

# SLIS DEI Report

AY22/23

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SLIS is committed to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion throughout our program and community, as reflected in our [strategic plan](#).

This report provides highlights of some of our EDI efforts and initiatives over academic year 2022-2023.

- The SLIS Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) committee and DEI Fellow led a discussion at the January retreat to lay the groundwork for a DEI audit of the SLIS curriculum.
- Following that discussion, the DEI Fellow undertook a study to develop a DEI rubric against which to assess SLIS syllabi, and is in the process of reviewing student responses to EDI questions on SLIS course evaluations. This data will inform further discussions of the DEI audit in retreats and faculty meetings during AY23/24.
- SLIS is also laying the groundwork for a separate accessibility audit of SLIS courses:
  - In fall 2022 the SLIS Director worked with Dr. Tang's LIS 403 Evaluation of Information Services course to develop a research proposal for studying the usability and accessibility of SLIS courses. In fall 2024, Dr. Tang's Usability course will build on this research proposal to run an accessibility and usability test using a selection of online course as test beds.
  - In spring 2023, the Interim Director oversaw an independent study in which a SLIS student surveyed and interviewed SLIS faculty about how they address accessibility in course design and what supports they need.
  - In fall 2023, the Interim Director worked with the Interim Dean to arrange a brief training on accessibility support with the Director of OAS.
- The DEI Fellow established office hours for students to meet and discuss any EDI issues or concerns.
- In Fall 2023, SLIS and the Simmons University Library launched its Library Fellows Program, an initiative to support students from historically marginalized backgrounds to becoming information professionals with scholarship support; meaningful, paid work experience; and mindful mentoring. The program was piloted in the fall 2023 with 4 fellows-- 3 internal at Simmons University Library and one external with Loyola Notre Dame University Library. The Interim Director and Dean are working to expand the program to 10+ fellows over the next 3 years by seeking more external partners and funding.
- SLIS continues to offer various ways for students to share feedback, including regular semesterly town hall meetings and an online, anonymous feedback form.
- With regard to faculty, SLIS has worked to build community and provide support to faculty through social events, mentoring and developmental workshops, and open drop-in sessions with both the Interim Director and the Mentoring, Development and Retention committee.
- Over academic year 22-23 SLIS engaged in a search for a tenure-track faculty member intentionally recruiting a wide and inclusive candidate pool which resulted in the successful hiring of Dr. Mei Zhang, who will begin her position at SLIS in July, 2023.