



University of
Pittsburgh

Graduate School of Public
and International Affairs

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at GSPIA

GSPIA's strategic plan to ensure and maintain a diverse, equitable, and inclusive space and curriculum that supports their mission of fostering world-class future leaders, recruiting diverse faculty, students, and staff, and furthering their local to global presence and excellence in both research and education.



In this report, the following questions will be addressed in the context of GSPIA:

- ❖ Section 1: Summary of the Charge and Background on Core Guiding Values
- ❖ Section 2: What does a diverse and inclusive curriculum look like?
- ❖ Section 3: How will GSPIA ensure diversity and inclusivity in the curriculum?
- ❖ Section 4: How will GSPIA ensure diversity and inclusivity in the institution?
- ❖ Section 5: How will GSPIA ensure diversity and inclusivity in the community?
- ❖ Section 6: What trackable metrics will GSPIA use to gain feedback and accountability for their efforts?
- ❖ Section 7: Statement of Support

Section 1: Summary of the Charge and Background on Core Guiding Values

In mid-2020, Dean Carissa Slotterback charged the Diversity and Inclusion Committee of the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs to summarize the efforts to date and the efforts moving forward to assess and enforce the diversity, equity, and inclusivity of GSPIA's pedagogy and practices.

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee centered this plan around the fact that GSPIA students are future leaders in public service who will go on to plan, implement, and evaluate policies that can have unequal effects on specific groups and communities. It is GSPIA's belief that removing barriers to access, enhancing inclusion, and promotion equity are fundamental to the work our students will do in any field of public and international affairs. To provide this training, our faculty and staff need support and opportunities to learn and apply these ideas in their research and courses themselves. Moreover, faculty and staff stand to benefit from greater exposure to individuals from diverse backgrounds and academic ideas grounded in more diverse perspectives. This goal is consistent with the Plan for Pitt's priority to "embod[y] diversity and inclusion as core values that enrich learning, scholarship, and the communities we serve" (<https://www.planforpitt.pitt.edu/>) and NASPAA standard 5.1 that our curriculum provide students with "the ability to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry" (<https://www.naspaa.org/sites/default/files/docs/2019-11/NASPAA%20Accreditation%20Standards%20-%202019%20FINAL%20with%20rationale.pdf>).

While the specific charge was to develop a plan to assess the inclusivity of our curriculum and pedagogy, we believe that limiting our efforts to what goes on in the classroom will produce only half-measures that neither fulfill the goals of promoting diversity and inclusion, but also fail to promote and protect academic freedom, the larger university mission, and our goal of preparing our students to become changemakers in a quickly diversifying country and a world that is rapidly becoming more connected, even if barriers to physical connectivity remain. As such, we have developed a plan that involves assessing inclusivity and diversity in three areas—the classroom, the larger institutions of GSPIA (and Pitt), and the communities beyond campus.

The following lists broad action steps in each of these three areas, as well as suggested trackable metrics that might be used to assess progress and compliance. Note that all of these are suggestions, and different action steps and/or trackable metrics might be used in practice.

No part of our plan should be read as infringing on any individual's freedom of thought or respectful expression. Indeed, Pitt's core mission is "improving the world through knowledge" (see <https://pitt.edu/coremission>), and one of the most important ways of pursuing knowledge is through repeated interactions with individuals with whom one may disagree—often vehemently. As such, we expect all classes at GSPIA—the extent of which will depend on the underlying course material—to include lively discussions of topics and ideas that may make some individuals uncomfortable, and with which they may disagree. Indeed, the ideas of many members of the GSPIA community will quite often conflict, but it is not GSPIA's role to protect any member of the GSPIA community from ideas and opinions they may find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive. Although GSPIA greatly values civility, and although all members of the GSPIA community share in the responsibility for maintaining a climate of mutual respect, concerns about civility and mutual respect can never be used as a justification for closing off discussion of ideas, however offensive or disagreeable those ideas may be to some members of our community. Indeed, fostering the ability of members of the GSPIA community to engage in such debate in an effective and responsible manner is an essential part of GSPIA's—and the University's—educational mission, and will enable GSPIA to truly become an intellectual home for diversity of thought. Moreover, doing so is consistent with the Plan for Pitt 2025 (<https://www.planforpitt.pitt.edu/>), which aims to "creat[e] a more diverse, equitable and inclusive campus environment—one that is welcoming and fair to every member of our community," while "protect[ing] academic freedom, institutional independence and the associated rights, responsibilities and privileges." This plan, if properly implemented, will achieve both goals.

Section 2: What does a diverse and inclusive curriculum look like?

As a nationally-renowned school of public and international affairs, GSPIA has multiple responsibilities to itself, its students, its faculty and staff, the Pittsburgh community, the broader academic community, and the individuals with whom our graduates will interact in the future. Among these are the importance of ensuring every member of the GSPIA community can feel at home within our community, that our students are inculcated with a sense of responsibility to each other as well as the increasingly diverse populations with whom they will interact, and that our faculty and staff are equipped with the academic, social, and emotional tools to effectively deliver a curriculum developed around a range of perspectives that represent the diversity of human experiences. To that effect, we believe the following principles should guide us in the development and maintenance of an inclusive curriculum:

- An inclusive curriculum is designed with the goal of reflecting the ideal that everyone belongs, regardless of race, gender and gender identity/expression, ethnicity,



abilities/disabilities, age, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, political beliefs, socioeconomic status and background, geographic region, migrant/immigrant/refugee status (including, but not limited to, documentation status), veteran status, or any other personal characteristics.

- An inclusive curriculum reflects a diverse set of experiences and perspectives.
- An inclusive curriculum is not static, but is flexible enough to incorporate new knowledge as it is created and to adapt to changing student bodies and individual needs.
- An inclusive curriculum is taught by a diverse faculty that better reflects the changing demographics of the student body and the communities from which they are drawn.
- An inclusive curriculum encompasses and presents diverse and often conflicting viewpoints.
- An inclusive curriculum equips students to engage in reasoned and respectful debate with others whose views they may reject.
- An inclusive curriculum prepares students for employment in an increasingly diverse workforce and increasingly connected world.

Section 3: How will GSPIA ensure diversity and inclusivity in the curriculum?

There are an endless number of opportunities to effectively integrate diversity and inclusion issues into GSPIA courses. This initial list of efforts is by no means comprehensive.

Effectively integrate diversity and inclusion issues into GSPIA courses in multiple ways.

- All faculty teaching core courses and major-required courses will ensure that concepts related to diversity, equity, and inclusion are integrated into those syllabi in meaningful ways as it relates to the subject of the course. Faculty teaching these courses are encouraged to meet each year to discuss ways to address diversity more explicitly or effectively.
- Consider having GSPIA's Diversity and Inclusion Committee as well as Pitt's Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion consult with core faculty teams to suggest ideas, materials, and approaches.
- Have GSPIA's Diversity and Inclusion Committee randomly audit a small percentage of the syllabi for courses taught each year to provide feedback on diversity and inclusion efforts to date as well as suggestions for improvement. If possible, such syllabi should be compared to previous versions of the course taught by the same instructor in order to gauge progress.
- Include in the required professional development course modules that introduce concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion in policy and governance.
- Paired with a broader strategy to increase faculty diversity, offer a more robust selection of electives each year that relate directly to diversity, particularly to those that examine power, group differences, oppression, structural racism, and other concepts related to equity in the context of policy and governance.
 - These could include Race and Public Policy, Crime and Punishment Policy, Gender and Public Policy, Disability and Public Policy, and others.

- Ensure that these courses are sufficiently promoted to the GSPIA community.
- Strongly encourage faculty to include a greater diversity of authors, viewpoints, and disciplinary approaches in their materials.
- Faculty should proactively—when appropriate in the context of their courses—discuss systemic racism and other structural discrimination in the context of government and policy, including (and perhaps especially) in courses for which these topics are not the ‘main’ focus of the course. These topics should reach all students in GSPIA, regardless of course selection.
- Faculty should encourage the sharing of multiple viewpoints in class contexts without forcing students from underrepresented backgrounds to undergo the emotional labor of broaching the subjects themselves.
- Strongly encourage faculty members to preface each course—either in person on the first day or on the syllabus—with a statement to the effect that students in the course may be exposed to ideas with which they disagree or even find deeply offensive, though such is the nature of engagement in diverse contexts, and discussion of these topics should be respectful, reasoned, and not performed in a way that restricts the freedom of others to express their own views.

Facilitate instructor learning and information sharing about integrating diversity and inclusion into curricular materials.

- In conjunction with the Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and the Center for Teaching and Learning, offer several diversity-related teaching seminars each year for faculty and teaching assistants. At least one of these seminars should take place during a regularly-scheduled faculty meeting, to ensure full participation.
- Introduce all faculty, staff, and students to the concept of implicit bias and to strategies to reduce it.
- Facilitate working groups and online resources (perhaps in conjunction with other campuses outside of Pitt) where faculty can assist each other when constructing reading lists.
- In conjunction with the Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and the Center for Teaching and Learning, GSPIA’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee should develop standard open-ended diversity-related questions to include on all OMETs.
 - Faculty should be strongly encouraged to use midterm course evaluations to solicit student feedback on diversity- and inclusion-related issues.
- Strongly encourage faculty and teaching assistants use self-assessments (to be designed in conjunction with the Diversity and Inclusion Committee) to identify strengths and weaknesses in promoting diversity in the classroom.

Acknowledge, highlight, and value effective teaching practices.

- Give out Diversity and Inclusion Awards at end of year to faculty who go “above and beyond” to address issues of diversity and inclusion in the classroom and in the school

generally. These should be nominated by the students and voted upon by a committee comprised of faculty, students, and staff.

- The award should be named in honor of a GSPIA/Pittsburgh figure who exemplifies the qualities we are trying to model.
- The honoree could be invited to present to a subsequent faculty assembly meeting about his/her approach, to encourage the sharing of best practices and resources among faculty.
- Include diversity and inclusion as a metric in the peer teaching evaluation process, as well as annual faculty reviews.
 - Faculty should be encouraged to provide examples of diversity- and inclusion-related comments from their OMETs as well as how they have responded.
- Encourage faculty to utilize free classroom resources whenever possible (or greater usage of the library's E-Reserves service).

Section 4: How will GSPIA ensure diversity and inclusivity in the institution?

There are an endless number of opportunities to effectively integrate diversity and inclusion issues into GSPIA courses. This initial list of efforts is by no means comprehensive.

Develop an understanding of what diversity is and how individuals' different circumstances affect their abilities to learn and be active within the GSPIA community.

- Revise GSPIA's Statement on Diversity and Inclusion to reinforce our dedication to a diverse, cosmopolitan community and that we embrace the full diversity of experiences, viewpoints, and expression provided by differences of race, gender and gender identity/expression, ethnicity, abilities/disabilities, age, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, political beliefs, socioeconomic status and background, geographic region, migrant/immigrant/refugee status (including, but not limited to, documentation status), and veteran status.
 - Make the revised statement available on the school's website and incorporate it into other branding and identity materials.
 - Update this statement at least every 2-3 years, and more often if needed.
- With the input of students, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee will design a survey—specifically targeted to first-year students—that includes open-ended questions about the environment within the school that they find positive and negative with regards to DEI-related issues. Responses will be anonymized and deidentified to the greatest extent possible and will be shared with the broader faculty to ensure faculty awareness.
 - Each year, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee—in conjunction with the Dean—will pledge to take tangible action on at least one area of concern identified by the survey, with all other issues communicated to the Dean's office.
 - The Diversity and Inclusion Committee will communicate with student interest groups the importance of filling out the survey in question.



- Petition the University to upgrade classroom technology to encourage the continuation of hybrid courses, which will allow more students with different backgrounds and life circumstances to attend courses remotely.
- Provide more fully asynchronous online classes—and make them available to those students not in the MPPM program—to expand accessibility to more courses for more students.
- Promote accessibility by having more informal events at nontraditional hours.
- Develop a centralized repository of professionalization resources that speak to basic professional skills used in most classes (e.g., how to write a memo) that can be accessed online by all students (with the understanding that different faculty members will have their own variations, just like different institutions have their own styles).
- Include student members on all GSPIA committees.
 - Students should provide lists of acceptable nominees (at least 3-5 per committee) and the Dean should choose from that list.
 - Provide stipends to all student members on GSPIA committees.
- Increase student representation on the Diversity and Inclusion Committee to a minimum of three members.
 - Require that at least one such student representative is chosen by SOCA (or its nearest equivalent organization) independently of the Dean.
- Hire a Diversity and Inclusion Officer for GSPIA, provide them with a *ex officio* seat on the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and develop a procedure to report incidents of bias to them (in addition to the university procedure: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix/make-report>).
 - Alternatively, or in conjunction with the aforementioned, identify faculty and staff, as individuals or a committee, who can act as resources for students who experience discrimination or microaggressions.
 - Names and contact information of the relevant individuals should be publicly posted in Posvar Hall as well as on the GSPIA website.
- Encourage the establishment and longevity of student interest groups focused on issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.
 - Encourage such groups to collaborate to create solutions for diversity and inclusion-related issues and engage in conversations around race, gender and gender identity, ethnicity, abilities/disabilities, age, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, socioeconomic status and background, geographic region, migrant/immigrant/refugee status, and veteran status.
 - Provide annual budgets and sufficiently large private workspace to such groups (including, but not limited to, SOCA).
- Allocate an annual budget, managed by the Dean or Associate Dean, for activities to support diversity, equity, and inclusion at GSPIA.

- Perform a “cultural audit” (in line with Susan Gooden’s suggestions in *Race and Social Equity: A Nervous Area of Government*) to understand the aspects of GSPIA’s culture that inhibit diversity, inclusion, and belonging.
 - Encourage Pitt to conduct a “cultural audit” at the university scale.

Promote shared values and beliefs that foster inclusion among all students, faculty, and staff.

- Field an anonymous GSPIA climate survey each year (including at the first possible opportunity, in order to establish a baseline) that will be sent to all faculty, staff, and students. Questions will be developed by GSPIA’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Pitt’s Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and interested student groups. Responses—which will be provided to the Dean and the Diversity and Inclusion Committee—will be used to guide future implementation of the inclusive curriculum plan.
 - Topics should include—but should not be limited to—the extent to which respondents feel like they “belong” at GSPIA, whether respondents feel GSPIA is making sufficient progress on its diversity- and inclusion-related issues, whether respondents feel comfortable expressing ideas—as well as whether they experience repercussions (and what kind) for expressing those beliefs—and the extent to which respondents feel academic freedom is protected.
- Encourage all faculty to use their preferred pronouns in all written communications—as well as during initial in-person introductions—to establish inclusive atmospheres.
- Encourage the adoption of NameCoach (<https://www.technology.pitt.edu/namecoach>) to facilitate the correct pronunciation of names as well as the broader usage of preferred pronouns.
- Provide funding for student-led conversations and seminars on diversity, inclusion, and related topics. Allow for remote attendance and recording for those who are unable to attend in person at the designated time.
- Recognize student, staff, and faculty work related to diversity and inclusion in emails sent to the GSPIA listserv and other outlets as necessary (e.g., the university newsletter).
- Identify and publicize capstones, research projects, and other products of GSPIA that critically examine issues of diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice.

Develop and retain a diverse community of faculty, staff, and students.

- Mandate diversity and inclusion statements for all staff and faculty applicants; at the end of each year, all such statements should be blinded and categorized (e.g., hired/interviewed but not hired/not interviewed) and provided to the Diversity and Inclusion Committee for auditing purposes.
- Strongly encourage student applicants to include diversity and inclusion statements with their applications.
- Require diversity and inclusion statements for faculty tenure and promotion.



- Seek out new hires whose research speaks to fundamental issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and who are able to use their own personal backgrounds to ground relevant course material.
- Promote the retention of faculty and staff from underrepresented backgrounds (to be defined by the Diversity and Inclusion Committee) by working with other responsibility centers on campus to develop and strengthen relevant campus programs (e.g., IMPACT, or *Institutional Mentoring Program Across a Community of Color*).
- Work with the university to install more gender-neutral bathrooms in Posvar Hall.
- For all faculty and staff positions, provide the Diversity and Inclusion Committee (or at least the chair) with applicant demographics and require that they sign off on interview lists before they can proceed.
- Post flexible and transparent medical and family leave policies online with specific details about GSPIA's implementation.

Section 5: How will GSPIA ensure diversity and inclusivity in the community?

There are an endless number of opportunities to effectively integrate diversity and inclusion issues into GSPIA courses. This initial list of efforts is by no means comprehensive.

Help students gain relevant skills about how to succeed in a multicultural, pluralistic, diverse society.

- Field a survey each year that will be sent to all alumni at 2, 5, and 10 years post-graduation.
 - Questions will cover the adequacy of GSPIA's training for a diverse and pluralistic society and will be developed by GSPIA's Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Pitt's Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and interested student groups.
- Highlight the labor market value of diversity- and inclusion-related skills, including, but not limited to, cultural competence, power and equity analysis, community engagement, and tools for centering equity in decision-making.
- Offer and advertise skill workshops related to diversity and inclusion.
- Ask GSPIA's Office of Career Services to conduct employer focus groups on diversity- and inclusion-related skills.
- Find opportunities in multiple courses to train students to use tools (e.g., the Heinz Endowment's toolkit, located at <https://tinyurl.com/HeinzToolkit>) to center equity in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of policy.
- Offer professional development resources tailored to the needs of underrepresented students.

Facilitate GSPIA's connections to outside communities.

- Support student-initiated fora through collaboration between staff, faculty, and students.

- Identify appropriate guest speakers on issues of access, diversity, inclusion, and equity in public policy and governance from other universities and from the community.
- Consider hosting trainings and events that offer opportunities to learn and discuss the ways in which policy has advantaged and disadvantaged some communities.
- Find ways to develop and deepen collaborations with Pitt's Community Engagement Centers.
- Consider how to improve GSPIA's operationalization of NASPAA standard 5.1 on communicating and interacting with a diverse citizenry.

Section 6: What trackable metrics will GSPIA use to gain feedback and accountability for their efforts?

Trackable Metrics for Curriculum

- Course evaluation items related to diversity and inclusion in the classroom.
- Diversity- and inclusion-related competency questions (on both course evaluations as well as faculty annual reports) written in consultation with Pitt's Center for Teaching and Learning as well as the Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.
- Faculty attendance at events specifically relating to diversity and inclusion in the classroom.
- Self-reported syllabi audits across faculty and courses, with the goal of quantifying readings and course material generated by authors with diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Trackable Metrics for Institution

- Climate surveys of all GSPIA students, staff, and faculty.
- Process in place to request diversity and inclusion statements for all student, staff, and faculty positions.
- Increase in the number of faculty and staff from underrepresented and nontraditional backgrounds.
- Exit surveys of graduating students.
- Reports of incidents of bias or prejudice.
- Percentage of courses offered fully online or with otherwise increased accessibility.
- Number of GSPIA-supported student groups focusing on diversity and inclusion issues.
- Percentage of syllabi with preferred pronouns listed.
- Percentage of syllabi with free resources or resources available through E-Reserves.
- Number of student-led events focused on diversity and inclusion and percentage of faculty/student/staff who attend.
- Implementation of suggestions developed as a result of the "cultural audit."

Trackable Metrics for Community

- Alumni surveys (2-, 5-, and 10-years post-graduation).
- Enrollment in diversity- and inclusion-related electives and skill workshops.

- Number of collaborations with Pitt’s Community Engagement Centers.
- Number of events with outside speakers on topics relating to diversity and inclusion.

Section 7: Statement of Support

The work of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee was reviewed by Dean Carissa Slotterback and each faculty member of the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs.

The Dean and the full faculty provided their full endorsement of the strategic plan and full commitment to its implementation.