Gender Equity Initiatives FAQ

Why did President Peterson conduct listening sessions on gender equity last fall?

In higher education, there are gender equity challenges unique to technology-focused learning institutions. At Georgia Tech, only 28 percent of staff positions above director-level are held by women.

In 2012, one of the major findings from Georgia Tech's Climate Assessment Survey was an expressed desire for targeted professional development opportunities for female employees.

During fall 2015, President Peterson invited members of the Georgia Tech community to participate in a series of listening sessions to discuss the experiences of women on campus as well as elicit ideas for enhancing gender equity and inclusion. These sessions were initiated following feedback from faculty and staff that some of the Institute's collective actions, practices, and policies demonstrated a lack of recognition for the contributions of women.

Who participated in these listening sessions?

The Office of the President met formally with seven groups—consisting separately of academic faculty, research faculty, staff, and students—and informally with various groups of faculty, staff, and students. Listening session participants were encouraged to share their experiences at Georgia Tech and offer ideas to enhance policies or campus climate issues.

What are the findings from these listening sessions on gender equity?

Two themes emerged from the listening sessions that will guide the Institute's action plan toward advancing a culture of gender equity and inclusive excellence:

- Promote gender equity policies and processes relating to recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion; create additional professional development opportunities; and emphasize the appointment to leadership roles of faculty and staff members.
- Celebrate and recognize the contributions of women in the Georgia Tech community and make the Institute's commitment to inclusion more visible in communications.

Tied to these themes, Georgia Tech identified 11 Gender Equity Initiatives that will be implemented over the next two years. These initiatives are grouped into four impact areas: **hiring, promotion, and tenure; professional and leadership development; leadership appointments; and recognition and increased visibility of the Institute's commitment to gender equity.**

The 11 Gender Equity Initiatives can be summarized as follows (not ranked by priority):

Impact Area 1: Hiring, Promotion, and Tenure

1. **Implicit Bias Workshops** – Offer Implicit Bias Workshops for senior staff search committees, faculty hiring committees, and faculty promotion and tenure committees. These workshops increase awareness of the impact of implicit bias and facilitate equitable decision-making across a range of processes.
2. **Diversity Guidelines to Search Committees** – Develop a search guidance framework with best practices and related policies for faculty and senior staff searches that are transparent and fair and yield the most qualified and diverse applicant pools.
3. **Processes and Pathways to Advancement and Promotion** – Review the performance management process for faculty to be aligned with career advancement, and develop a career track for staff that includes career maps and identifies core competencies.
4. **Salary Equity Studies** – Conduct gender equity surveys periodically for faculty and staff, and identify funding to meet salary inequity issues as appropriate.

Impact Area 2: Professional and Leadership Development

5. **Professional and Leadership Development Programs** – Develop leadership coaching for women faculty and staff, such as the Leading Women @ Tech program, and encourage faculty to be involved in student organizations.

6. **Family Friendly Programming and Policies** – Revisit and strengthen the [Family Friendly Task Force](#) recommendations for faculty and staff, including dual hiring policies, parental leave, and others.

Impact Area 3: Leadership Appointments
7. **Inclusive and Open Processes for Appointments** – Require guidelines in the identification of candidates for faculty leadership positions. Also require inclusive and open processes for appointments to faculty administrative, named faculty, and Regents' Professor and Researcher positions.

Impact Area 4: Recognition and Increased Visibility
8. **Reporting System Awareness** – Increase awareness of in-person and anonymous reporting channels for experiences of bias, including gender bias.
9. **Success Story Promotion** – Regularly promote the success stories and achievements of women through internal and external communication channels.
10. **Event Promotion** – Promote events on campus that feature and celebrate women, such as the [Eighth Annual Diversity Symposium](#)'s focus on gender equity.
11. **Gender Equity Data** – Analyze data on faculty attrition and compile reports that provide employee data and trends.

When will these Gender Equity Initiatives be implemented?
These initiatives will be implemented over the next two years.

Which units are tasked with implementing the Gender Equity Initiatives?
Moving forward, the implementation of the Gender Equity Initiatives will be led by Institute Diversity, in partnership with the Office of Human Resources and Office of Faculty Affairs. Institute Diversity will meet quarterly with unit representatives from the Office of Human Resources, Office of Faculty Affairs, Institute Communications, and other units as needed to prioritize and monitor progress on these initiatives.

Who should I contact with any questions and/or concerns about the Gender Equity Initiatives?
For any questions on the Gender Equity Initiatives, email institutediversity@gatech.edu. For more information, visit diversity.gatech.edu/genderequityinitiatives.