

Dear CSD Community,

In all health care and educational settings, we interact with people from different cultural backgrounds, identities and intersectionalities. Therefore, **it's essential that our students learn to appreciate their own cultural lens and the life perspective and lens that individuals from diverse backgrounds bring to our profession and work settings.** With the spring semester here again, we have new opportunities to re-commit to working to support initiatives that encourage diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) for all. If you want to read what we have reported in the past, please [read here](#). And read below for what has transpired this past year in CSD.

Periodic Review

In April, we completed a required periodic review process related to a university re-accreditation. This is separate from our CAA accreditation. Collectively, **faculty agreed that we were particularly interested in examining how diversity, equity, and inclusion are reflected in our people, policies and curriculum along with recruitment and retention.** To prepare, we generated a 40-page self-study. This was followed up by a 2-day site visit by both external and internal reviewers. Reviewers provided us with a follow up report and suggestions that we are using as we move forward.

Record Enrollment

In our recent graduate cohort, **we have one of the highest enrollments of students from diverse backgrounds to date.** We are very proud of this accomplishment and To help support and retain these students we re-launched a mentoring initiative (see below).

Mentoring Matters!

We know this is important because students from diverse backgrounds can greatly benefit from such relationships by gaining additional support, feeling seen and heard, and obtaining guidance from someone external to the program who they look up to. **A huge shout out to our alumni who showed up to mentor our graduate students of color. Sharrell Barnes, Shamekia Mason, Shirley Addo Dorsett, Mariah Morton-Jones and Kinya Embry-Wright, Taylor Puryear Byrd and Miricle Dominquez!!** We appreciate the time each of you has committed to mentor our students. Currently mentors and mentees, meet individually and in a group a couple times per year or as needed. If you're interested in participating in this initiative, please [contact Anne Olson \(aolso2@uky.edu\)](mailto:aolso2@uky.edu)

Faculty and Staff

Continue to engage in ongoing training related to DEI and Mental Health. Our database shows that our faculty and staff (n=13) completed 25 different trainings. This activity reflects that we recognize we can continue to learn, that **we value this learning and hope to put what we learn into action.**

Respectfully,

Anne Olson, Department Chair CSD