

Health Equity Forum (HEF) Charter

Statement of Purpose:

The Health Equity Forum (HEF) is an independent umbrella group of student leaders and student organizational representatives from across DGSOM and the UCLA graduate schools who are committed to health equity and social justice. Many student organizations and activities exist in isolation from one another, despite working on similar projects in the local community and sharing similar goals in promoting community service, advocacy, and social justice. The goal of the Health Equity Forum is for student leaders to share ideas, collaborate on projects and events, work together to build our campus culture of equity, social justice, and anti-oppression, and enhance our impact for collective action and community engagement.

Structure:

Student organizations, graduate school leadership entities with majority student representation (i.e. student government or school diversity initiative), and the Charles R. Drew and UCLA PRIME programs may participate in the Health Equity Forum contingent on agreeing to the values of the Health Equity Forum and Health Equity Hub and to the terms of participation outlined below. Individual students may also participate without any organizational affiliation. Participation in the Forum is voluntary and each participating entity, organization, or individual can recommit to participation terms every year. The Health Equity Forum (HEF) works closely with the Health Equity Hub (HEH), an on-campus space which serves as the physical meeting location for HEF. Student leaders in the Health Equity Forum serve as the core membership of the Hub and may take on roles in leading the Health Equity Hub. The entire Health Equity Forum membership will meet, at minimum, twice yearly during a Health Equity Forum Summit in the Hub, during which participating entities will provide updates on their ongoing activities. These biannual gatherings will also serve as a time when the entire group will collectively brainstorm goals for the upcoming semester and outline a calendar of events.

Governance:

The Health Equity Forum is a horizontal umbrella entity with the goal of engaging participation from its membership through working groups. These working groups will maintain communication and collaborate on shared long-term goals between Health Equity Summit meetings.

A committee of 2-5 student leaders from Health Equity Forum will oversee the daily operations and programming of the Health Equity Hub. After the first year of the Forum/Hub, these leaders will be elected to a one-year term by Health Equity Forum members and will agree to act as steward for the mission, values and vision of HEF/HEH. Their work will be informed by the HEF working groups.

Working Groups: Each working group will self-determine their own schedule and meeting arrangements, however, they will be responsible for providing updates on a monthly basis to Hub leadership.

1) Education and Curriculum

This group will work on building the Hub/Forum resource database, respond to emergent curricular concerns, and liaise with the Cultural Competency Committee at DGSOM, Medical Education Committee,

and similar entities at other graduate institutions to work on integrating the values outlined in the Health Equity Hub and Forum charters into the broader curriculum. This group will also work with the Hub leadership on speaker ideas and possible longitudinal educational threads within the Hub.

2) UCLA Equity and Campus Culture

This group will work on promoting equity on campus across the student body, faculty, administration and future health professional pipeline. This group will liaise with the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Outreach and Office of Admissions to work to improve the recruitment, participation, experience and visibility of students and faculty from historically marginalized and underrepresented minority groups at UCLA. In addition, this group will work on growing and improving existing mentorship and pipeline programs, and ensuring that the HEH/HEF continues to function as a supportive community space for students of color, queer and undocumented students.

3) Community Organizing and Advocacy

This group will help organize shared efforts to engage in community projects and local and national efforts on issues of health equity and social justice. The goal of this group is to increase our visibility and participation as health professionals and allies in the local community and in the broader struggle for social justice. These events may include already ongoing events, such as health fairs, community actions, such as city council meetings, demonstrations, and voter registration, or national campaigns. This group will also work with the Hub leadership to publicize these events.

Values:

The Health Equity Forum shares its core values with the Health Equity Hub, as the Forum exists to carry out the mission of the Hub through active student collaboration.

1. **Anti-oppression.** Our work centers on eradicating structural and systemic oppression on the basis of race, sex, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, immigration status, and religion.
2. **Intersectionality.** Our struggle to achieve health equity demands a holistic approach and a recognition of the multiple identities that individuals occupy and which impact their ability to access health care and the resources they need to be healthy.
3. **Advocacy.** Our conversations in this space will catalyze active change and advocacy within our institution and communities towards health equity.
4. **Autonomy.** We envision this space as a site for building a strong student community where we can foster a collective culture of accountability that prioritizes student goals and visions above all else. As students, our priorities will at times differ from or conflict with those of the broader institutions we participate in, and as such we hold that all decisions regarding advocacy goals, programming, and rules of conduct will be reached independently of institutional oversight.
5. **Collaboration and Community Building.** This space will serve as a site of interdisciplinary collaboration across UCLA as well as between our school and the broader communities of Los Angeles. As a community, we welcome and stand in solidarity with those who experience the full weight of these systems of oppression, including people of color, trans and queer people, sex

workers, the homeless, the poor, differently abled people, and indigenous and undocumented people.

6. **Equity and Social Justice.** We acknowledge the ways in which historic and current social, political, environmental, and economic injustices have driven the creation of health disparities locally, nationally, and globally. We stand resolutely opposed to institutions that engender and maintain oppression, including white supremacy, systems of incarceration and law enforcement, the death penalty, borders and their policing, reproductive violence and coercion, neo-colonialism and occupation of indigenous lands, and capitalism.
7. **History and Education.** We acknowledge the ways local, regional and global history create place-based health inequities, and the role of healthcare institutions in enacting oppression. We recognize that the advancement of medicine has, historically, been borne on backs of the oppressed, and often still fails those who are most vulnerable. History provides a foundation for understanding the interconnectedness between structural forces such as violence and poverty, and the health outcomes we see in our clinical work. We are committed to educating ourselves and our communities on the roots of structural oppression and the long tradition of revolutionary activism, towards the goal of creating a just and equitable society.
8. **Accountability.** Our work in the Health Equity Hub demands accountability to and respect for the communities we serve as well as each other. We want to support our communities and patients to have autonomy and decision-making power over the healthcare they receive and act as true partners on this journey to health equity. While we hope for and recognize that this space will provide an opportunity for consciousness-raising and growth, we maintain that these principles of accountability and respect are paramount towards building a strong, supportive community. Those who prove themselves to be unable or unwilling to uphold these values are not welcome.

Terms of Participation:

1. Each participating entity or individual will uphold the values of the Health Equity Hub and Forum.
2. Each participating entity or individual will treat the Health Equity Hub space with respect and keep the space clean.
3. Each participating entity will send at least one leadership member to a twice yearly Health Equity Forum Summit to provide updates on the work of the organization/entity. In addition, each participating entity will update the Hub leadership on upcoming events of interest to Hub/Forum members on a monthly basis.
4. Each participating entity will have at least one member who participates in at least one of the working groups. Participating entities may have multiple members working in multiple working groups.

Benefits of Participation:

1. Participating entities will have a cohesive voice within the institution and with administration to advocate for our shared priorities of curriculum development, diversity & equity, and community engagement.
2. Participating entities will be able to request the centrally located Health Equity Hub in the Center for Health Sciences as a space for their events.

3. Participating entities will be able to better advertise their events through a network of like-minded students and recruit participants and volunteers.
4. Participating entities will have a clear sense of the projects that other student organizations are working on and be able to better collaborate, minimize duplicative efforts, and advocate on each other's behalf.
5. As the Hub and Forum grow, participating entities will have access to institutional memory documents to streamline event planning and learn from past successes and challenges across multiple student organizations.