

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

**PROVIDE INFORMATION FOR ITEMS 1-15.**

1. Project Title

Merritt Writing Program Diversity Initiatives Committee

2. Project Manager (Person submitting the proposal)

Catherine Koehler

3. Project Manager Email Address

[ckoehler@ucmerced.edu](mailto:ckoehler@ucmerced.edu)

4. What are you proposing to do and how will you do it?

This proposal supports the formation of a Diversity Initiatives Committee within the Merritt Writing Program. The committee's goals include promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion as aspects of teaching and in relation to workplace climate. First, the committee will provide professional development for MWP faculty with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the composition classroom. Through faculty Common Reads, a Mini-Conference with an invited keynote speaker (ideally, one or both of the Common Read authors), and a Capstone Teaching Symposium, the committee will support faculty efforts to revise teaching practices and materials to be more responsive to diverse student needs and experiences and more equitable and inclusive in approach and design.

Two faculty Common Reads have been selected: Juan Guerra's *Language, Culture, Identity, and Citizenship in College Classrooms and Communities* and Iris Ruiz's *Reclaiming Composition for Chicano/as and Other Ethnic Minorities*. These selections were based on the following criteria: have pedagogical implications; create opportunities for structured professional development; are disciplinary in focus, with relevance for Writing Studies; unite theory with praxis; explore intersections and co-factors of diversity; and are relevant to the University's role as an Hispanic-Serving Institution with a diverse student body. The Mini-Conference will include roundtables and workshops that explore how the Common Read texts can inform pedagogy and curriculum, and incorporates the Common Read authors in conference activities and as possible keynote speakers. The Capstone Teaching Symposium will provide faculty with a venue to share how they've integrated the Common Read texts and related conference activities into their teaching to make their classrooms more diverse, equitable, and inclusive spaces.

A related goal is to better understand workplace climate issues of concern to MWP faculty, particularly as these concerns can provide a window into pedagogical and curricular priorities, as well. To do so, the committee will develop a survey tool to assess local climate concerns, particularly those around visible and invisible diversity and the

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

relevant correlations with perceptions of workplace inclusion and exclusion, equity, social support, and opportunity. Data from the survey will be aggregated and shared with the program in order to be used by the committee to identify priority issues and areas. Coordinating with program administration, the committee will work to develop actionable solutions to identified climate issues documented by the survey.

5. How will the program contribute to and enhance UC Merced’s campus climate as a more equitable and inclusive place to study, research and work?

(Successful proposals specifically describes and includes supporting data on how the program will contribute to and enhance UC Merced’s campus climate as a more equitable and inclusive place to study, research and work and specifically includes one or more findings from documented climate surveys, findings or statistics. For more documentation on climate information, please visit: <http://diversity.ucmerced.edu/data-reports/2016-17.>)

Of 67 faculty in the MWP, 66 are Unit 18 Lecturers. [This represents roughly 54% of all Unit 18 Lecturers at UC Merced.](#) [While women are underrepresented in all Senate Faculty categories, women are overrepresented in non-senate, Unit 18 positions.](#) This overrepresentation is even more pronounced in the MWP, where over 70% of Unit 18 Lecturers are women. This is in line with national trends. By some estimates, women comprise between 51-61% of the contingent academic labor force (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009; Coalition on the Academic Workforce, 2012). That conditions on our campus and in the MWP reflect the parallel processes of feminization and casualization of teaching within the academy at large should, perhaps, be unsurprising. The association between gender and contingency is longstanding and well-documented. Eileen Schell describes this association for the field of composition, which, she explains, “has the Janus-faced reputation of being ‘feminized,’ simultaneously welcoming the work of women, while marginalizing them as part-time faculty, lecturers, and adjuncts.”

Because of our standing as Non-Senate Faculty, we have limited access to professional development support on campus, which significantly impacts our ability to cultivate teaching excellence. Despite the fact that the primary responsibility of Unit 18 Lecturers is teaching students and that, as MWP faculty, we teach roughly half of the UC Merced student body in a given academic year, including all first-year students, we are excluded from even those resources specific to teaching. For example, the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) recently announced that only Senate Faculty will be able to apply for the next cycle of Faculty Fellowships, fellowships specifically designed to improve pedagogy, revise curriculum, and develop new courses. Furthermore, the College One budget allocation for professional development for the MWP only provides \$5,000 an academic year for 66 lecturers—or roughly \$75 each—to cover everything from conference travel to professional association membership fees. A DEI grant will be a substantial contribution toward creating equal access to professional development for Unit 18 Lecturers on our campus.

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

This lack of professional development support for Unit 18 Lecturers is tied to lack of institutional support for our research, in general. The current MOU restricts Unit 18 Lecturers as primary investigators in university-sponsored research activities. Our ability to better understand and respond to our students' particular needs and more effectively design, assess, and revise our curriculum is dependent on our ability to engage in research on teaching. This ability is compromised by our exclusion from the research identity of our campus, an exclusion that is explicitly tied to our faculty type and teaching role. The proposed professional development activities are designed to begin to close the loop between research and teaching by integrating engagement with relevant scholarship, incorporation of this scholarship into teaching practices and materials, and related assessment of student learning.

That the proposed professional development activities are programmatic in scale is also significant for the equity and inclusion of Unit 18 Lecturers. Non-Senate Faculty have been consistently overlooked in campus space planning and allocation. MWP offices are currently split between shared offices in the Academic Office Annex, open-air cubicles in the Classroom and Office Building (some with four lecturers assigned to a space designed for three), and a dozen offices in off-site temporary buildings at the Merced College campus. This not only presents basic challenges to performing our work—for example, holding office hours with students—but provides us with little opportunity for regular, meaningful communication with colleagues about teaching. One way to address the atomization created by campus space inequities is to provide professional development opportunities like faculty Common Reads and associated events, creating shared experience and collaborative venues for lecturers to come together as part of a scholarly community.

Perhaps most important to highlight is that an investment in the professional development of Unit 18 Lecturers is an investment in UC Merced students. Promoting the equity and inclusion of Non-Senate Faculty through professional development specific to our teaching role on campus not only improves workplace climate for lecturers but improves the quality of instruction, the learning environment, and, ultimately, the success of students (see Question 6). Furthermore, in its focus on diversity in relation to pedagogy and curriculum, the proposed professional development activities are responsive to our particular institutional profile and student population, and student demands for more campus engagement with diversity issues (see Question 7).

The proposed climate survey is specific to our faculty type as Unit 18 Lecturers and our institutional location as Writing faculty, with implications for the equity and inclusion issues described above. Documenting how these issues impact and are experienced within the MWP, and identifying additional workplace climate concerns through the survey, will provide supporting data with which to advocate for resources, both

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

programmatically and institutionally. Survey data will also guide the work of the committee within and beyond the pilot year in redressing workplace climate concerns documented in the survey, in conversation with the MWP Advisory Board and Program Director. The survey will also provide foundational data with which to measure workplace climate concerns over time, and the willingness and effectiveness of the program and institution to meaningfully address these concerns.

6. Describe how this project is a new, high impact, collaborative, experimental and/or sustainable approach to enhancing and/or addressing an area of campus climate.

(Proposal specifically describes a new, high impact, collaborative, experimental and/or sustainable approach to enhancing and/or addressing an area of campus climate.)

As a foundational grant, DEI funds will establish the Diversity Initiatives Committee as a permanent body within the MWP's existing committee structure and define committee objectives to shape course and program planning beyond the pilot year. As a program-level committee, this project is fundamentally collaborative, with an emphasis on shared leadership, knowledge, and experience to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the classroom through pedagogical and curricular development and to address climate concerns for faculty within the MWP.

The committee will be of significant import, both due to the number of students impacted and the percentage of Non-Senate Faculty the proposed initiatives will reach (see Question 7). Furthermore, the nature of those initiatives, which focus on fundamental changes to how and what we teach and the environment in which we perform this work, will create continuing impact on UC Merced students' perception and experience of inclusion and equity on campus, which has the potential to affect their long-term academic and career placement. According to K. F. Gabriel in *Teaching Unprepared Students: Strategies for Promoting Retention In Higher Education*, students are more successful in a classroom environment that "embraces diversity and promotes inclusion." Moreover, faculty who engage their students both inside and outside of class develop the necessary supportive role many students need in order to acclimate to academic culture and for faculty to acclimate and respond to students' individual and group identity-based needs and concerns and to create culturally responsive pedagogy.

This project will be innovative in that it will define and complete a clear process of identifying, examining, and integrating climate concerns within the MWP and then offering students, faculty, and staff an opportunity to participate in various project goals. The survey, the Common Reads, the Mini-Conference, and the Capstone Teaching Symposium will represent milestones marking a successful first year of the Diversity Initiatives Committee within the Merritt Writing Program. The Mini-Conference in particular will be innovative in that both undergraduate and graduate students will be

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

invited to attend roundtable discussions and workshops. Additionally, this project will be innovative in that it represents a self-starting effort on the part of the MWP to meet the goals and outcomes of both the University of California's Office of the President and its Diversity and Engagement program, as well as the meeting of UC Merced's [Campus Climate Action Plan](#).

Beyond the pilot year, funding will allow for the consideration of experimental approaches to further student participation in efforts to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion, including the possibility of student panels at future conferences and symposiums; a student advisory board; and student-faculty mixed focus groups for future surveys, pedagogical approaches, and curriculum changes.

7. Describe the expected difference(s) the project will make on the issues addressed, the audience(s) it will serve, and the number of people it will affect.

(Proposals: (1) specifically describes the expected difference(s) the project will make on the issues addressed, the audience(s) it will serve, and the number of people it will affect and (2) specifically describes and includes supporting impact data from documented climate surveys, findings or statistics.)

The primary audience served by this project is UC Merced undergraduate students. All first-year UC Merced students enroll in WRI 1 or WRI 10, which translates to approximately 2,300 students during AY 2017-18 alone. Further, 70%, or roughly 1,600, of these students will complete both courses. As the new General Education plan is implemented, an additional 500-600 first-year students will co-enroll in SPARKS courses offered by Writing faculty. In addition to first-year students, 600-750 unique students enroll in upper division Writing coursework in a given academic year. Given the scale of MWP course offerings and the diversity of our student body, roughly [82% of whom identify as ethnoracial minorities](#) and [72% as first-generation college students](#), ensuring that our pedagogy and curriculum engage diversity, equity, and inclusion in meaningful ways is particularly important. As Gabriel notes in her work, studies indicate that faculty who maintain high standards while working closely with students to promote inclusion are more likely to see students achieve.

The relationship between inclusion and student success is significant in light of UC Merced's retention and graduation rates, especially for Hispanic students. While UC Merced retains and graduates Hispanic students at a rate higher than both the national average and that of other UCs, which is commendable, [first-year retention and six-year graduate rates for Hispanic students on our campus still lag behind overall campus cohort averages and cohort averages for every other ethnoracial group](#) (one notable exception is the Fall 2016 first-year retention rate for White students, though this is a 10+ point departure from all other available cohort data for White students and thus an aberration). The faculty Common Reads selected to guide proposed professional development activities are specific to UC Merced's status as an Hispanic-Serving

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

Institution, and pedagogical and curricular changes that result from these activities will be keyed to the inclusion and success of UC Merced's Hispanic students.

This emphasis on faculty professional development responds to research that suggests a relationship between professional development and student retention. According to Patricia L. Farrell, State Universities of Michigan's director of University Outreach and Policy Research, "Research on first-year programs and outside-the-classroom experiences points to the prominence of faculty for student retention. Researchers linked retention to involvement in the classroom—the only place where many students meet other students and the faculty." Farrell also claims that, as a result, "researchers recommended faculty development programs focused on teaching and learning." Given our degree of contact with first-year students, first-year retention can be supported through ongoing professional development of Unit-18 Lecturers.

Finally, students themselves recognize this need. The Intercultural Hub recently demanded that the university "allocate more resources for social justice programming that highlights diversity." We would argue that social justice programming can include pedagogy and curriculum, and that the deliverables that will result from this project will be a sustainable response to this demand. The Intercultural Hub also expressed dissatisfaction with the number of staff and faculty of color. While this project cannot resolve this problem directly, the proposed activities acknowledge that students want more intentional and ongoing engagement with historically underrepresented populations. This project responds to these issues through professional development by encouraging faculty to incorporate diversity issues in their pedagogy and course design in order to better serve UC Merced's student population, particularly its Hispanic students.

According to Hinds, Hindle, Savage, Meyer, Penetito, and Sleeter in *The Impact of Teacher Professional Development to Reposition Pedagogy for Indigenous Students in Mainstream Schools*, "...it appears that professional development for culturally responsive pedagogy, designed with the aim of repositioning teachers as learners from their minoritized students, and including classroom coaching, can shift the classroom behavior of a large proportion of teachers." Additionally, "...this shift is noticed by minoritized students who tend to respond positively." A lack of professional development opportunities for Unit 18 lecturers who interact with a majority of minoritized students at UC Merced disrupts this reciprocal benefit between professionally engaged and developing faculty and UC Merced's unusually diverse student body.

Finally, in involving students as participants in project activities and in dialogue with faculty, we expect students to have a direct and meaningful influence on project outcomes. Our classrooms stand to be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive in how and what they teach as a result of this project (see Questions 12, 13, and 14).

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

8. How will the project bring together two or more campus entities, advance mutual goals and/or share knowledge? Specifically identify how the project will be integrated into the activities of teaching, research or public service.

(Proposal specifically describes how the project will bring together two or more campus entities, advance mutual goals and/or share knowledge; and specifically identifies how the project will be integrated into the activities of teaching, research or public service.)

The idea for this committee evolved from an informal group of MWP faculty who met in Spring 2017 and again in Fall 2017 to discuss issues related to diversity in teaching. The group identified priority areas for further consideration, including engaging diversity programmatically (for example, resourcing for program initiatives and professional development related to diversity) and in our curriculum (for example, through course offerings, materials, and approach). Additionally, in Fall 2017, the broader MWP faculty identified diversity, equity, and inclusion as fundamental to the development of program mission, vision, and values statements. The formation of the Diversity Initiatives Committee and the proposed pilot activities are a direct effort to capitalize on this momentum and advance these shared priorities.

Because Non-Senate Faculty have institutional barriers to accessing professional development opportunities on campus, this project is necessary to provide some compensatory research support. Professional development opportunities are critical not just for the fostering of a more diverse and supported student body, but also for the retention of Non-Senate Faculty. They are, in fact, the seed for Non-Senate Faculty to become involved in both personal and collaborative research.

This project will not just support the formation of a Diversity Initiatives Committee within the Merritt Writing Program, but it will also create useful and usable teaching, research, and public service artifacts. These artifacts and events will include MWP climate survey results, a library guide, diverse syllabi, a diversity reader, a Mini-Conference with guest speakers, and a culminating Capstone Teaching Symposium. Many of these artifacts and events will be open and available to both MWP and non-MWP faculty, as well as to students, providing the MWP with an opportunity to share knowledge with faculty, staff, and students both inside and outside the program. Additionally, the committee will work with the UC Merced library staff to create both the diversity reader and the library guide, which will be available online for other UCM faculty to use. Meanwhile, the Mini-Conference will bring together students, staff, and faculty and the Capstone Teaching Symposium will offer a collective sharing of pedagogy and curricula.

Importantly, the MWP Diversity Initiatives committee's work will assist in meeting the four primary goals of the UCM Climate Action Plan of 2014-17. These include: Goal #1:

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

Improve Inclusiveness Across All Segments; Goal #2: Improve Engagement of Faculty, Students and Staff; Goal #3: Improve Overall Comfort Levels of Under-represented Minority Faculty; and Goal #4: Improve Campus Climate for Those with Physical Mobility or Disability Condition. This committee will demonstrate a program-level commitment to meet these and other campus and UC system-wide goals in the first project year.

Future efforts to meet program, campus, and UC system diversity, equity, and inclusion goals will likely include a greater MWP participation in the academic community. Such efforts will ideally include increased faculty attendance and presentations at conferences; increased support for faculty doing relevant pedagogical research; publication of papers; development of new and more diverse syllabi, library guides dedicated to resources on diversity, additional conferences, panels, symposiums, speakers, etc. Importantly, students, faculty, and staff will sustain ongoing discussions about diversity, equity, and inclusion concerns and approaches beyond the pilot year conference and symposium. Ultimately, all efforts will focus on developing inclusive pedagogy, which values course design, faculty discernment, and students' sense of belonging and being heard, as described by Kevin Gannon writing for the *Chronicle of Higher Education* in "The Case for Inclusive Teaching."

9. Describe the leadership, capacity and qualifications of the individual or group to implement the project.

(Proposal specifically describes the leadership, capacity and qualifications of the individual or group to implement the project and specifically describes how each individual will implement the components of the project. Project Managers are in good standing with the University.)

During the pilot year (AY 18-19), the committee will be co-chaired by Catherine Koehler and Christopher Ramirez, both faculty in the Merritt Writing Program with demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion issues at UC Merced. Additionally, both are members of the Merritt Writing Program's Advisory Board with experience working together on program development.

Dr. Koehler will be lead on professional development planning. She is a member of the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women, and was an active participant in the DEI grant-supported working group "Community and Inclusion for Non-Senate Faculty." In Spring 2017 and Fall 2017, she organized faculty forums on diversity for the MWP, which supported exploratory discussions to define shared interests and priorities around diversity, teaching, and program planning (see Question 8). Additional program service promotes teaching excellence, including the MWP's Academic Review Committee, and addresses broader issues of contingency in the academy, including the American Anthropological Association's Committee on Labor Relations. Her research and teaching focus on intersections of race, gender, and literacy, including ethnographic research on adult literacy learning in prison and community work teaching for college-

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

in-prison programs, as well as MWP course offerings that focus on race and gender in disciplinary communication.

Mr. Ramirez will be lead on workplace climate assessment. He has co-chaired the Chancellor’s Advisory Council on Campus Climate, Culture, and Inclusion (CCCI) for the last two years and was appointed to the council in January 2012. His extensive knowledge of ongoing campus climate conditions, climate survey research and experience, and commitment to diversity make him adept at leading workplace climate assessment. Last year he assisted in the development of the first climate survey specifically designed for Non-Senate Faculty Members on campus. He played a significant role in both the development of UC Merced’s Principals of Community and CCCI’s Charter. As a founding board member of the Staff and Faculty of Color Association (SFCA), his primary focus at the moment involves increasing faculty outreach and membership. Ramirez has written several Op-Ed columns for the *Merced County Times* and *The Merced Sun-Star* that address local climate issues. His dedicated service to fostering a more equitable community also extends into his role as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) where he advocates for the interests of abused and neglected foster youth in Merced County. Finally, his research and curriculum design aims to foster an inclusive learning experience for students at UC Merced.

Committee membership will represent a broad coalition of Merritt Writing Program faculty and administration, with teaching emphases in first-year composition, professional writing, creative writing, and writing in the disciplines areas, which affirms the project’s potential impact. The following faculty have committed to committee membership and carrying out grant-supported activities: Mariana Abuan, Rebeca Antoine, Susan Bohrer, Elizabeth Cunningham, Nahrin Downey, Christa Fraser, Andrea Mele, Susan Miller, Anna Moncovich, and Helen Sandoval. This group has extensive experience both organizing conferences and symposiums and developing and administering survey tools and interpreting survey data. All share a commitment to addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion in our classrooms and in our program, and we expect they will become committee leads beyond the pilot year.

10. Describe how likely the project is to be continued and incorporated or replicated by other organizations on campus and demonstrate why.

(Demonstration of likelihood is supported with facts.)

Because UC Merced is the newest university in the UC system, it is still developing campus organizations and initiatives that reflect the unique needs of student, faculty, and staff in our diverse region in California. It seems reasonable to conclude that many early efforts within campus entities to organize, codify, and support diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts will be supported, especially when considering that the University of California has demonstrated commitment to these efforts and that older UC

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

campuses already display a breadth and depth of diversity, equity, and inclusion organizations intended to support and benefit students, staff, and faculty. Since 2007, the University of California has relied on its [Diversity Statement](#) to encourage and support diversity initiatives within its ten campuses. According to the University of California's [Guidelines for Addressing Race and Gender Equity in Academic Programs in Compliance with Proposition 209](#), "The commitment from University leadership is an important starting point for efforts to increase diversity... Chancellors, Provosts, Deans and other university leaders also may express their support for diversity and equal opportunity through their messages to the university community and through their commitment of resources. A bold message from the top can attract a diverse student body, engage a diverse faculty, promote a diverse staff, and create a welcoming campus climate."

With the upcoming completion of the UC Merced 2020 plan and the continued projected growth of the campus, there is an increased likelihood of future diversity initiatives committees to form on campus in order to serve various and emergent student, faculty, and staff entities. According to the University of California's publication, *Diversity: The Facts*, campuses within the UC system "have a wide variety of longstanding diversity initiatives designed to enhance the campus environment and educate our community. Each campus has developed or is in the process of developing short- and long-term strategic plans to specifically address campus diversity." Due to UC Merced's status as the newest campus, early diversity efforts in the forms of program- and department-level committees are likely to be expected, supported, continued, and possibly replicated across campus entities.

11. Provide the full timeline - from start to completion - for the project.

The timeline for meeting project goals for the Diversity Initiatives Committee within the Merritt Writing Program can be broken down into two major phases, which include the pilot year and the continuation of the committee and its work beyond the pilot year. First year expected outcomes are focused primarily on improving pedagogies and curricula in composition courses and on assessing and addressing climate issues within the Merritt Writing Program. These climate issues will be discovered via a survey taken by MWP faculty at the beginning of the 2018-2019 academic year.

The progression of the project's pilot year timeline is as follows:

Spring 2018: Develop and implement MWP climate survey tool; share results with MWP Advisory Board and MWP Director  
Summer 2018: Order faculty Common Read

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

August 2018: Convene Diversity Initiatives Committee, with monthly meetings hereafter; make recommendations and develop action items based on MWP climate survey to be carried out during AY 18-19  
Sep-Nov 2018: Mini-Conference planning  
Jan 2019: Mini-Conference, with keynote speaker Juan Guerra  
Jan-Mar 2019: Capstone Teaching Symposium planning  
April 2019: Capstone Teaching Symposium, with keynote speaker Iris Ruiz

12. What are your project goals and expected outcomes?

Pilot year goals and relevant deliverables and milestones are primarily related to MWP program faculty climate concerns, composition pedagogy, composition curriculum, and faculty research and teaching opportunities.

Specifically pilot year project deliverables will include:

Program Faculty Climate Concerns

- a. Conducting a faculty climate survey within the MWP to identify issues of concern.
- b. Discussions with the MWP about the results of the survey.

Composition Pedagogy

- a. The purchase and distribution of the two faculty Common Read texts which will be used to support the professional develop series for faculty. These two texts will be available to MWP faculty at the beginning of the Fall 2018 semester.
- b. The creation of a "Diversity Reader" which will be a compilation of specific diversity topics and will be used in conjunction with the Common Read texts to support the professional development series for faculty. The Diversity Reader will also be the first stage of development of a library guide.
- c. The development of a library guide dedicated to readings and resources about diversity that will be publicly available to faculty, staff, and students.

Composition Curriculum

- a. The creation and collection of diverse syllabi and lesson plans for instructors to use and/or take inspiration from in order to understand how diversity can be approached in their own unique classrooms. The workshops will initiate the process of creating new and more responsive instructional materials. Additional curricular materials will be developed in the pilot year and thereafter, with the possibility of drafting a series of collections of the resultant materials.

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

Faculty Research and Teaching Opportunities

- a. The invitation of guest speakers (the authors of the Common Read texts and others) to the Mini-Conference and Capstone Teaching Symposium.
- b. The creation and development of a Mini-Conference that will occur on the UC Merced Campus in January 2019, giving faculty time to read and engage with the Common Reads before the event.
- c. The creation and development of a Capstone Teaching Symposium in April 2019 that will serve as a culmination of the pilot year efforts.

By engaging faculty in serious study of pedagogies that are both rigorous and that generate meaningful responses to our unique student population, our student learning outcomes will improve. According to Kathleen F. Gabriel and Sandra M. Flake in *Teaching Unprepared Students, Strategies for Promoting Retention in Higher Education*, creating a positive classroom environment that embraces diversity and inclusion is a critical factor in determining whether students participate and enhances the likelihood of their persistence until graduation. A goal of this committee is that students will not only be heard and represented in the classroom, but their voices will be part of the larger academic community that welcomes their contributions and makes changes reflective of their input. The overall consequences will be a shift from a climate that pays attention to inclusion, to one that honors diversity by actively and conscientiously enacting equity, justice, and inclusion collaboratively. Course materials that result from these activities will therefor serve to benefit both faculty and students.

Beyond the committee's first year, some future deliverables will likely include faculty attendance and presentations at conferences; mini-grants for faculty doing relevant research on teaching; publication of papers, collection of diverse syllabi, and library guides dedicated to resources on diversity; additional conferences, panels, symposium, speakers, etc. Importantly, students, faculty, and staff will sustain ongoing discussions about diversity, equity, and inclusion concerns and approaches beyond the pilot year conference and symposium. These discussions will result in ongoing revisions of lesson plans, syllabi, and curricula, which will support further professional development for MWP faculty as well as faculty from other UCM departments.

13. What is your definition of success? How will you measure it?

The success of the Merritt Writing Program Diversity Initiatives committee will be defined via several milestones:

- 1) The successful completion of the pilot year project plans and goals.
- 2) The delivery of expected pilot year outcomes, which include pedagogical and curricular artifacts.

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

- 3) Actionable items resulting from the MWP climate survey and roundtable discussions at the Mini-Conference.
- 4) Demonstrably improved teaching pedagogies.
- 5) Demonstrably improved program and classroom climates.
- 6) Faculty attendance at and participation in the committee.
- 7) Ongoing dialogue about diversity, equity, and inclusion between MWP students, staff, and faculty.
- 8) Continuation of the MWP Diversity Initiatives committee beyond the pilot year.

Success will not just be recognizable by way of meeting the above milestones, however: success will also be rooted in increased student satisfaction and retention and in comparable faculty satisfaction and retention.

As noted in *Advancing Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education*, instructors' use of inclusive instructional materials and the creation of an environment that fosters student growth together provide for a better classroom environment. Studies indicate that when students see themselves reflected in texts and in the curriculum, they are more likely to succeed. In order to measure classroom success, we will track changes in first- and second-year retention to document the efficacy of further engaging our students through greater cultural competency, equity, and inclusion. We will also archive instructors' contributions to the development of course materials that demonstrate the influence of research and professional development as a result of pursuing the goals of diversity and plans for an improved climate.

Similarly, faculty satisfaction and retention will be tracked as a means to predict and assess MWP climate concerns. Among a list of other recommendations, in *Teaching without Tenure: Policies and Practices for a New Era*, authors Roger G. Baldwin and Jay L. Chronister recommend that "institutions wishing to provide a supportive work environment for full-time non-tenure-track faculty" offer support for professional development and provide "meaningful involvement in governance and curricular development" for full-time, non-tenure-track faculty.

Importantly, Baldwin and Chronister also claim that the "quality of students' educational experience and the overall health of our higher education system depend on a vigorous academic profession— including faculty in non-tenure-track positions. The complex educational and personnel issues raised by the growing cadre of full-time term-appointment faculty must be addressed in order to respond adequately to society's

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

growing demand for high-quality higher education." In other words, faculty success is closely correlated with student success and, by extension, campus success overall. At a critical time in the growth of UC Merced, the success of the MWP Diversity Initiatives Committee merits support, especially when considering that 54% of UC Merced's Unit 18 lecturers work as part of the MWP.

In the absence of increased institutional funding and support for professional development within the MWP, the committee will continue to find ways to support program faculty professional development as it relates to DEI concerns in the classroom and among colleagues.

14. What tools will you use to collect the data needed to measure the progress and success of each expected outcome? When will you use them?

Tools used to measure the project's success will vary according to expected outcomes of the committee's pilot year plan and subsequent efforts in future years.

Pilot year program assessment tools will be closely tied to the project timeline and will include:

- 1) The development of recommendations and action items based on a survey, which will be used to collect preliminary climate data within the Merritt Writing Program. Subsequent surveys will be used to collect DEI data beyond the first year of the committee.
- 2) MWP faculty attendance at Diversity Initiatives committee meetings and events throughout Academic Year 2018-19, which will be logged in meeting notes and aggregated annually.
- 3) Faculty engagement with the two Common Reads and Diversity Reader, which will be loosely measured by frequency of relevant faculty discussions and subsequent utilization of pedagogical approaches.
- 4) Mini-Conference attendance and participation figures, which will be collected to measure student, staff, and faculty engagement with the open Mini-Conference.
- 5) Capstone Teaching Symposium attendance and participation, which will be held at the end of academic year 2018-2019.

Post-pilot-year surveys will be conducted to assess classroom and program climate concerns and measure successful integration of teaching practices, which will

**Office of Campus Climate  
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Grant Program  
Grant Proposal Application Form  
2018 – 2019**

demonstrate the cumulative success of pilot-year initiatives and offer a starting point for efforts in subsequent years.

**15. Project sponsoring unit**

(All projects must be sponsored by a UC Merced student organization, or campus department/ by-law unit, School or Graduate Group. The sponsoring unit is responsible for administering and reporting on funds. Project managers must be current UC Merced campus members. Project Managers are in good standing with the University. Budget Managers must be current UC Merced staff members.)

**a. UCM Sponsor**

(Sponsoring Group(s)/Unit(s)/Department(s)/Schools(s)/Graduate Groups)

Merritt Writing Program

**b. Budget Manager**

Sandra Mora

**c. Budget Manager Email Address**

[smora@ucmerced.edu](mailto:smora@ucmerced.edu)