WSWS Officer and Committee Report
August 2022

Office or Committee Name: Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Ad Hoc Committee
Officer or Chairperson Name: Elizabeth Mosqueda
Date of Preparation (include year): August, 2022

Activities during the year:
After the 2022 Annual Meeting the WSWS D&I Committee began the process of modifying the WSWS Operating Procedures (OP) to make the language used in the document more inclusive. After strategizing how best to accomplish this task, the committee decided to first formulate a WSWS Inclusive Language Guide and, after many edits, we have come close to finalizing the document which the BoD can review at the end of this report.

This document will guide the committee as we critically think about the different areas of the OP we believe could benefit from using inclusive language and will also help with construction of recommended modifications to the document. As with all other documents and material created by the committee, the WSWS Inclusive Language Guide was created to be a fluid document that will be continuously assessed and modified as needed. The committee will also use this guide for future tasks of creating more inclusive documentation and believe the BoD will benefit from also using the document where they see fit.

If the BoD have any input or suggestions on the WSWS Inclusive Language Guide please reach out to Elizabeth Mosqueda at Elizabeth.mosqueda@maderacollege.edu.

The D&I Committees goal for the OP modification is to have a draft of the recommended edits as well as next steps for the BoD to review by November, 2022. Your patience is appreciated during this time.

Recommendations for Board Action:

Review the WSWS Inclusive Language Guide found at the end of this document. If the BoD have any comments or suggestions, please let Elizabeth Mosqueda know.

Please send Elizabeth Mosqueda an update on the WSWS website and when the content created for the Diversity & Inclusion section will be displayed on the website. A copy of what was made and sent to WSWS leadership and website editors can be found after the Inclusive Language Guide.

Budget Needs:

None at this time

Name of Person Preparing This Report:

Elizabeth Mosqueda

WSWS Inclusive Language Guide

What is Inclusive Language:
Inclusive language avoids biases, slang, words, or expressions that discriminate against groups of people based on race, ethnicity, country of origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or socioeconomic status. Inclusive language allows you to resonate with all people by speaking and writing in more impartial ways. Inclusive language acknowledges, accepts, and celebrates differences.

Guiding Principles:

1. **Avoid acronyms when possible.** Acronyms can be alienating to new or potential members by making readers feel separate from the organization. Even those who have been members for extended periods and are looking to be more involved with leadership can be overwhelmed by acronyms.

2. **Refer to a theoretical person as "they" instead of "he" or "she."** Use of non-gendered pronouns "they", "them", or "their" won't alienate anyone who does not identify with these pronouns and we won't make any assumptions on gender and roles, especially with positions of leadership. Other gender neutral terms include, "this person", "everyone", "people", "adult".

3. **Use plain language rather than expressions, jargon, or idioms.** The use of cultural expressions (e.g., "break a leg", "knock it out of the park", "easy as cake", etc.) may be easily understood by members from North America, but to be inclusive of those who are not originally from this region, use of plain language makes reading and interpreting information better. Expressions can also be gendered (e.g., "every man for himself") and therefore exclusive; instead, use gender-neutral terms that convey the same meaning (e.g., "you are responsible for yourself").

4. **When speaking about family, use gender-neutral labels for family members.** Rather than using gendered terms like wife, husband, son, daughter, mom, dad, use language like partner, children, and parent when referring to family.

5. **Use person-first language.** Use respectful language that acknowledges people's humanity and is preferred by a group. This language is important to use because many feel it's dehumanizing to put the disability or gender orientation first, as it seems to define the individual (e.g., "people with autism" and *not* "autistic people" or "people with disabilities: and *not* "disabled people"). Use respectful language that acknowledges people's humanity.

6. **Avoid phrases that suggest victimhood** when speaking about disability**,** e.g. "afflicted by," "victim of," "suffers from," "confined to a wheelchair". Also, exclude euphemisms like "challenged," "differently abled," or "specially-abled," too.

7. **When in doubt, ask individuals which pronouns they prefer (but make it clear they can choose not to identify, as well).** Strive to include language that reflects peoples' choice and style in how they talk about themselves. Click here for a resource on pronouns from LGBT Life Center: https://lgbtlifecenter.org/pronouns/#columns-1

8. **When addressing race and ethnicity, first learn how distinct groups choose to self-identify.** Do not assume a particular group identifies a certain way and do not use outdated terms to refer to race and ethnicity, as most of these terms stem from prejudice and racism. Note that groups self-identify differently depending on location.

Diversity & Inclusion section of WSWS Webpage

The WSWS D&I ad hoc committee would like to create a new sub-tab within the "Society" tab of the WSWS web page titled "Diversity & Inclusion." This tab will include the following 4 sections.

The D&I committee has been using the ASA diversity, equity and inclusion webpage as a reference. https://www.agronomy.org/diversity/

We would also like to request that the D&I tab be features/incorporated into the homepage somehow. We were thinking if one of the photos that home page scrolls through could mention D&I and have a link leading to the D&I tab. I'll also make sure to run this by Sandra and others to make sure it's ok. Thanks and please let me know if you have any questions!

-Elizabeth Mosqueda

elizabeth.mosqueda@scccd.edu

831-676-6983

Sections for Diversity & Inclusion page:

1. WSWS Diversity & Inclusion

Western Society of Weed Science Diversity and Inclusion Mission Statement

The Western Society of Weed Science is committed to fostering an inclusive environment where people from all backgrounds have an opportunity to grow and flourish. In the field of weed science, diverse backgrounds, minds and experiences are what makes us thrive. This upholds our commitment to foster and encourage education, research, and management in weed science and represents the values we uphold as well as the work we do. Western Society of Weed Science is on a journey to live the values that have made us a welcoming and successful organization by cultivating a diverse and inclusive community.

The WSWS Diversity and Inclusion Mission Statement is meant to act as an introduction to our society's D&I commitment and efforts and resonate with both members and potential members. It may be referred to and included in WSWS documents, messages, webpages as well as other ways.

Policies for Implementing the WSWS D&I Mission Statement

The following three areas (WSWS Meeting, WSWS Operating Guide and discussion with incoming Board of Directors and committee chairs, and Student Member

Opportunities) were identified by the D&I ad-hoc Committee as key areas that D&I efforts should target for the next few years. Following each key area listed below are details on how the D&I committee, with the help of society members and Board of Directors, will implement change for each area.

The WSWS strongly believes that each person brings something unique to the field of weed science in the form of ideas, perspectives, backgrounds, and personalities. We are committed to creating an inclusive community and give every person equal access to opportunities within the society so that everyone is heard, understood, and welcomed.

Below are the key areas we will focus on with actions to help make our community more inclusive.

WSWS Annual Meeting

- Continuously work with meeting attendees to collect input for diversity and inclusion initiatives to ensure all members are represented at all levels in the society
- The D&I ad-hoc Committee chair will be an active member of the General Program section of our annual meeting
- Consider locations for our annual meeting that would contribute to the economic viability of both large and small cities and pick locations for pre-conference tours and activities that could also contribute to the economic viability of smaller communities
- Work with our Site Selection Committee and members to formulate a Land Acknowledgement statement to properly recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards on any land on which WSWS members hold society business or carry out research

WSWS Operating Guides:

- Encourage Nominations Committee to consider members with diverse backgrounds when suggesting the slate of nominations for leadership positions to the Board of Directors
- Work with the Executive Committee and Constitution and Operating Procedures representative to develop diversity and inclusion information to present to incoming leadership teams
- Encourage incoming presidents to consider diversity and inclusion when filling committee assignments
- Augment existing material on our website and Operating Guide to have more inclusive language and vocabulary

Student Member Opportunities:

- Recommend scholarship/funding opportunities to be allocated to underrepresented groups
- Encourage students to participate in our annual Student Night Out event to enhance their student and member opportunities

2. WSWS D&I Survey

The following information is specific to WSWS members and not intended to be generalized to all weed scientists

Figures indicating results will be made for each of the following questions included in the 2021 D&I Survey:

- Preliminary information for demonstrating our existing strengths and the factors we are trying to work on or improve
- Career Stage data
- How included do you feel
- Do you feel all members are represented

3. Previous Actions

- Appointment of the Diversity & Inclusion ad hoc Committee
- A draft WSWS Diversity & Inclusion Statement was made by the D&I ad hoc committee
- The WSWS Diversity & Inclusion Statement was officially adopted
- 2021 WSWS Annual Meeting - D&I Social Hour
- 2021 D&I Survey

4. List of D&I committee members names & contact information of Chair or WSWS main email.

-Please reach out to Elizabeth Mosqueda for an updated list.