

EDJI Faculty Fellows Impact Report – 2023-24

Executive Summary

The EDJI Faculty Fellows Program was created to promote an inclusive learning environment by implementing the curriculum and pedagogy recommendations from the President’s Advisory Council on Race (PACOR). This year-long program trained the inaugural cohort in inclusive pedagogy, universal design, assessment, change management, and academic leadership. Participants engaged in a community of practice to share best practices and receive feedback, and they designed and completed projects to disseminate EDJI teaching and learning principles to instructors in their units.

Program goals addressed infrastructure, professional development, and course and curriculum processes. Program accomplishments include the following:

- Successfully training of 14 faculty members across various schools and disciplines.
- Developed frameworks for EDJI curriculum review and improvement.
- Increased faculty collaboration and communication.
- A curated digital repository of resources for inclusive pedagogy.
- A fully developed self-paced course to support faculty in understanding and implementing EDJI principles.

These were accomplished through training and development and a community of practice focusing on key topics, such as inclusive course and syllabus design, anti-racist language, understanding diverse populations, strategies to promote a sense of belonging, and leadership and change management.

Based on feedback, several changes will be implemented for the 2024-25 cohort:

- A streamlined one-day in-person training session with a self-guided UB Learns Course.
- More focused spring community of practice sessions on content rather than reporting.
- Inclusion of additional anti-racist materials and best practices.

The feedback underscored the need for practical strategies for enacting change, addressing barriers to equity and diversity, and creating inclusive online courses. These insights will inform the program's next iteration, ensuring continuous improvement and greater impact.

The EDJI Faculty Fellows Program successfully fostered an inclusive and equitable academic environment by embedding EDJI principles in curricula and professional development. The collaborative approach and the establishment of leadership roles have laid a strong foundation for ongoing and future EDJI initiatives, enriching educational experiences and promoting a supportive academic community.

Program Overview

CATT launched the EDJI Faculty Fellows Program to support the implementation of the curriculum and pedagogy recommendations of the University's President's Advisory Council on Race (PACOR). The inaugural faculty cohort attended training on inclusive pedagogy, universal design, assessment, change management and academic leadership. Throughout the academic year, the fellows participated in a community of practice through which they shared best practices and received feedback on their efforts.

Deans were asked to nominate at least one faculty member from their respective units to participate. The final cohort included fourteen fellows from twelve academic units:

Faculty Member	Title/Role	Unit
Annahita Ball	Associate Professor	School of Social Work
Elizabeth Bartelt	Clinical Teaching Faculty	School of Public Health and Health Related Professions
Sharon Beckford-Foster	Associate Professor	College of Arts and Sciences
Kathy Boje	Assoc. Prof, Assoc Dean, & Director	School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Matthew Bowker	Clinical Assistant Professor	College of Arts and Sciences
Rikki Cannioto	Research Professor	Roswell Park Cancer Institute
Yunjeong Chang	Assistant Professor	Graduate School of Education
Grady Gambrel	Clinical Assistant Professor	College of Arts and Sciences
Jordana Maisel	Assist. Professor & Director	School of Architecture and Planning
Mary Ann Rogers	Clinical Associate Prof., Assist. Dean	School of Management
Jamie Smith	Chief Academic Officer	Roswell Park Cancer Institute
Jennifer Surtees	Associate Professor	Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences
Doga Yucalan	Lecturer	School of Engineering and Applied Sciences
Luke Ziarek	Associate Professor	School of Engineering and Applied Sciences

The program was conceptualized by the associate vice provost and fully developed by the senior curriculum specialist, Lauren Bruzga, who served as the project manager. Additional support was provided by an assessment expert and a learning designer. The initial staff members serving in these roles were Courtney Doxbeck and Jeremy Jungbluth. Over the mid-fall and early spring periods, these three staff members resigned. Cathleen Morreale, Jackie Conroy, and Jeffrey Kohler graciously offered to step in and support the program.

Most of the trainings in inclusive practices and UB resources and supports were delivered by UB faculty and staff. However, Roberta Schlehr, a CATT learning designer, stepped in to assist with syllabus design.

While staff turnover was a concern, those who joined the project to help were highly effective in transitioning seamlessly into the group. The Fellows did not experience any negative consequences due to this turnover.

Program Goals

The EDJI Faculty Fellows program was designed to address the PACOR Curriculum and Pedagogy Recommendations related to curricular design, course and syllabus development, inclusive pedagogy, and the creation of an anti-racist and inclusive culture. The coordinating team within CATT outlined goals for the implementation of the program and the desired impacts. In addition, they established

learning outcomes for the Fellows. These goals (shown in the table below) are distinct from the goals that each Fellow established for their project.

Operational Goals	Programmatic Outcome Goals	Faculty Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the program, including processes & workflows & documentation. • Partner with other UB offices supporting EDJI initiatives. • Collaborate with faculty serving as EDJI liaisons. • Develop training for liaisons. • Facilitate training for liaisons. • Develop training and resources for all faculty. • Determine an assessment plan to evaluate program effectiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide initial and ongoing training for unit liaisons (train the trainer). • Develop EDJI frameworks and/or guidelines to review and improve programmatic curriculum. • Develop EDJI frameworks and/or guidelines to review and improve courses. • Complete curricular and course reviews from an EDJI lens. • Curate resources to build out a digital repository. • Build self-paced courses to support all faculty with EDJI in pedagogy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase communication and collaboration across units and between units and Academic Affairs. • Empower faculty with knowledge, information, and resources. • Establish a collaborative cohort that serves as advocates and ambassadors for inclusive pedagogy within their units.

Roles and Responsibilities

Before the training series began in August 2023, participating faculty and CATT staff were briefed on their roles and responsibilities within the program. Fellows received a \$5,000 stipend to attend the August training, and academic units received up to \$10,000 to cover a course release in both the fall and spring semesters. The course release funding was released to the unit in late spring 2024 after progress toward goals had been verified.

To participate, EDJI Faculty Fellows were required to attend a week-long training on EDJI principles. This training series included the following topics:

- Anti-Racism
- Accessibility
- Difficult Conversations
- Diverse Populations and Intersectionality
- Inclusive Policies, Course Syllabi, Content, and Materials
- Inclusive Pedagogy and Assessment
- Leadership and Change Management
- Sense of Belonging

In addition, Fellows were required to set three year-long goals that focused on implementing EDJI training, curriculum revisions, and syllabus redesign within their department/units. Each goal was assessed, and follow-up activities were encouraged based on initial assessment findings. For example, Goal 1 was to “Conduct a syllabi review of their department/unit’s current course offerings and suggest

how to make syllabi more inclusive.” These syllabi reviews were due to the EDJI Faculty Fellows Leaders by the end of the Fall 2023 sessions. Upon completing the program, Fellows submitted a final assessment report of the interventions, training/workshops, surveys, and syllabus redesign they conducted over the year.

Finally, Fellows were required to participate in a Community of Practice that met bi-monthly throughout the academic year. These sessions included discussion of projects, sharing ideas, and addressing challenges. In addition, presenters were invited to address emerging issues. During spring semester, the Fellows took turns presenting their projects in these sessions.

Assessment Results

Training Sessions

Due to availability restrictions, the five-day training session was offered across several different weeks instead of the initially proposed five days of consecutive training. Three training days were offered in August, two sessions were offered in September, and the final training session was offered in December. A survey was distributed in late September 2023 to assess the effectiveness of the August and September trainings. Seven fellows completed the survey. All seven indicated that they attended all August training days. For the September training, six fellows indicated they attended both sessions and one fellow attended one of the two offerings. Overall, attendance was high for all training sessions.

Overall, feedback was positive for the training sessions. Some indicated that there was an overwhelming amount of content, but the information presented was appreciated and would be included in their course design moving forward. Additional comments included:

- The concept of universal design is a direction that I have been moving in my teaching over the past few years, in an informal way, without really realizing that's what it was. Therefore, getting some real grounding in tot has been really useful and has broadened my thinking. At the same time, thinking about the balance between universal design and student-centered learning versus rigor and properly preparing students has been really important.
- I was able to review my syllabus, activities, and the languages I have been using to be more inclusive. Due to lack of knowledge about students who identified themselves as queers or who are coming from indigenous groups, I hesitated to ask questions or having meaningful conversations with them. However, after learning more about them, I feel more confident in having conversations with colleagues or students who have diverse backgrounds.
- Learning about many of the resources at UB was really eye-opening for me. Being on the south campus and now on the downtown campus, we're really isolated from a lot of these offices and don't have easy access to many resources. This means that I can share this information with students and colleagues and use these centers and offices as resources myself. The interactions with other EDJI fellows has also been really valuable, especially as the training went on and we got to know each other better. We can really learn from each other and share resources, strategies and ideas.
- Looking at UDL was a bit overwhelming in a department that is very traditional. I have learned to implement applicable aspects incrementally with the hopes of getting to UDL.
- It was all a bit overwhelming. There's so much to consider. I'm still working on how best to share this material with others. I appreciated the working sessions and the opportunity to apply what

was taught to actual case studies. I think it will just take time to practice/apply all the lessons learned.

Faculty were also asked what topics they were expecting but were not covered in the content. Overall, the feedback was positive and included content that we will incorporate into the next iteration of the program:

- Strategies for enacting change in our units. Specifically, how to negotiate with leadership effectively for resources.
- The need to include joy, liberation, and decolonization throughout our teaching so that we do not pathologize oppressed communities.
- Limitations of EDJI practices, How to create inclusive online courses, actual samples of the course materials that are revised with inclusive strategies, conversation with student panels from different schools.
- Recognizing and addressing barriers to Equity and Diversity.

Faculty also expressed some frustrations with length of the August training days, redundancy in the content covered, and the scalability of the EDJI practices. These comments are included in the Action Plan for Improvement Section and have helped us in implementing changes for the 2024-25 Cohort.

Community of Practice

Attendance for the Community of Practice sessions was high for both the Fall and Spring sessions, with most fellows consistently attending and participating. Fellows were actively engaged and provided a supportive network for one another. A final end-of-the-year celebration was held in the Buffalo Room on North Campus, where fellows had a chance to discuss their projects with their respective deans and department heads.

Overall, these community of practices were positively received, with fellows appreciating the chance to network and work with other faculty members from different academic perspectives. The only qualm directly mentioned was the hectic schedule:

"I think a more consistent meeting schedule would be good rather than changing days of the week. Working groups and collaborations between current (and former EDJI Fellows) may also be good."

Overall Impact

This initiative aimed to enhance the faculty's ability to integrate EDJI principles within their academic units, fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment. Each fellow completed an assessment report, outlining their goals, interventions, assessment methodologies, data and interpretation of data, as well as lessons learned and suggestions or actions moving forward. These reports can be found in Appendix – Assessment Reports.

Fellows revised existing courses and developed new curricula to incorporate EDJI principles. This included integrating diverse perspectives, addressing issues of social justice, and ensuring that course materials represented a wide range of voices and experiences. As a result, students were exposed to a richer, more inclusive educational experience that will broaden their understanding of complex societal issues. An example of curriculum development goals includes the incorporation of EDJI-related Council

on Social Work Education (CSWE) competencies in the Master of Social Work (MSW) curriculum. A new course, PHM 644, Health Care Equity from a Pharmacist's Perspective was launched in the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. Another example is the implementation of making courses more accessible, specifically in the Physics department. In the Physics department, goals for the introductory courses PHY 101 and 107 were introduced, involving focusing interventions on PHY 100 advisement and offering it as a low-stress introduction to physics topics that bolsters math preparation. PHY 100 was proposed to be offered as a 1 credit-hour course with an emphasis on participation credit and allow for multiple quiz attempts to encourage deeper learning. Tailoring the introductory courses over time will help to close the gap between students with differing prior physics backgrounds. Finally, regarding curriculum, Lukasz Ziarek, a fellow, serves on the UB Curriculum - Diversity and Integrative Learning Sub-Committee. He has reviewed course proposals from across the University and has helped develop, with Delia Cozzarelli, the Diversity in the United States Rubric, which will be used University-wide.

The fellows served as catalysts for change within their departments by leading professional development sessions for their colleagues and students. These sessions focused on effective strategies for inclusive teaching, recognizing and addressing implicit biases, and creating supportive learning environments for all students. The ripple effect of these efforts led to a broader adoption of EDJI practices across various academic units. Several fellows offered workshops on Inclusive and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). In the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, an Inclusive Pedagogy Open House was held with over 25 submissions from faculty, students, and staff. Over 65 students, faculty, and staff attended. Some fellows focused on building relationships with peers in their units. In the School of Management, for example, 95% of the school's 73 full-time faculty met one-on-one with their fellow for safe conversations, allowing them to learn the true objectives of EDJI principles and to address possible apprehensions of weaving them into their classroom materials. In the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, new leadership was under discussion with the Dean to designate an Associate Dean of Diversity and to elevate the ad hoc diversity committee to a formal standing school committee referenced by the revised school bylaws. Dr. Kalpesh Desai was appointed as Assistant Dean for Inclusive Excellence and the EDI Committee was established.

Furthermore, fellows created partnerships and collaborations within their units. This provided for opportunities to share what they learned through their fellowships. An example is in the College of Arts and Sciences. The fellow plans to work with the CAS Diversity, Equity, and Belonging team to prepare options and opportunities for incorporating EDJI principles in the syllabi to broaden assessment methods for students in the Humanities sector as a way of helping with student retention. The hope is that the CAS team will have the required support to implement changes in appreciation of time well spent. In addition, the fellow plans to create a workshop for graduate students on incorporating EDJI principles in teaching and mentoring students.

Finally, several fellows aimed to understand the needs and the desire to increase departmental-, unit-, and University-wide resources. To understand the overall needs of learning EDJI teaching practices from the faculty members in their unit, the Graduate School of Education fellow designed a research-supported needs assessment survey. She created a student advisory board to aid in the collection of data from students. The student advisory board assisted in collecting information surrounding the understanding of students' needs and preferences on inclusive learning environments. Eight (out of 18 applicants) students were selected based on their responses to the application form. Following the

application, advisory board candidates were interviewed in a focus-group style interview. During the one-and-a-half-hour focus-group interview, students were asked about their definitions and expectations of inclusive learning environments, needs, preferences, challenges, and suggestions to create inclusive learning environments in GSE. Four themes were generated from this discussion and summarized below:

- More interactive activities at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester are necessary to enhance student engagement.
- Acknowledge and recognize intersectionality of each student is critical.
- A sense of belonging and community is important, and instructors should be there to facilitate.
- Autonomy is a key element for inclusive learning environments.
- How the syllabus is designed and how it's delivered are different.

The Jacobs School of Medicine and Biological Sciences fellow also deployed a survey to ~200 faculty who perform the bulk of classroom teaching and received 94 responses. Some findings include:

- Lots of support is needed for the concept of incorporating EDJI principles into teaching.
- Lots of uncertainty about how to do this, particularly for fundamental science instruction and learning (seen as easier in Medical curriculum).
- A sense that people are weary of hearing about what we have to do and want to know how to do it in practical terms.
- Some skepticism related to concerns of indoctrination of students.
- Some skepticism about ensuring rigor and maintaining standards – not wanting to “dumb things down” in order to incorporate EDJI principles.
- Some skepticism about whether this is even relevant to what we do in the Jacobs School – is this something we need to teach in our cases or is it the purview of other disciplines.

In conclusion, the EDJI Faculty Fellows Program successfully fostered a more inclusive and equitable learning environment across various academic units by embedding EDJI principles into curricula, professional development, and institutional policies. Through the dedicated efforts of the fellows, significant strides were made in revising courses, developing new programs, and promoting inclusive teaching practices. The collaborative approach and the establishment of leadership roles in diversity have laid a strong foundation for ongoing and future EDJI initiatives. These efforts not only enriched the educational experiences of students but also equipped faculty and staff with the tools and understanding necessary to create a more supportive and inclusive academic community.

Action Plan for Continuous Improvement

Reflecting upon feedback from the multiple surveys distributed throughout the year, the program will be making several changes in format moving forward. For example, instead of having an intensive five-day training program in August, there will be a one-day in-person training and a self-guided [UB Learns Course](#). The Fellows will be able to choose between August 6 and August 16, depending on their schedules. The UB Learns Course will host topics like the initial five-day training held in 2023, providing readings, workshop recordings, and assignments to track participation.

Following feedback from the end-of-the-program survey and the August/September training assessment survey, the spring sessions will be focused on content rather than listening sessions. Additionally, the revised UB Learns Course will include more anti-racist materials throughout the modules.

August/September Summative Survey Feedback

The following feedback specifically guided the additional changes made to the UB Learns Course content:

- I would like to see more discussion about scaling interventions to larger / larger courses. What works for a course of 20 likely will not work with a course of 80. What can be made to work for a course of 80 likely will not work for a course of 250.”
- “I hope there are more workshop-based sessions than seminar-style training. Also, some sessions are about what I already know more about the topics, compared to other topics. So, I hope we can have options to attend or not attend the sessions.”
- “There was some redundancy throughout that could likely be eliminated. The three day intensive training felt quite long and I wish that was more interactive. Hearing about all of the marginalized groups--while important--seemed a bit unnecessary (particularly for this audience). The amount of materials shared with us was incredibly helpful but also quite overwhelming.”

Spring Summative Survey

In May 2024, the first cohort of fellows was asked about their preparedness to deliver current knowledge, disseminate knowledge, and provide interventions on EDJI to faculty, staff, and leaders both within their own unit and across the campus. All fellows who participated in the survey either agreed or strongly agreed that the program increased their preparedness. They were also asked open-ended questions on how their final culminating projects led to the implementation of PACOR curriculum and instruction recommendations, fostered anti-racist climates, incorporated EDJI principles in the curricular design process for new courses and developed and disseminated suggestions for syllabus and course design. Participants reported mixed sentiments, some indicating their deans and unit faculty were willing to embrace the changes, while others stated they received resistance and hesitation from other faculty and staff when attempting to implement EDJI principles.

When asked, *Any additional comments for the EDJI Faculty Fellows coordination team?* The feedback was generally positive with some suggestions for improvement. For example, several comments mentioned the flow of the community of practice could be more balanced, with more emphasis on training year-round rather than having the first half of the year focusing on training and the second half of the year focusing on fellows reporting out their project progress:

“The summer intensive session and workshops throughout the fall were great. The spring agenda of just listening to others’ implementation was not an effective use of time. More training/applied workshops would have been preferred.”

When asked, *In what ways did your project promote strategies to foster an anti-racist climate and an equitable culture within courses, programs, departments, and the unit? Please explain.*, the feedback

provided indicated we did not focus enough on providing anti-racist materials and best practices in the promotion of anti-racism: *The inclusion of a variety of members and anti-racist best practices.*

Informal feedback was also collected at the end-of-year celebration. Fellows mentioned that the current format approached the participants' knowledge base as minimal to no understanding of EDJI best practices. Several members suggested implementing a needs assessment prior to the training to better hone the lessons to the new cohort's current understanding level rather than assume the fellows do not know about EDJI. A needs assessment has been built and will be deployed prior to the next cohort meeting for the August 2024 Training.

Summary

The EDJI Faculty Fellows Program successfully fostered an inclusive and equitable academic environment by embedding EDJI principles in curricula and professional development. Our year-long program trained the inaugural cohort in inclusive pedagogy, universal design, assessment, change management, and academic leadership. The program emphasized a collaborative approach, created a network of peers, and established our fellows in leadership roles. This has laid a strong foundation for ongoing and future EDJI initiatives, enriching educational experiences and promoting a supportive academic community. Participants engaged in a community of practice to share best practices and receive feedback. The fellows served as catalysts for change within their departments by leading professional development sessions for their colleagues and students. Fellows revised existing courses and developed new curricula to incorporate EDJI principles, including integrating diverse perspectives, addressing social justice issues, and ensuring that course materials represented a wide range of voices and experiences. As a result, students were exposed to a richer, more inclusive educational experience that will broaden their understanding of complex societal issues. Fellows created partnerships and collaborations within their units, providing opportunities to share what they learned through their fellowships amongst their unit peers. These efforts enriched students' educational experiences and equipped faculty and staff with the tools and understanding necessary to create a more supportive and inclusive academic community.

Feedback collected throughout the year has guided changes and shifts in how the 2024-25 cohort will be trained. For example, a needs assessment has been built and deployed in the UB Learns course. The self-paced UB Learns course is designed to take two months to complete, with the expectation that incoming fellows will complete it before the community of practice meetings start. The final project for the course fulfills the obligation of creating an inclusive syllabus. This course is asynchronous and contains six modules:

1. Overview and Introduction
2. Sense of Belonging and Why it Matters to Higher Education
3. Inclusive Pedagogy: Introduction and Design
4. Inclusive Pedagogy: Strategies and Application
5. DIFCON (Difficult Conversations)
6. Academic Leadership and Change Management

The community of practice meetings will shift focus from workshops to support sessions as fellows complete their year-long assessment projects. With the feedback and improvements made to the program, we look forward to successfully training the next cohort of EDJI Faculty Fellows and continuing the mission and vision of the PACOR initiative.

Appendices

[CATT Roles and Responsibilities](#)

[Faculty Roles and Responsibilities](#)

[Cohort 1 August 2023 training series schedule](#)

[List of Fellows/Units](#)

[Learning from the EDJI Fellowship Program – CATT Blog](#)

[EDJI Faculty Fellows Webpage](#)

[CATT Role in PACOR draft](#)

[How EDJI Program Addresses PACOR](#)

[Memo- EDJI Faculty Fellows Recruitment \(2024-25 Cohort\)](#)

[Memo-EDJI Faculty Fellows Recruitment \(2023-24 Cohort\)](#)

[August Training Evaluation Data \(2023-24 cohort\)](#)

[Cohort 1 Summative Survey Results](#)

[UB Learns Course 2024-25 Cohort Asynchronous Modules](#)

[2024-25 Cohort Formative Evaluation](#)

[PPT Project Proposal Roadshow](#)

[EDJI Faculty Fellows Goal Assessment Guide \(Document\)](#)

[EDJI Faculty Fellows Assessment Plan Worksheet \(Grid\)](#)

[August Training Days Attendance \(Excel Sheet\)](#)

[September Training Days Attendance](#)

[Fall Community of Practice Attendance](#)