

Climate Wellness & Restoration Initiative (CWRI):

A Restorative, Equity-Centered Institutional Framework for Wellness, Belonging, and Organizational Thriving in Nursing Education

LED BY:
Office of Diversity, Equity,
Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB)
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A RESTORATIVE APPROACH TO WELLNESS, BELONGING, AND EQUITY • GROUNDED IN SCHOLARSHIP • LED BY THE DEIB OFFICE

WHY THIS MATTERS

- Burnout among nursing faculty exceeds national crisis thresholds
- Traditional wellness approaches focus on individual coping rather than institutional conditions
- Equity, belonging, and wellbeing are inseparable from workforce sustainability
- Humane learning environments are essential for preparing future nurses

THE CHALLENGE

Many institutional wellness efforts in higher education continue to emphasize individual coping strategies while insufficiently addressing structural inequities, moral distress, workload inequities, and exclusionary organizational conditions.


CWRI responds to the need for:

- ✓ Institution-level accountability for wellness and belonging
- ✓ Data-informed DEIB strategy development
- ✓ Restorative and trauma-informed organizational assessment
- ✓ Sustainable organizational thriving rather than individual resilience alone

PROJECT AIM

The purpose of CWRI is to develop a comprehensive, multi-method institutional environmental assessment that:

- 1 Establishes baseline climate and wellness indicators
- 2 Identifies structural and cultural drivers of inequity
- 3 Grounds strategic DEIB and wellness planning in evidence
- 4 Launches restorative institutional redesign efforts across nursing education systems

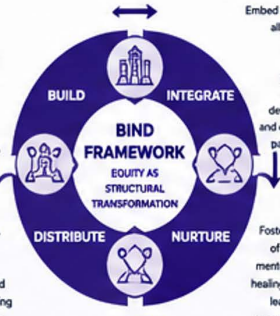


CWRI advances a restorative model of institutional climate assessment that integrates DEIB, wellness, governance, and organizational accountability into a unified systems-based framework.

INTEGRATED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

BIND FRAMEWORK

Build • Integrate • Nurture • Distribute



Establish the infrastructure, leadership, and policies needed to sustain DEIB efforts (equity dashboards, accountability alignment).

Embed equity into all aspects of research, curricula, pedagogy, workforce development, and community partnerships.

Share resources, power, and opportunities transparently and equitably, ensuring accountability to both internal and external communities.

Foster a culture of belonging, mentorship, and healing-centered leadership to ensure students, staff, and faculty thrive.

HUMANE FRAMEWORK

Healing • Upholding Rights • Moral Resilience • Accountability • Nurturing Belonging • Empowerment

- HEALING**
Create environments that repair harm, restore dignity, and promote wellbeing.
- UPHOLDING RIGHTS**
Ensure fairness, equity, and protection of human and labor rights.
- MORAL RESILIENCE**
Build capacity to sustain ethical practice in the face of adversity.
- ACCOUNTABILITY**
Embed transparency, shared responsibility, and accountability.
- NURTURING BELONGING**
Cultivate connection, inclusion, and psychological safety.
- EMPOWERMENT**
Distribute power, develop leadership, and build collective agency.

RESTORE FRAMEWORK

Resilience • Empathy • Sensemaking • Thriving • Optimization • Regulation • Empowerment

- RESILIENCE**
Create capacities through connection and supportive systems.
- EMPATHY**
Lead and relate with compassion and understanding.
- SENSEMAKING**
Make meaning collectively and acknowledge lived experiences.
- THRIVING**
Advance wellbeing and fulfillment across all levels.
- OPTIMIZATION**
Align resources, systems, and processes for equity.
- REGULATION**
Establish supportive structures, policies, and boundaries.
- EMPOWERMENT**
Advance agency, voice, and shared decision-making.

METHODS: FIVE-STREAM ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- RESTORATIVE LISTENING SESSIONS**
Trauma-informed qualitative facilitation with faculty, staff, and students.
- CWRI CLIMATE SURVEY**
36-item institutional climate instrument aligned with frameworks.
- EXISTING BIND DATA ANALYSIS**
Organizational equity metrics and prior survey data review.
- POLICY & DOCUMENTATION REVIEW**
Institutional systems, policies, and procedures analysis.
- UW INSTITUTIONAL DATA SCAN**
Public data review and benchmarking across UW systems.

INTEGRATED THROUGH BIND + HUMANE + RESTORE
To identify structural drivers of institutional climate and wellbeing.

KEY INNOVATIONS

- Moves beyond traditional "climate survey" models toward restorative institutional assessment.
- Embeds trauma-informed and healing-centered methodologies.
- Uses sentinel risk indicators to identify concentrated institutional harm.
- Aligns DEIB, wellness, governance, and workforce sustainability.
- Integrates policy review with lived experience data.
- Establishes measurable accountability structures for leadership and systems change.

EMERGING INSTITUTIONAL THEMES

Preliminary restorative listening sessions identified:

- Decision-making opacity
- Workload inequities and invisible labor
- Burnout and moral distress
- Belonging disparities across units and identities
- Need for trauma-informed and anti-racist pedagogy
- Desire for restorative accountability rather than blame-centered systems
- Need for transparent governance and equitable professional development access

RESTORATION vs. RESILIENCE

TRADITIONAL WELLNESS MODELS	CWRI RESTORATIVE MODEL
Focus on individual coping	Focus on institutional conditions
Burnout framed as personal issue	Burnout framed as structural outcome
Resilience as endurance	Thriving as organizational responsibility
Episodic wellness initiatives	Sustainable systems redesign
Reactive interventions	Preventive institutional accountability

LEADERSHIP & ACE ALIGNMENT

CWRI reflects principles emphasized within the AACN ACE Leadership Institute, including:

- ★ Systems leadership
- ★ Strategic organizational transformation
- ★ Equity-centered governance
- ★ Adaptive leadership
- ★ Workforce wellbeing and sustainability
- ★ Data-informed institutional change

The initiative positions DEIB leadership as central to organizational excellence, workforce retention, and institutional thriving.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING LEADERSHIP

CWRI offers a scalable model for nursing schools seeking to:

- ✓ Advance institutional wellbeing and belonging
- ✓ Reduce burnout and moral injury
- ✓ Improve retention and organizational trust
- ✓ Align DEIB with strategic operations
- ✓ Build restorative and humane academic systems
- ✓ Establish accountability-driven organizational change infrastructures

INSTITUTIONAL IMPACT

CWRI establishes:

- A scalable framework for restorative organizational assessment
- A foundation for longitudinal DEIB and wellness accountability
- A strategic infrastructure for workforce retention and belonging
- A replicable model for nursing schools nationally

“Humane care cannot be taught in inhumane institutions.”
— Ballout & Hamadeh, 2026

PROJECT TIMELINE

- 2025–2026 Assessment & Data Collection
- 2026 Analysis & Synthesis
- 2026–2027 Strategy & Priority Development
- 2027–2031 Implementation & Restoration
- Sustainability & Long-Term Impact

REFERENCES

Your references are ready!




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LEARN MORE

Explore the CWRI Framework, strategic plans, manuscripts, resources, and more.

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TAP OR SCAN TO CONNECT



Climate Wellness & Restoration Initiative

Suha Ballout, PhD, RN, FADLN, FAAN

Biography

Dr. Suha Ballout is a nursing scholar, educator, and equity strategist whose work advances health equity through research, leadership, and global advocacy. An immigrant from Lebanon, she brings lived and professional expertise to her role as Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access, and Belonging, and Associate Professor in the Department of Biobehavioral Nursing & Health Informatics at the University of Washington School of Nursing.

A Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing, Dr. Ballout has led transformative initiatives to strengthen nursing education and workforce diversity. She is the Co-Principal Investigator of the \$20 million Clinical Leadership Collaborative for Diversity in Nursing and the Principal Investigator of the MB-Health WEAVE Framework, a Massachusetts statewide initiative addressing behavioral health workforce shortages. Internationally, as the first woman and nurse to serve as President of the Lebanese Medical Association for Sexual Health, she championed LGBTQ+ health, led campaigns to end sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts in the MENA region, and trained hundreds of healthcare providers in inclusive care.

Her program of research includes trauma, mental health equity, LGBTQ+ health, and the well-being of immigrants and refugees, resulting in widely cited publications in leading journals such as Nursing Outlook, Journal of Advanced Nursing, and IJERPH. She has authored nationally adopted frameworks, including READY+, the Equity-Centered Nursing Leadership Framework (ECNLF), and the Integrated Workforce Trauma & Resilience (IWTR) model, that inform education and health systems transformation.

A recipient of the Massachusetts Nurses Association Nurse Educator Award, UMass Boston's Chancellor's Award for Distinguished Teaching, and UMass Boston Department of Nursing's DEI Award, Dr. Ballout is also an invited plenary and keynote speaker at international conferences. She is dedicated to mentoring the next generation of nurses and health leaders, aiming to advance belonging, justice, and equity in healthcare and society.

Contact Information



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