

## One-page summary

The CALS All-College Forum on Diversity and Inclusion on Feb. 2 drew around 85 members of the CALS community and included small-group discussion time that yielded a large amount of valuable feedback. Below is a summary of the feedback, grouped by the forum's three discussion prompts: 1) What concerns you most about the climate in CALS? 2) What are your ideas for positive action to promote an inclusive climate in CALS? 3) What questions do you have that we can address moving forward?

At the forum, participants expressed a wide range of concerns about climate, including occurrences of divisiveness, as well as feeling a lack of connection, communication and trust. On the college and university level, there were comments about budget stress and a question as to why some professors in CALS were leaving. Concerns were expressed about the lack of racial diversity and behaviors/conditions that make students of color feel unsafe and excluded. There were comments about gender and sexual orientation/identity issues, including gender inequality, homophobia, as well as salary equity, equitable retention strategies and leave policies. Concerns over suicide rates were expressed. The effects of the current national climate were discussed, with concerns about bigotry being normalized, strategies for dealing with national climate issues in the classroom, the impact on international students, and the future of students in environmental and science fields. Tensions regarding an us-vs.-them mentality were discussed, including urban-rural tensions.

On a general level, participants expressed a need to build community, create a sense of belonging, and a desire to take meaningful action. Suggestions were made to improve communications in CALS, including creating an anonymous way to give feedback about these issues, developing communication plans to share information more broadly, and having diverse stories in eCALS. Ideas for events and workshops included daily coffee chats, Lunch and Learn sessions, a CALS diversity celebration, mixers/intentional social encounters, learning forums, and a panel for people to share their identities. There were also suggestions for positive action on the interpersonal level, emphasizing the importance of making a difference for the populations we work with and focusing on what we can control in our professional and personal lives. A need for resources was also brought up, including resource people to report to, mentoring, safe places to have discussions, as well as identifying tools and techniques for dealing with bias incidents, and raising awareness of existing UW and CALS resources. Participants also discussed actions that can take place in the classroom, including developing course policies that help students develop cultural awareness, training in cultural competency and empathy for instructors/TAs, and having a diversity statement on course syllabi. Recommendations also included support for training opportunities about bias and diversity.

The small and large group discussions brought out a number of questions for the college to consider as we move forward, including:

- How can we make students feel more welcome?
- How do we consider all viewpoints? How do you create an environment where people feel safe yet protect speech?
- How do we include more people in these conversations?
- What does it mean to be diverse? What does an inclusive environment look like?
- What can you do if you are from a place or work in a place with very little diversity?
- How do we teach inclusion? Empathy?
- How are the UW and CALS going to identify and evaluate policies for potential discriminatory impacts, and help promote change, if needed?

Participants discussed the importance of including all forms of diversity. For a healthy climate, we do not all need to agree, but we do need a climate where we can all communicate.

The next steps are to review the feedback from the forum and keep the lines of communication open. Comments and questions can be directed to Dean Kate VandenBosch and Senior Assistant Dean Tom Browne.