

BRIDGING TO INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE: A CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

Introduction

As a world-class research university, Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) is committed to fostering an environment where all members of our community have a sense of belonging. We desire that all in our community be welcomed, valued and given the opportunity to thrive. Our achievement of excellence in education and research will be supported by a framework that recognizes that diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) are critical. We understand our shared responsibility to openly communicate and demonstrate our dedication to our DEIB values so that our community knows our intentions.

To make progress toward inclusive excellence, CMU has created a framework titled “The Bridging to Inclusive Excellence: A Carnegie Mellon University Framework” (The Framework) to prioritize, align and assess our DEIB efforts across the University. The Framework is CMU’s philosophical foundation for a comprehensive and well-coordinated set of systemic actions that focus specifically on cultivating DEIB success and accountability to advance the excellence of the university community and its outcomes. The Framework guides the intentional integration of DEIB efforts throughout the university, supports and monitors progress across institutional units, and promotes a sense of shared ownership and accountability.

Developing a Framework?

The Framework's development was a result of a transparent, iterative and inclusive process. It allowed for the active involvement of numerous voices within the CMU community and capitalized on the positive initiatives already being implemented as part of the current strategic plans within colleges and divisions. Many of these initiatives aligned with and were reinforced by President Jahanian's call to action, as articulated in his June 2020 Confronting Racism [memorandum](#). The engagement process encompassed the following:

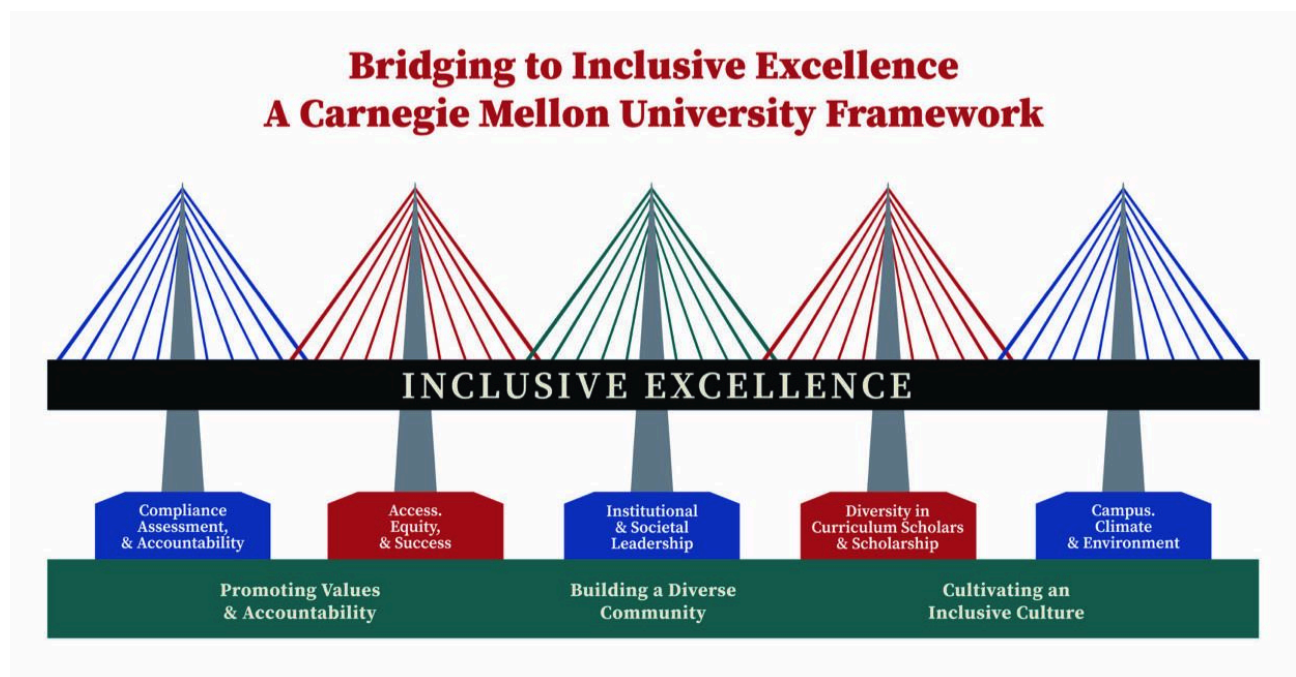
- Collaborative meetings with vice presidents, deans, vice provosts, academic diversity officers, DEI leads, diversity committees, student groups and alums.
- Hosting three open presentation sessions to gather input and feedback.
- Development of web-based FAQs to provide clarity and information.
- A thorough review of the diversity strategic plans of each college and division to ensure alignment and synergy.

The Framework collaboratively bridges community-identified direction and will help us fulfill our vision of ensuring that CMU stands on the right side of history through bold and concrete actions, and maintains transparency and accountability. It serves as a proud testament to our collective commitment to embedding diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) into our mission of academic excellence. This Framework is grounded in contemporary literature, informed by current best practices, and enriched by institutional feedback, all firmly rooted in our institution’s mission,

vision and core values. It underscores the deliberate integration of DEIB initiatives into the very heart of our institution to enhance success and academic excellence. It assists in pinpointing areas where gaps exist and then. The Framework provides guidance on effectively addressing and bridging these gaps within our institutional system. Furthermore, it reinforces our foundational principles and bolsters accountability and assessment mechanisms throughout our institutional landscape. Ultimately, it nurtures an environment where students, faculty and staff feel a sense of belonging and play integral roles in fostering a thriving community.

CMU's journey toward building a community focused on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging has been guided over the generations by a number of committed students, faculty, staff and institutional leaders who understood the need for more action and commitment to DEIB, even before the terms themselves became popularly understood. The Framework integrates and builds on this important historical work while enhancing and expanding our efforts toward greater progress. We will operationalize The Framework, creating a compelling platform for strategy development and execution and raising the profile of DEIB to increase accountability and cultivate a sense of belonging across campus.

The Framework is based on three core values and five pillars of excellence to serve as implementation guideposts for all of CMU's academic and administrative strategic plans for diversity, equity, and inclusion.



Core Values

The core values serve as the foundation for The Framework. These three foundational concepts sit at the intersection of our institutional values, contemporary literature, and input from key

stakeholders and leaders. These values help define what we are striving for, preview how to achieve it, and inform us of our purpose for engaging in Inclusive Excellence.

Building a Diverse Community

The intentional act of constituting our community norms to provide access and support to all identities, especially those that are historically marginalized.

Cultivating an Inclusive Culture

Growing an inclusive community through equitable practices that create and maintain an environment where a diverse group of faculty, staff, students and leaders can fully participate.

Promoting Values and Accountability

By holding our community accountable to our strong DEIB values, our commitment is demonstrated by assessing diverse participation in social and intellectual development and adhering to the mission while navigating institutional or external forces.

Pillars of Inclusive Excellence

The pillars of Inclusive Excellence (PIE) have been adapted from the work of Daryl G. Smith, senior research fellow and professor emerita at Claremont Graduate University, and are constructed with direct interplay from the core values. The PIE serves as the structural support strategy for development and refinement at all levels of the university and assessment execution. The execution of these strategies, organized by and founded upon these pillars of inclusive excellence, is what drives us towards success of university-wide inclusive excellence.

Institutional and Societal Leadership

This pillar focuses on the engagement of leaders at every level of the organization in DEIB efforts. It is important for each leader to engage the current realities and inspire a shared vision for their sphere of influence to promote inclusive behavior.

Access, Equity and Success

This pillar concentrates on building a diverse and equitable community throughout the institution in a way that is meaningful and measurable. An inclusively excellent institution is historically informed and works to identify access gaps and increase access to those not represented. It prioritizes an equitable experience at each institutional level and encourages success for all students, faculty and staff.

Campus, Climate and Environment

This pillar focuses on the physical, psychological and behavioral climate of the community. The institutional infrastructure includes the physical landscape along with the people, policies and protocols that animate it.

Diversity in Curriculum, Scholars and Scholarship

This pillar focuses on building diversity in the curriculum (content, pedagogy, and modality), scholars and scholarship. Inclusive excellence in these areas is not created by using a single mold, but through expanding perspectives and opportunities for engagement.

Compliance, Assessment and Accountability

This pillar focuses on using data to inform institutional accountability toward inclusive excellence instead of compliance alone. Though compliance is foundational, to be excellent in inclusivity, it is important for an institution to hold itself accountable to its greater mission by assessing its DEIB strategy, implementation and experience at all levels.

By operationalizing these key thematic areas, CMU is able to maintain a community dedicated to Inclusive Excellence and uphold its mission and values as a university that places its “heart in the work.”