

Daniels Diversity & Equity Committee
Minutes – August 6, 2020

In Attendance

- Jane Wolff (Chair)
- Rob Wright
- John Shnier
- Nene Brode
- Nicole Tratnik
- Mary Lou Lobsinger
- Randa Omar
- Jenny Hill
- Danijela Puric- Mladenovic
- Janice Miyagi
- Clara James
- Mauricio Quiros Pacheco
- Mitchell Akiyama
- Markus Peterson

Minute taker: Harold Tan

Convened: 5:03 pm

1. Introductions

None.

2. Final Approval of July 23 Minutes

Moved: Nicole Tratnik

Seconded: Clara James

Motion carried. Opposed: None. Abstentions: None

3. Approval of July 30 Minutes

Moved: Mauricio Quiros Pacheco

Seconded: Daniela Puric- Mladenovic

Motion carried. Opposed: None. Abstentions: None.

4. Notes from Chair – Questions

None.

5. Defining a Framework to Discuss Faculty and Staff Diversity (Mary Lou Lobsinger and Mauricio Quiros Pacheco)

Chair provided some context for members. Looking at the statistics on faculty and staff diversity is an important first step, and only a first step. Numbers can reveal a great deal, but also obscure and hide important information. Chair asked Mary Lou Lobsinger and Mauricio Quiros Pacheco to review the most recent statistics and deliver a presentation to the Committee.

Highlights from the presentation:

- Presentation based on diversity and equity statistics provided by the Faculty's Business Office in June 2020
- Presentation is the beginning of the conversation
- A number of important must be asked if we are to look beyond the basic numbers:
 - What values and information can be represented through numbers?
 - Do numbers and charts help assess diversity and equity within the Faculty?
 - How do numbers and charts become complicit in constructing particular realities?
 - What contents and values are privileged and what other types of contents or values elided?
- Important to look beneath the numbers and look at what they really mean
- Otherwise, there is a risk that we are merely ticking boxes to satisfy a superficial checklist without looking at deeper, more profound underlying issues such as power, influence and intersectionality
- An example of a superficial approach to looking at number is: "We need a _____ (fill in the blank, woman, BIPOC, etc.) for _____ (fill the blank: a design review panel, for Dean, for a committee, a signature, on the front desk...)."
- This approach also does not recognize how hiring is structured in a university setting (eg. FTE or "Full Time Equivalent")
- An FTE is not a person. It is a unit of measurement that take on multiple forms and can encompass more than one person
- Depending on how the FTE is organized, it can distort statistics significantly if the goal is to measure sustainable, long-term progress on diversity and equity issues

- Initial conversations about what diversity and equity mean/are, should start out from the official –at least the University’s/Faculty’s -definitions and policies on equity and diversity
- In reviewing university policies, presenters unable to find an official definition
- Reflective of fact that diversity is a changing and moving object
- Distinctions between social diversity and content diversity should be made as they do not seem to necessarily correlate
- One way to move forward is to use an intersectionality lens
- Every course is directly related to social and content issues on diversity and equity. This includes the course’s delivery and requirements, including language and technology
- Metrics provide the most reliable evidence based/objective knowledge to move forward
- We need to refine them
- There are implicit biases in making decisions through metrics
- Metrics should be also be projected into the future to illustrate the corrections that have been put into place but are not currently measurable (i.e. how would the composition of tenured faculty look like if we consider all recent hires?)
- The numbers in the pie charts will change in the next few years
- An inquiry into diversity and equity needs to be disaggregated, for example:
 - diversity and equity in admissions
 - diversity and equity in awards & merit
 - diversity and equity in hires
 - diversity and equity in advancement and promotion
 - diversity and equity in teaching assignments: core courses, graduate and undergraduate
 - diversity and equity in degree requirements to be employed at the Faculty
 - diversity and equity in terms of who sits at the table where decisions are being made
 - diversity and equity in the types of labour: responsibility vs. authority, “care work” or command work?
- “Progress” as represented by FTE or Full Time Equivalent: the numbers are based on those who hold anywhere from a one year contract at 50% to C.L.T.A. (contract limited-term appointments), teaching stream, tenure track, tenured, and those who enjoy full professorships

- We need a more nuanced reading to understand the distribution of “diversity and equity”
 - For example, who sits at the table when decisions are being made?
 - Historically, though there were many women teaching at this Faculty, they were all adjunct professors without long-term contracts, and adjunct professors have a very different relationship to the institution
 - Pie chart breakdowns do not indicate who holds genuine influence and power in making decisions that lead to long-term structural and cultural change (eg. tenure track, research v. teaching stream)
 - Important to break numbers down according to academic program, which faculty contribute to teaching and other factors such as educational background
 - If we are hiring faculty who received their education from a small number of institutions, that in itself can limit diversity
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- The design disciplines are all deeply racialized
 - The disciplines and pedagogies of technology, ecology, engineering are equally, deeply racialized
 - Have to re-think the whole curriculum and how we approach pedagogy
 - It’s really important for those who teach studio
 - Is diversity confined to electives, or incorporated into core courses (linked to curriculum)

Chair opened discussion and asked: how do these questions influence our next steps? Where do we go from here?

- Self-awareness is critical, as we all operate under larger structures (eg. capitalism) that inform how we think and behave
 - Imperative that we think broadly and critically
 - Everything we do impacts diversity and equity
 - Example: How does the cost of printing disadvantage students who are less financially secure than other students?
 - Another example is the cost of technology imposed upon students who now are being expected to engage remotely (eg. cost of increasing internet bandwidth, upgrading their laptop, etc.)
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- Going-forward, Chair suggest two actions:
 - First, embark on a longer-term analysis of exactly the kinds of obfuscations the original data set presented
 - FTE is not a person
 - Value in conducting finer-grain analysis of how FTE’s organized and distributed

- **Action:** M.L. Lobsinger and M.Q. Pacheco to provide realistic timeline as to when a more nuanced analysis can be conducted
 - Second, identify opportunities for change given faculty searches in the coming academic year
 - Acting Dean indicated that he is in the process of reviewing the entire faculty complement plan
 - The faculty complement plan does not identify who will fill the position
 - Acting Dean will present faculty complement plan to committee once it is finalized
 - Acting Dean acknowledged that one way to capture a more diverse pool of applicants is to disseminate information more broadly
 - Many potentially qualified applicants do not apply for postings because they don't think they will succeed
 - Universities are more flexible than people think
 - Before we can do so, however, we have to see what we've done and what options are open to us (ie. We need to see the whole tableau)
 - Acting Dean observed that if we are a Faculty, some of these positions should be able to cross over multiple disciplines
 - Example: Forestry identified that they need an Environmental Economist. Presents opportunities for cross-appointments
 - Acting Dean commented that our hiring has traditionally been very late. We end up scrambling for sessionals, and that is not conducive to diversifying teaching pool
 - One of his commitments is to move up hiring decisions to May, rather than June
 - Acting Dean stated that Faculty has made a lot of hires in the last five years in the teaching stream
 - When he first came to the Faculty, 90% of teaching was done by sessionals
 - That meant that composition of Faculty could change on a dime
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- Student Representative asked how Committee could track progress already made
 - Next week, Acting Dean will be announcing all committees
 - Curriculum committee, for example, may ultimately affect hiring
 - All committees will have student representation
 - Committees will be posted on website
 - First three or four committees will be posted next week
 - If there are gaps in terms of who was (and was not) notified, student unions can bring that to the attention of the Acting Dean
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- Student Representative asked how many faculty hires are planned

- Acting Dean stated that there are three positions available in Forestry, Visual Studies and Architecture
 - Hiring process delayed because of COVID-19
 - Possibility of an additional three hires
 - Acting Dean stated that composition of hiring committees will be made public
 - Historically, that was not done
 - Diversity and Equity Officer (to be hired) will assist in communicating job postings as broadly as possible
 - Recognition that reaching out to networks increases likelihood of capturing a more diverse applicant pool
 - Diversity and Equity Officer could work with students in broadening network
 - Diversity and Equity Officer will also work with hiring committees to address implicit bias
- Acting Dean acknowledged that while he has ultimate decision making authority over faculty hires, it is a risky position for a Dean not to accept the recommendation of the hiring committee
- A lot of progress has already been made in diversifying the faculty pool and rebalancing teaching responsibilities previous assumed disproportionately by sessionals
 - Core faculty is now more diverse

Action: Acting Dean to provide information regarding:

- Hiring committee composition
- Faculty complement plan

6. Communication Strategy - Discussion

- Chair commented that it's become clear that we have had communication gaps between the Committee and rest of our community
 - As we look at September and start of term, colleagues and students will be have questions about work we did over summer
 - Now is time to think about strategies and goals for what we are communicating, to whom, and modes of delivery
 - **Action:** Document will be created in Committee Teams page that will invite members to contribute their thoughts on communication strategy
- New Communications Officer has just taken up position, and it would be good to hear about her role and how she can collaborate with the Committee
 - **Action:** Communications Officer will be invited to speak with Committee

- Next week, we'll hear from Executive Board of the Black Architects and Interior Designers Association (BAIDA)

7. Motion to adjourn

Moved: Mauricio Quiros Pacheco

Seconded: Daniela Puric- Mladenovic

Motion carried. Opposed: None. Abstentions: None

Meeting end: 6:25 pm