

ECE Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Northeastern University

Effective dates of plan: A 3 year period, starting from the date that the plan is adopted by the department.

Revision of plan will begin: A revision plan will start in year 3 of the current plan.

Contact: The members of the ECE Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee

Data:

We have carried out a survey of our undergraduate and graduate students in terms of the current state of DEI issues and have shared this information with our faculty and with the ECE DEI council. A summary of this data has been presented to the faculty and the ECE DEI Council. The presentation is also available on the ECE DEI webpage. This data is being used to identify the goals for this plan.

Goals:

The goals of our ECE DEI strategic plan include:

- Investigate the factors that have limited the number of women and underrepresented groups in the department.
- Explore best practices and methods to maintain a welcoming environment for all in ECE, including methods of improvement that provide more structured support for these activities.
- Foster a department culture that embraces diversity and inclusion through recruiting activities, DEI-related events, assistance for retention of women and underrepresented groups, and educational resources.
- Advocate that the department/college/university allocate staff member time and develop funding sources in the ECE department to support DEI-related activities.

Activities:

The DEI related activities include both short-term (either ongoing or annual) and long-term (updated on a 3-year basis) categories.

Ongoing/Short-term Activities:

- Create and maintain an ECE DEI webpage.
- Sponsor a DEI-related talk or activity in the department each semester.
- Offer at least one DEI-related training activity annually for faculty and staff.
- Require attendance at a STRIDE workshop for all faculty search committee members.
- Sponsor a DEI-related student facing activity each semester.

- Pursue funds across the university to support recruitment and retention of graduate students from underrepresented groups.
- Increase awareness of programs available and provide resources to support raising families in ECE.
- Create an annual recognition of faculty/staff that have contributed to DEI efforts.
- Sponsor a fellowship/scholarship submission preparation program annually that is specific to opportunities for students from underrepresented groups.
- Continuously review faculty mentoring policies in ECE and monitor faculty retention patterns.
- Revise annual goals and objectives related to hiring activities and assess the prior year's achievement of goals.
- Provide information on DEI activities and priorities on the ECE DEI webpage.

The ECE Department will establish a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council to listen to the student body's issues regarding DEI, advise the ECE DEI committee, and collaborate with the ECE community to formulate and execute solutions. The council will be composed of ECE students, with liaisons from the ECE DEI Committee and ECE student organizations, with the goal of fostering cooperation across the broader community on DEI and outreach activities.

Long-term Activities:

- Survey the ECE community bi-annually on the environment in the department.
- Assess the success of plans regarding hiring and retention goals, including faculty, staff and student numbers.
- Add a section to report DEI activities as part of the annual activities report of faculty and staff.
- Add DEI-related material to ECE course content and learning objectives.
- Update this plan every three years.
- The ECE DEI Committee will report out to the COE DEI Committee regularly on our activities.

Annual/Short-term and Long-term Metrics:

- Over a 3-year period, increase the diversity in terms of representation of female faculty by 5% (currently 24 out of 98 tenured/tenure-track/teaching/coop faculty) and increase the diversity of the faculty in terms of underrepresented groups by 5% (currently 9 out of 98 tenured/tenure-track/teaching/coop faculty).
- Assess the participation and impact of ongoing sponsored programs each semester.
- Over a 3-year period, update the course learning objectives for at least three courses in each ECE BS and MS degree program offered by our department, adding new DEI-related learning outcomes.

Evaluation:

- The ECE DEI Committee will report annually to the department on the progress made toward achieving the goals and delivering the activities focused on DEI.
- The ECE DEI Committee will survey the ECE community bi-annually in terms of progress made on DEI-related initiatives and the current health of the ECE environment.
- Every third year, hire an external evaluator to assess the DEI health of the ECE department.