

Florida Coastal Everglades Long Term Ecological Research Program

Diversity and Inclusion Plan

Updated April 23, 2020

The goal of the Florida Coastal Everglades (FCE) Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) program's Diversity and Inclusion plan is to *foster an intellectually vibrant environment that is inclusive, open to all, respectful of diversity, and where our individual differences are recognized, valued, and seen as a source of strength that is integral to the discoveries we make as scientists*. We embrace the notion that our community is enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions and is committed to increasing the representation of those populations that have been historically excluded from participation, including as a function of race, ethnicity and national origins, gender and gender identity, sexuality, socio-economic class, age, spirituality, physical and mental ability, and military status. FIU is the nation's fourth largest university ($n = 58,063$) and largest Hispanic Serving Institution ($n = 37,272$; 64%) and over 90% of FCE undergraduate students ($n = 202$) identify as underrepresented groups (87% Hispanic; 7% Non-Hispanic Black; 63% female). The leadership team of FCE (the IEC, Fig. 2) is diverse, with 7 women, 3 Hispanics, 1 Asian, 1 Non-Hispanic Black, and 3 LGBT members representing a membership where 42% and 42% of senior personnel, collaborators and postdocs and 38% and 41% of graduate students identify as female and underrepresented ethnic groups, respectively. The FCE program honors the identity of all participants and maintains an atmosphere that represents and embraces diverse cultures, backgrounds and life experiences that reflect the multicultural nature of South Florida and the global society.

The FCE *Diversity and Inclusion Committee* consists of the Lead PI, the Education and Outreach Coordinator, one graduate student, one FIU collaborator, and an off-site collaborator. It is currently represented to the IEC and LTER Network Executive Board by graduate student L. Iporac. The committee established three objectives for FCE IV, each with measurable outcomes. **(1): Enhance representation and advancement of early career scientists from underrepresented groups** by annually hosting a workshop with FIU's Multicultural Programs and Services (MPAS) office to equip students for advocacy on issues related to diversity, inclusion, and equity, and awareness of related programs; strategically recruiting students from underrepresented groups through the *Ecological Society of America's Strategies for Education in Ecology, Diversity and Sustainability Partnerships for Undergraduate Research Fellowship*, *Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities*, and the *National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education* programs; funding student research exchanges among coastal LTER sites; and, engaging teachers and high school students (and their parents) from Miami Dade County Public Schools (90% underrepresented groups, 60% female) in science and professional development through our Research Experience Programs. **(2): Enhance representation of faculty from underrepresented groups** by the FCE PI's service on the internal advisory board of FIU's ADVANCE program in the Office to Advance Women, Equity & Diversity to advance institutional structures, processes, and climate to recruit and promote FCE faculty from underrepresented groups. Through the ADVANCE program we will also continue to recruit FCE post-docs from underrepresented groups into a prestigious FIU Postdoctoral Fellowship program. **(3): Promote diversity, equity, inclusivity, and well-being among FCE collaborators** by fostering leadership through our structure described above, encouraging membership in more than one working group, inclusion of multiple working groups on student advisory committees and co-production of publications with agency/NGO scientists, and encouraging personnel to participate in public education, community engagement and outreach activities and frequent FCE social events. FCE's progress toward each goal will be annually assessed by Associate Dean of Research, Dr. Rita Teutonico, through interviews and focus groups, and an anonymous survey of quantitative demographic and qualitative inclusion data.