

Faculty Affiliates Program

The Office for Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) Faculty Affiliates support the advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) capacity building at the University of Connecticut. In 2020-2021, ODI piloted this program with one faculty member. In 2021-2022, ODI will sponsor up to five faculty affiliates. As a primarily area-based role (STEM, professional preparation programs, social sciences--arts & humanities, regional campuses, UConn Health), the ODI Faculty Affiliates provide additionally support within and across units to “advocate for access and equity, to welcome and celebrate the experiences of historically marginalized individuals and groups and to transform climate to build a more welcome and inclusive community” (ODI Mission Statement). In addition, ODI Faculty Affiliates collaborate to support ODI’s efforts in at least one of five strategic domains: 1) graduate student support and development; 2) faculty and staff support and development; 3) ODI and unit-level strategy and operations related to DEI; 4) community outreach, engagement, and advocacy; and 5) research and policy.

ODI Faculty Affiliates: Purpose and Description

The establishment of the ODI Faculty Affiliates Program provides infrastructure to and resources toward creating a sustainable capacity-building model for diversity and inclusion across academic colleges/schools and campuses at UConn. Toward that end, the ODI Faculty Affiliates will be positioned to serve as a resource and platform for innovation and transformation at a local level, with support (both in terms of resources and training) from the University at-large. In addition, ODI Faculty Affiliates will contribute to at least one of the five domains (each area is described below) in support of ODI’s central areas of responsibilities.

Each ODI Faculty Affiliate commits to a minimum of a one academic year to the role. The position may be renewed at the discretion of ODI and the Faculty Affiliate’s dean. Potential candidates (preferably at the rank of associate or higher) can self-nominate but must have a support letter by their academic deans. ODI will sponsor one faculty member from each participating academic unit, up to five units during the 21-22.

Benefits to the Institution:

Faculty Affiliates will serve as DEI specialist within a specific area (STEM, professional preparation programs, social sciences--arts & humanities, regional campuses, UConn Health) providing support to strategic efforts to advance DEI planning and development within and across academic units. The Faculty Affiliate will, through their affiliation with ODI, leverage university-level insights and resources to support institution-wide and unit level DEI efforts and response.

Benefits to the Faculty Affiliate:

ODI will provide the Faculty Affiliate with compensatory resources, including but not limited to trainings and professional development, cohort meetings and support, a stipend, a small budget for ODI related meetings, funds to cover a course buyout (at their dean’s discretion), conference funding, and/or access to an ODI graduate assistant to support work related to this role. This intentional experience will be structured to support potential readiness for future leadership opportunities.

Five Domains of Work

In addition to the area-focused DEI responsibilities, each ODI Faculty Affiliate will build a portfolio of activities based on their unique interests, expertise, and engagement in one or more of the five strategic domains.

Graduate Student Support and Development:

The Faculty Affiliate will work with ODI on a specific graduate student support and development effort particularly in support of BIPOC and/or historically marginalized graduate students at UConn. This might include student support, student services, student programming, trainings or workshops, or committees.

Faculty and Staff Support and Development:

One of the President's high-level goals is to add significantly to the diversity of our faculty and staff at the University of Connecticut. Achieving this goal entails that each academic unit show not only interest in, but care for faculty for whom the academy and its normative structures can be less than welcoming. The role of the ODI Faculty Affiliate working in this domain is to support ODI's role in faculty and staff initiatives related to recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of historically underrepresented faculty and staff. This Affiliate will provide unique insight and aid to faculty and staff through consultations, workshops, trainings as well as work with the university-leadership team to address these issues.

ODI Strategy and Operations:

As members of specific academic units, faculty have a unique lens on UConn, their units, and the efforts of both toward creating and embedding DEI. In this sense the ODI Faculty Affiliates simultaneously play a role as a discipline and/or area-based faculty member and a faculty member as part of the UConn community. This duality of representation will help both units and the university critically think about strategic planning, accountability, and the commitment to the development of cultural competency and diversity skills for all members of the UConn community. This ODI Faculty Affiliate may support university-wide strategic planning by providing units with specific support, resources, and tools to advance their strategic plans in ways that meaningfully incorporate DEI goals.

Community Outreach, Engagement, and Advocacy:

The Faculty Affiliate will work to advance UConn's engagement with alumni and the communities we serve locally, state-wide, nationally, or globally. This might include resources, support, programming, or engagement opportunities. This responsibility also includes goals related to advancing UConn's leadership promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, whether locally or as collaborations with other higher education institutions. This ODI faculty Affiliate will offer support and trainings to advance community DEI trainings and workshops with campus members and/or community partners.

Research and Policy:

The Faculty Affiliate focusing on research and policy will contribute to researching issues for diversity, equity, and inclusion or for directing that research to policy. This responsibility includes capacity building around the issues that impact UConn internally, as well as the external issues in higher education.

Application Process

If you are interested in nominating yourself for the ODI Faculty Affiliate program, we ask that you submit a letter of interest (no more than 2-3 pages single-spaced) in response to the following prompts:

- 1) Of the five areas (STEM, professional preparation programs, social sciences--arts & humanities, regional campuses, UConn Health), which ones (1-2) would you identify as your area of interest and expertise? What would you offer ODI in these areas given your expertise and what would you hope to learn through this experience?
- 2) Of the five domains (graduate student support and development; faculty and staff support and development; ODI and unit-level DEI strategy and operations; community outreach, engagement, and advocacy; and research and policy, which ones (1-2) would you identify as your area of interest and expertise?
- 3) Beyond the scope of this program, what are some of the long-term possibilities for the work you would like to engage in related to DEI?
- 4) What are some potential indicators of success for your participation in this program?

In addition, each nomination must be accompanied with a letter of support from the person's respective academic dean addressing the following questions:

- 1) How has this faculty member contributed to the advancement of DEI in your unit and/ or UConn more broadly?
- 2) How might this faculty member benefit from participating in this leadership development opportunity?
- 3) Describe your support of this faculty member for the ODI Faculty Affiliate program.
- 4) What do you see as some potential opportunities for supporting efforts to advance DEI that would of benefit to your unit based on the applicants proposed focused area and domain interests?

Please note that ODI will select only five total Faculty Affiliates for 2021-22 and at most, only one per area. Both the nominee's letter of interest and the Dean's letter of support can be emailed to: Diversity@uconn.edu. Please put "Faculty Affiliates" in the email subject line. **Deadline for submission of nominations: May 27, 2021. ODI will make decisions and communicate them by June 1, 2021.**

Resources

All ODI Faculty Affiliates who participate in this program will receive the following during the 2021-22 academic year:

- 1) One course release/buyout (at the discretion of the Dean or unit head)
- 2) \$5,000 stipend (that can be used as a summer stipend or to get an additional course release)
- 3) Access to funding to support programming efforts.
- 4) Access to an ODI graduate assistant to support the Affiliates' work related to their role.
- 5) DEI and leadership training

ODI Faculty Affiliate Expectations

In addition to negotiated area focused efforts to advance DEI, ODI Faculty Affiliates will be expected to participate in bi-monthly meetings with ODI representatives; participate in training and development opportunities hosted by ODI; and submit a mid-year and annual report detailing their activities, accomplishments, and overall impact. The hours may range as the semester work unfolds, but on average the Faculty Affiliate will commit to ~ 10 hours a week to ODI during their time in the role.