action Items:**
- Add a course examining social justice issues in Washington DC to Fall 2021 schedule.
- Add a course examining engaging with DEI issues to Spring 2022 schedule.
- Facilitate student research projects in Inquiry course on underrepresented ideas and topics.
- Bi-weekly newsletter in the Issues course looking at a range of issues, including underrepresented ones.

**Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in Academics**

**Strategic Objective 2:** Revise current course curricula to incorporate and implement topics that engage effectively with social justice issues or approaches in order to create classrooms that are inclusive of ideas, experiences, backgrounds, and learning styles.

**Measures of Success:**
1. Social justice topics or approaches incorporated effectively into elective courses at CIW.
2. Social justice considerations incorporated into core required course (the inquiry course) through the semester research project.

**Anticipated Action Items:**
- Work with elective course faculty to develop their curriculums and incorporate social justice topics or approaches.
- In core course, have students evaluate their policy proposals on how they impact issues of equity and diversity.

**Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in Academics**

**Strategic Objective 3:** Create opportunities for new courses by visiting faculty to be offered that focus on topics of social justice.

**Measures of Success:**
1. Having visiting faculty at CIW offering courses that focus on topics of social justice.
2. Demonstrated effort to locate and recruit faculty who could create such courses.

**Anticipated Action Items:**
- Locate faculty & courses that engage with topics of social justice on main campus for potential recruitment and publicize these opportunities to faculty on the main campus.

**Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in Academics**

**Strategic Objective 4:** Create opportunities to invite a diverse group of guest speakers or other kinds of teachers to the various courses.

**Measures of Success:**
1. Increased diversity and inclusiveness of guest speakers or other kinds of guest teachers of every semester Issues course.
2. Increased diversity and inclusiveness of guest speakers or other kinds of guest teachers of the rotating elective courses.

Anticipated Action Items:
  h. Create a diverse and inclusive speaker series in the Issues course.
  i. Work with elective faculty to enable diverse and inclusive guest voices in their classes.

Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in Academics.

5. Engagement within the CIW community

Primary Responsibility: Academic and Residential Life Coordinator

Strategic Objective 1: Develop and implement a required 2-credit learning-where-you-live course that begins the semester before students live in DC, which focuses on inclusive leadership, professional development, and civic engagement, utilizing the Social Change Model, various critical theories and the Experiential Learning Model.

Measures of Success:
1. Development of a course that supports the DEI strategic objectives
2. Approval of course by the LYWL curriculum committee
3. Implementation of the course
4. Successful creation of service project and partnerships

Anticipated Action Items:
  a. Develop the 2-credit LWYL course, including a syllabus and all materials needed for instruction

AY22 Actions:
  b. Work with the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education to get a designated UNILWYL course
  c. Find organizations with whom CIW can partner to provide opportunities of civic engagement and service projects

AY23 Actions:
  d. Begin implementing the course

Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in CIW Community

Strategic Objective 2: Create opportunities to challenge and support students in their own social-identity development and to learn about and celebrate themselves and others, through multicultural programming

Measures of Success:
1. Frequent multicultural programming taking place on a monthly basis
2. Frequent opportunities for conversation around social justice is taking place

Anticipated Action Items:
  e. Provide opportunities for conversations around current events, power, privilege, oppression and implicit bias
  f. Provide frequent multicultural programming, focusing on identity-based themes for months and days of the year

Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in CIW Community

Strategic Objective 3: Implement intentional inclusive-practices to prevent incidents of implicit bias and microaggressions and to promote the DEI strategic plan.
Measures of Success:
1. Concerns are expressed and responded to appropriately
2. The number and nature of concerns are documented and expected to be kept at zero or near-zero levels

Anticipated Action Items:
  g. Benchmark inclusive practices (e.g., land acknowledgements, sharing personal pronouns, pronouncing and remembering names) and include them into the current SOPs
  h. Develop an SOP on how students can respond to concerns of bias, how that will be communicated to students and how faculty and staff will respond to concerns

Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in CIW Community

6. The Engagement Program within DC

Primary Responsibility: Academic and Residential Life Coordinator

Strategic Objective 1: Create attractive opportunities for CIW students to learn about and celebrate the history and diversity of Washington, DC through engagement with various DC organizations.

Measures of Success:
1. A robust program of activities is available each semester
2. Active participation in these activities and positive evaluations of them
3. Active partnerships and exchange of services with BIPOC/LGBTQ+-owned businesses

Anticipated Action Items:
  a. Highlight locations around DC in our newsletter and provide suggestions for excursions/museums of diverse perspectives
  b. Compliment the already established semesterly excursions with opportunities for students to learn and experience DC from other diverse perspectives
  c. Build relationships with non-profit organizations, diverse local DC organizations, and local high schools
  d. Build relationships with other DC-based university programs to create affinity groups and other engagement opportunities for students
  e. Create a list of identity-relevant clubs and associations in DC for social and networking purposes
  f. Be intentional about promoting and doing business with BIPOC/LGBTQ+-owned businesses

Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in the CIW Community

7. Internships and Professional Development

Primary Responsibility: Associate Director

Strategic Objective 1: Make sure that Cornell in Washington internship opportunities are accessible and sustainable to all.

Measures of Success:
1. Student participation in a professional training preparation program for internship.
2. Increased number of paid internships.
3. Increased number of internships that can be treated as work-study.

Anticipated Action Items:
  a. Include professional training program for students applying to Cornell in Washington.
b. Maintain and make available to students a list of organizations that provide paid internships

c. Work with Public Service Center and Financial Aid to solidify work study potential for internships.

**Contributes to equity and inclusion in Internships and Professional Development**

**Strategic Objective 2:** Increase visibility and accessibility of internships at DC organizations working in DEI-related areas.

**Measures of Success:**
1. Provided information about such organizations to students for each semester.
2. Engaged students with members of such organizations.

**Anticipated Action Items:**

d. Maintain a list of organizations/businesses whose mission and visions relate to DEI work in the DC community, internationally, country wide to our students.

**Contributes to equity and inclusion in Internships and Professional Development**

**8. Financial Accessibility**

**Primary Responsibility: Director of Administration,**

**Strategic Objective:** Ensure that CIW is financially accessible to all students and removing financial barriers to allow students the opportunity to participate in this unique residential community program located in the heart of Washington, DC.

**Measures of Success:**
1. Increased participation in CIW Program by students who have financial barriers
2. Specific work study internships identified and promoted
3. Defined internal community programs at CIW to assist students in planning finances and meals as well as time management
4. Committed financial support for CIW programs by external partners: CIW alums and local Cornell Alumni groups

**Anticipated Action Items:**

a. Explore funding opportunities for students who accept unpaid internships, such as Federal Work-Study, scholarships/grants etc.

b. Work with the university financial aid office to ensure that financial aid packages for CIW students are in line with the actual costs of participating in the program.

c. Work with the university financial aid office to clarify financial aid polices for CIW staff and students

d. CIW staff will work in partnership with the CU Financial Aid office, International Service Office of Global Learning, CU Accessibility Office, Engaged Cornell, and the Cornell Club of Washington to ensure that one on one support is available to each student to address their individual concerns before and throughout their experience.

e. Post on website and flyers comparison of expenses in DC and Ithaca to be updated annually by CIW ambassadors

f. Develop in-house programming at the CU Wolpe Center to teach students how to prepare budget friendly meals, manage time and funds, and introduce the myriad of free cultural and entertainment resources in DC.

**Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in All CIW Domains**
9. The Marketing and Recruitment Program

**Primary Responsibility:** Student Services Associate  
**Strategic Objective:** Create a sustainable marketing/recruitment structure that attract, recruits and supports a diverse pool of applicants, including recruitment of all races, cultural backgrounds, socioeconomic statuses, sexual orientations, gender identities, academic disciplines and ability statuses.

**Measures of Success:**
1. An up-to-date list of contacts from each department/office across campus who we are consistently in touch.
2. 1 or 2 DEI events conducted each year.
3. An up-to-date list of DEI alumni contacts and organization contacts within the DC community who support and partner with CIW.
4. 1 Alumni Diversity Panel Event conducted each year.
5. Successful implementation of an inclusive and anti-racist application and admissions process.

**Anticipated Action Items:**
   a. Evaluate the application and admission procedures to ensure and enhance its inclusivity and deploy new application and admissions procedures as appropriate (led by CIW Director).
   b. Establish relationships with all offices across campus that serve these student populations, including but are not limited to the Africana Studies and Research Center, American Indian Studies Program, LGBT Resource Center, Asian and Asian American Center, DEI programs, and other academic departments.
   c. Partner with departments and offices across campus to host DEI events that serve as recruitment and networking opportunities.
   d. Increase awareness of Cornell in Washington by strategically partnering with diverse business/organizations in the DC area and bringing them to Ithaca campus to network and mentor CIW’s diverse student population. For example, Black Owned Businesses and non-profits that work with marginalized communities in Washington, D.C.
   e. Partner with CIW Alumni who are in the DC area and host networking and recruitment events on Cornell’s Ithaca campus, to highlight the successes of our CIW alumni and provide our prospective and current CIW students a chance to network, establish connections and a sense of belonging with DC professionals.

**Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in All CIW Domains**

10. Alumni Engagement

**Primary Responsibility:** Director of Administration  
**Strategic Objective:** Connect with our alumni to engage across majors, years, identities, and cultures to establish a robust network that provides opportunities for engagement, networking, and mentoring.

**Measures of Success:**
1. Establishment of Diverse CIW alumni advisory group to facilitate engagement, networking, and mentoring.
2. Establishment of CIW specific connection with Cornell Alumni Affairs and Development staff to develop funding sources for CIW

**Anticipated Action Items:**
- Create an advisory group of former CIW students, CU Office of Alumni Affairs and Development and the Cornell Club of Washington
- Work with the advisory group to identify a range of ways in which alumni can engage with CIW
- Conduct outreach with alums to identify volunteers for various activities
- Host recruitment and networking events such as an Alumni Diversity Panel which will highlight the successes of our CIW Alumni as well as give our prospective and current CIW students a chance to network and establish connections in their fields.

**Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in All CIW Domains**

11. Accountability and Evaluation

**Primary Responsibility: CIW Director**

**Strategic Objective:** Create and maintain clear systems of accountability for implementing this DEI plan and mechanisms of evaluation to generate the data needed to assess progress, gaps and necessary adjustments.

**Measures of Success:**
1. Performance demonstrated in the Progress Tracker
2. Outcomes demonstrated in all CIW surveys
3. Success in eliciting support from the university to address issues outside of the control of CIW (including but not limited to financial aid, admissions procedures)

**Anticipated Action Items:**
- Assign primary responsibility for each of the elements of the DEI Strategic Plan to a specific CIW staff member and modify position descriptions to reflect this, with the CIW Director taking overall responsibility.
- Develop and maintain a DEI Progress Tracker with goals, timetables and descriptions of progress and obstacles for each element of the DEI Strategic Plan.
- Modify the orientation survey, end-of-semester survey, course evaluations, internship evaluation survey and internship search survey to include items related to diversity, equity and inclusion. Develop and implement a climate survey.
- Review the DEI Progress Tracker and survey results at the end of each semester, take steps to address any concerns and use these tools as part of annual performance reviews with staff.
- Submit an annual progress report on CIW’s DEI initiatives to the university administration and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at the end of June each year.
- Continuously review the policies and procedures of similar programs as they pertain to DEI and implement programs to promote positive change.
- Update all CIW evaluation surveys to include attention to DEI aspects.
- Advocate for an external review of the CIW DEI plan and experience in its implementation.

**Contributes to diversity, equity and inclusion in All CIW Domains**
Appendix 1: Overview of Cornell in Washington

Cornell in Washington is a residential academic and experiential learning program for undergraduate students located in the nation’s capital. It began in 1980 as a small pilot program for six students and since then has grown into a popular and highly respected center of off-campus experiential learning. Located in the Cornell University Wolpe Center in a residential area of Dupont Circle, the program houses up to 50 students each semester and summer. In the early decades it primarily served students majoring in government, American studies and history and in recent years has expanded to include students from colleges across the campus.

The program has three core components: Academics, internships and community engagement. The academic program consists of one required core course taught by the Associate Director and 6-8 electives taught by DC-based adjunct instructors or Ithaca-based faculty. All courses are approved by one or more departments on campus. Elective courses are limited to an enrollment of 15 students, with most ranging from 5-10. Students take a full load of classes (12-16 credits) during the fall and spring semesters and one course during the summer. In addition to their course work, students participate in a half-time internship (20-25 hours per week) in a public, non-profit or private sector organization of their choosing. CIW staff provide one-on-one support to guide students in their internship search and application process during the semester before they arrive, including connecting them with electronic databases and resources, preparing their cover letters and refining their resumes. The community engagement component consists of a variety of regular social, civic and educational activities within the Wolpe Center itself and in the DC community, ranging from museum tours, Kennedy Center performances, professional sports events, DC walking tours and the like.

Students on campus learn about CIW through an extensive and regular set of marketing activities conducted each semester on campus, via social media, class visits by CIW faculty, promotional Powerpoint slides shown in large classes, information sessions and internship panels. Interested students apply to the program through the CIW website (https://sce.cornell.edu/ciw) by submitting their resume, transcript and the name of an academic reference. CIW tuition is the same as the student’s tuition on campus. Students live in fully furnished apartments in the Wolpe Center (double or triple occupancy) where they prepare their own meals in lieu of a meal plan. The cost of housing and program fee in the Wolpe Center $6781 (F21) for the semester. The student’s financial aid package follows them to CIW. Currently there is no adjustment for any differences in the cost of housing, cost of living in DC or the fact that federal work-study opportunities are not as readily available as on campus.