

Equity – External Learning & Teaching Experiences

This document has a three-fold purpose -1) to set safety standards for ESF's external teaching and learning partners by establishing and maintaining deeper accountability systems (i.e. anchoring each external academic experience with an on and off-site liaison); 2) to provide our community and external partners a framework for creating, reviewing, and assessing these systems (i.e. impartially sharing teaching and learning opportunities across academic departments to support interdisciplinary activity; goal setting for teachers and learners, actively managing work output in relationship to goals, and discussing job performance and well-being on an ongoing basis), and, 3) to link, align, and leverage deployment of ESF affiliates by (a) developing a mechanism to determine who is being deployed and for what purpose/audience, and (b) advocate for the development of a training toolkit of ESF key messages, resources, and materials to support our coordinated efforts with high-impact and attention to resource allocation.

Protect Students and Employees Whose Jobs Make Them Vulnerable

Imagine that you are deployed to teach or learn at a local company where you will gain credit to supplement your academic experience when a bias incident befalls you. Further, imagine that your field is extremely small and that you hesitate to report the incident for fear of retaliation. Now, imagine that you are doing work abroad when a bias incident occurs at the hands of an individual who controls program transportation, lodging, and evaluation of your experience. Maintaining clear and consistent expectations across the ESF community and external partners will support on-campus and on-site liaisons in improving productivity and engagement; improving participants' abilities to successfully respond to in-the-field challenges; reducing the likelihood of violence or other safety risks; supporting disaster and emergency preparedness; and managing the effect of disruptive incidents, such as injury, or other crises.

Level the Playing Field: Framework for Reviewing or Assessing Systems

The need for standardization of internship process and practices across campus has been identified as a near-term goal for the successful Interim Provost. Many campus constituents stand ready to support the next phases of this work.

Standardizing processes, course descriptions and field practices will begin by establishing an understanding for common definitions and language that surround the teaching and learning experiences. Next, will be formalizing the registration process for credit bearing internships. This will raise awareness of curricular requirements, as well as standardization of student learning outcomes and a confirmation of student experiences as an advanced return on investment. Finally, to increase access, equity, and to ensure equity and safety, the standardization of internship processes should include a centralized, ESF branded, repository for opportunities. Adherence will allow for additional opportunities to celebrate and leverage prominent student experiences. Faculty will receive enhanced support with the administrative practices in a new standardized model and timely compensation.

Link, align, and leverage deployment of ESF affiliates

Dr. Malika Carter
Chief Diversity Officer
Office of Inclusion Diversity and Equity

Thomas Carter
Assistant Director
Office of International Education

Dr. John E. Turbeville
Senior Assistant Dean for Student Affairs &
Director of Career Services

Equity – External Learning & Teaching Experiences

Protect Students and Employees Whose Jobs Make Them Vulnerable to Harassment – EQUITY

Dr. Malika Carter, Chief Diversity Officer

From Cosby to Kavanaugh, Kelly, and Nassar at Michigan State, etc., recent headlines have raised awareness of incidences of inequity that are sexual and violent in nature. The unfortunate reality has provided our institution with an opportunity to (1) comply more closely with the law, (2) educate the domestic and international ESF community members of rights and responsibilities, and (3) render a voice to vulnerable community members who may find themselves voiceless on campus, online, abroad, and in interpersonal exchanges where they may experience harassment amid power differentials and high stakes for reporting harmful behavior and language.

Healthy conditions for learning and work (domestic or abroad) are the elements of a climate that contribute to an individual's academic or professional achievement and success, and are associated with improved institutional reputation; strong community contributions; positive relationships; and are a critical part in narrowing achievement gaps.

Exclusionary or unsafe learning and work environments, which disproportionately affect underrepresented populations – such as women, person of color, people with disabilities, low-income persons, and GLBTQ community—can undermine efforts to achieve ideal learning/working experiences at SUNY ESF and at external experiences wherein students and employees participate. The need to establish equitable conditions for learning is clear. Many navigate on/off-campus educational experiences where they rely upon others for coordinating safe spaces, residential setting, work, and transportation conditions. Depending upon where in the world one may find themselves, if language, ability, or other identity markers become hyper visible; the student or employee could find themselves at social or academic risk – jeopardizing their academic reputation and productivity, or wellbeing.

Resources: <https://metoostem.com>

Equity – External Learning & Teaching Experiences

Recommendations

- Provide resources/training to every student and employee prior to their external ESF experience. Our community will need information if a situation arises so they will be equipped with who they should contact.
- Require the reliance and use of off-campus individuals to complete our institution's volunteer form with Human Resources, including those who are not employed by SUNY ESF or have no research/work entity affiliation.
- Standards are the primary vehicle for conveying expectations. To raise awareness about the potential impact cognitive biases can have on all stages of the teacher or learner process, campus community is welcome to contact ESF's Office of Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity to request on-demand anti-bias professional development.

Anti-Bias Professional Development will help the community to recognize and correct for unconscious bias affecting “decision or selection” stages that have a significant impact on the inclusion and upward mobility of already-low numbers of underrepresented people in the ESF community, and it is important to support a system where the impact of any such biases is minimized.

Equity – External Learning & Teaching Experiences

Level the Playing Field - EQUITY

Dr. John Turbeville, Senior Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Director of Career Services

In relationship to equitable external teaching and learning opportunities, the following is a list of suggestions that we will continually review and improve with the assistance of the Interim Provost beginning March 1, 2019:

- Curricular requirements – clarity
- Standardization of internship processes and practices
- Centralization of opportunity postings (goal for all student employment)
- Establishing support roles and common procedures
- Review capturing summer tuition dollars, if so, create faculty sponsor compensation plan

You should be aware that as we begin to collect demographics of students participating in internship and externship experiences, the Career Services Office and the Office of Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity will be formulating recruitment goals in order to determine recruitment strategies and sources to attract applicants from under-represented race and gender groups. Please bear in mind that the goals are for *recruitment* of a diverse applicant pool but play no role in candidate *selection*.

Recommendations

- When seeking and recruiting, suppress sociological tendencies to only recruit persons of similar gender, race, sexual orientation, culture, and ethnicity.
- With creativity and innovation, demonstrate to underrepresented-identity people that you have opportunities available, even if you are not knowledgeable of their total skillset.
- Advertise your opportunity through ESF Career Services by emailing careers@esf.edu. As you win a research grant that has opportunity for student researchers built in, share the information so that qualified individuals can apply to your opportunity. This is only one good strategy for attracting a diverse and qualified pool of applicants.
- Keep in mind that while search committees are responsible for fulfilling the College's requirement to demonstrate "good faith efforts" to diversify the applicant pool, homogeneous overrepresentation is not corrected for in the same way for student internships/externships.
- Engage in formal and informal networking, utilize non-traditional advertising such as listservs and on-line publications, and discuss the position among members of relevant membership in professional organizations and during conferences.

Equity – External Learning & Teaching Experiences

- **Reflection**—Every external learning experience should be equipped with a standardized reflection on how the student exhibited agreed-upon competencies
- **Feedback**—On and off-site anchors and/or supervisors and a direct report should discuss demonstration of agreed-upon competencies
- **Journal or other documentation of product**-- Insights gained from reflection and feedback should also be connected to product documentation or a measurable outcome

Equity – External Learning & Teaching Experiences

Standardize the Experience - EQUITY

Thomas Carter, Assistant Director of International Education

In partnership with the Office of Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity and with the assistance of the Interim Provost, we aim to accomplish the following in regards to international programs:

- Standardization of learning outcomes of international experiences at all three levels of the experience (pre-, during, and post-)
- Establishment of a mechanism(s) to ensure the completion of said learning outcomes
- Development and maintenance of standardized health, safety, non-discrimination, and overall experience norms
- Equity in recruitment and accessibility for international programs

Due to the remote nature of our programs, there are varying levels of accessibility, services, accommodations, and experiences that our students engage and face. It is not unlikely for our students to be placed in areas that operate in remote regions with delayed access to medical care, limited or absent mental health resources, or other barriers relative to gender, sexuality, ability, race, etc. The institution must aim to consistently provide resources for all students prior to, before, and after their travels abroad in order to ensure that all students receive an equitable education experience.

Recommendations

- **Health/Safety/Risk Management** - Consult with faculty leaders and off-campus liaisons on ESF policies and procedures (e.g. Online Bias Reporting System; Sexual Harassment, Assault, and Violence Prevention Policy; the ESF *Student Handbook*; the ESF *Code of Student Conduct*, etc.) prior to them working with ESF students and employees. Require that all international programs meet a standardized norm of health, safety, and non-discrimination. Per state and federal policy, require faculty and volunteer leaders to be trained in health, safety, risk management, non-discrimination, and Clery guidelines. All program volunteers and involved affiliates will be required to also submit a volunteer form via ESF's Office of Human Resources.
- **Learning Outcomes** - Mandate standardized learning outcomes for all international programs both internal and external. Achieve accomplishment of mandated learning outcomes through required pre-departure programming, on-site reflection/engagement, and returnee assessment.

Equity – External Learning & Teaching Experiences

- **Centralize International Programs** - Have ESF's Office of International Education (OIE) serve as the central location of approved international programs *for credit*. All recruitment and promotion should be funneled through OIE to ensure equitable access to opportunities. This will also reduce load on faculty for having to review and assess health/safety/risk management of individual programs.