

Tulane Public Health highlights EDI and public health practice by creating separate offices for each area

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Eva Silvestre (left) and Susan Cheng.

Effective July 1, equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) initiatives at the Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine will be coordinated by a separate office within the school led by new Associate Dean Dr. [Eva Silvestre](#), associate professor of international health and sustainable development.

The school established an [EDI office](#) two years ago, led by Dr. [Susan Cheng](#), who also serves as the associate dean for public health practice. Going forward, Cheng will focus on public health practice, in addition to her role as director of the Doctor of Public Health program.

“As a leading institution in the area of health equity, it is important that our school be proactive in issues relating to equity, diversity, and inclusion,” said Dean Thomas LaVeist in his announcement. “For the past two years EDI efforts at SPHTM have been well led by Dr. Susan Cheng, and our thoughtfulness and efforts in EDI have expanded greatly under her leadership. At the same time, however, Susan has been leading our public health practice initiative and launching a fully reimagined DrPH program, both of which have been monumental tasks on their own.”

Silvestre earned her doctorate in international health and development from SPHTM and has been on the school’s faculty since 2008. Her educational background spans nutrition, anthropology, and public health, with experiences in both quantitative and qualitative data collection. Over the past few years, she has served as data strategist to the Tulane University Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Silvestre has also served as interim associate dean and director of the Office of Academic Equity for Newcomb-Tulane College.

Eva came to the U.S. as an asylum seeker from Guatemala when she was a child, and she has a passion for ensuring that everyone, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, health, or other status, is accorded equitable respect and opportunity.

“[Dr. Silvestre’s] commitment to EDI issues makes her an ideal choice for this role, and I know she will be an active voice at the school ensuring that equity and inclusion are woven into the fabric of our community,” LaVeist said in the announcement.

LaVeist anticipates that Cheng’s role in public health practice will only grow in the coming years as the school develops more ongoing and long-lasting partnerships with organizations to provide training for students in public health practice settings.