



# ADVANCING FACULTY EQUITY & RESILIENCE



PAGE **03**

**Empowering Age Inclusivity**

PAGE **07**

**Strategies to Support Faculty from Underrepresented groups.**

PAGE **13**

**Economics Department wins DEI Award**

## Advancing Faculty Equity & Resilience

The aim of this publication is to promote faculty diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) in a resilient, empowering, and healthy academic environment.

This newsletter will present articles and other relevant materials on DEIB in addition to publishing news and activities from the Office for Faculty Equity and Resilience (OFER).

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## THE FACULTY SUCCESS CENTER: FOSTERING COLLABORATION & LEARNING

> Officially inaugurated in Spring 2023, the [Faculty Success Center \(FCC\)](#) represents the university's continuous commitment to support and empower its faculty.

In the face of the challenges that surfaced during the wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, higher education establishments have continually sought innovative ways to support faculty members in their professional growth and collaboration. Embracing this climate of change, UMass Lowell's Faculty Success Center emerged as a beacon of connectivity and knowledge exchange.

The Faculty Success Center is centrally situated on the first floor of University Crossing Building B (UC-140). This physical space offers a tangible hub for faculty members to convene, exchange ideas, and embark on collective learning journeys. The center incorporates versatile spaces tailored for meetings, workshops, and interactive sessions. It is a space where educators from all disciplines can meet to explore innovative pedagogical approaches and share best practices.

The space is open weekdays during business hours. The ADVANCE Office for Faculty Equity & Resilience is located within the FCC. We look forward to seeing you engage with the center and contribute to our vibrant academic community!

# UMASS LOWELL'S VISIONARY APPROACH: EMPOWERING AGE INCLUSIVITY



> Amidst the evolving demographics of the United States, where the population is rapidly aging, institutions of higher education are increasingly recognizing the importance of age diversity within their campuses. To embrace this change universities worldwide are uniting behind initiatives such as the [Age-Friendly University \(AFU\)](#) movement, aimed at creating inclusive learning environments for all individuals regardless of age.

The movement originated at Dublin City University in 2013 and has garnered momentum by advocating for lifelong learning opportunities. The University of Massachusetts (UMass) system made history in a groundbreaking move in 2019 by becoming the first university system to endorse the 10 principles of the AFU initiative, signaling a commitment to age-friendly practices. To build on these foundations UMass Lowell proudly launched its [Age-Friendly Campus Initiative](#) in 2022 with support from the Provost's office and the ADVANCE Office for Faculty Equity.

This pivotal step marked the beginning of a concerted effort to promote age inclusivity across the university's fabric. Leading this transformative journey is the [AFU Collaborative Steering Committee](#) led by Drs. Ramraj Gautam and Karen Devereaux Melillo. This committee consists of a diverse group of leaders including faculty (Drs. Lisa Abdallah, Andrew Hostetler, Pia Markkanen, & Jack Luskin), staff (Heather Makrez Allen & Lee Ann Alden), and community representatives (Nancy Pitkin from [Learning in Retirement Association \(LIRA\)](#), Graduate Student Association, and Student Government Association); and has been instrumental in devising a series of workshops tailored to address opportunities and challenges related to retirement.

A recent event held on March 14, 2024, titled "Thinking about Retirement: Where to Start?" attracted over 80 participants, including faculty, staff, and community members. During the session, Dr. Gautam discussed

## 10 Principles of An Age-Friendly University

1. Encourage older adults in all the core activities of the university
2. Support second careers
3. Recognize the educational needs of older adults
4. Promote intergenerational learning
5. Widen access to online educational opportunities
6. Include aging in the research agenda
7. Increase understanding of longevity dividend
8. Provide access for older adults to the university's range of activities
9. Engage the university's own retired community.
10. Ensure regular dialogue with aging organizations

the results of the [AFU Climate survey](#) conducted at UMass Lowell in 2020 and provided insights into the university's journey toward becoming an AFU, shedding light on the university's commitment to age-friendly principles. In addition, Nancy Pitkin, a longstanding member of the LIRA and the AFU Collaborative Steering Committee, highlighted LIRA's role in providing college-level courses and field trips to retirees and community members at minimal cost. Kimberley Casey, Executive Director of Compensation & Benefits in the Office of Human Resources, offered valuable insights into retirement preparation, covering various retirement plans available to university personnel.



# OFER'S SERVICE EQUITY INITIATIVE: PROMOTING AN EQUITABLE & FAIR ENVIRONMENT



## A roadmap for service equity

Daniel Arroyo-Rodríguez (World Lang. & Cultures)  
 Karoline Evans (Management)  
 Teresa Lee (Biological Sciences)  
 Rocío Rosales (Psychology)

**What is service equity?**  
 This term refers to the distribution of service workload among faculty. It can include ensuring fair access to opportunities, acknowledging all kinds of ongoing service, or developing accountability benchmarks.

**Why does it matter?**

- Service is often distributed unequally along axes of gender, race, and rank.
- A lack of transparency around roles & allocation makes inequity hard to address.
- Faculty retention increases when equity improves.
- Developing service equity aligns with UML's strategic plan to create an inclusive campus of excellence.

**How can the OFER Service Equity Roadmap help?**

1. Understand your dept's current processes (or lack thereof).
2. Explore what service roles exist & how they're valued.
3. Collaborate with your dept to develop an action plan.

**0. Prep for expedition.**

**Goals:**  
 Define service equity & generate interest in your dept for the expedition

**OFER offerings:**  
 • Roadmap overview poster  
 • 5-min teaser PPT presentation for Dept OFER ambassadors to explain Roadmap stages

**Does it feel like you have more service demands than before?**  
**Are you happy with the service you're doing?**  
**Do you understand how your service roles help with your professional goals?**

**1. Base camp.**

**OFER offerings:**  
 • Stage 1 workshop facilitated by OFER Equity Leaders (1-2 hr)

**Outcomes:**  
 • Service equity grid  
 • Uncover inequities & points of confusion

**2. Advanced base camp.**

**OFER offerings:**  
 • Stage 2 workshop to develop & customize best practice tools (1-2 hr)

**Outcomes:**  
 • Identify most important issues to tackle  
 • Develop tools to address dept needs

**3. Summit push!**

**Goals:**  
 • Implement customized best practices as a dept  
 • Evaluate performance & needs  
 • Iterate new versions of best practices based on evaluation  
 • Rise & repeat...

**Outcomes:**  
 • Long-term action plan for achieving service equity  
 • Dept guidelines for service roles & allocation

**OFER offerings:**  
 • OFER Equity Leaders will check in with OFER Ambassador & dept equity crmte

**4. Descent.**

**Goals:**  
 • Custom assessment plan  
 • Schedule regular evaluations of service equity

Presented by **OFER**  
 The Office for Faculty Equity & Resilience

**“** MAYA PANDIT, STUDENT,  
 THE SOLOMONT SCHOOL OF NURSING,  
 ZUCKERBERG COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES,  
 COMMONWEALTH HONORS COLLEGE

During this workshop, I enjoyed learning about LIRA, as well as the importance of financial planning for retirement. I'm hoping to use this experience as a part of my Honors Fellowship to promote awareness about the pre-retirement workshops offered by the UMass Lowell AFU Steering Committee.”

The success of the event underscores UMass Lowell's commitment to fostering an [age-inclusive campus environment](#). By spearheading initiatives such as the Age-Friendly Campus Initiative and organizing workshops on retirement planning, the university is poised to lead by example in promoting age diversity and inclusivity within higher education.

### AFU STEERING COMMITTEE

The AFU Collaborative Steering Committee encourages you to participate in the [Qualtrics evaluation](#) survey to help the committee plan future content for upcoming sessions on pre- and near-retirement.

The UML AFU Steering Committee is forming two sub-committees; The Strategic Planning Sub-committee to brainstorm and come up with a strategic planning document led by Jack Luskin, and an Event Planning sub-committee. If you are interested in joining any of the two sub-committees, please contact [Ramraj\\_Gautam@uml.edu](mailto:Ramraj_Gautam@uml.edu) or [Karen\\_Meliillo@uml.edu](mailto:Karen_Meliillo@uml.edu)

> Karoline Evans and Daniel Arroyo-Rodríguez, leads of OFER's initiatives addressing Workplace Norms, pilot their Service Equity roadmap.

The workshop created by Evans, Arroyo-Rodríguez, Teresa Lee, and Rocío Rosales highlighted feedback from various departments and programs at UMass Lowell during the 2022-23 academic year, along with the latest research in the field of service equity.

The Service Equity initiative aims to facilitate discussions around the equitable distribution of service work among faculty members, particularly focusing on how such responsibilities may disproportionately impact certain groups. The workshop

provides a framework for departments to identify priorities and develop action plans to address potential imbalances in service workloads.

The Service Equity initiative is part of OFER's ongoing efforts to cultivate a diverse, equitable, and supportive campus community for everyone. By raising awareness and implementing research-driven strategies, the goal is to promote a fair and inclusive environment where service responsibilities are distributed equitably among all faculty members.

OFER looks forward to expanding these important discussions across the university. If you or your department would be interested in starting a service equity journey, please reach out so we can discuss the different support options OFER can provide.



Research highlights numerous advantages for students when they have instructors who mirror their racial or ethnic backgrounds, including enhancing retention and career aspirations. Despite growing student diversity, inadequate representation of faculty calls to attention the urgent need for reform.

UMass Lowell echoes this prevailing trend. Data reveals that in 2022, while the recruitment of White faculty increased from 68.56% in 2018 to 70.4%, there was minimal growth in the recruitment of underrepresented faculty. In fact, there was a decline in the representation of Hispanic faculty (from 3.85% to 3.4%) and Black faculty (from 2.31% to 2.12%) during the same period. Moreover, data from each of the colleges highlights a significant incongruity between faculty and student demographics. For instance, despite a 40% increase in Black or African-American students enrolled in the Colleges of Science and Engineering, both colleges have limited representation of Black or African-American faculty.

Addressing the disparity in faculty diversity is imperative for ensuring an inclusive and equitable academic environment that nurtures the potential of all individuals. On March 19, 2024, the ADVANCE Office for Faculty Equity (OFER) Personal Practice Committee facilitated a planning summit for key collaborators to discuss ways to improve the recruitment and retention of faculty from underrepresented groups, particularly Black and Hispanic faculty. The summit's organizing committee, chaired by Dr. Mike Beers, included Drs. Brita Dean, Mahdi Garelnabi, and Sumudu Lewis, brought together deans, associate deans, some department chairs, representatives from legal and human resources departments, as well as guests and experts for a full day of discussions and planning.

The summit commenced with opening statements from the Chancellor, Provost, and Vice Provost expressing strong support for the efforts of ADVANCE Office equity leaders in orchestrating this important event. Following this, the Asso-

# CULTIVATING CHANGE

**A SUMMIT TO DEVELOP INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES TO RECRUIT & SUPPORT FACULTY FROM UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS**

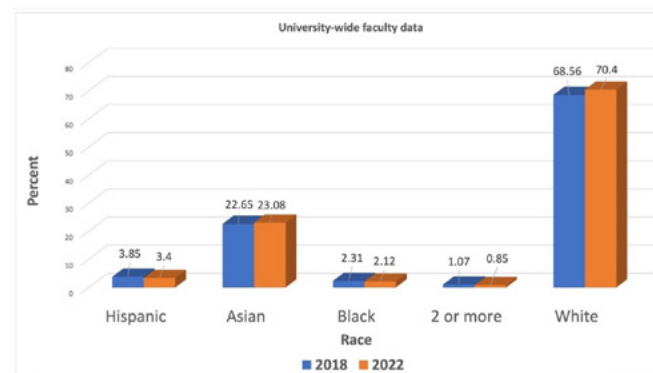
> Faculty diversity is essential for cultivating a dynamic and vibrant exchange of ideas in academia, thereby propelling the growth of all participants. Yet, in leading public research universities in the U.S., the representation of BIPOC faculty lags significantly behind student demographics, highlighting a profound disparity.



“ Addressing the disparity in faculty diversity is imperative for ensuring an inclusive and equitable academic environment that nurtures the potential of all individuals.



College	Hispanic Latino-White	Asian	Black/AA	Two or more	White	Total
Business	2	33	3	0	43	81
FAHSS	2	22	7	3	208	242
Engineering	6	43	1	1	74	125
Health	0	12	3	0	57	72
Science	3	53	1	2	114	173



ciate Dean of Engineering, Dr. Kavitha Chandra, led the Deans Panel with representation from the Manning School of Business, Zuckerberg College of Health Sciences, Kennedy College of Sciences, Francis College of Engineering, and Fine Arts Humanities & Social Sciences. The panel deliberated the current recruitment and retention strategies at the departmental level and identified successful approaches for recruiting underrepresented faculty while acknowledging the obstacles. Subsequently, the Chairs' panel, facilitated by Dr.

Anthony Szczesiul, continued the discussion, sharing both successes and ongoing challenges. The morning sessions concluded with HR and legal representatives clarifying compliance with equal employment laws and policies, ensuring adherence to legal hiring procedures.

The afternoon sessions opened with a presentation of campus climate survey data by Dean of Equity and Inclusion, Leslie Wong and Dean of Student Affairs and Experiential Learning,

Dr. James Kohl. Following this insightful presentation, invited experts David Gordon MD, from the University of Michigan-Flint, and Dr. Joya Misra, from UMass Amherst, shared their expertise, offering valuable insights into recruiting and retaining underrepresented faculty members. Their contributions enriched the discussion, providing attendees with actionable strategies and a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in this critical area of faculty diversity and inclusion.

The summit concluded with breakout sessions, led by Dr. Geillan Aly, a DEI Consultant, who provided a platform for participants to delve deeper into actionable strategies. These sessions focused on the roles of deans, chairs, search committees, and the university support agencies in advancing faculty diversity and retention. This holistic approach aimed to identify comprehensive solutions that encompass both recruitment and retention strategies, ensuring sustained progress toward a more inclusive and diverse faculty body.

# NAVIGATING MICROAGGRESSIONS: ESTABLISHING WELCOMING + SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES ON CAMPUS



> Microaggressions are unintentional slights or insults directed towards marginalized groups, that permeate various social interactions, workplaces, and academic settings in our present society. Despite their seemingly innocuous nature, microaggressions can have profound psychological and emotional effects on individuals, contributing to feelings of invalidation and marginalization.



Bystander training not only disrupts the perpetuation of microaggressions but also cultivates a culture of accountability and allyship.



As awareness of microaggressions has grown in recent years, so has the urgency to address and dismantle these pervasive behaviors. At UMass Lowell, this initiative has remained a priority for several years through the evidence-based [bystander training program](#) that emerged as a proactive approach to combat microaggressions. This training aims to equip individuals with the tools to recognize, intervene, and effectively address microaggressive behaviors with a goal of fostering inclusive communities. By empowering witnesses to speak up and challenge instances of bias or discrimination, bystander training not only disrupts the perpetuation of microaggressions but also cultivates a culture of accountability and allyship. Through simulated scenarios and interactive workshops, participants learn how to navigate delicate situations with empathy and assertiveness, ultimately contributing to the creation of safer and more respectful spaces for all individuals.

On March 1, 2024, ADVANCE OFER [faculty equity leaders](#), Drs. Mike Beers and Meg Sobkowitz Kline, facilitated a two-hour interactive workshop with UMass Lowell faculty from all ranks and representing various departments on campus. While the current version of bystander training addresses microaggressions based on intersecting marginalized statuses, the training provided by the equity leaders focused on equipping participants with skills to identify and interrupt microaggressions. Through ongoing initiatives like these, UMass Lowell continues its commitment to fostering an inclusive environment where all members of the community feel valued and respected.

# UMASS LOWELL'S ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT LEADING THE WAY IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

> In a landmark achievement, the Department of Economics has clinched the esteemed [2023 American Economic Association \(AEA\) Award](#) for [Outstanding Achievement in Diversity and Inclusion](#) sharing the spotlight with UC Berkeley.



This prestigious award stands as a testament to the relentless dedication and hard work put forth by the members of the Economics department in recent years, solidifying their position as leaders in recognizing and meeting the needs of their diverse pool of students.

Presented during the [AEA annual meeting](#) in January in San Antonio, Texas, the award highlights the pivotal role played by the Department

of Economics at UMass Lowell in championing diversity and inclusion. Led by Professor Monica Galizzi, the department has been at the forefront of initiatives aimed at establishing inclusive environments, introducing innovative programs, and amplifying the participation of underrepresented groups from classrooms to the profession.

The Department of Economics' commitment to diversity and inclusion is deeply ingrained

in their revamped [mission statement](#) that emphasizes the critical importance of embracing faculty and students' diverse backgrounds and perspectives. The department's mission resonates with the university's continuous commitment and dedication to nurturing a vibrant academic community that values inclusivity.

The department's efforts have yielded tangible results, with a notable surge in enrollment and remarkable changes in the ethnic composition of its student body. Over the years, the proportion of non-White students has seen a significant rise, surpassing the university's average.

Moreover, the department has prioritized the recruitment of minority candidates in recent faculty searches, despite salary constraints imposed upon public universities.



The economics department at the University of Massachusetts Lowell has deliberately chosen to engage with the problem of underrepresentation of minorities within the economics profession and to operate with an increased awareness of the growing diversity of the students they serve. They pursue the commitment to making their department and the profession welcome to all by systematically mentoring faculty and students, adding content to classes to make the material relevant to the experiences and interests of their students, and actively using AEA resources to increase the knowledge and networks of their students and faculty."

[AMERICAN ECONOMICS ASSOCIATION](#) JANUARY 10, 2024

Recognizing that recruitment alone is not sufficient, the department has focused on retention strategies, fostering a close-knit community to pair senior mentors in the department with junior faculty to provide ongoing support and guidance that is conducive to professional growth. This includes opportunities for collaboration, research discussions, and networking. UMass Lowell's

Economics Department's recognition with the AEA Award highlights its immutable commitment to diversity, inclusion, and excellence in academia, setting a shining example for institutions nationwide. Through their dedication and perseverance, they continue to shape a brighter and more inclusive future for the economics profession and beyond.



## APPLY FOR DEIB AWARDS:

# EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY, INCLUSION + BELONGING

Starting on December 2024

> ADVANCE OFER is thrilled to announce the introduction of two new Awards to celebrate UMass Lowell Colleges and Departments' Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) efforts. These awards will honor colleges and departments who have demonstrated outstanding commitment and leadership in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within our institution. ADVANCE OFER is delighted and grateful to the Provost office for collaborating with us to release these awards.

Through this mechanism our colleges and departments can also apply to similar national DEIB awards, having won our campus award and eventually our campus can also compete for such awards given away by national bodies.

As we celebrate these achievements, we also reaffirm our commitment to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in everything we do. Together, we can continue to build a culture where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered, and our institution continue to succeed.

The awards criteria and submission deadline was shared with colleges Deans and Departments' Chairs.

**Please do not hesitate to contact ADVANCE OFER for any questions.**



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### Contact Us

ADVANCE\_office@uml.edu

Faculty Success Center (UC-140)