

Unified treatment of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging in NSAC LRP

Roxanne P. Springer^{1,*}

¹*Department of Physics, Duke University, Durham, NC 27708, USA*

It is now well established that social identities determine how different DNP members experience our community. As just one example along one axis: A recent survey sent to DNP members asked the following question, “While in a professional setting (such as university, lab, institute, or conference) how often in approximately the past 12 months have you felt uncomfortable because of your gender?” 90% of respondents identifying as male said zero; 18% of respondents identifying as female said zero. Just 2% of men said they experienced 1-5 incidents while 54% of women said they experienced 1-5 incidents. At the 2021 DNP meeting and again at the 2022 April meeting, Tim Hallman made a personal plea to the DNP community about gender harassment: “This has to Stop. Now.” While he is aware of egregious and potentially criminal behavior, he points out (echoing the National Academies 2018 (NAS2018) report ¹) that “...dismissive behavior based solely on gender, ... inappropriate comments or nonprofessional remarks based on gender, ...[and] microaggressions based up gender” continue and “may be in the end be much more damaging to the community’s goals for DEI.” Data on the experience of Blacks, members of the LBGTQ+ community, and those with disabilities is less well documented but is expected to show even stronger disparities ¹.

Fortunately, we find ourselves with a unique opportunity: (i) NSAC has received a charge to “articulate how efforts to promote and sustain a diverse, equitable, and inclusive nuclear science workforce will be fully integrated into every aspect of the vision for the future...”; (ii) DOE and NSF are newly committed to the effort ²; (iii) APS has articulated standards of ethical behavior, including “treatment of colleagues and subordinates.” ³ It is time for everyone in the DNP community to take ownership of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) goals, set milestones to meet, and frequently measure progress.

At the moment, each town hall has their own DEIB effort. And yet we will be stronger if the entire DNP community presents a united voice in the LRP. This can happen if the town hall DEIB leaders confer. The three subfields may differ in many ways, but what creates a safe, welcoming, and inclusive culture is universal in the DNP. Since Fundamental Symmetries, Neutrons, and Neutrinos is going last, we request that it undertake to endorse and adopt the outcome of the Hot and Cold QCD and Nuclear Structure, Reactions, and Astrophysics town halls where it agrees, and work with them to create consensus where disagreements exist.

In particular, Recommendation 3 from QCD includes, “Part of recruiting and maintaining a diverse workforce requires treating all community members with respect and dignity. Supporting the recent initiatives by the APS and DNP to develop community-wide standards of conduct, we recommend that host labs and user facilities require the establishment and/or adoption of enforceable conduct standards by all of the experimental and theoretical collaborations they support. The enforcement of such standards is the combined responsibility of all laboratories, theoretical and experimental collaborations, conference organizers, and individual investigators supported by the nuclear physics research program.” A possible way forward was suggested to the snowmass community in arXiv:2209.06755. At the Nuclear Structure, Reactions, and Astrophysics town hall, emerging themes included, “We recommend that all physics collaborations be required to adopt Community Agreements, which include expectations for community members’ behavior, a process for enforcement and fact-finding, and enforcement of consequences for misconduct that are unbiased, transparent, and just. We recommend the expansion of the DNP Allies Program at Spring APS meetings and the promotion of its adoption in other APS units, as well as offering bystander training at APS meetings. We recommend that DEI plans be integrated into all grant proposals with grants renewal re-assessed based on DEIB performances. We recommend that community climates be measured annually through anonymous surveys to assess and improve on the impact of DEIB efforts.”⁴

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This submission is based upon conversations with C. Nattras, F. Nunes, and W. Rogers, but they are not responsible for errors or omissions.

* rps@phy.duke.edu

¹ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2018. Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/24994>

² e.g., <https://www.energy.gov/science/diversity-equity-inclusion> and <https://www.nsf.gov/od/oecr/diversity.jsp>

³ <https://www.aps.org/policy/statements/19.1.cfm>

⁴ W. Rogers, private communication