

SUMMARY OF BME DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION SURVEY REPORT

Survey Conducted Fall 2020

UMass BME DEI Survey Q2: What do you think the faculty, staff, & students in UMass BME do well to tackle these challenges?



Summary Recurring Themes:

- 1) We've done a good job of *acknowledging* the importance of diversity
- 2) Faculty & staff try to create an inclusive environment, use inclusive language, open to talking to students
- 3) Students are friendly, willing to help each other, and to stand up for each other
- 4) Students feel comfortable expressing themselves & they speak up in class
- 5) Good female-to-male ratio, better than other stem topics
- 6) Use of pronouns, and making (online) classes accessible time-wise to non-local students
- 7) DEI committee a good start

Notable quote: 'We are constantly reminded that we are all accepted and that if we have any issues, we can always reach out to someone.'

- Be aware of student preparation differences – don't assume knowledge unless from a required prereq course (esp. in 1st/2nd year courses)
- Other DEI
 - REU for URM students; or scholarship for low-income and/or URM students
 - Work with other departments in Engineering and campus to collaborate on DEI initiatives, take advantage of resources elsewhere
 - Run diversity trainings; talk about pronouns, ask how students would like to be referred to
 - Educate students on DEI issues, being aware that there will be different levels of awareness; Involve the students more in DEI discussions
 - Outreach programs to local/area schools (middle & high school)

BME DEI COMMITTEE PROPOSED ACTION PLAN 2021

Short Term and Highly Feasible

- Establish a monthly coffee hour run by the BME DEI committee to build culture and inclusivity in the department.
 - To ensure participation of URM students, we will work with the societies on campus (e.g., SWE, NSBE, SHPE, SASE, BMES) to encourage participation and/or directly invite groups. Another possibility is to have rotating DEI topics informally discussed at these coffee hours.
- Build a dedicated DEI section on the BME website.
 - Content can include: survey results; BME DEI committee members and activities; action plan and progress; resources.
- Work with all faculty to have them directly express a commitment to DEI at the start of every BME course.
 - Encourage faculty to post DEI themed posters (e.g., see <https://sammykatta.com/diversity>).
- Work with all faculty to maximize participation in the Dean's Curriculum challenge.
 - We think it is feasible to hit 100% participation as a faculty during Spring 2021.
- Using ENGIN114 as a potential way for all faculty to interact with the incoming freshman class
 - The objective would be to break down any barriers for people to interact with faculty at the outset and to ensure first generation students and URMs are given opportunities to network with faculty from the outset of their studies
- Review the practices around advertising and recruitment of undergrads to labs to ensure access for all students.
- Support a peer-mentorship program for all graduate students that is being established by the Bioengineering Graduate Students Society (BEGS)
- Establish an information session in the Fall semester for undergraduate students to learn about graduate school and to meet-and-greet our graduate students
- Ensure departmental representation at conferences aimed at minority students (e.g., ABRCMS)
- Ensure all graduate students and faculty are informed of the benefits of the Graduate Student Union at Umass
- Strive to have our TAs represent the diversity in the department

Medium/Long-Term or potentially more challenging

- Following establishment of a seminar series in the department, have speakers dedicate 10mins to DEI issues and career development/advice. Additionally, ensure there is sufficient time for student meet and greet with seminar speakers.
- Work towards having a course on DEI in STEM as a GenEd requirement for BME degree.
- Establish Departmental travel awards for attending (1) a conference focused on diversity and (2) for URM to attend a scientific meeting
- Provide scholarship relocation funds for graduate students to help recruit URMs
- Discuss the development of a Slack group (or similar) for the entire department or for each year or the entire department
- Establish departmental social events
- Build up our outreach programming, working with efforts at the college level
- Commit to recruiting practices at all levels that will lead to our departmental demographic matches US demographics.