

2018 - 2019
Report of the University Council Committee on Diversity & Equity
April 1, 2019

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

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| Chair: | Ben Garcia |
| Faculty: | DaCarla Albright H. Gerald Campano Antonio Garcia Irina Marinov Timothy Rommen Eric Schelter Ebony Thomas |
| Graduate and Professional Students: | Francisco Saldaña Laronnda Thompson |
| Undergraduate Students: | Luke Kertcher Oluwafeyikemi Makinde |
| PPSA: | Cynthia Kwan Kathy Tang |
| WPPSA: | Tiffany Perkins Angela Rivers |
| Administrative Liaison: | Sam Starks |
| Staff: | Kuan Evans |

COMMITTEE GENERAL CHARGES

The Committee on Diversity and Equity aids Penn in fostering and taking full advantage of its diversity as well as in strengthening ties across all boundaries to enrich and enliven the campus community. The Committee shall advise the offices of the president, provost, and the executive vice presidents on ways to develop and maintain a supportive atmosphere on campus for the inclusion and appreciation of diversity among all members of the University community. The Committee will review and provide advice regarding the University's equal opportunity and affirmative action programs and policies. The areas in which the Committee shall report to the Council include diversity within the educational and work settings, integration of staff and faculty into the larger campus community, and ways to foster a campus environment that is inclusive and supportive of difference. The Committee also will advise the administration on specific diversity issues that may arise on campus.

2018-2019 SPECIFIC CHARGES

1. Review and comment on student experiences of microaggressions and bias and school mechanisms and practices for reporting and addressing.
2. Examine current and potential mechanisms and practices for campus wide information dissemination, particularly pertaining to topics and resources on diversity and equity.
3. Understand and comment on the difficulties of being a faculty of diversity (underrepresented minorities (URM), women, etc.), especially with regards to instances of bullying/microaggressions induced by senior faculty and staff.

Strategies and Focus of Inquiry

As the committee for the 2018-2019 academic year was largely made-up of members serving on the committee for the first time (only 3 returning committee members from 2017-2018), the chair decided to host an initial conference call to get all of the committee members on board with the general charge of the committee. Also discussed was what is expected of committee members and how exactly the recommendations made by the committee can influence University policies. This first conference call also served to start a preliminary discussion of the specific committee charges, before the first in person meeting, that were selected by last year's committee. This initial meeting set the stage for future meetings of the committee.

Number of Meetings

The committee had two conference calls and five in person meetings over the academic year.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

1. The committee had its first conference call on October 17, 2018. The purpose of the conference call was to introduce all the new committee members to each other, and also to discuss the specific committee charges and ways to tackle these charges during the upcoming year, with the possibility of revising the language around some of the charges. At this first conference call, Sam Starks went over what was discussed by last year's committee and how these new charges came to be. The two charges recommended by last year's committee were numbers 1 and 2 above, "Review and comment on student experiences of microaggressions and bias and school mechanisms and practices for reporting and addressing," and to "Examine current and potential mechanisms and practices for campus wide information dissemination, particularly pertaining to topics and resources on diversity and equity." Some questions about what confidential resources exist for students were discussed, and reporting structures for students and faculty/staff that are different from one another. Overall, it was felt that the chain of command is not always clear, and that the current system may not also have enough confidentiality around reporting.
2. The committee had the first in person meeting on November 6, 2018 to discuss the 2018-2019 charges. A discussion on the first charge concerning student experiences of microaggressions and bias, and school mechanisms and practices for reporting, were led by Sam Starks. He described how this charge was implemented following comments from students during the *Listening to Diversity* forum. The committee also discussed and agreed to host the *Listening to Diversity* forum again in the spring. The undergraduate students on the committee, Luke Kerner and Oluwafeyikemia (Feyi) Makinde, led a discussion on the Bias form and information dissemination. They mentioned how they either would rather talk to one another about concerns or, in the case of a classroom bias/aggression, would rather comment on this in the course review. The second charge of examining the current and potential mechanisms and practices for campus wide information dissemination were then discussed. Students said they go to familiar websites and they prefer to obtain text messages and emails. Sam Starks mentioned that Penn has a Diversity@Penn website designed to keep the Penn community informed. It was asked if metrics on the usage of that website could be obtained. It seemed like everyone was more or less content with how all types of information are disseminated at Penn through email, phone messages, texts, websites, departments, centers, etc., for all student, staff and faculty levels.
3. The committee had a second conference call on November 14, 2018 to continue to discuss finalizing the 2018-2019 charges. We started the meeting with a discussion on the Bias form,

but it was realized that there is not enough data on usage of the Bias form (which just went live in the fall) to assess its effectiveness. Dr. Irina Marinov spoke about bias and how it affects male and female faculty, and that there may be a need for mechanisms for submitting formal complaints. This then led the committee to slightly switch to a conversation on bullying and macroaggressions, specifically at the faculty level. The committee asked if Penn offers training that addresses bullying and microaggressions of faculty, and Sam Starks noted that Penn does have this type of training, but that it is not mandatory for faculty. Sam suggested that we invite someone from Faculty Affairs to give the committee an overview of training in this area, but that the committee's focus needs to be focused in scope. The meeting concluded with a conversation about reporting, with notes that each school has its own reporting structure and that the Ombuds Office is also a good place for mediation.

4. The committee had a meeting on December 12, 2018 to continue discussing finalizing the 2018-2019 charges. The committee again discussed the Bias Report Form and how it could be distributed campus wide, as it was felt it might not be readily accessible to everyone. Sam Starks noted that the Bias Report Form is governed by Joann Mitchell who disseminates the concerns outlined in the report to the appropriate resource (school, department, or center) within the university community. Sam further mentioned the AAU Climate Survey that would be occurring this year, and it was suggested that the committee invite Joann Mitchell, Vice President of Institutional Affairs & Chief Diversity Officer, to discuss the survey and how it is specific to Penn. The committee then had a discussion on latent bias training, and the imbalance of power regarding junior faculty here at Penn. Some committee members noted that their departments have some types of this training that urges colleagues to attend, but that the content does not make anyone feel singled out. Eric Schelter added that Penn should provide a safe setting to encourage and support faculty, particularly URM and women, to speak about their concerns. The meeting ended with a Latent Bias presentation by Lubna Mian (Executive Director, Faculty Affairs) which highlighted topics on Unconscious Schemas, Inconsistent Standards, Gendered Praise, and Bias Interrupters. The presentation was incredibly well received by the committee, who wished this presentation could somehow be seen by faculty in all departments.
5. The committee had the first conference call of the new year on January 16, 2019. The committee continued their discussion of biases faced by junior faculty. Irina Marinov spoke about discrimination and harassment that is endured by female junior faculty, and mentioned that this topic of faculty "bullying" is now being reviewed by scientific societies such as the American Geophysical Union (AGU). She agreed to send everyone handouts regarding harassment and discrimination that she had been given at an AGU society conference workshop. Eric Schelter then led a discussion on how the committee could advocate and raise awareness for junior female faculty who may be experiencing biased behavior. It was discussed if there was a way to survey junior faculty to get more information on what they might be experiencing and what resources might be accessible. Sam Starks mentioned the Gender Equity/Minority Equity Reports, which are now combined in the Faculty Inclusion Report produced through the Provost's office, and that he would report back with a brief summary on it at the next meeting. It was asked if the committee could be given more information about the questions on the survey, how data is collected, and what Penn is doing in response to the report. The committee decided to add a new charge for this year, "Understand and comment on the difficulties of being a faculty of diversity (URM, women, etc.), especially with regards to instances of bullying by senior faculty and staff." The committee created the first sub-committees of the year with Angela Rivers and Tiffany Perkins reporting back on the Bias Report Form, Eric Schelter and Irina Marinov scheduling a meeting with Lubna Mian (Faculty

Affairs) to discuss female junior faculty issues, and Tiffany Perkins leading resource gathering on the staff survey.

6. The committee held its next meeting on January 30, 2018. The committee discussed reviewing Penn's code of ethics, and noted that there are numerous links when reviewing faculty and staff policies. Irina Marinov sent a PDF file and link to the group on the topic of faculty harassment and bullying. The conversation included that Penn's academic code of integrity needs to be addressed and, if found lacking, suggestions to update the language could be recommended. It was asked if Lubna Mian's "Latent Bias" presentation could be streamlined to include issues surrounding female junior faculty. Eric Schelter and Irina Marinov agreed to bring this up with her at their upcoming meeting with her. It was settled that the committee would first start with reviewing the Penn Faculty Handbook and Principles of Responsible Conduct at the next meeting to begin to explore this topic.
7. The committee held its last meeting of the academic year on March 18, 2018. The primary focus of this meeting was a discussion of the Penn Faculty Handbook and Principles of Responsible Conduct. In reading through the various links of the Principles of Responsible Conduct, there were a couple places that described ethical and responsible conduct of faculty, especially with regards to respect in the workplace, and also in reporting suspected violations. However, the committee found the text/language surrounding many areas of faculty microaggression and harassment were lacking (i.e., complaints against faculty, and policy against retaliation). While text additions to the Penn Faculty Handbook and Principles of Responsible Conduct need to be made, it was also discussed that these additions will not solve major problems without a culture change on campus that needs to come from the top down administratively.

Listening to Diversity: A Forum for the Penn Community. On March 13, 2019, the Listening to Diversity forum was sponsored by the University Council Committee on Diversity & Equity, the Faculty Senate, and the Penn Forum for Women Faculty. Listening to Diversity is a public forum that will provide all members of Penn's campus community the opportunity to voice their concerns and share their suggestions for how to work together to bring about change. The Listening to Diversity Forum was very well attended by faculty and staff across all of Penn. One of the issues that came out prominently at the Diversity Forum is the large discrepancy in solving diversity and equity problems across various departments and schools at Penn. Specifically, some issues that get solved transparently in some departments and schools do not get solved in other departments. Speakers suggested that the morale of minority faculty and staff is connected in part to the training and interest of the deans of their schools in Equity/Diversity issues, as well as the programs put in place in their schools. Other topics that were discussed included:

- The need to increase hiring pools to include minorities
- Eliminating barriers to success for administrative assistants
- Developing better working relations between the diverse populations at Penn
- Unconscious bias training for faculty and staff
- Recommend every school and center have a diversity committee to address issues/concerns
- Penn needs to continue recognizing diversity as an intimate problem and deal with it as a campus
- Address structural issues that can hinder advancement and retention
- Address avoidance of raced based discussions in the classroom

RESPONSE TO 2018-2019 SPECIFIC CHARGES

Charge 1: Review and comment on student experiences of microaggressions and bias and school mechanisms and practices for reporting and addressing.

The committee had several discussions on the student experiences and mechanisms of reporting bias and microaggressions, and noted that many reporting schemes seem to be in place. Nevertheless, this is not always clear, as this exists in different places and forms within departments and schools. Student committee members felt adequate mechanisms were also in place as well. The usefulness of the new Bias form could not be determined, as it is new this year and there is not enough data to access. Nevertheless, the committee felt that students had several avenues for reporting microaggressions and biases, and feel that this charge was discussed fully and no further recommendations were proposed.

Charge 2: Examine current and potential mechanisms and practices for campus wide information dissemination, particularly pertaining to topics and resources on diversity and equity.

This topic was brought forth from the Listening to Diversity session in 2018. Most committee members felt that while information is available around resources and events, that it is often redundant across department/schools or uneven (i.e., some offices do a much better job than others). Specifically, it was noted that some schools are well served by their designated Office of Diversity (e.g., Medical School), while in other schools the burden of advancing on Equity/Diversity issues falls on the shoulders of the Deans, without a specialized office in place. This also raises issues of inequity in how some faculty/staff issues are resolved across the University (better in some schools than in others). As Penn is a very decentralized institution, better coordination of information dissemination would make efforts to promote diversity more effective. The committee's recommendation is that it would be better served if each school would consider creating/designating an Office of Diversity (some already exist, such as in the Perelman School of Medicine, Penn Nursing, and Penn Dental), and if those offices could better coordinate so that all students, faculty, and staff would get the same information from their respective schools. If Penn created a centralized Equity/Diversity office, to be led by the newly announced position of an Associate Vice President for Equity and Title IX Officer, this could serve as the epicenter for such cross-school coordination to take place.

Charge 3. Understand and comment on the difficulties of being a faculty of diversity (URM, women, etc.), especially with regards to instances of bullying/microaggressions induced by senior faculty and staff.

Several committee members commented that there are various challenges and issues that URM and women junior faculty face pre-tenure, and that often this is a result of "bullying" by senior faculty members and staff. The committee has studied Penn's Responsible Code of Conduct and Faculty Handbook, and determined that language surrounding bullying/intimidation of faculty by other faculty is severely lacking. This is especially evident when comparing Penn's policies to other universities and professional societies that have recently added such guidelines/policies covering faculty bullying into their official handbooks. This was unanimously accepted by the committee as a new charge for this academic year, and we are still in the middle of deciding on new language recommendations for the Penn Responsible Code of Conduct and Faculty Handbook. Next year, we will look for ways for Penn to improve and expand the discussion and resources for bullying, hostile and intimidating behavior (microaggressions), gendered harassment, and non-violent sexual harassment. These harassments need to be defined clearly and

more extensively in the newly proposed Penn sexual harassment policy (and other relevant policies) and specifically in the Faculty Handbook (https://provost.upenn.edu/policies/faculty-handbook/other-policies/vi-e#_ftn2). Mechanisms need to be put in place at Penn to address these issues, e.g., via a centralized website (see for example <https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>), by defining clear codes of faculty and staff conduct, and by finding ways to take action against aggressors and to support victims.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE CHARGES

As most of the committee was made up of new members (including the chair), the committee took a little longer to get settled in and focus our diverse thoughts on the two charges recommended from last year. Additionally, due to strong discussions on microaggressions, the committee added one new charge this year on understanding the microaggressions junior faculty face. Therefore, we recommend that we continue our work next year on 2 of the 3 charges we tackled this year as listed below:

1. Examine current and potential mechanisms and practices for campus wide information dissemination, particularly pertaining to topics and resources on diversity and equity to have a better centralized effort in these areas.
2. Understand and comment on the difficulties of being a faculty of diversity (URM, women, etc.), especially with regards to instances of bullying/microaggressions induced by senior faculty and staff to support setting up mechanisms at Penn to address the issues.