

Affinity Groups Overview

1. Balancing Scientific Work with Support for Affinity Groups

“When you see fires, you have to put them out” – Peggy Mason

Academia and DEI work are *not* separate. Academia is NOT just science we cannot separate the two.

These efforts are indistinguishable from our identities, if we were not allowed to do this work, we would not be here at all.

2. Supporting every aspect of your student’s identity

Make a community that is open and welcoming to all identities both visible and invisible.

We need to support people as individuals but also with recognition of their identity as members of groups who have been historically marginalized. There is need for work that reflects the group for tackling large scale issues such as systemic racism. This is also the case when public policy effects certain minority populations and not others, we cannot decontextualize a student’s identity and still support them.

3. Support for Students and Faculty Engaging in DEI work

Students need to be compensated for the work they are doing to improve campus climate. The more we treat DEI work as additional or extracurricular the more we force students to split their identities. **Faculty NEED to support their students doing this work and stop treating it as a distraction from completing a PhD.** If you want better diversity on campus, faculty need to stop penalizing students for trying to improve campus climate.

Students also shouldn’t become identified and valued for DEI work alone. Scientific work should also be equally recognized.

Faculty should be encouraging each other to get involved as well! It’s always the same faculty shouldering the burdens.