The inaugural year of the new Division of Finance and Administration (DFA) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advancement Committee and Focus Group was a success as measured by foundations established, members engaged, and goals achieved.

Co-chairs Christine Atwood and Keahi McFadden began meeting in March 2023 to plan committee meeting cadence, member expectations, and strategic goals for FY24 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024). The Advancement Committee met monthly and the Focus Group was established to assist with committee work and develop future members, which began meeting quarterly in July 2023. At the core of the meetings were building community, establishing relationships, engaging in shared learning, and having strategic discussions that helped orient committee members and calibrate their baseline understanding, forming the foundation of the DFA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) program. Attendance and engagement by members have been consistent throughout the year.

Strategic goals set for FY24 for the DEI Advancement Committee and their status follows:

1) **Developing a co-chair road map and program foundation:** Building and setting a solid foundation is important for the future success of a new program. Co-chairs met weekly to plan and strategize the work of the committee, refine the direction we were headed, and to correct the path when needed. We completed a draft roadmap that is a guideline for current and future co-chairs. This roadmap establishes the cadence of conversations and will assist with preparing for deadlines sooner. This is a fluid document, and changes are made as deadlines and other requirements are changed from year to year. The co-chairs met quarterly for all-day strategic planning meetings that helped us to address outstanding tasks, plan the next quarter of conversations and expectations, and to build out ideas we were creating. The main challenge this first year was not knowing the time commitment to lead the committee as co-chairs, especially when starting up a new group. Realizing how this work became almost 20% of our time, the co-chairs are refining their approach, and it is possible that the time commitment for co-chairs will decrease as the program becomes more stable and established.

2) **Shared Learning Opportunities:** Advancement Committee and Focus Group members were invited to two shared learning opportunities facilitated by Carina Buzo-Tipton from the Office of Institutional Diversity (OID). They led the committee through “Dialogue Skills for Conflict and Cooperation” and “Foundations for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Social Identity and Socialization” in fall 2023. OID has been a close and collaborative partner throughout DFA’s DEI efforts, and we will continue to learn from their expertise and guidance.
3) **Establishing sub-committees:** Advancement Committee members responded to a survey to assist co-chairs with determining which DEI actions would be developed further and implemented. Four sub-committees were established, and each has two co-leads. The co-leads are responsible for leading their sub-committee with the goal of preparing recommendations for the division’s Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to consider. Co-leads worked collaboratively with co-chairs as liaisons to address concerns, issues, and questions. Sub-committee discussions in the beginning were broad and over the course of seven months the scope of their work became more focused, resulting in several recommendations as presented to the DFA SLT during their March retreat.

   a. **Inclusive Hiring Practices** (co-leads Mary Joslin and Manmeet Singh Khetarpal; Stephanie Smith, Maile Moore): *Share resources for best practices and guidelines for search committees.*
      
      i. Recommend developing a list of diversity qualification statements for consideration of inclusion by departments on DFA position descriptions. Proposal accepted with the following revision: Recommend a list of diversity statements for consideration of inclusion by departments in DFA to possibly be utilized during interview process, workplan, and evaluations.
      
      ii. Recommend developing a guideline for hiring managers to reference at the beginning of a search. (Approved by SLT)
      
      iii. **Action:** Both recommendations require subcommittee work closely to coordinate DFA actions with University Human Resources’ plans and activities for recruitment

   b. **Peer Networking** (co-leads Tracy Elmshaeuser and David Belton; Melanie Rose, Stephen Nelson, Kevin Hawkins): *Establish peer to peer support for new employees of color at time of hire.*
      
      i. Recommend establishing DFA Peer Ambassador Networking Program to help new DFA employees of color acclimate to the OSU community. Proposal accepted with the following revision: Recommend establishing DFA Peer Ambassador Networking Program to help new DFA employees acclimate to the OSU community. (Approved by SLT)
      
      1. **Action:** Subcommittee work with University Human Resources to coordinate more closely on how information will flow
      
      2. **Action:** Determine who would initially serve as Ambassadors and determine initial training and information

   c. **Peer to Peer Appreciation** (co-leads Christine Atwood and Keahi McFadden; Monika Watkins, Penny Pinard): *Create more opportunities for unit level appreciation.*
      
      i. Recommend adding ‘Belonging’ to DFA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advancement Committee name to become Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. (Approved by SLT)
      
      ii. Recommend updating DFA Inclusive Excellence webpage to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. (Approved by SLT)
      
      1. **Action:** Co-leads work with person maintaining website to update according to recommendation
iii. Recommend *Culture of Appreciation* workshop facilitated by Jon Dorbolo and Tarron Anderson to build belonging within work units and across the division. (Pending approval—SLT would like to take workshop themselves before they accept this proposal for division-wide action)

1. **Action:** Co-leads work with Andrea McDaniel and Melanie Rose to schedule a date for the workshop

d. **Training and Education** (co leads Aviva Rivera and Carrie Trant; Melissa Medina, Jessica King): *Create resources for exploring DEI through basic foundational knowledge, support for learning and self-assessments.*

i. **Action:** Subcommittee work with Office of Institutional Diversity to ensure we are not duplicating efforts

ii. **Action:** Continue researching content for webpage that develops DEI educational journey

The biggest challenge of the year was attrition due to members accepting positions outside of DFA or outside of OSU. This particularly impacted the sub-committee efforts. Co-chairs decided in February 2024 to invite Focus Group members to the sub-committees to help with transition and begin learning about the work of the committee and how they can contribute.

4) **Communication and Outreach Plan:** Informing the division's employees of the work the Advancement Committee is doing is an ongoing effort. Members are encouraged to talk about our work during their team meetings and to encourage participation on the committee. Through these efforts, we received names of a few people that are interested in being involved and plan to respond to the request for volunteers for the Advancement Committee survey. The co-chair’s roadmap is useful for planning regular updates, communications, and contributions to the quarterly VPFA News Updates as well. The Training and Education sub-committee presented their efforts to the Controller’s Unit and recently their unit reached out to schedule the remaining sub-committees to present at a future meeting. Communication and outreach are important and the need to develop what and how this looks for the committee is ongoing.

5) **Metrics and Analysis:** “Don’t just measure DEI—*Improve it*” (attributed to an anonymous author). Co-chairs made this quote as a guideline for our work, and it kept us in ongoing discussions about how to best show the committee’s results from an analytical view that is more than just numbers. For the first year’s metrics, co-chairs will conduct a member survey to determine areas of success and improvements which will be a baseline to measure future progress. Additionally, we will report on the number of DFA employees that self-reported completion of the Human Resources Search Committee training. As the program develops and implementation of the recommended actions occurs, we will continue our conversations on metrics and analysis.
FY24 next steps for committee co-chairs

- Call for volunteers: Update the Qualtrics Survey and provide link to SLT Liaison for inclusion in email to DFA employees. The committee membership has a few gaps regarding representation from departments which may be attributed to department size, people of color, people with disabilities, and people from work shifts outside of 8am – 5pm.
- Transition/Celebration: Plan end of year celebration in June to recognize efforts of all members and welcome new members.
- Schedule a guest speaker: We want at least one more speaker to present to our committee. We will work with OID and the Equity Leaders Consortium to see if there are any interested parties.

FY25 tentative goals for committee co-chairs

- Build on and implement approved FY24 recommendations and alignment with DFA Strategic Priorities specifically on “Advance a safe and inclusive environment” and “Be an Oregon employer of choice (by improving recruitment and expanding a welcoming and supportive workplace culture”
- Develop baseline metrics in these possible areas: Committee participation satisfaction, search committee training (continued self-reporting by employees), and DFA Hurray submissions (working closely with Andrea to ensure presentation of this information as part of the DEI Peer to Peer Appreciation is appropriate)
- Explore connection with DFA Food Insecurity Committee
- Explore connection with DFA Framework for Success Champion metrics team
- Increase Focus Group/Outgoing members continued involvement
- Increase number of committee members
- Consider proposing part-time position to oversee program to support continuity
- Reduction in number of sub-committees
- Review DEI Vision developed by Action Planning Workgroup and a philosophy statement developed by Training and Education sub-committee to present one statement