

# **Georgia State University Faculty Identity Group & Diverse Faculty Alliance Handbook**

*“Promoting inclusion, social justice, mentorship and professional development”*



**Office of the Provost  
Georgia State University  
Atlanta, GA 30302**

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# Welcome & Guidelines

The Office of the Provost appreciates your interest in creating a Faculty Identity Group and joining the Diverse Faculty Alliance (DFA). This initiative was derived from the recommendations of the Provost's Commission on the Next Generation of Faculty and developed by the Implementation Steering Committee in Spring 2020. If there are groups who would like to organize themselves outside of the listed commonalties they may do so, providing they are inclusive of prospective members who would like to join. These groups can select anyone to join their organization, even those who are outside of the group identity. Further, any Faculty Identity Group can select members who are not faculty, such as staff, if they decide to as an organization.

The GSU Faculty Identity Groups will be an essential part of the well-being and acculturation into the academic community. The goal of the groups is to invite faculty to establish networks, mutually beneficial relationships and build communities to enhance not only academic ties, but social and cultural associations. We hope that the DFA along with its Faculty Identity Groups will raise the consciousness of the GSU community by building coalitions of learning, scholarship, and inclusive excellence.

## What is a Faculty Identity Group?

Faculty Identity Groups are voluntary associations of faculty members who have common interests. The Georgia State University (GSU) Faculty Identity Groups were formed on the recommendations of GSU faculty and the need for building a sense of community among underrepresented faculty on campus. These initiatives are University-wide and are intentionally developed to create supportive environments among faculty of diverse backgrounds. Academic, social and collegial networks are the purpose of these organizations, working with both current and new faculty from the downtown and Perimeter College campuses. We define a Faculty Identity Group as a group of faculty members who identify themselves with common ethnicities, gender expression, sexual orientation, racial backgrounds, military status, and/or some other common affiliation. Specifically, Faculty Identity Groups can be comprised of any underrepresented minorities or underrepresented groups (URM/URG) of faculty, such as African American, Latinx, Native American, Asian American, LGBTQ+, Women, Veterans, or Disability. Any URM/URG group is encouraged to apply to become an organization.

Faculty Identity Groups play a vital role in articulating, promoting, and supporting the needs and goals of their various communities and organizations within the university. The Identity Groups build community, share networks, support professional development and advancement of colleagues, and promote the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty. Their primary focus is to develop and improve the campus climate by increasing the presence of diverse faculty. The Identity Groups can assist the university with the recruitment, retention, and promotion of top diverse talent. In addition, they can help increase morale, provide insights into research on diversity, build bridges with our community and empower members. Faculty Identity Groups also serve to spotlight the achievements and accomplishments of the university's faculty.

## **What is the Diverse Faculty Alliance (DFA)?**

The Diverse Faculty Alliance (DFA) membership will be comprised of the leadership or designee from each Faculty Identity Group. This designee may be an officer or another member designated by the group. The DFA will advocate for building faculty community, professional development, and various activities for underrepresented minorities and groups of faculty within each respective Faculty Identity Group.

At the orientation in the fall, groups will be provided with more detailed information on next steps, which will include the dissemination of the Faculty Identity Groups & DFA Handbook of policies and procedures in which all Faculty Identity Groups will adhere to. This handbook will include guidelines on creating a name, mission, election of officers, etc., for your organization. This is something you will want to do in conjunction with your group, to represent the ideas of everyone (or most) of the members.

## **Initial Rules & Policies of the DFA**

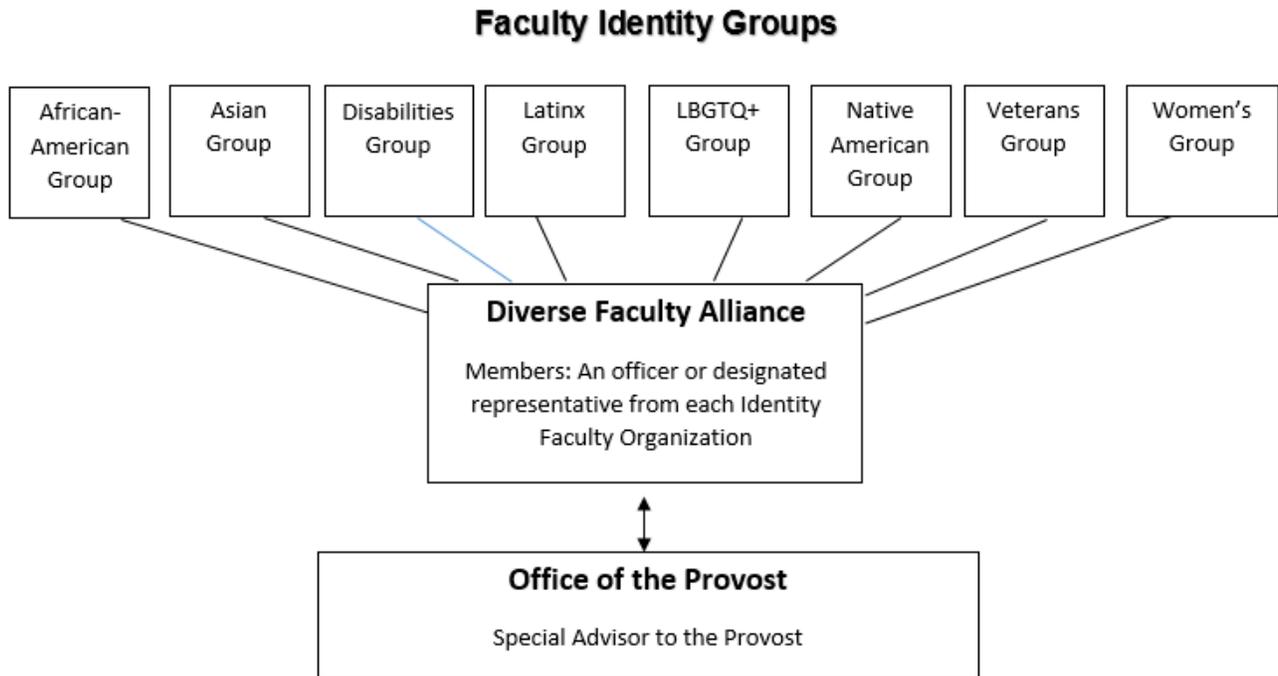
- At least 4-5 Faculty organizations are needed to sustain the DFA in a calendar year, if less than 4 organizations, they will all report individually.
- Meet (at least) once per semester (rotating among various GSU campuses or virtually).
- Any policy changes of individual organizations per the charter initially given to the DFA must be approved by the DFA.
- Each group's mission, goals, and budget should be created during the initial year of implementation.
- DFA membership will meet periodically with the Office of the Provost.

## **Office of the Provost & Special Advisor to the Provost**

The Special Advisor to the Provost will serve as the liaison between the DFA, Faculty Organizations and the university administration. The Special Advisor will also consult with the Implementation Steering Committee's Retention Subcommittee II members, the Associate Provost of Faculty Affairs, and representation from the University's Faculty Senate Cultural Diversity Committee.

# Framework for Faculty Identity Groups & Diverse Faculty Alliance

## Governing Structure:



# Establishing a Faculty Identity Group

To create a faculty identity group, the following will be expected prior to the DFA orientation:

- Meet (at least) once virtually or in person, to include all interested members from all campuses.
- Elect or select officers. Organizations with more than 20 members are encouraged to engage in an election process (i.e. nomination of officers, vote available to all members). Smaller groups can choose to have an election of officers or designate a board of directors to lead the group. (\* Staff members are allowed to participate in Faculty Identity Groups only if approved by the entire group. Staff members cannot be part of the leadership of the Faculty Identity Group.)
- Select a designee (or group of persons who can alternate) to attend the first Diversity Faculty Alliance meeting each fall, and report back to your group. The president (or officer/designee) is highly recommended to attend the first meeting each year, as it will be an orientation. (Date TBA)

Any underrepresented group that wants to establish their own Faculty Identity Group should follow the following guidelines.

## Rules & Policies of Faculty Identity Groups (\*Subject to change annually)

- At least 5-10 faculty members (tenure-track, lecturers, non-tenure track) per organization (full or part-time at GSU) are encouraged (Once faculty group is established, the group can allow non-faculty to join). Staff members are allowed to participate in Faculty Identity Groups only if approved by the entire group. Staff members cannot be part of the leadership of the Faculty Identity Group.
- List of names, title, rank and officers (\*see attached application) must be included on application
  - Faculty Identity Groups may opt out of having elected officials or could have co-chairs or presidents. Whatever the configuration decided by the leadership there must be one person who can serve as the point of contact and serve on the DFA (***this doesn't have to be the same person***)
  - If possible, there should be at least one Perimeter College faculty member as an officer or on the Board of Directors (\*for example, at-large member).
- Applications must be completed by the beginning of the fall semester (\*date TBA annually) and once approved for registration, the organization can meet and receive benefits as a recognized faculty organization
- Applications must be reviewed each year by the DFA (***exception for year 1 of organizations***).
- Any changes to the application form, including but not limited to changes in leadership, charge of group and goals or name of group must be reported to the Diverse Faculty Alliance (DFA)
- All organizations are encouraged to have membership fees or dues
- All organizations are eligible to receive a small budget from the Office of the Provost
- All organization should look to serve as a support mechanism for the members, providing professional development, social opportunities, mentorship and advocacy for the respective Faculty Identity Group
- Identity faculty organizations are subject to all application rules and regulations of Georgia State University. Failure to follow these rules may result in suspension or revocation of registered status of the organization

## Set the Mission and Goals

The mission and goals should be established in collaboration with all of the group members and be linked to specific goals. Together, the mission and goals should align with the organization's vision as well as communicate the group's core values and common interest.

- What are the core values of the group?
- How is the group different from other groups at the University?
- What steps need to be taken to achieve the group's mission?
- What are the short and long term goals of the group?
- What resources are needed for each goal?
- Who will take the lead and implementation of each goal?

## Design Structure

In this phase of the framework process, the governmental structure and meeting schedule should be decided on by the group.

- Decide specific roles for members
- Determine the day, time, length and frequency of meetings
- Create a virtual plan for those who may not be able to attend in person (i.e. Zoom, WebEx, Skype, etc.)
- Select a location that rotates around the university and its campuses, if it's not virtual.

## Name the Group

The name of the Faculty Identity Group should reflect the group's mission and values and should be decided upon collaboratively, by:

- Soliciting name recommendations from the group
- Having a meeting to discuss ideas or an alternative method for making suggestions
- Choosing a name that reflects the purpose or values of the group
- Ensuring that this name clearly communicates the mission of the group and is
- interesting enough to make someone want to learn more or join

(Examples: <https://provost.northeastern.edu/oidi/affinity/>; <https://worklife.msu.edu/relocation-community/campus-connections>; <https://diversity.fsu.edu/affinity-groups>)

## Communications & Media

Each group should look to set up a consistent platform to share information with their respective group, gain new members and create community. Please use the following to set up your faculty identity group.

- [GSU Websites](#) -developing website should be completed through the GSU sites page by the Faculty Identity group (website will be linked to GSU Diversity website). Once completed please share link with Office of the Provost, Communication Manager, Mr. Jeremy Craig ([jcraig@gsu.edu](mailto:jcraig@gsu.edu))
- [GSU Listserv](#) -developing email distribution lists for large groups
- [GSU Webex](#) -live online meeting platform
- [GSU iCollege](#) -online repository & asynchronous meeting platform
- [GSU Microsoft Teams](#) -online meetings, share files & organize projects
- [Zoom Meetings](#) -off campus platform for meetings

- [Facebook Group Page](#) -social media platform to bring awareness of group and share achievements

## **Maintaining Momentum**

An important aspect to having a successful group is member support. The ownership for maintaining the momentum resides with the entire group. To maximize effectiveness and to ensure continued momentum the group should follow the below tips:

- Establish credibility by adhering to mission, goals, and timelines
- Communicate the group’s efforts utilizing all available resources
- Build a network to increase enrollment
- Create visibility by conducting or participating in special events

## **Possible Goals for Sustaining a Faculty Identity Group**

- Recruit at least 5-10 new members per year
  - Publish a quarterly newsletter
  - Host one annual event
  - Design two group activities
  - Increase participant attendance at meetings and events by being inclusive of all people
- Submit an annual report to the Diverse Faculty Alliance.

## **How to Measure the Success of your Faculty Identity Group**

- Develop a mission and goals that align to the Faculty Identity Group’s strategy.
- Develop and maintain an annual plan of activities and events.
- Create measurable indicators for each area of focus within the activity plan.
- Track activities of members and progress towards achieving goals (i.e. recruitment, retention and promotion).
- Communicate the value of the activities to the organization’s administrators, leadership and members.

## **Financial Management**

Financial support provided to groups from the Office of the Provost will be in the form of State Appropriations. All faculty members should be familiar with the parameters around State Appropriations through the operation of their home academic departments. As broad examples, state funds can be used to pay for travel and registration fees for a conference, bringing in an outside speaker, or purchasing equipment or supplies that remain the property of the university in perpetuity. Funds may not be used for items such as food, alcohol, supplemental pay for an employee or “giveaway” items such as t-shirts, sweatshirts or coffee mugs. Unspent funds at the end of a fiscal year may not be carried forward by the group for use in a future fiscal year.

Committee leadership must coordinate in advance with the Office of the Provost prior to committing or using any funds provided by that office. As faculty identity groups develop their financial management plans, please reach out to the Special Advisor to the Provost for more details. Further, these arrangements will be discussed at the DFA Orientation.

## **Dissolving a Faculty Identity Group**

Faculty Identity Groups authorized by the Office of the Provost may be dissolved when:

- The group chooses to dissolve itself. Such dissolution should be reported to the Office of the Provost, with an explanation as to the reason behind the decision; Or,
- The group does not submit its annual report to the Diverse Faculty Alliance and the Office of the Provost.

## **DFA Leadership Procedure (2021)**

Each year DFA affinity/identity groups should allow their membership to anonymously self-nominate or nominate other individuals to be a part their leadership (please select an impartial member of group to collect nominations, if needed). If there are members who have been nominated to serve in the leadership of a particular affinity/identity group, the group must run a fair and impartial election. Leadership from both the Atlanta and Perimeter College campuses should be strongly encouraged. The annual nomination process should take place during March, with elections in April. Term limits are required for all leadership roles, and they must follow one of the two timeframes: one year, with a second year in an advisement role, or two years maximum of consecutive service in a leadership role. All DFA affinity/identity groups can make policies and procedures that work within these guidelines.

**\*This handbook is subject to change without notice and will be reviewed annually.**

## REFERENCES

Florida State University Diversity & Inclusion Office. (n.d.). Florida State University Affinity Group Framework. Retrieved July 1, 2020, from <https://diversity.fsu.edu/affinity-groups> .

Michigan State University Worklife Office. (n.d.). Michigan State University Campus Connections & Coalition of Racial and Ethnic Minorities (CoREM). Retrieved July 1, 2020, from <https://worklife.msu.edu/relocation-community/campus-connections> .

Northwestern University Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion. (n.d.). Northwestern University Affinity Groups. Retrieved July 1, 2020, from <https://provost.northeastern.edu/oidi/affinity/> .

## **APPENDIX**



### New Faculty Identity Group Application

(\*Due fall semester. Recommended to send ASAP.)

#### Organization Information

Select the underrepresented group. If not listed, choose "Other" and list the identity group.

- African-American/Black     American Indian/Alaskan Native     Veterans
  
- Hispanic/Latino                       Native/Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders                       Disability
  
- Asian                                       LGBTQ+                                       \*OTHER \_\_\_\_\_  
(\*List name of URM group)

#### Organization Officers (*or list of representatives*)

List the names of the officers for the group, if determined.

##### President

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

##### Vice-President

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

##### Treasurer

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

##### DFA Representative (\*this can be an officer or another member)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

##### Point of Contact (\*this can be an officer or another member)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Members (*can be sent in excel spreadsheet, must be provided before DFA orientation*)

**List the names of the additional members of the group or attach sheet with all of this information**

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_
3. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_
4. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_
5. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_
6. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_
7. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_
8. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_
9. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
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10. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
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15. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
College/Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_