



Report on
Inclusive
Excellence
2025



Land and Labor Statement

We honor and acknowledge that we are on the traditional territories and ancestral homelands of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Nations. We acknowledge the land and history of this space we are located today. This area was also the site of trade, hunting, gathering and healing for many other Native Nations: the Lakota, Ute, Kiowa, Comanche, Apache, Shoshone and others. Forty-eight tribes have called this land home. We recognize the Indigenous peoples as the original stewards of the land, water, plants and animals who called this place home.

Let us also acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced removal from this territory. We recognize that U.S. public policy has been used to displace Indigenous communities, erode Tribal Nation sovereignty and forcibly assimilate Native individuals into U.S. society. We respect the many diverse Indigenous peoples still connected to this land on which we gather. We pay our respect to them and give thanks to all Tribal Nations and the ancestors of this place.

We also acknowledge the labor of enslaved Africans and their descendants who worked this stolen land for the colonists and who continue to disproportionately face economic oppression, racism, violence and exploitation.

Lastly, we want to recognize the community and families of Auraria displaced by the creation of this campus for Metropolitan State University of Denver to have a place that we now call a learning community. We share this acknowledgment to encourage all of us here on the Auraria Campus to consider how our work in this space and in our daily lives can address these historic and contemporary atrocities perpetuated against Native people and other marginalized communities.



President's Message

Metropolitan State University of Denver is celebrating 60 years as a leader in social mobility, committed to fostering equity and opportunity for Colorado's diverse population. Since opening our doors in downtown Denver in 1965, MSU Denver has provided high-quality, accessible education to hundreds of thousands of students — empowering more than 112,000 graduates who lead and innovate as Changemakers across Colorado's workforce and economy. MSU Denver is one of the state's most diverse communities, with more than 55% of our undergraduate students identifying as people of color, 87% working full or part time, 764 veterans and military-affiliated students, and nearly 60% first-generation college students. We connect our students — 96% from Colorado — directly to a world-class faculty and high-quality career opportunities.

As you will read in this report, this work is about more than the numbers. Serving our students well, sharing diverse voices and preparing all Coloradans for the modern workforce are critical. But don't take our word for it. Last year, MSU Denver was honored with the Bernie Valdez Alianza Award by the Colorado Latino Leadership, Advocacy & Research Organization and, for the 11th consecutive year, with the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award. The University has also proudly received the Seal of Excelencia, a three-year certification, recognizing its evidence-based commitment to serving Latino students — the first and only Colorado institution of higher education to receive the distinction.

MSU Denver is the State of Colorado's only statutorily mandated undergraduate-access institution, and equity, diversity and inclusion are a deep-seated part of the University's culture and values. MSU Denver established the state's first campus Immigrant Services Program in 1990 and became a leading public advocate for "Dreamers" when the University became one of the first in the nation to offer in-state tuition to



undocumented students in 2012. In 2013, MSU Denver's program became the basis for Colorado's state law known as the ASSET Bill, supporting undocumented Colorado students.

Throughout our 60-year history, MSU Denver has remained steadfastly committed to welcoming diversity and fostering inclusion, regardless of what is happening around us. We invite you to look inside this report and learn about the legacy — and the future — of inclusive excellence at MSU Denver.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janine Davidson". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Janine Davidson, Ph.D.

President, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Vice President's Message

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion is excited to publish MSU Denver's 2025 Report on Inclusive Excellence. This report highlights a wide variety of efforts and initiatives from within the office and across the University aimed at advancing MSU Denver's 2030 Strategic Plan and the Diversity Strategic Plan.

At MSU Denver, we intentionally infuse equity and inclusion into every facet of our institutional culture, including representation, processes, practice, curriculum, research and policy. One role of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion is to assure we are acting on our mission and values to support and promote equity, diversity and inclusion as a Hispanic-Serving Institution and as a Minority-Serving Institution. This means ensuring that all faculty and staff members understand that we all play a role in, and contribute to, advancing this work to ensure student success. Anyone interested can play a significant role in leading and shaping an institutional culture of belonging and inclusivity. "Diversity" is not a word we throw around casually. Diversity is who MSU Denver is in all its richness, dating to the University's founding. MSU Denver serves a diverse range of students from all walks of life and so our faculty and staff lean into the type of servingness that meets our students where they are.

Equity, diversity and inclusion are core values of MSU Denver and together serve as one of the five pillars of the University's 2030 Strategic Plan. These core values are also intentionally integrated into each of the other four pillars. At MSU Denver, we lean into our institutional mission, with access and cultivation at the forefront of our conversations; academic focus on the intellectual and social development of all our students; intentional formation and leveraging of resources to enhance student learning; expectations that all campus members contribute to learning; attention to the cultural pluralism learners bring to the educational experience; and efforts to constantly foster the type of welcoming community that engages all of its diverse representation in the service of student and organizational learning. We understand well whom we serve and how we need to serve to assure inclusive excellence.

MSU Denver continues to demonstrate through our actions our commitment to advancing inclusive excellence. This includes our ongoing efforts to serve as a national-model Hispanic-Serving Institution; the integration of culturally responsive pedagogies and processes into the institution's teaching and practice; and review of policies to assure that they are aligned with our mission to serve students first. The Diversity Strategic Plan outlines our goals and objectives and operationalizes Pillar IV of the 2030 Strategic Plan. This report outlines ongoing progress we have made within each of the goals under Pillar IV: supporting faculty diversity success and offering robust opportunities for staff and faculty development; Hispanic-Serving Institution/Minority Serving Institution (HSI/MSI) servingness and community collaboration; and offering



a plethora of curricular and co-curricular opportunities for student learning and engagement. Aligning these efforts to servingness and student success, MSU Denver continues to elevate and further permeate our core values. We believe everyone is deserving of support and the opportunity to grow and thrive.

Through institutional avenues such as the Faculty Fellows initiative, the Teaching Assistants program, HSI Week, the School of Hospitality WorkReady Program, School of Education Solidarity efforts, the Roadrunner First-Year Faculty Academy, the SpaceTech Scholars Program, department-led conferences, distinguished visiting professorships and many other efforts across the University highlighted in this report, MSU Denver continues to lead the way in innovative thinking and engagement toward positive impact and promising outcomes. Our signature programs bring renowned scholars and leaders from a variety of disciplinary and scholarly backgrounds, connecting to our Denver and campus communities by collaborating with school districts and community organizations. Our office takes pride in celebrating this incredible work by continuing to support and collaborate with faculty, staff, students and the broader community.

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion takes pride in our ongoing and demonstrated commitment to supporting, funding and elevating campus and community initiatives through sponsorships, grants and cross-functional collaboration to advance inclusive excellence. It is through these actions and initiatives such as those detailed in this report that we demonstrate student servingness and our commitment to equity and inclusion. At MSU Denver, we don't just talk the talk; we model what we expect from our campus community through accountability to our mission and action.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael Benitez Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Benitez Jr., Ph.D.
Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion
Metropolitan State University of Denver

Important Terms

Diversity

Conceptualizing diversity through an equity-and-inclusion understanding provides focus on the social representations and institutional processes that cause groups or individuals to be systematically excluded from full participation in higher education. It also relates to the understanding that benefits for some groups are embedded in the organizational aspects of the University.

This includes not only social identities and characteristics but processes such as design of curriculum, admissions policies and practices, hiring practices, budgeting, tenure decisions and any other day-to-day business decisions made within the institution.

Equity

Historically and politically, equity refers to the process of creating equivalent outcomes for members of historically underrepresented and oppressed groups. Equity is about ending systemic discrimination against people based on their identity and background, and it focuses on building areas where gaps exist in institutional needs to achieve diversity and inclusion (Williams, 2013).

Inclusion

Inclusion exists when traditionally marginalized individuals and groups feel a sense of belonging and are empowered to participate in the majority culture as full and valued members of the community, shaping and redefining that culture in different ways (Williams, 2013).

HSI Servingness

Using a multidimensional framework of servingness at Hispanic-Serving Institutions by Garcia, Núñez and Sansone (2019), MSU Denver defines servingness as being conceptualized by indicators of serving as well as structures for serving. Indicators of serving include academic and nonacademic outcomes that may be measured by HSIs, including but not limited to persistence, graduation, course completion, leadership identity, critical consciousness and civic engagement (Garcia et al., 2019). Students' overlapping experiences tied to each of these outcomes contribute to their overall sense of belonging and support (Garcia et al., 2019). As a result, servingness at an HSI is partially identified through actively fostering a culturally affirming environment for students through the creation and implementation of mentoring and support programs as well as cultural celebrations on campus.

Structures for serving then come into place as the additional definition of servingness. Structures for serving include organizational transformations to better serve Latina/o/x students.

Such transformations include HSI grant activities, decision-making processes, equity-minded leadership practices and policies, engagement with the community, etc. (Garcia et al., 2019). In practice, MSU Denver identifies servingness as an intentional transition of organizational structures through use of resources and programming. MSU Denver will learn with and from existing model HSIs to implement promising practices of servingness. Race and ethnicity must also be considered to fully identify the HSI mission for servingness. While it is inherent that there is no singular approach to serve the needs of students, servingness must therefore be multidimensional and race-conscious in application to serve diverse populations intentionally and adequately.



Diversity Strategic Plan

Metropolitan State University of Denver's Diversity Strategic Plan is a guiding framework designed to strengthen equity, diversity and inclusion across the campus community. The plan was shaped through a multiyear collaborative effort led by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council, a Universitywide group formed in spring 2020. The council includes nearly 80 members representing faculty, staff, students, alumni and community partners.

Tasked with examining policies and practices through an equity lens, the council worked closely with departments, divisions and stakeholders across the institution. Early in the process, it established a steering committee, and four subcommittees focused on recruitment and retention, HSI servingness, campus culture and community-mending. Each group contributed specific strategies and recommendations to inform the plan.

Between 2020 and 2022, the council hosted a series of forums to invite input from students, faculty and staff. It also met with academic and administrative leaders and reviewed institutional and climate data to ensure that the plan reflected the experiences and priorities of the campus community. The final version of the Diversity Strategic Plan was presented to the MSU Denver Board of Trustees in March 2022 and received formal endorsement.

This work remains ongoing. Guided by data, shaped by community input and aligned with the University's mission, the plan continues to serve as a foundation for action. Through its implementation, MSU Denver seeks to model inclusive excellence in higher education and deepen its connections with the diverse communities it serves.



Goals and Objectives

1. Inclusivity and Campus Climate Cultivation

We intentionally foster and sustain a welcoming and diverse University community that strives for structural diversity and belongingness. The community cultivates, nurtures and sustains a culture of inclusive teaching, learning and practice, based on the principles of equity, inclusion, access and anti-racism.

Objectives

- Collaborate with administrative and academic units to ensure that equity, diversity, inclusion and access practices are integrated into the units' goals and align with University priorities.
- Actively engage in the ongoing assessment of campus climate and culture to identify and address areas for improvement and disseminate and communicate findings with the campus community.
- Acknowledge and address equity and accountability gaps in policy and practice.
- Analyze data-driven and evidence-based recommendations to develop and implement appropriate actions with campus stakeholders.

2. Community Connections and Engagement

We deliberately develop new relationships, strengthen existing relationships and heal broken relationships. We build mutually beneficial collaborations that promote just transformation and further the educational and civic aims of the University and broader communities.

Objectives

- Engage in reflection to uncover and actively reconcile past and present injustices perpetuated by structural racism and systemic inequities impacting marginalized communities.
- Identify and evaluate the inequities and barriers within our social and operational structures by engaging with metropolitan Denver and broader communities.
- Invest resources in and create a sustainable infrastructure for the implementation of strategies to mend past/current harm and create a positive impact, such as community wealth-building, investing in and supporting local communities and recognizing and responding to local issues and inequities.
- Identify areas for ongoing cultivation and strengthening of community relations and mutually beneficial partnerships and collaborations.
- Ensure that aspects of marketing and communication, such as web presence and external relations, create a more inclusive, accessible and welcoming digital environment for MSU Denver and broader communities.

3. HSI Servingness

As a recently designated Hispanic-Serving Institution, we strive to become a national-model HSI, serving as a preferred choice for students and meeting the needs of a growing Latina/o/x student population in Colorado. We provide the resources necessary to develop academic and support services to address issues of access, persistence and success.

Objectives

- Inform policymakers and other stakeholders about HSI issues and advocate for enhanced funding and new initiatives, programs and services.
- Maintain expertise about laws, regulations, policies, issues and trends pertaining to HSI funding, programs and designation.
- Strengthen the process and criteria for the identification, review and prioritization of HSI/MSI grants and provide support for the implementation of grants awarded.
- Research and benchmark promising practices at HSI/MSI institutions for consideration.

4. Recruitment, Retention and Success

We commit to diversifying our faculty, staff and student body to better reflect the diverse communities we serve and commit to retaining and sustaining diversity among our students, faculty and staff. MSU Denver commits to the recruitment and retention of a diverse and inclusive workforce. We greatly value the diverse and intersectional identities of our faculty, staff and students. We recognize that to achieve equity, diversity must include but also go beyond representation.

Objectives

- Develop comprehensive recruitment and retention strategies to diversify MSU Denver's faculty and staff.
- Utilize data tracking with respect to diversity and understand data across employee categories, especially including administrative, classified and professional staff and faculty at all ranks.
- Provide institutional resources and support for the retention and success of diverse faculty and staff members.
- Provide opportunities for professional development and growth to faculty and staff members and students centered on Access, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Ensure recruitment and retention of students through collaboration with campus partners, sharing of strategies, vetting ideas and building of resources.
- Provide the resources necessary to develop academic and support services to address issues of access, persistence and success among students of color.

HSI Servingness

The First Colorado HSI Summit Hosted at MSU Denver

The Inaugural Colorado HSI Summit was held Sept. 20, 2024, serving as a pivotal platform for fostering discussions on Hispanic-Serving Institutions, advancing knowledge on equity in education and providing a space for networking, professional development and institutional collaboration. The summit brought together 160 attendees — faculty members, administrators and students representing various educational institutions and industry leaders — to explore best practices, challenges and strategies for ensuring student success at HSIs.

The Colorado HSI Summit was designed to:

- Foster institutional collaboration: Encourage partnerships among colleges and universities to share best practices and research regarding HSI designation and servingness.
- Enhance student success: Provide insights into supporting Latina/o/x students through advising, curriculum development and academic and financial resources.
- Increase leadership development: Offer opportunities for faculty members and administrators to build their leadership capacity within HSIs.
- Promote research and policy development: Discuss the latest findings in education research and policy that impact HSIs.
- Facilitate meaningful networking: Create structured opportunities for participants to connect and exchange ideas.

The summit included an inspirational keynote address, a presidents panel from university leadership on the importance of HSIs and their strategic direction, 10 valuable and relevant breakout sessions and networking events designed for attendees to interact with others across the state.

HSI Week 2024: Centering Culture, Commitment, and Community at MSU Denver

MSU Denver led the celebration of Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week 2024 with a full slate of events that honored Latina/o/x identity and reinforced the University's commitment to serving its diverse student population. The week brought together students and faculty, staff and community members to explore culture, promote civic engagement and reflect on MSU Denver's role as Colorado's most diverse public university.



HSI Summit, Sept. 20, 2024

The week opened Sept. 16 with the **Latinx Heritage Month Kickoff** at St. Cajetan's on the Auraria Campus. Hosted in collaboration with the University of Colorado Denver, the event featured cultural performances, student and campus leader remarks, free food and booths from student organizations and local vendors. MSU Denver student groups played a central role in welcoming attendees and setting the tone for the week, which focused on Latina/o/x excellence in education and community.

The next day's programming emphasized civic responsibility through **Voter Engagement Day**, also held at St. Cajetan's. Students had the opportunity to register to vote, collect information about upcoming elections and engage with community partners. Free giveaways and food encouraged participation while reinforcing the importance of student voices in the electoral process.

The following day, MSU Denver showcased the richness of Latina/o/x food traditions during **Cocina de los Correcaminos**, a tamale-cooking demonstration led by Manuel Del Real, Ph.D., executive director for HSI Initiatives and Inclusion. Held in the Hospitality Learning Center, the event highlighted the culinary diversity within Latina/o/x cultures and created a welcoming space for community-building. Later in the day, a screening of "A Million Miles Away" took place in the Center for Multicultural Engagement and Inclusion Lounge. The film tells the story of José Hernández, a Mexican American farmworker who became a NASA astronaut. This was in advance of Hernández's visit to MSU Denver as the 2024 Castro Professorship speaker.

The **HSI Servingness Reception** took place on the evening of Sept. 19 at SpringHill Suites Denver Downtown. The reception recognized MSU Denver's progress as a Hispanic-Serving Institution and honored the faculty and staff members and partners advancing Latina/o/x student success. University leaders shared recent milestones and celebrated award recipients who exemplify the University's values through their work in inclusive teaching, service and institutional leadership.





HSI Week concluded the following evening with the **Viva Southwest Mariachi Festival** at Levitt Pavilion in south Denver. This open-air community gathering featured live performances from renowned mariachi bands and provided a space for attendees to come together in celebration. The festival served as a joyful and culturally resonant conclusion to the week, reinforcing community bonds and honoring Latina/o/x heritage through music.

Through the events of HSI Week 2024, MSU Denver demonstrated its continued investment in equity, belonging and academic excellence for all students, with a clear focus on building a stronger, more inclusive future.

AAHHE National Conference

In March 2025, MSU Denver hosted the 20th Annual National Conference of the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education. This marked the first time the conference was held in Colorado and brought national attention to MSU Denver's leadership as a Hispanic-Serving Institution.

The event drew hundreds of scholars, educators, policymakers and students from across the country to the Auraria Campus. Conference sessions and plenaries were held in the Tivoli Student Union and MSU Denver's Jordan Student Success Building. The theme of the conference, "Reconciling Our Past, Challenging the Present, Shaping Equitable Futures," aligned directly with MSU Denver's mission and daily work.

MSU Denver was selected as host not only for its central location and facilities but for its demonstrated impact as an HSI. Some 56% of MSU Denver students identify as students of color, and more than one-third are Latina/o/x. Since receiving its federal HSI designation in 2019, the University has secured over \$14 million in grant funding to improve student outcomes and build capacity for culturally relevant support systems.

Throughout the conference, MSU Denver staff and faculty members and students served as presenters, facilitators and panelists. Sessions focused on Latina/o/x student success, community-college pathways,





HSI Reception, Sept. 19, 2024

equity in STEM fields and leadership development for emerging scholars. The University's vice president for Diversity and Inclusion, Michael Benitez Jr., Ph.D., delivered a featured plenary, reinforcing MSU Denver's reputation as a thought leader in equity and belonging.

Hosting the AAHHE's national conference also highlighted MSU Denver's broader role in statewide and national HSI efforts. As a founding member of the Colorado HSI Consortium, the University continues to help shape public policy, institutional practice and community-engagement strategies for HSIs across the region. The conference provided a platform for sharing those models with institutions around the country.

Being selected to host the AAHHE conference was a significant honor. It recognized not only MSU Denver's progress as an HSI but its commitment to serving with intention. Through its inclusive practices, grant-supported programs and focus on student success, the University demonstrated what an urban-serving public institution can achieve when equity is a shared value.

As MSU Denver continues to lead through practice and partnership, the conference served as a moment of reflection and momentum. It confirmed that the University's HSI identity is more than a federal designation; it is a core part of how MSU Denver educates, supports and prepares the next generation of Changemakers.

Empowering Future Leaders: MSU Denver and INSPIRE Host Change Agent Training

On Jan. 31, MSU Denver partnered with INSPIRE, a Denver-based nonprofit focused on increasing college enrollment rates, to host the second annual "Empowering 7 Generations of Activists" training day. The event welcomed 138 high school seniors from 10 low-income schools across metro Denver to campus for a day of workshops centered on postsecondary access and student empowerment.

INSPIRE identifies these students as "Change Agents" — young leaders who are preparing to become the first in their families to attend and graduate from college. The event was designed to equip participants with tools, information and critical context to navigate higher education and build their futures as advocates and scholars. Through its mission, INSPIRE supports students as they redefine their family narratives and take steps toward educational and personal transformation.

This partnership, co-led by Manuel Del Real, Ph.D., and Michael Benitez, Ph.D., reflects MSU Denver's ongoing commitment to support first-generation students and deepen relationships with community-based organizations. The day's programming placed educational empowerment within a broader historical and cultural context. It began with an acknowledgment of the Auraria Campus' history as a site of displacement for a Latina/o/x-majority neighborhood and connected that history to broader patterns of marginalization throughout the Americas.

Workshops and panels throughout the day provided actionable guidance for students preparing for college. Sessions focused on navigating institutional systems, cultivating academic confidence and understanding the systemic barriers many Latina/o/x students continue to face. Presenters addressed the current political climate and cultural resistance to diversity, framing higher education as a key pathway for structural change.

Jesse Ramirez, founder of INSPIRE: “I believe our work aligns perfectly as MSU Denver’s tagline is ‘Changemakers Wanted,’ and we are training young leaders to be Change Agents in their schools, families and communities.”

By hosting this event, MSU Denver continues to demonstrate how institutions of higher education can serve as platforms for community engagement, leadership development and generational change.

HSI Grants Development Institute

On November 22, 2024, members of the Office of Sponsored Research and Programs (OSRP) and Executive Director of HSI Initiatives and Inclusion participated in University of Arizona’s 4th Annual HSI Grants Development Institute. The purpose of this full day institute was to:

1. generate awareness of HSI related funding opportunities;
2. strengthen understanding of HSI models and frameworks; and
3. cultivate networks among those with shared interests for pursuing HSI funding opportunities.





Sweet Strawberry Tamales

Yields: Approx. 16-20 tamales

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook time: 1 - 1.5 hours

Ingredients:

4 to 4¼ cups masa harina (nixtamalized corn flour)

1 to 1¼ cups unsalted butter, softened (2-2½ standard sticks)

1¾ cups sweetened condensed milk (from one 14 oz can)

1 cup granulated sugar (divided, ½ for dough, ½ for taste)

4½ cups evaporated milk (from 3 cans)

1 cup raisins (optional)

30-40 tamal wrappers (corn husks), soaked in hot water

Choose ONE for flavor and color:

- 1-2 packets strawberry-flavored atole mix (for pastel pink and subtle flavor, may need more liquid)
- 1 packet strawberry-flavored powdered drink mix (Kool-Aid) (for vibrant pink and bold flavor)

Instructions:

1. **Soak wrappers:** Place corn husks in hot water and soak for 20-30 minutes until pliable.
2. **Cream fat and sweetener:** In a large bowl, beat softened butter until fluffy. Add condensed milk and beat until smooth.
3. **Mix dough:** Gradually add masa harina to the butter mixture, mixing until combined.
4. **Hydrate dough:** Slowly add evaporated milk (about 4½ cups total) until the dough is very soft, almost spreadable, but not runny. It should be “floppy.”
5. **Add strawberry flavor:** Divide the dough in half.
Option A: (Atole Mix): Mix 1-2 packets of strawberry atole mix into one half. If dough thickens, add a little more evaporated milk to reach desired consistency.
Option B: (Drink Mix): Mix 1 packet of strawberry drink mix into the other half.
6. **Adjust sweetness and add raisins:** Taste both doughs. If needed, mix in ½ cup granulated sugar to each half until dissolved. Stir in optional raisins (half into each dough).
7. **Prepare steamer:** Fill steamer pot with water below the rack. Line the rack with extra corn husks.

8. **Assemble tamales:** Spread 2-3 tablespoons of dough onto the wide end of a softened corn husk. Fold the sides over the dough, then fold up the bottom to seal. Leave the top open.

9. **Steam tamales:** Stand tamales upright in the steamer. Cover with a lid. Steam for 1 to 1½ hours.

10. **Rest and serve:** Turn off heat and let tamales rest in the steamer for 10-15 minutes (or longer) before serving. This helps them firm up and peel easily from the husk.

Recipe Options and Variations:

Vegan adaptations (Swap out the dairy products):

- Butter for vegetable shortening vegan butter stick
- Sweetened condensed milk for vegan sweetened condensed coconut milk
- Evaporated milk for use plant-based milk like almond, soy, or oat milk.

Different flavors:

The key to changing the flavor is using flavored drink mixes or atole mixes.

- **Melon tamales:** Use melon-flavored powdered drink mix.
- **Prickly pear Tamales:** Use prickly pear-flavored powdered drink mix.
- **Vanilla tamales:** Omit the fruit flavorings and add 2 teaspoons of vanilla extract to the dough, along with a few drops of yellow food coloring if you want a visual cue.
- **Cinnamon tamales:** Omit fruit flavorings and add 2-3 teaspoons of ground cinnamon to the dough.

Extra flavor combinations/add-ins:

Once you have your base sweet tamal dough, you can get creative with fillings and mix-ins.

- **Fruit jams/marmalades:** A dollop of strawberry jam, guava paste, or apricot marmalade in the center of the dough before folding.
- **Cream cheese:** A small cube of cream cheese in the center for a creamy surprise.
- **Coconut flakes:** Add shredded coconut (sweetened or unsweetened) to the dough or as a small filling.
- **Nuts:** Chopped pecans, walnuts or almonds can add a nice texture and nutty flavor.
- **Chocolate chips:** Mini chocolate chips would be a delicious addition to the strawberry dough.
- **Dried fruits** (beyond raisins): Diced dried cranberries, blueberries or apricots can add different fruity notes.

Teaching Assistant Program

The Undergraduate Teaching Assistant (TA) Program at Metropolitan State University of Denver continued to play a vital role in advancing student retention and success and inclusive teaching during the 2024-25 academic year. A collaboration between the Offices of Diversity and Inclusion and Undergraduate Studies, and led by faculty members Phillip Bernhardt, Ph.D., professor in the School of Education; and Rebecca Forgash, Ph.D., professor in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, the program is a proven model for student-centered academic support and success rooted in equity and leadership development.

Since its formal expansion in fall 2020, the program has engaged more than 400 TAs and supported over 9,000 students across 288 faculty-partnered course sections. Each semester, approximately 75 TAs are placed in more than 90 courses, with a majority of those courses at the 1000 level, where student attrition rates tend to be highest. In fall 2024, 100 faculty members across five colleges and schools participated, with the highest participation coming from the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences and the College of Health and Applied Sciences.

The program's design intentionally prioritizes underrepresented, first-generation, Pell-eligible students both as TAs and as beneficiaries of TA support. All TAs receive structured training on pedagogy, inclusive teaching practices and strategies for supporting peer learning. TAs assist with classroom facilitation, assignment feedback and one-on-one support, while also serving as approachable role models for their peers and bridges to the faculty.

Quantitative and qualitative findings point to clear impacts. In fall 2024, 87% of students were retained from fall to spring, outpacing the general undergraduate retention rate by nearly 14 percentage points. Students enrolled in TA-supported classes experienced a 4.16% higher retention rate compared with their peers. Survey data showed that 93% of faculty reported increased classroom engagement, and students in TA-supported classes cited greater academic confidence, improved understanding of course content and a stronger sense of belonging.

One student noted, "The TA explained things in a way I could finally understand. I passed Chemistry because of their help." Another shared, "Having a TA who looked like me made a huge difference. I felt seen and supported in ways I hadn't before." These reflections are echoed in the survey responses, where students consistently named TAs as one of the most valuable aspects of their learning experience.

The program also serves as a launching point for future educators and scholars. TAs reported gains in

teaching confidence, communication skills and clarity in their career paths. "This program made me realize I want to be a teacher," one TA wrote. "It gave me real experience and mentorship that I never had before." Others shared that the opportunity strengthened their sense of purpose and belonging at MSU Denver, especially in academic spaces where they previously felt isolated.



The impact is not limited to individual courses. Faculty members shared that the presence of a TA allowed them to implement more interactive teaching strategies, provide faster feedback and build stronger relationships with students. Many advocated for the program to be expanded into more departments and disciplines.

The program's alignment with MSU Denver's Diversity Strategic Plan is clear. It promotes retention, supports inclusive classroom climates and builds a diverse pipeline of future educators. It is also cost-effective. At an average investment of \$2,000 per TA per semester, the program yields measurable improvements in student outcomes and classroom engagement.

Looking ahead, continued priorities include increasing faculty and student participation, targeting TA placement in courses with high DFW rates and strengthening data-collection systems for ongoing assessment. Recommendations from recent evaluations include clearer communication about the TA role, expanded professional development for TAs and faculty members and more structured reflection opportunities for participants.

The Undergraduate Teaching Assistant Program is not a stand-alone intervention. It is part of a larger institutional strategy that affirms MSU Denver's commitment to equitable student success, peer mentorship and leadership development. As the University deepens its work as a Hispanic-Serving Institution, the TA Program offers a practical and powerful example of what intentional, equity-driven programming can achieve.



School of Hospitality WorkReady Opens Pathways for Newcomers to Denver

In partnership with the City of Denver and *Centro de Los Trabajadores*, MSU Denver's School of Hospitality launched the WorkReady Hospitality Program to meet a dual need: support for newcomers to the city and talent development for a strained workforce. Now in its second year, the program has delivered five culinary and three housekeeping training sessions, creating tangible career pathways for asylum-seekers and immigrants from countries such as Venezuela, Colombia and Chile.

Funded through Denver's Asylum Seeker Initiative, the program is designed to prepare participants for employment in high-demand hospitality roles, including prep cook, line cook and housekeeping positions. The curriculum blends hands-on culinary instruction with professional development, job readiness and language support. Students graduate with ServSafe certification and gain experience using commercial kitchen equipment, converting recipes, managing time and communicating in English in a professional setting.

The impact is evident. All graduates from the culinary track have completed food-safety certification. Many arrived with little to no formal kitchen experience but finished the program capable of executing complex dishes such as turkey roulade with seasonal vegetables and mosaic salmon plated with infused sauces. Several students from recent cohorts have already received job offers from program partners including Monarch Casino, Ready Foods and Spring Street Denver, pending their work authorization.

"This program has changed my life and my children's future," said one graduate from Venezuela. "I never imagined I would have the opportunity to study in the United States."

Culinary instructor Jay Lee, Ph.D., emphasized the program's intensive nature. "Many of our students had never worked in a kitchen, never seen snow and spoke

little English," he said. "Yet they showed up every day, learned technical terms, adapted to U.S. standards and took pride in what they created."

A key feature of the program is its emphasis on dignity, community and real-world integration. Bilingual faculty members and peer translators support students throughout the process. The capstone of the culinary track is a formal three-course meal served to invited guests, where students demonstrate their skills in a professional setting.

Beyond workforce preparation, the program fosters connection and confidence. "We've learned not just how to cook but how to show up on time, speak up and feel proud of what we do," said one trainee.

The program also reflects MSU Denver's commitment to community-centered equity. It addresses several goals outlined in the University's Diversity Strategic Plan, including expanding access to career-readiness opportunities, supporting linguistically and culturally diverse learners and strengthening community partnerships. By training students to succeed in roles where labor shortages are urgent, the program meets the needs of both individuals and industry.

The WorkReady Hospitality Program demonstrates how higher education can respond quickly and meaningfully to shifting demographics, economic pressures and community needs. The program offers more than skills: a sense of belonging, purpose and possibility for students to build a life in a new country.

With continued city funding secured through December and a new housekeeping cohort launching with support from Sage Hospitality, the program is poised to grow. MSU Denver will continue working closely with city partners, employers and community organizations to ensure that students are not only trained but supported, connected and empowered to thrive.

Programming: Inclusive Excellence in Practice

The 2024-25 academic year reflected MSU Denver's deep and sustained commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion. More than 40 programs were formally reported, though many offices and departments continued to embed this work into their operations, ensuring that inclusive practices are integrated into academic and student life.

Music, Race and Social Justice Series

Cultural programming remained central to this work, offering opportunities for students and faculty, staff and community members to engage in shared learning, celebration and dialogue. As part of the Music, Race and Social Justice Visiting Artist Series, internationally acclaimed pianist and composer Tigran Hamasyan performed "The Bird of a Thousand Voices," a genre-blending concert rooted in Armenian folklore, jazz and progressive rock. Organized by Elizabeth McLean Macy, Ph.D., in collaboration with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the performance invited participants into deeper conversations about identity, resilience and the role of storytelling in cultural preservation.

Lunar New Year Celebration

The Lunar New Year Celebration brought more than 400 attendees together to recognize Asian and Pacific Islander cultures through food, music and traditional storytelling. This year's event also marked the launch of MSU Denver's Asian Studies minor, connecting cultural expression with academic advancement. Similarly, the Viva Southwest Mariachi Conference welcomed over 100 middle and high school students for immersive instruction in mariachi music. Supported by a diversity grant, the event empowered young musicians to explore cultural identity through performance and encouraged future educational pathways.

DUHOP Mentorship Initiative

Student-focused initiatives advanced equity in academic and career development. The Inclusive Experiential Learning Fund enabled 45 students to participate in paid internships, prioritizing those with financial need and who are from historically underrepresented backgrounds. The DACA/Undocumented Health Opportunities Program, known as DUHOP, provided advising, workshops and structured mentorship for DACA and undocumented students, addressing barriers to persistence and fostering a sense of belonging.

C2Hub Dress for Success

MSU Denver's outreach programs extended support beyond the classroom. Dress for Success Day provided professional attire, styling guidance and résumé review for students preparing for internships or job interviews, with support from faculty and



The Morin Khuur, a traditional Mongolian horse-head fiddle, played by Ragchaasuren Baatar

staff volunteers. The Accelerating Diversity Job Fair brought together inclusive employers from across sectors, connecting students with organizations committed to equity in hiring. Campus services also included outreach for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program enrollment and disability access, ensuring that students had tools to meet their basic needs and fully participate in University life.

Confronting Ableism Development Workshops

The University prioritized professional development through workshops and summits that built capacity among faculty, staff and partners. The Confronting Ableism workshop addressed structural bias within higher education and its impact on students with disabilities. With more than 1,300 students registered through the Access Center, this conversation resonated across campus and encouraged more inclusive practices.

UndocuPeers Advocacy and Support

UndocuPeers training offered tools to better support undocumented students, demystifying legal frameworks and affirming responsive, student-centered engagement. The Workplace Equity Summit welcomed over 100 participants for a full day of panels on inclusive leadership, disability access and BIPOC entrepreneurship. Post-event evaluation showed that 92% of attendees reported increased knowledge of inclusive workplace practices.

Men of Color Leadership Summit

The 2025 Men of Color Leadership Summit at MSU Denver brought together 60 students for a powerful day of connection, reflection and development. With the theme “Healing, Hustle and Hope,” the summit created space for men of color in higher education to explore their identities, build leadership skills and engage in honest conversations about persistence and belonging.

The full-day event featured keynote addresses, panel discussions, interactive workshops and networking opportunities. Speakers included faculty members, alumni and community leaders who shared personal stories and professional insight on navigating systemic barriers, sustaining mental wellness and thriving in academic and professional spaces. Workshops focused on actionable skills such as time management, self-advocacy, career planning and emotional regulation.

Throughout the day, students were encouraged to reflect on their experiences and identify tools that support their academic and personal success. Between sessions, they connected with campus departments and student organizations offering mentorship, advising and culturally relevant programming.

A post-event survey revealed the summit’s strong impact. Participants rated it 9.75 out of 10 for strengthening their ability to navigate the challenges facing men of color in college. They also rated the summit 9.25 for increasing their understanding of leadership and access to supportive resources. Peer and faculty/staff support were each rated 9.5, while the campuswide environment received an 8.75. Students’ overall sense of belonging was rated at 9.25. Vendor engagement and networking received a perfect score of 10.

Participants identified common challenges, including navigating institutions not built for students of color, balancing cultural identity with academic performance and the need for more healing-centered spaces and mentorship. They expressed interest in continued engagement through organizations such as SHPE, LAEH, Brother to Brother and First Gen/Latinx initiatives, along with academic- and disability-support services.

The Men of Color Leadership Summit demonstrated MSU Denver’s ongoing commitment to cultivate affirming environments for historically underserved students. By fostering authentic dialogue, leadership growth and community connections, the summit strengthened a foundation of support for men of color across campus.



Men of Color Leadership Summit 2025



School of Education Solidarity Hours

Faculty members led efforts to integrate equity into academic environments. The School of Education hosted Solidarity Hours, creating space for faculty and staff members to reflect on racial equity, inclusive pedagogy and student experience. Faculty members also expanded concurrent enrollment programs to increase early access to college for underrepresented high school students. Within the Classroom to Career Hub, early childhood education credentialing programs supported educators of color through accelerated pathways that incorporated equity-focused mentoring and course design.

Across these programs, several themes emerged. Cross-sector partnerships played a critical role in the success of many initiatives, as did a continued focus on supporting first-generation and historically underserved students. Cultural and artistic programming served as powerful entry points for dialogue and engagement. Data across initiatives demonstrated measurable outcomes in student retention, engagement and career preparation. These collective efforts reflect MSU Denver's commitment to institutional transformation and position the University as a leader in inclusive, community-anchored higher education

Equity and Inclusion Faculty Fellows

Throughout the 2024-25 academic year, MSU Denver's Faculty Fellows advanced the University's equity, diversity and inclusion goals through a shared commitment to mentorship, research and institutional change. Their work was not isolated but instead reflected an interconnected strategy to support faculty belonging and retention through inclusive pedagogy development and data-informed decision-making that guided efforts of support. Central to these efforts was the cultivation of equitable faculty-support ecosystems.

Daphne Simmonds, Ph.D., led an in-depth needs assessment among academic deans to better understand how mentoring is practiced and where gaps persist, particularly for underrepresented faculty members. Her work, informed by interviews and campus-climate data, revealed widespread interest in centralized mentorship structures. She collaborated with Faculty Affairs and the EMBRACE program to explore formal solutions and helped organize fall and spring BIPOC faculty gatherings to create spaces for connection and community.

Similarly, **Chereka Dickerson, Ph.D.**, provided leadership within the Roadrunner Faculty Academy and helped facilitate equity-focused professional learning communities for tenure-track faculty members. By working closely with academic leaders and faculty affinity groups, Dickerson ensured that mentoring and support initiatives were grounded in experiences responsive to the evolving needs of MSU Denver's faculty.

Efforts to strengthen inclusive classroom practices and cultural programming ran parallel to these mentoring initiatives. **Elizabeth Macy, Ph.D.**, leads the Music, Race and Social Justice Visiting Artist Series, coordinating artist residencies that brought global perspectives and critical dialogue into the academic space. Events featuring Maria Isa, Daniel French and Tigran Hamasyan invited students and faculty members to engage with themes of migration, race and storytelling through music. Macy also facilitated faculty-development sessions that support new faculty members navigating the tenure process through the Tenure Track Supper Club. These efforts reflect a larger institutional investment in making cultural engagement and academic success mutually reinforcing.

MSU Denver's commitment to data-driven equity was advanced by **Jovan Hernandez, Ph.D.**, who co-led the analysis of the 2024 Campus Climate Survey. His work encompassed the cleaning and disaggregation of survey responses from more than 1,700 faculty and staff members and students, culminating in an executive summary and presentations delivered to MSU's Board of Trustees and other campus leaders.

Hernandez also conducted a department-level climate survey in the Department of Psychological Sciences, contributed to a National Science Foundation ADVANCE grant proposal focused on faculty diversity in STEM and represented the University at the McKnight Fellows Annual Conference. His leadership ensured that MSU Denver's inclusion efforts were backed by actionable insights and robust analysis.

Qualitative research and collaborative interpretation of Campus Climate Survey data were further supported by **K Scherrer, Ph.D.**, who focused on elevating student voices within the Campus Climate Survey results. Scherrer engaged leaders from campus affinity groups to inform the narrative behind the data, ensuring that policy development and planning remained student-centered. As co-chair of the Queer Faculty and Staff Collective, Scherrer also strengthened LGBTQ+ inclusion efforts across campus and co-facilitated an interinstitutional learning community focused on family diversity in research. Their facilitation of professional development within the Roadrunner Faculty Success Collective helped bridge the gap between research and instructional practice.

Meanwhile, **Bill Herman, Ph.D.**, worked to expand infrastructure, enhancing recruitment strategies and contributing to DEI-related research. He has led the growth of the office's database of diversity-related scholarship to over 478,000 entries. Herman produced three major scholarly contributions, including two DEI-related papers presented at the Western Decision Sciences Institute conference and a publication in *Business Ethics Journal Review* on epistemic injustice and workplace discrimination. Additionally, Herman provided workshops to the Colorado Inclusive Economy program, extending DEI conversations beyond academia. As co-chair of the Inclusive Faculty Hiring Committee, Herman continued to formalize committee goals and build a system to support strategic recruitment, including data tracking and communication templates for outreach and follow-up.

Together, the work of these six Faculty Fellows demonstrates the power of distributed and shared leadership in shaping an inclusive University culture and how faculty members contribute beyond the classroom. Whether building mentorship infrastructure, fostering community through the arts, analyzing institutional data or designing equitable hiring and credentialing pathways, the Fellows' contributions have deepened MSU Denver's ability to serve its diverse student body and retain a thriving, equity-minded faculty. Their collective efforts continue to inform the University's vision for inclusive excellence rooted in accountability, collaboration and sustained impact.

Castro Distinguished Visiting Professorship

On Oct. 8, 2024, MSU Denver welcomed José Hernández, former NASA astronaut and engineer, as the Richard T. and Virginia M. Castro Distinguished Visiting Professor. His visit underscored the University's commitment to honor Latina/o/x leadership and promote access to educational and professional pathways for historically underrepresented communities.

Hernández, whose story was recently depicted in the biographical film *A Million Miles Away*, shared his journey from working alongside his family in California's agricultural fields to becoming one of the few Latino astronauts to travel to space. During his keynote lecture, he emphasized the roles of education, perseverance and community in achieving long-term goals, offering a message that resonated deeply with MSU Denver students and faculty and community members.

The event brought together more than 400 attendees from across the University and metro Denver. In addition to the keynote, Hernández engaged directly

with students in small-group conversations. These dialogues provided first-generation college students, in particular, with the opportunity to connect with someone who had walked a similar path and broken through systemic barriers.

Established in 1997, the Castro Professorship honors the legacy of Richard T. Castro, a civil-rights leader and former state representative, and his wife, Virginia M. Castro, an advocate for education and social justice. The program invites nationally recognized Latina/o/x leaders to MSU Denver each year to share their expertise with the campus and surrounding community. Hernández's presence further elevated this legacy by highlighting what is possible when institutions center equity and invest in the potential of every student.

The 2024 Castro Professorship served as a moment of reflection and inspiration, reinforcing MSU Denver's mission to provide inclusive, transformative education grounded in real-world leadership and community engagement.





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MLK Peace Breakfast

For more than three decades, MSU Denver has hosted the annual MLK Peace Breakfast to honor the life and legacy of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. The 2025 event marked a new chapter in this tradition by moving off campus for the first time. Held at Mile High Station, the breakfast brought together over 350 students, faculty and staff members and community leaders to reflect on King's enduring impact and to recommit to the work of equity and justice.

This year's keynote speaker was Erika Alexander, an actor, writer, producer and activist known for using storytelling to elevate underrepresented voices. In addition to her acting career, Alexander co-founded Color Farm Media, a production company focused on racial equity in media and culture. Her keynote emphasized the importance of persistence in the face of injustice and the power of narrative to build empathy and accountability. She challenged attendees to view social change not as an abstract idea but as a daily practice rooted in community engagement and courage.

The breakfast also served as a platform to recognize individuals whose leadership reflects the principles King lived and died for. Honorees included K Scherrer, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Social Work known for advancing inclusive pedagogy and supporting LGBTQ+ communities; Jermaine Gunnells, assistant director of the Brother-to-Brother Program, who has led campuswide efforts to empower students of color; and Ryan Ross, Ph.D., president and CEO of the Urban Leadership Foundation of Colorado, recognized for his contributions to civic engagement and the professional development of emerging leaders.

"The Peace Breakfast reminds us that our commitment to justice must be sustained and visible," said Michael Benitez, Ph.D., vice president for Diversity and Inclusion. "It is a moment to honor community-builders, reflect on our shared values and chart a path forward."

As a signature event for MSU Denver, the 2025 MLK Peace Breakfast served as both a celebration and a call to action. By gathering across sectors and generations, the University reaffirmed its role as a convener for social impact and an institution grounded in the values of equity, peace and collective transformation.

Beyond the Ring: The Power of Representation in Sport

MSU Denver hosted “Beyond the Ring: The Power of Representation in Sport,” a collaboration between the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and the Department of Chicana/o Studies. The event featured Kali Reis, professional boxer, actress and activist; along with Rudy Mondragón, Ph.D., a scholarly expert in critical sports and ethnic studies at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles.

Over three days, the program explored themes of resilience, identity and equity in boxing and, more broadly, sports. In collaboration with the Department of Chicana/o Studies, the events included a colloquium led by Mondragón titled “On the Ropes: Dignity and Resistance in the Brutal Economy of Boxing,” where he discussed the challenges athletes face in an unequal system and how boxing can serve as a platform for social justice and advocacy.

The second day focused on uplifting women of color through a special event with Reis. She shared her journey in boxing and activism, speaking about the obstacles she has faced as a woman of color and calling for more representation and fairness.

The event concluded with a conversation between Reis and Mondragón, moderated by Michael Benitez, Ph.D., vice president for Diversity and Inclusion at MSU Denver. Together, they discussed pay inequality, discrimination and the importance of identity and representation in sports and beyond.

“Beyond the Ring” provided a powerful platform for reflection and action, inspiring participants and students to continue advocating for equity and representation in both sports and society.



Noel Distinguished Visiting Professorship

On April 23, 2025, MSU Denver had the honor of hosting Van Jones as the Rachel B. Noel Distinguished Visiting Professor. With the theme “Voices of Impact: Honoring the Past, Shaping the Future,” Jones delivered a thought-provoking visit that celebrated the enduring legacy of Rachel B. Noel and encouraged attendees to take up the mantle of change. The professorship consisted of two packed keynote presentations at MSU Denver and Shorter Community AME Church.



The program honors Rachel B. Noel, a civil-rights leader and educator. She was the first African American woman elected to public office in Colorado and helped desegregate Denver’s public schools. She also taught at MSU Denver and led the African American Studies Department. Established in 1981, the professorship invites important speakers to share ideas about justice, equity and social change with the community.

Jones, a CNN host, lawyer and social-justice leader, delivered a powerful keynote speech that deeply inspired the audience. He shared personal stories of struggle and success, emphasizing the importance of staying true to your mission even in difficult times. He posed a central question to the crowd: “What are you going to do about it?” His message encouraged everyone to act with courage and help build a more just and compassionate world.

Jones reflected on how his father’s sacrifice paved the way for his success and how that legacy drives his mission to fight for justice and opportunity, especially for underserved communities. His work on green jobs, bipartisan criminal-justice reform and social equity stands as a testament to the power of persistence, partnership and faith over fear.

Through storytelling and personal insight, Jones reminded the MSU Denver community that true change begins with individuals willing to act, even when it means being misunderstood. His message left a deep impression: “What’s more important? Your image or your impact?”

As part of the program, MSU Denver honored Rashad Anderson, Ph.D., and Russell Noles with the Hope for the Future Award. As director of the Call Me MISTER program and an associate professor at MSU Denver, Anderson is dedicated to supporting Black educators and students. Noles, a Denver native and MSU Denver graduate, serves on the University’s Board of Trustees and works actively to uplift local communities. The event also celebrated five students who received the Rachel B. Noel Scholarship, encouraging them to continue striving for excellence and leadership.

The evening closed with heartfelt thanks from the Noel family, leaving attendees inspired and united in their commitment to lead with compassion and conviction. Jones’ visit honored Noel’s legacy in the most powerful way: by calling each person to rise and become an agent of change in their community.



Office of Diversity and Inclusion at an axe throwing team building event

Office of Diversity and Inclusion

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion leads, collaborates with and engages with many of the efforts outlined in this report. We know this is a team effort with all the partners across MSU Denver: the staff and faculty members and students who have made this work possible.

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Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion
and Associate Professor

Manuel Del Real, Ph.D.

Executive Director of HSI Initiatives and Inclusion

Chalane Lechuga, Ph.D.

Associate Vice President of Faculty Climate
Research and Development and Professor

Julie Sharer-Price

Executive Assistant to the Vice President for
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Jeremy VanHooser

Associate Director of Equity, Diversity,
and Inclusion

Faculty Fellows

Wilfredo Alvarez, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

Chereka Dickerson, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

Bill Herman, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

Jovan Hernandez, Ph.D.

Professor

Elizabeth Macy, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

K Scherrer, Ph.D.

Professor

Daphne Simmonds, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

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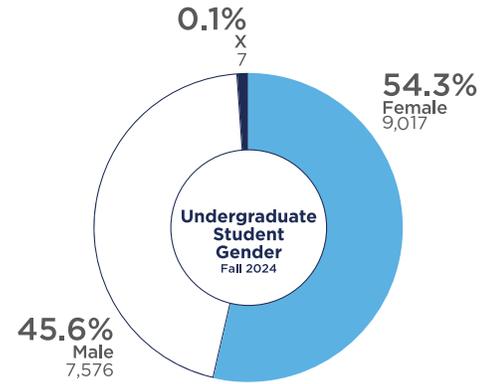
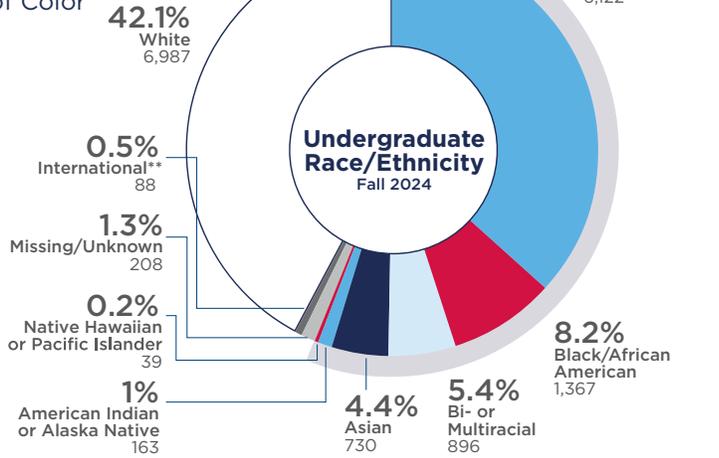
¹Graduated 2025

Student Demographics

16,600 Undergraduate Students

56.1%

9,317
Students
of Color



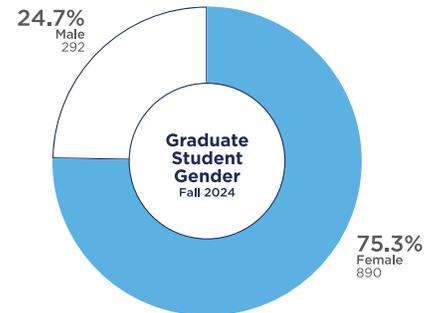
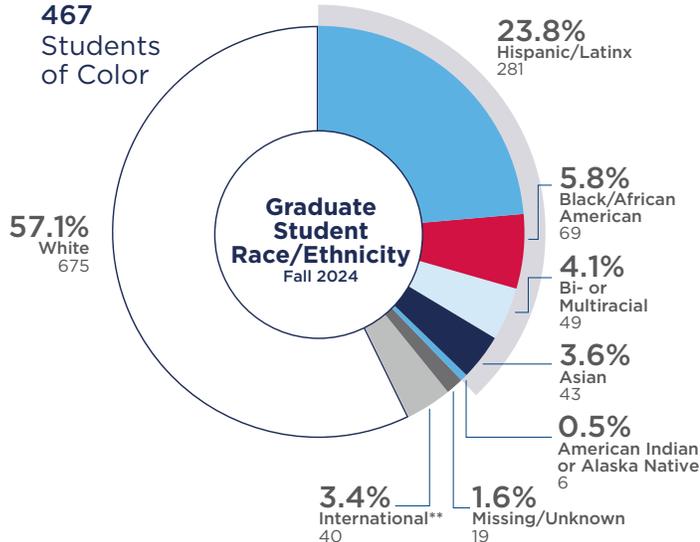
58%
First-Generation
Undergraduate
Students

*Totals percents not 100% due to rounding
**International Students not included in total students of color.

1,182 Graduate Students

37.8%

467
Students
of Color



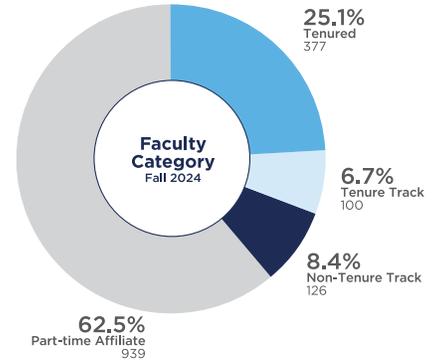
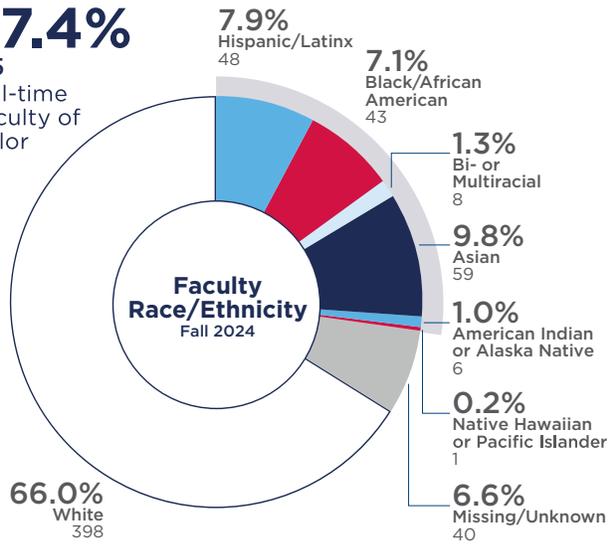
Note: No Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Graduate Students enrolled at the time of survey.

Faculty and Staff Demographics

1,503 Faculty Members

27.4%

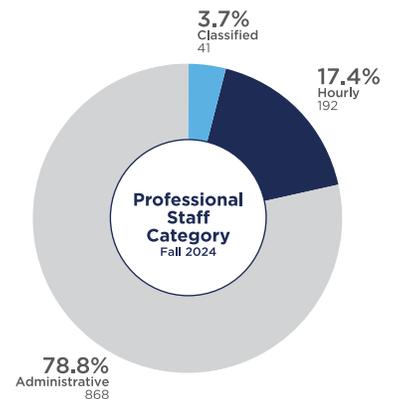
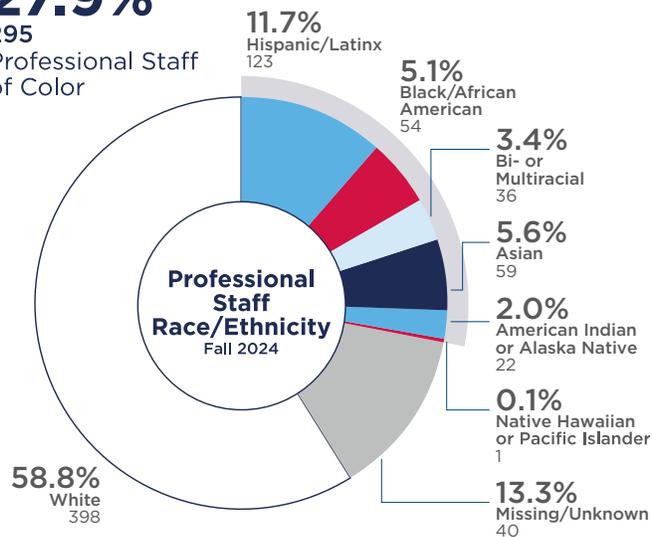
165
Full-time
Faculty of
Color



1,101 Professional Staff

27.9%

295
Professional Staff
of Color





MSU
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