Departmental BPC Plan
School of Computing
University of Georgia

Effective dates of Plan: 12/19/2022- 12/19/2024
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1. Context

In 2021, the enrolled student population at the University of Georgia (UGA) is 66.8% White, 9.3% Asian, 8.2% Black or African American, 5.7% Hispanic or Latino, 4.4% International, 4.1 Multi-Ethnic, 1.2% unknown, 0.1 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. This includes both full-time and part-time students as well as graduates and undergraduates. Moreover, the university has a significant female student population with 57.7% of women in the undergraduate student population and 58.6% of women in the graduate student population. However, in the Computer Science program at UGA, the number of women students who are newly enrolled is around 25% and the percentage of students from underrepresented groups (URGs; people who identify as Black, African American, Hispanic, or Latino) is less than 18%. In addition, women faculty in the department now stand at only 17%, while UGA has 52.8%. There is a significant gap between the University's diversity and departmental diversity, especially when it comes to women and African American students. This BPC plan will address this gap by focusing on increasing the number of students and faculty who identify as women or as members of URGs. Accordingly, we lay out the goals and activities below.

2. Goals

G1: [Data Collection and Analysis]: Annually, collect and analyze participation and demographic data to understand the effect of various interventions and activities.

G2: [Increase the Number of Female Students and Faculty]: We aim to increase the number of women students in both undergraduate and graduate student populations by 5% every year for the next four years (2022-2026). We also aim to add more women faculty to the department.

G3: [Broaden Undergraduate Research Involvement from URGs]: By 2026, we plan to achieve an increase of at least 20% in the number of undergraduate women and students from URGs participating in research activities with faculty members.

G4. [Enhance faculty, staff, and student training in inclusiveness and diversity]: In the next four years, we plan to have 50% of the CS faculty, staff, and graduate students complete at least one course related to diversity and inclusiveness offered by the UGA Office of Institutional Diversity, the Office of Human Resources, and the Graduate School. We also plan to have 30% of CS faculty and staff complete a diversity certificate offered by the UGA Office of Institutional Diversity by 2024.

3. Activities and Measurement

A1 (G1, G2): Data collection [contact: Manijeh Keshtgari]: We are currently collecting data related to broadening participation in our community, with a specific focus on increasing the number of women students (as part of a grant) and increasing the number of transfer students from URGs. We will report and analyze this data for improving the activities at our annual faculty retreat. Faculty can participate by helping develop new data collection and tracking mechanisms in addition to suggesting and implementing activities to recruit or support students from URGs.

A2 (G2): Faculty Recruitment [contact: Thiab Taha]: Faculty will work with the UGA Office of Institutional Diversity and Equal Opportunity Office in the process that helps recruit more faculty from URGs. For example, advertising on websites like BlackJobs.org and reaching out to HBCU schools. Faculty and search committee members will support this activity by taking training programs on avoiding implicit bias and recruiting strategies.

A3 (G2): Retention of URGs in foundational courses [contact: Michael Cotterell] We will utilize the existing programs such as the Peer/Undergraduate Learning Assistantship (PLA/ULA) in lower division courses (CSCI 1300, 1301, 1302, 2610, 2720) to provide peer support and tutoring. Faculty will train and support the PLAs/ULAs with a particular focus on the retention of women and students from URGs in the CS major. This will help URGs enrolled in this course to improve their grades and course standing.

A4 (G3): Encourage undergraduate student participation in research [contact: Ramviyas Parasuraman] We will encourage undergraduate women and students from URG to participate in research activities within the department, as well as attend regional, national, and international conferences to present their research. Faculty will also encourage these students to apply to graduate school and other broader opportunities.Faculty participating in this activity will pursue funding to support undergraduate research in their group, including funding from the BPC-focused Undergraduate Research Experiences programs such as as UGA's L- SAMP funding and CURO funding programs.

A5 (G4): Support faculty and student training to create an inclusive climate [Contact: Krys Kochut] We will provide opportunities for resource sharing and exchange via a quarterly newsletter and Slack channel designed to support our community inclusivity; faculty can commit to contributing toward this activity by creating, sharing, and making use of the resources offered. Faculty will also participate in workshops and courses to improve pedagogical strategies and diversity from the UGA's Center for Teaching and Learning.

A6 (G4): Rewarding Faculty [contact: Thiab Taha] The department will take measures to reward faculty for their involvement in BPC-focused activities and committees by including their involvement in the annual performance review process. Faculty will report and highlight their involvement through self and project-driven efforts.

A7 (G2, G3, G4): Increasing Participation in Conferences, Panels, and Talks [contact: Soheyla Amirian] We will encourage students and faculty to participate in diversity-related conferences such as the Tapia Conference and Anita Borg Grace Hopper Conference. Faculty can support the travel of the students, themselves, or colleagues through their grants. Faculty will also be encouraged to participate and play an important role in workshops and panels organized by diversity-related student organizations. Examples of such activities include faculty speaking about their research at DATA4Good, and Women in Tech forums that are regularly happening at the University of Georgia.

4. Evaluation and Measures:

We will use the following measures to evaluate the goals: 1) Annual survey of students and faculty to collect and analyze data related to the BPC activities (G1); 2) Demographics of enrolment and retention (G2); 3) # students participating in research activities (G3); 4) # of diversity-related workshops and conferences attended by students and faculty and the # of courses and/or diversity certificates taken by students and faculty related to diversity (G4).