

Diversity Grants for Faculty Allies

The Rackham Graduate School is pleased to present the Diversity Grants for Faculty Allies project abstracts that received funding. Funding was awarded Summer 2011 for one year, with the possibility of extension for a second year. The projects range from expanding recruiting strategies for underrepresented students to improving departmental climate. Additional information is available at http://www.rackham.umich.edu/student_life/diversity/allies/

American Culture

Faculty Ally: Nadine Naber

The Program in American Culture launched a set of programs, beginning in summer 2011. The programs have generated a new energy in our program, expanding students' sense of intellectual community and support. The same opportunities will be made available for winter and summer 2012. Activities include: pairing eight graduate students with faculty mentors, providing financial and mentoring support for the summer; dissertation writing workshops; travel with faculty awards for mentored travel to conferences; community building activities in which students created groups focused on particular topics and engaged faculty mentors; funding support to a guest lecturer to bring an M.A. student on his visit to U-M. (The student spent two days at U-M and had a full schedule while meeting with grad students and faculty and learning about our graduate program).

Anthropology

Faculty Ally: Damani Partridge

Collaborator: Barbra Meek

In its continued commitment to diversity, the Anthropology department is establishing a new mentoring program, developing strategic interdepartmental alliances to support mentoring and training, providing additional support for summer research, and organizing a series of workshops on publishing and grant writing.

For the future, the department is also organizing targeted recruitment visits to key undergraduate institutions, and also re-orienting our strategy for recruiting a diverse student body. We are convinced that these efforts will greatly enhance the experience of our students, faculty, and staff.

AOSS, NERS, & EECS

Faculty Ally: Tony England (AOSS)

Collaborators: John Foster (NERS), Fred Terry (EECS)

To increase the number of URM students who succeed in CoE's physics-intensive, Ph.D. programs, we proposed in February 2011 to develop a Rackham bridge M.S. patterned, to some extent, after the Applied Physics Program. It would emphasize academic depth in preparation for entering an engineering Ph.D. program, feature intensive mentoring to assure professional success, and establish an academic community for peer support. The original proposal was modified in summer of 2011 following a Rackham review suggesting that the desired academic community would be readily established if our program were part of the Applied Physics Program. We pursued this option until early October 2011 when it became clear that becoming part of Applied Physics was not viable. We then returned to the original concept of a CoE parallel to Applied Physics. Without a program to offer students in F'12, we have not pursued our initial contacts with MSIs. Our next step will be to explore with the CoE Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education whether the M.S. in Engineering Science can reside at the College level rather than as related M.S. programs in the participating departments.

Civil and Environmental Engineering

Faculty Allies: Avery Demond, Gustavo Parra-Montesinos, Dimitrios Zekkos

Collaborators: Adda Athanasopoulos-Zekkos, Sang-Hyun Lee

As part of the Rackham Graduate School Diversity Grant, a Network for Women in Civil and Environmental Engineering (NeW in CEE) has been formed. Two e-mail lists were created to target female undergraduate and graduate students, and invite them to join NeW. An online NeW group website was developed using LinkedIn. A workshop was organized for undergraduate students that included a presentation on good resume and interview practices, and 15-minute mock interviews with industry professionals. Two surveys were conducted to collect information from female undergraduate and graduate students on the departmental climate, mentorship, and the factors that affect their decisions in attending graduate school. A faculty and graduate student mentor list has been developed and we are in the process of having students sign-up for the mentorship program. The students leading NeW are organizing 3 seminars for the Winter 2012 semester with female leaders in CEE as speakers. Next steps include facilitating a summer internship program and also organizing the summer research experience program for female undergraduate students in CEE.

Chemistry

Faculty Ally: John P. Wolfe

Collaborators: Bart Bartlett, Eitan Geva, Anna Mapp, Nils Walter

The graduate program in chemistry has few students from underrepresented minority

groups due to low number of applicants from these groups. We plan to increase our applicant pool by establishing close relationships with four HBCU's: Jackson State University, Xavier University, Alabama A&M University, and Florida A&M University. We will host four undergraduates from these institutions for an eight-week summer research program, and three faculty members for a one-week summer visit, during 2012-2013. Each year we will invite one faculty member from each institution to present a seminar in our department, and will send one of four faculty to visit these Universities. These activities will provide faculty and students at the allied Universities with a picture of the research, environment, and supportive atmosphere of our department, which should increase the number of applications to our program. Moreover, our faculty and students will gain a better understanding of the HCBU educational experience.

Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education

Faculty Ally: Patricia M. King

The goals of this initiative are to improve the sense of community in CSHPE, recruit a more diverse cohort of students, and produce graduates who are trained in and committed to social justice issues in the research and practice of higher education. Toward this end, we are developing a master's level concentration on Diversity and Social Justice in Higher Education consisting of 4 courses, an internship that addresses diversity and social justice issues, and an integrative activity. We are also sponsoring (with Educational Studies) a year-long symposium on Race and Social Justice Issues in Education. The first in this series was the screening of *Precious Knowledge*, a documentary film about the role of ethnic studies and student success in Arizona; this event was held at the Michigan Theatre and was attended by over 300 people. Students have the opportunity to attend workshops conducted by other prominent speakers following public presentations.

Dentistry (Oral Health Sciences)

Faculty Ally: Jan CC Hu

The goal of this proposal is to enhance program visibility and accessibility. To achieve this goal, we will reach out to underrepresented students through discipline-specific national conferences, establish contacts with Health Science Departments of colleges/universities in the State of Michigan, and hold informational sessions on campus for undergraduates and dental students. We will organize a summer conference on Oral Health Sciences for students who are interested in our program and/or recommended by their mentors. We hope to achieve the following objectives: to make the program visible and accessible, to enhance scientific exchange among our program faculty and students and to build teamwork among them, and to get to know our potential applicants through scientific interactions.

Educational Studies

Faculty Ally: Carla O'Connor

REIPDS features four arms of activity to advance the academic progress and professional development of graduate students pursuing research and professional agendas in which race and equity figure prominently. The **Race and Social Justice in Education Symposia and Workshops** (co-coordinated with CSHPE) provides for renowned scholars to give lectures on race and social justice issues in education and to present professional, methodological, and teaching workshops that increase students' capacities to engage in related research and practice. Through **Alumni Presentations** ES graduates reference their personal experiences in advising current students about how to maximize their educational and professional opportunities in graduate school. **Presentations by U-M Faculty** provide mentoring on key professional issues (e.g., how to get the mentoring you want; strategies for developing academic writing; determining publication outlets; crafting job talks). A **Small Gants Competition** funds graduate student activities that facilitate degree completion and the achievement of career goals.

English Language and Literature and Joint Program in English and Education (JPEE)

Faculty Ally: Megan Sweeney

English and JPEE have planned three initiatives designed to improve our recruitment, mentoring, and nurturing of a diverse group of graduate students. First, we have invited a select group of undergraduates from Michigan-area colleges and universities to participate in a pre-recruitment event that involves interactions with faculty members, graduate students, and members of SCOR and BHC. Second, pairs of faculty members and graduate students will recruit potential applicants at summer institutes and undergraduate research conferences. Third, in October of 2012, we will host an interdisciplinary conference focusing on the work of author Gayl Jones. Hosting this conference will allow us to highlight the history and ongoing importance of African American literary studies at U-M, and it will provide rich opportunities for mentoring and faculty/graduate student collaboration, including a Gayl Jones Reading Group that will take place during the Winter of 2012.

Epidemiology

Faculty Ally: Allison E. Aiello

Collaborator: Sharon Kardia

This diversity grant opportunity will allow us to develop new initiatives to address critical needs regarding diversity in our department. Our goals for this proposal focus on continued academic success of diverse students in Epidemiology. We propose to increase faculty involvement interaction with existing School of Public Health (SPH) diversity

student organizations and provide greater financial support for the existing diverse student organizations at SPH. We also seek to create a new seminar series entitled “The Health Equity Seminar Series” to increase the number of diverse speakers and talks on topics of diversity so that students are exposed to and can take advantage of meeting with diverse academic role-models and gain a better understanding of the importance of diversity. The success of this proposed program will be evaluated by interviews and surveys.

Health Behavior and Health Education

Faculty Ally: Amy Schulz

Collaborator: Marc Zimmerman

Objective 1: To promote academic excellence of matriculated students through financial support for mentored publication opportunities for all students. Student/faculty teams may apply for up to four months of summer funding to move writing projects toward publication: Students funded are required to complete *Rackham Academic Writing Workshops (Sweetland)* and faculty mentors are encouraged to complete the *Mentoring Others Results in Excellence (MORE)* program to support excellence in mentoring efforts.

Objective 2: To enhance the climate within the department and the SPH more broadly related to a common vision of research and action to promote population health and health equity, we requested funding to support a speaker series featuring accomplished and diverse public health professionals speaking about their research to promote population health and health equity. In addition to formal presentations for departmental and school-wide audiences, opportunities for informal interactions with faculty and students (e.g., dinner, small group discussions) are structured aspects of these visits.

Linguistics

Faculty Ally: Marlyse Baptista

Collaborator: Robin Queen

The primary goal of the diversity grant the Linguistics department received is to increase the number of underrepresented students in the department. Some of the grant is being used to organize an undergraduate conference on March 30, 2012 on a topic of linguistics (language variation and language contact) likely to attract excellent undergraduates from other institutions. We received 20 abstracts and intend to accept as many of the students as possible for their participation to the conference on March 30. Their travel and accommodation will be fully funded. Some participants identified themselves in the abstracts as members of underrepresented communities, so we know that some applicants are from the groups we are targeting. In addition, the Linguistics department will use some of the funds to bus undergraduate students from neighboring institutions to participate in our MLK kick-off event on January 13, 2012. This year’s speaker will talk about the revitalization of American Indian languages.

PIBS

Faculty Ally: Lori L. Isom

Collaborator: Tiffany L. Porties

Project Objectives: To sustain and increase our ability to recruit a diverse student body. Historically, Preview has been targeted toward underrepresented students based on their racial or ethnic group and although this group was and remains a key part of diversifying our PIBS classes, underrepresented groups in the biomedical sciences also include individuals with disabilities and those from disadvantaged social, cultural, economical, and/or educational backgrounds. PIBS has long been dedicated to such recruitment efforts (i.e., RMF and McNair award recipients).

Project Activities:

- 1) Submission of a Preview application reviewed by a committee of all 14 Ph.D. programs
- 2) All expenses paid visitation
- 3) Meals and activities with current U-M students
- 4) One-on-one and group interaction with faculty and graduate program(s) of interest
- 5) Information session with Rackham Office of Student Success
- 6) PIBS Fall Open House

Political Science

Faculty Allies: Nicholas Valentino, Rob Mickey, Pamela Brandwein

Collaborator: Elizabeth Wingrove

Our objective is to increase diversity in our applicant pool. We invited 10 undergraduates from institutions around the country, together with their faculty sponsors, to a conference at which the undergraduates gave brief presentations on their current research. The students were recruited through the Co-PIs' professional networks and were identified by faculty sponsors as outstanding scholars whose familial, socio-economic, and/or other background factors made it unlikely that pursuing a Ph.D. in political science would appear a viable option. Each student presented on one of three topically-organized panels (Social Movements and Their Legacies, Causes and Consequences of Public Policy, Social Psychological Approaches to Politics). Without exception, their presentations generated lively discussion among audience members which, in addition to the faculty sponsors and conference organizers, were comprised of departmental faculty and graduate students. These intellectually energizing exchanges were complemented by extremely successful social events, including both a welcoming dinner for all invitees, departmental faculty, and our current graduate students, and separate dinners for students and faculty.

Psychology

Faculty Allies: Rob Sellers, Denise Sekaquaptewa, Stephanie Rowley

The Department of Psychology's diversity committee (comprised of faculty and students) is responsible for implementing the activities associated with our Rackham Diversity Grant. The goals of the grant are to: 1) enhance efforts to recruit Underrepresented Ethnic Minority (URM) graduate students; 2) maintain our efforts to successfully train URM graduate students; and 3) reinforce excellence through diversity as a core value throughout the department. Our recruitment efforts include faculty/student recruitment trips to other universities, a diversity recruitment weekend, and the development of diversity-related recruitment materials. Our retention efforts include funding social and academic support activities proposed by our URM student organizations as well as the department offering professional development workshops for students. Finally, we will sponsor speakers (local and national) to present their research on diversity-related topics as well as offer a diversity research award for faculty and students to reinforce the department's commitment to diversity.

Public Policy and Political Science

Faculty Ally: Mary Corcoran

The Project goal is to reduce time to degree after students achieve candidacy. We have made three changes to the Joint Ph.D. Program guidelines that should support this. In addition, we have formed a student-run workshop for candidates which (1) provides timely information about these requirements; and (2) provides candidates a formal connection to the Ph.D. program to present thesis ideas/work, receive feedback and share tips on the thesis process. The workshop has a faculty advisor, and students not on the U-M campus participate by phone. We have had two meetings as of December 2011. At the first meeting, the faculty advisor described the proposed workshop and new Ph.D. guidelines as well as general advice and rules. The students then set up a structure for the workshop and its agenda. The subsequent workshop dealt with choosing a committee, approaching faculty, getting faculty feedback in a timely manner and funding opportunities early on in the thesis process. Workshops will meet on a monthly basis.

SNRE

Faculty Ally: Ivette Perfecto

Collaborators: Bill Currie, Sondra Auerbach

We created a new program called SNRE Envoys. The goal of the program is to increase the recruitment, retention, and community building among diverse students in our Master's programs. Applicants for admission were selected based on merit, cross-school representation of disciplines, and commitment to diversity issues. The SNRE dean

contributed \$100K that we used as recruiting fellowships for 10 such students, who matriculated in Fall 2011. These student Envoys will work with other students and faculty, travel to conferences, and meet with prospective students to help improve applications and matriculations from diverse populations. Rackham funds are being used for travel, recruiting, and attracting prospective students to spend summers working with faculty in their research programs.

Social Work and Social Science

Faculty Ally: Lorraine Gutierrez

Collaborators: Berit Ingersoll-Dayton, Mieko Yoshihama, Trina Williams Shanks

Our objectives are two-fold: *to recruit and retain more students from diverse backgrounds*. These objectives require activities oriented toward identifying a broader range of applicants and improving our student yield. We also propose activities that would improve the climate for students, enhance our student mentoring culture; address student learning needs, and support program completion. These activities aim toward changes on the individual student, faculty, program, and school levels of change. Activities include the development of a learning circle of faculty and graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds, outreach to faculty allies in our associated social science departments, a guest speaker, a welcoming dinner for all incoming Ph.D. students and their faculty mentors, and an alumni-student mentoring program.

Sociology

Faculty Ally: Karin A. Martin

Collaborators: Alford Young Jr., Elizabeth Armstrong

The objectives of this project are to engage in a set of activities that will increase the number of competitive underrepresented minorities who apply to Sociology, who our admissions committee accepts, and who ultimately enroll. We want to ensure that current and recruited students are well mentored, retained, and successful. We aim to achieve these objectives through a variety of activities: 1) Increasing direct faculty interface with recruitment sites; 2) Mobilizing and strengthening the ties we have to academic programs around the country who are poised to send us excellent students; 3) Increasing the number of our own concentrators who consider graduate school; 4) Better marketing of our program; 5) Decreasing unconscious bias in admissions; 6) Improving mentoring ; 7) Improving climate among faculty and among students; 8) reaching out to alums who can serve as resources by bringing them to campus and connecting our students with their expertise.