



School of Planning, Design and Construction DEI Efforts Report

The intention of this report is to highlight all efforts regarding DEI within the School of Planning, Design and Construction (SPDC) during the 2021-22 academic year.

1) Supporting a Departmental DEI Committee:

- The School of Planning, Design and Construction (SPDC) instituted a standing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee in November 2020.
- The DEI Committee co-chairs are Noah Durst and Mary Beth Graebert. Other members include George Berghorn, Hannah Brodhead, Wisdom Henry (undergraduate student representative), Trish Machemer, Deyanira Nevarez Martinez, Harshal Shah, Laura Winter, and Jing Zhou (graduate student representative).
- The DEI Committee also established a Student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council; its members were self-nominated and represent both undergraduate and graduate students, domestic and international students, and each of the School's programs. The SDEIC provided input on and reviewed DEI assessment questions.
- The DEI Committee met once or twice per month during the academic year.
- The director provided \$10,000 in funding to support the efforts of the DEI committee.

2) Strategic Plan Development

- Conducted surveys of SPDC faculty, staff and students to assess their current perspectives of diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Hosted focus groups for SPDC undergraduate and graduate students to tell us about their current perspectives of DEI.
- Collected institutional data from the MSU Office of Planning and Budgets to better understand things like faculty and staff racial/ethnic/gender diversity, student racial/ethnic/gender diversity, pre-and post-admission demographic comparisons by program, retention and graduation rates.
- Shared results of assessments with faculty, staff and students, and asked them to tell us what strategies, actions and goals would help us to improve our DEI.
- Through a facilitated process, the DEI committee used the outcomes of information gathering, the MSU DEI strategic plan, and other resources to develop a draft strategic plan with seven major goals, associated strategies and short, medium, and long term action steps.
- Shared the draft plan with faculty, staff and students and requested feedback. The plan was revised and submitted for a vote on May 13, 2022. The SPDC DEI Strategic Plan was adopted in May 2022 and will be posted on our website shortly.



3) **Attended DEI Training Seminars (Webinars, Workshops):**

- At the annual SPDC retreat on August 26, 2021, Lynn Lammers, from the Transforming Theatre Ensemble, led the group through an exercise about recognizing challenges with equity and exclusiveness in the workplace, as well as opportunities to address these challenges to create a more inclusive atmosphere. The group watched a TTE video showing a workplace scenario about microaggressions and had a group discussion about it.
- Noah Durst and Mary Beth Graebert participated in the two-day 2021 College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ODEI) Courageous Leaders Inclusion Summit in November 2021.
- SPDC Director invited the WorkLife Office to attend the SPDC faculty and staff meeting on May 13, 2022, to share ways that WLO can help to create an inclusive environment MSU & SPDC.
- SPDC Director Ming-Han Li attended the two-day Inclusive Campus Initiative summit conducted by MSU Office of Cultural and Academic Transitions on June 28 & 29, 2022.

4) **DEI Action Steps/Projects:**

- SPDC partnered with the Center for Global Change & Earth Observations (CGCEO) and the Environmental Science and Policy Program (ESPP) to request a Social Justice and Environmental Justice faculty position. This posting is now live, and the selected open-rank candidate will join the first cohort of 1855 professors at MSU next year.
- Noah Durst (Urban & Regional Planning (URP) Assistant Professor) and Najma Muhammad (URP Masters Student) prepared a report, “A Review of the Urban and Regional Planning Core Curriculum at Michigan State University.”
- Rene Rosenbaum (SPDC Associate Professor) prepared a report, “Leveraging SPDC’s Peer Institutions in the Interest of Advancing the School’s Diversity Agenda.”
- Hannah Brodhead (SPDC Advisor) and Mohamed ElGafy (Construction Management Associate Professor) represented SPDC on the CANR committee to determine how to incorporate DEI into the reappointment, promotion and tenure (RPT) process for the college. They conducted a survey of faculty and academic staff about this effort.
- The Girl Scouts and MSU Professional Women Builders hosted a STEM Career Exploration event for girls to learn about careers in construction from industry professionals. The event was open to middle school and high school students.
- Linda Nubani (Interior Design Assistant Professor) worked with Ferguson Development to gather community feedback about repurposing the shuttered elementary school in south Lansing once attended by civil rights icon Malcolm X. Residents in this area historically score the lowest when it comes to access to resources and support.



- SPDC provided \$500 to sponsor the Michigan Chapter American Society of Landscape Architects (MiASLA) for its 2021 conference event called “LA RIDE.” RIDE represents “Respect, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity.” The LA RIDE tradition, a cycling tour, started in 2016 with the purpose of promoting diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) for the profession. MiASLA uses this event to raise awareness of DEI, provide DEI training and recruit minoritized students to major in landscape architecture. Our LA student, Naomi Bailey, was chosen to receive the DEI scholarship.

5) Receipt of any DEI grants:

- We applied for a Creating Inclusive Excellence Grant (CIEG) to support our strategic planning efforts, but were unsuccessful. We used internal resources during 2020-21 and have reapplied to CIEG for 2021-22 to assist with strategic plan implementation steps.

6) Social Media Message and Social Campaign Initiatives:

- For Hispanic Heritage Month, Rene Rosenbaum (SPDC Associate Professor), was recognized by the College of Social Science for his remarkable studies on poverty and urban economic development.
- For Black History Month, Wisdom Henry (SPDC undergraduate student), was recognized by the College of Social Science for her commitment to DEI. In November, we honored two of our U.S. veterans in SPDC for Veterans Day: Wayne Beyea and George Berghorn.
- SPDC posted a recording of Martin Luther King, Jr. on MLK Day.
- SPDC celebrated Lunar New Year on social media platforms.
- For Black History Month in February, we highlighted Melvin Mance, a Construction Management graduate from the class of 1992; Najma Muhammad, an Urban & Regional Planning graduate (BURP & MURP); Stephanie Onwenu, a Landscape Architecture and Masters in Environmental Design graduate; and Naomi Bailey, a Landscape Architecture senior who received the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA) University-Level Fountain Scholar award.
- On March 7, SPDC invited our community to participate in the Queering Racial Justice Summit, hosted by the MSU Gender and Sexuality Campus Center.
- On March 8, SPDC wished a Happy International Women’s Day to our SPDC family and alumni from around the world.
- During Arab-American History Month in April, SPDC recognized one of our Construction Management students, Qadri Shaheen, on our social media platforms.
- SPDC shared information about the candlelight vigil for Patrick Lyoya and other victims of police violence in April at the MSU Rock.
- In May, SPDC wished “Eid Mubarak” to all who celebrate the Muslim holiday.



- In May, SPDC posted a message to extend a happy Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month to our SPDC family.
- In June, SPDC posted a social media message in support and celebration of LGBTQI+ Pride Month.
- On June 27, after the SCOTUS decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, SPDC posted a statement in support of the basic human right to reproductive health care.

7) Hosting DEI Seminars and/or Events:

- SPDC hosted a Lecture Series in 2021-22 with a diverse group of speakers from various backgrounds and demographics. The DEI committee worked with the Lectures Series committee to ensure the events reflected a variety of voices.
- In particular, on October 14, 2021, the Landscape Architecture Program hosted a speaker panel on “The Detroit Waterfront: Charting a Just and Equitable Future,” with Elnora Austell, E. Austell Associates; Nate Trevethan, Michael Van Valkenburgh Associated; and Mark Wallace, Detroit Waterfront Conservancy.
- On November 8, 2021, June Manning Thomas, Professor of Urban Planning at University of Michigan, gave a keynote address at the URP program’s 75th “Planniversary,” entitled: “Seeking Equity in Planning.”

8) Next Steps:

- The SPDC DEI Committee identified the following seven goals in its Strategic Plan, with associated strategies; progress indicators; and short, medium, long term and ongoing actions:
 1. Cultivate a school climate that is welcoming to all and promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion of all students, faculty, and staff.
 2. Modify curricula and instructional practices to ensure that course content and learning experiences reflect the importance and values of DEI.
 3. Ensure that internal and external communications and outreach and engagement efforts employ DEI best practices to build and maintain relationships with diverse communities and stakeholders.
 4. Recruit, admit, retain, and ensure timely and equitable completion of diverse students.
 5. Recruit, retain, and ensure timely and equitable promotion and advancement of diverse faculty and staff.
 6. Imbed the values of and content of DEI throughout SPDC’s research and grant activity by supporting research focused on DEI topics or that promotes engagement with diverse scholars and communities.



7. Ensure that SPDC leadership and decision-making structures provide inclusive and equitable access to information, processes, and policies, as well as opportunities for stakeholders to voice opinions and concerns.
- The SPDC DEI Committee, led by co-chairs Noah Durst and Mary Beth Graebert, has submitted a proposal to the 2021-2022 Creating Inclusive Excellence Grant for the purpose of hosting facilitated strategic planning workshops and DEI training for SPDC students, staff and faculty:
 1. DEI Training for Teaching and Curriculum Development:
 - a. Host a workshop for SPDC faculty, staff and graduate students with the Division of Teaching Excellence & Innovation at the University of California, Irvine, that will include the following elements:
 - i. Defining DEI in the context of teaching and learning.
 - ii. Facilitating difficult discussions.
 - iii. Creating/designing inclusive in-class activities and assessments.
 - iv. Putting DEI concepts into practice.
 2. DEI in Research Professional Development:
 - a. Work with Dr. Deborah Johnson to invite experts from the MSU Diversity Research Network to provide presentations and working sessions with SPDC faculty, staff, and graduate students, covering potential topics of:
 - i. Applying for DEI-related external grants (NSF, NIH, etc.).
 - ii. Mentoring and career growth for underrepresented faculty.
 - iii. Establishing interdisciplinary collaborations around DEI (VPRI).
 3. Integrating DEI in research and research teams.
 - a. DEI in Outreach Professional Development Work with Dionardo Pizaña and the MSU Extension Coming Together for Racial Understanding (CTRU) training team to develop workshops for SPDC faculty, staff, and students. SPDC partners will be invited to participate (National Charrette Institute, Center for Community and Economic Development, Environmental Science & Policy Program, Center for Global Change and Earth Observations, and our programs' industry advisory boards). Topics will include:
 - i. Community-engaged scholarship.
 - ii. Restorative justice.
 - iii. Cultural competence.