

DEI-AB Professional Development Plan for CLAS Academic Advising Center 2024–2025 Academic Year

1. DEI-AB Goal(s)/Outcome(s):

- A. *What does your unit want to achieve with respect to fostering an inclusive and equitable community among staff and faculty in the unit?*

CAAC is staffed by people who are strongly committed to and motivated by student-centered equity/inclusion work and who strive to live up to our DEI-AB Values statement: “The CLAS Academic Advising Center is dedicated to integrating diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in all aspects of our work. We aim to provide an inclusive, safe environment where all students feel respected and heard in their interactions with advisors and other staff.”

Translating that focus to collegial relationships is always essential but will take on increased importance in the coming year as we onboard a large cohort hire of new advisors over the summer. Center staff will work together to create a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive atmosphere for all. Specifically, we will:

- Reinforce the use of inclusive and respectful language when speaking to each other, keeping in mind the wide variety of socioeconomic, national, and cultural backgrounds represented by CAAC staff. Staff will use correct pronouns for all staff members and will work to better understand colleagues whose backgrounds are different than their own.
- Reinforce a collective ethos of mutual support, constructive feedback, and equitable labor-sharing.
- Reinforce an office culture where all staff have the opportunity to bring their whole selves to work, to the degree that they feel comfortable doing so, and where we engage with each other in a manner characterized by respectful curiosity, active listening, and respect for others’ boundaries.

- B. *What does your unit want to achieve regarding the professional development of faculty and staff in DEI-AB?*

CAAC has an existing culture of ongoing professional development in DEI-AB topics for staff. We will continue fostering this culture by providing opportunities throughout the year for “unavoidable” professional development (such as sessions during staff meetings), and by providing support for advisors to attend and/or develop and present trainings on topics of interest to them. Our goal is to better understand, and therefore better serve, the students for whom we are responsible by encountering them within a framework of respect and cultural humility.

2. Objectives:

What does your unit want to achieve that will help accomplish your unit’s DEI-AB goal(s)/outcome(s)?

- Objective 1: Ensure an inclusive, safe workplace where all staff feel respected and heard by creating an internal process to assess office climate on an annual basis.
- Objective 2: Support and facilitate the growth of staff knowledge and awareness of DEI-AB issues through training and community learning opportunities.

3. Strategies

What approaches will your unit use to accomplish your goal(s)/outcome(s)?

- The CAAC will formally constitute a DEI-AB committee to both provide a leadership opportunity for an entry-level advisor and develop a programming schedule driven by advisors' professional needs and interests.
- The CAAC will develop an annual assessment instrument that will allow us to monitor Center climate.
- The CAAC will reserve time at its annual retreats to reflect on DEI-AB topics.

4. Professional Development Activities

What will faculty and staff in your unit do to implement the unit's strategies for accomplishing the plan's objectives and/or achieve the plan's objectives?

- The CAAC will dedicate at least two staff meetings per semester to internal DEI-AB professional development.
- The CAAC will continue its "Lunch and Learn" series, an opt-in internal learning community to foster conversation around DEI-AB topics.
- The CAAC will support staff members in using work time to participate in up to 6 individual DEI-AB activities external to the Center (panels, trainings, etc.) per assessment cycle (May-May).

5. Reflection on Learning

What have faculty and staff learned from engaging and participating in DEI-AB professional development activities during the 2024–2025 academic year?

Staff will be given the opportunity to reflect on DEI-AB professional development during our two annual retreats (Summer and Winter). These conversations already naturally and regularly occur during weekly staff meetings as well, and we expect this will continue.

6. Timeline

What will your unit do to implement the plan over the next academic year? When do you plan to reflect on how well your unit has achieved one or more of its objectives for the 2024–2025 academic year?

Spring/Summer 24

CAAC will convene the DEI-AB Committee to determine a programming schedule for the academic year, including both mandatory professional development sessions during at least 2 staff meetings per semester, and a list of topics for opt-in lunch-and-learn sessions.

Fall 24

CAAC will implement the programming schedule and leadership will regularly share out information about opt-in professional development activities. Staff will continue to be supported in seeking out DEI-AB-related programming opportunities beyond those facilitated by the Center, whether internal or external to GVSU. Leadership will work on developing the assessment instrument to evaluate Center climate.

Winter 25

CAAC will continue the programming schedule and leadership will regularly share out information about opt-in professional development activities. Staff will continue to be supported in seeking out DEI-AB-related programming opportunities beyond those facilitated by the Center, whether internal or external to GVSU. The climate assessment instrument will be administered in February, prior to the Winter retreat, and time during the retreat will be dedicated to reflecting on the progress we have made toward our goals.

NB: the May-May timeline presents a challenge to our unit because March, April, and May are the months when the Center is busiest, and it will be difficult to find time for reflection during that period. The Director will complete a report prior to the May deadline that encompasses a summary of staff reflection and feedback from the February retreat and an overview of results from the climate assessment survey, as well as an accounting of DEI-AB-related activities which have taken place between February and May.