

School of Journalism and Communication Diversity Action Plan

Adopted May 29, 2024

The University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication (SOJC) seeks to be a welcoming and inclusive home for all students, staff, and faculty. We believe that our differences make us stronger, and we learn from each other's experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds. The SOJC adopted a comprehensive action plan to assess and advance its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) objectives in 1993, with subsequent revisions in 2006, 2007, 2011, and 2017. The 2017 plan was guided by the University of Oregon's IDEAL framework, which is still in place today.

The IDEAL Framework consists of five pillars designed to focus DEI resources toward building a sense of community among students, faculty, and staff, while achieving our academic mission. The five pillars are:

Inclusion: Cultivating a more welcoming and respectful environment for all.

Diversity: Developing and implementing equitable strategies for recruiting, retaining and advancing cadre of student, faculty and staff, with a wide variety of backgrounds, talents, perspectives and experiences.

Evaluation: Using assessment and measurement strategies to evaluate our process in meeting the university's goal of equity and inclusion.

Achievement: Ensuring that our policies, processes, and practices provide access for all to achieve their personal best.

Leadership: Develop, nurture and coach leadership to facilitate inclusive environments as well as the resources for success.

The 2023-24 SOJC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee examined the successes and lessons learned over the past six years and developed the 2024+ SOJC Diversity Action Plan to guide the school through the next six years of DEI strategies and goals. The committee has chosen to focus new initiatives on DEI issues that affect our workplace at the faculty, staff, and graduate student level while continuing to support existing and successful student-centered DEI initiatives rooted in past SOJC Diversity Action Plans. Within the 2024+ Diversity Action Plan, new initiatives are highlighted in gray, while non-highlighted initiatives are carried forward from the 2017 plan.

The two overarching goals of the 2024+ SOJC Diversity Action Plan are inclusion and belonging. Workplace inclusion and belonging in higher education are essential components in fostering collaboration, productivity, and employee satisfaction. Positive outcomes associated with workplace inclusion and belonging include increased job satisfaction, reduced turnover, and greater innovation. When faculty and staff feel a strong sense of inclusion and belonging, they are likely to be more engaged, satisfied, and productive, which can positively impact students. For example, staff and faculty who feel valued and supported are more likely to provide better mentorship, teaching, and support services to students, leading to improved learning outcomes

and a more positive educational experience overall. Nurturing a culture of inclusion and belonging benefits everyone.

It is important to define concepts and priorities within the Diversity Action Plan. The SOJC definition of diversity aligns with the University of Oregon’s definition and recognizes that diversity has many definitions, “The UO looks at it broadly and inclusively, encompassing race, ethnicity, disability, thought, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender, and economics. The UO seeks to promote further diversity among its faculty, staff, and student body through active recruitment and intentional retention.” As the landscape of underrepresented groups evolves both domestically and internationally, our priority focus will adapt to address emerging needs, challenges, and opportunities, ensuring that our efforts remain relevant and impactful. One such developing opportunity is the university’s plans to emphasize flourishing as a cornerstone of its equity goals. While the University is currently defining how flourishing, a psycho-social state related to a person’s holistic well-being, can be integrated into campus planning, SOJC leadership is represented within that campus workgroup, and we intend to incorporate this concept into our Diversity Action Plan once it is more developed.

In addition to the IDEAL framework, the UO and SOJC seek to prioritize strategic DEI initiatives that embody the L.A.C.E. framework. Developed in 2021 by Yvette M. Alex-Assensoh, UO Vice President of Equity and Inclusion, the L.A.C.E. framework follows three phases where individuals and organizational decisions are guided by Love, Authenticity, Courage and Empathy: (Phase 1) Raising personal awareness and knowledge; (Phase 2) Building connections with individuals and communities; and (Phase 3) Transformation of self, systems and society. Through the 2024+ Diversity Action Plan, the SOJC seeks to be a school where everyone is included and feels that they belong. The goals of inclusion and belong are further defined and supported with specific strategies, tactics, and objectives within this plan.

GOAL 1: Inclusion. We seek to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for all. Pursuing this climate has been embraced and championed by SOJC’s leadership, faculty, staff, and students. We would like to embrace the pursuit of an equitable environment that results in greater diversity.

Strategy 1: Support practices and programs that foster a more welcoming, respectful, and inclusive climate for all.

Tactic	Personnel/ Resources	Timeline	Accountability
Create a presentation for the SOJC incoming faculty and graduate educator orientations that highlights campus DEI resources and our custom SOJC DEI Canvas resource	DEI committee and SOJC Dean’s Office events coordinator	Target launch winter 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track SOJC DEI Canvas page activity • Ask incoming faculty and graduate educators for

page, including how to integrate DEI into the classroom and syllabus.			feedback after the presentations
Encourage more school-wide promotion of DEI-focused scholarship, mentorship, conference, and event opportunities. The SOJC will scan for relevant happenings and notify faculty, staff, and students through email and digital board displays.	DEI committee, Graduate Director, SOJC Dean's Office events coordinator, and Dean's office	Launching during AY 2024-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track notifications sent • Track attendance
Encourage SOJC committees to meet with the DEI committee during policy development to ensure consideration has been given to DEI issues and impacts.	DEI committee, Dean's office, and Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs' office	Launching AY 2025-26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track occurrence for any new/updated SOJC policies that come to a faculty/staff vote
Expand SOJC website to highlight diversity-related programs, faculty, research, and community service.	SOJC Communication team and Dean's Office	Launched spring 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review annually for updates

Strategy 2: Actively embrace anti-racist and anti-bias initiatives. Facilitate equity, inclusion, and intercultural understanding in onboarding, evaluations, and ongoing growth opportunities, ensuring an environment where every member can thrive.

Tactic	Personnel/ Resources	Timeline	Accountability
Create a presentation for a mid-year SOJC faculty/staff meeting that highlights campus DEI resources and our custom SOJC DEI Canvas resource page, including how to integrate DEI into the classroom and syllabus.	DEI committee and SOJC Dean's Office events coordinator	Target launch winter 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track SOJC DEI Canvas page activity
Host an annual interactive anti-racist training at a faculty/staff meeting. An example is the UO Rehearsals for Life theatre group that conducts similar training on campus. Another possibility is incorporating the technology access our school has to virtual reality through anti-racist trainings.	DEI committee and Dean's office	Launching during AY 2024-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track attendance • Ask faculty/staff for feedback after presentation

Encourage DEI committee members to attend UO DEI trainings, workshops, and resource events to learn from other units, share resources, and stay up to date with DEI best practices.	DEI committee	Launching AY 2024-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track attendance
Encourage syllabi to contain course material on issues of cultural diversity and a section highlighting the importance of an inclusive environment.	Associate Dean for Undergraduate Affairs and Graduate Director	Launched 2017-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOJC distributes “best practice” syllabus language • SOJC checks syllabi each term
Require all SOJC search committee members to complete the UO implicit bias training within the term of their service. The training is valid for three years.	Search committee chairs	Launched fall 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search chairs report trainings to HR
Create an SOJC Canvas page dedicated to DEI resources and trainings available to all SOJC employees. Create an interactive chat option by training a GPT bot with the information available on the page.	DEI committee	Page launched in 2022, bot launch 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track page analytics

GOAL 2: Belonging. We seek to strengthen the bonds within our work culture, cultivating a supportive community. By encouraging open communication, recognizing and celebrating differences, and implementing programs that foster connections, we aspire to build a workplace where everyone feels like they are contributing to a culture of unity and shared success. Post-pandemic perspectives have allowed us time and space to reflect on how we can redefine how we connect and collaborate across time, distance, and ranks. The committee notes that belonging should span both job classifications and campus locations, such as working towards an increased sense of belonging among the Portland and Eugene staff, faculty, and students.

Strategy 1: Support practices and programs that recognize and demonstrate appreciation for staff and faculty.

Tactic	Personnel/ Resources	Timeline	Accountability
Increase recognition among SOJC employees and students for DEI-related work and accomplishments.	DEI committee and Dean’s office	Begin planning in 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan awards and recognition platforms

Discuss the possibility of formal awards. Post recognitions on SOJC DEI Canvas site. Consider potential alternative site options, such as a website or other accessible designs instead of Canvas.			
Keep SOJC-produced content featuring faculty, staff, and graduate students current to authentically represent diversity among cohorts. Ensure that featured employees consent to website features and highlights.	SOJC Communication office	Discuss for AY 2024-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check content annually
Encourage community and belonging through activities organized by the SOJC Internal Relations. These activities invite all SOJC employees to join group events like potlucks, coffee chats, walks, and games.	SOJC Internal Relations Committee	Launched in 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host at least one event each month

Strategy 2: Create opportunities for connection and mentorship among faculty, staff, and students.

Tactic	Personnel/ Resources	Timeline	Accountability
Create a new proactive mentorship program focusing on employees within their first two years at the SOJC. The goal is to foster a culture of inclusion and connection early.	DEI committee and Dean’s office	Develop AY 2024-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate service time and outcomes through feedback from mentors and mentees at the end of the first year
Include a “About Me” feature for 2-3 employees at each faculty/staff meeting as an opportunity to find shared connections and encourage community.	Dean’s office	Launch in AY 2024-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track features and ensure good distribution among employee groups
Establish and pilot an SOJC Journalism Advancement Council (JAC) undergraduate mentorship program (JAC Buddy Program). This program pairs students with JAC members (typically alumni) who	Dean’s office	Launched in winter 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot the program and report on participant engagement and feedback

have careers in advertising, journalism, media studies, and public relations for ongoing mentorship.			
Establish a faculty-advisor partnership program where each advisor is paired with a faculty member and meet up for coffee or lunch. The goals are to build stronger connections between our departments so that we can work together to better support students.	SOJC Advising office	Launched in fall 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the program benefits and areas of improvement after one year

Strategy 3: Actively seek out criticism, feedback, and new ideas that can improve SOJC diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Tactic	Personnel/ Resources	Timeline	Accountability
Conduct annual DEI-focused survey. Building off past internal research and UO’s 2023 Climate Survey continue the conversation on experiences and improvements needed.	DEI committee and Dean’s office	Launch in AY 2024-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report findings to SOJC leadership and present at a faculty/staff meeting
Host an annual discussion for faculty, staff, and students to share their ideas and experiences related to inclusion and belonging. Format could vary and include guest speakers or be more of a townhall style.	DEI committee and Dean’s office	Launch in AY 2025-26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tally attendance Take and categorize notes to share with the committee and SOJC community
Evaluate the work of the DEI committee with a self-study every three years. Report on strategy and tactic progress and adjust plans as needed.	DEI committee and Dean’s office	Launch in AY 2026-2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to SOJC leadership and present at a faculty/staff meeting

Note: The 2023-2024 SOJC DEI committee consists of five faculty members, one staff member, and one graduate employee. The committee reports to SOJC leadership.