

DEI Implementation Team Report: February 2020

Introduction

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Implementation Team is pleased to share a report of the progress made on the goals identified in the [DEI Planning Team Report](#) issued in April 2019. In this update, we have organized the report into the following sections:

1. Priorities with moderate to significant progress
2. Priorities requiring groundwork for further action
3. Priorities that were deferred
4. Priorities for the Spring 2020 semester (includes additional priorities that were not outlined in the initial DEI Plan)

Our goal is to enhance transparency and communication around these efforts. We have paraphrased the goals identified in the original DEI Plan to make this document more user friendly and concise. Specific goals articulated in the DEI Plan are referenced in the paraphrased goals below (e.g., “see A-1-1”).

We made progress on some of the “Meta Goals” articulated in the introduction of the DEI Plan (see page 3).

- Dean Amit Taneja’s position was elevated to “Associate Provost for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion”. Dean Taneja retained his ongoing responsibilities for Academic Affairs as defined in the original position description, and the College created further [dotted line structures](#) for additional units outside of academic affairs. This new DEI structure aims to enhance coordination and accountability across divisions.
- This report, in addition to the dissemination of the Campus Climate Survey data, are efforts aimed at enhancing transparency and accountability towards DEI efforts. In addition to campus wide dissemination, the campus climate study was discussed in specific divisions (e.g. Student Affairs) and ongoing conversations are scheduled for additional divisions (e.g. Athletics, Faculty Departments, etc.).
- The College established the [DEI Implementation Team](#) in the fall of 2019.
- Efforts to engage the Board of Trustees on campus climate and DEI issues are underway. The Academic Affairs and Student Life sub-committees of the Board of Trustees received presentations on the campus climate survey results.

Section 1: Priorities with moderate to significant progress

The College made significant progress on the following goals established in the DEI plan.

- **Goal:** Establish an institutional membership with the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (see B-3-1)
 - **Progress:** The College established an institutional membership. 51 faculty members have signed up for this resource.

- **Goal:** Create and hire a staff position focused on LGBTQ student services (see B-1-1)
 - **Progress:** Dean Michele Murray created this position. A national search resulted in the hire of Amie Archambault as the new Assistant Director of OME/ LGBTQIA+ Specialist.

- **Goal:** Implement recommendations from the International Students Survey (see B-4-2)
 - **Progress:** Of the recommendations listed, the first annual [International Education Week](#) was celebrated on campus in September 2019. The Assistant Dean of International Students (Tina Chen), the Associate Dean for Student Engagement (Michelle Bata) and the Director of Academic Services and Learning Resources (Kelly Saintellus) are actively working to expand the existing Mentor Program to include international student mentorship.

- **Goal:** Redesign Orientation Programs; Build Community Across Programs (see A-1-4)
 - **Progress:** Three components are currently underway: 1) The Office of Student Involvement (OSI) will work with Odyssey and Passport to ensure a structured transition between these programs and Gateways; 2) OSI will be expanding their efforts to engage the 40% of incoming students - largely students of color, students who live far away, and international, first-generation, and Pell grant eligible students - who do not currently attend Summer Gateways; 3) reimagining Fall Gateways with an emphasis on creating time and space for social activities, relationship-building, and acclimating to campus.

- **Goal:** Create a Commuter Student Association (see B-5-1)
 - **Progress:** The Office of Student Involvement is actively working directly with commuters in order to identify specific commuter needs and work toward implementing solutions for those needs.

- **Goal:** Enhance first year retreat programs to enhance dialogue and community-building (see D-2-1)
 - **Progress:** the Chaplains' Office hired an outside consultant, Essential Partners, to revamp the retreat and they have provided data to help us examine the curriculum. Three separate retreats with first year students were implemented under this new curricular model focused on difficult dialogues, community building and engaged campus citizenship. Over 100 students participated. Over 25 faculty/staff and an additional 25-30 student leaders were also trained in this dialogue model.

- **Goal:** Department chair's role in fostering inclusive environments (see D-3-3)
 - **Progress:** The Associate Provost for DEI and Deans of Faculty worked with department chairs on these topics. Additional conversations are planned for the Summer 2020 department chairs' retreats.

- **Goal:** Form working group for LGBTQ issues – policies & practices (see B-1-2) & Campus pride LGBTQ Campus Climate Index & evaluate (see B-1-3)
 - **Progress:** The *LGBTQIA+ Policies and Procedures Task Force* was appointed in the Fall of 2019 to review our policies and practices. The Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (Kasey Catlett) and the Asst. Director of OME/LGBTQIA+ Coordinator (Amie Archambault) are the conveners of this team. A recommendations report will be produced on April 1, 2020. Additionally, this task force is scheduled to participate in the Campus Pride Index assessment in the Spring 2020 semester to benchmark our efforts in comparison to best practices.

- **Goal:** Create greater visibility for ally groups (see A-1-2)
 - **Progress:** The Asst. Director of Athletics for Student Athlete Development (Aaron Dashiell), the Director of the ODEI (Kasey Catlett) and staff in OSI are identifying current ally organizations that are already established and active and those that are no longer active. Once those active organizations are identified, structures will be implemented to provide additional support for ally focused initiatives and cross-campus collaboration

- **Goal:** Administer CUPA-HR DEI Maturity Index (see D-5-1)
 - **Progress:** The DE&I Implementation Team assessed the College’s progress against an index of five critical factors for DE&I effectiveness or “maturity”: 1) Communication & Education, 2) Formal Assessments Administered/Goals, 3) Culture, 4) Investment and Infrastructure, and 5) Compensation, Recruitment, and Retention. The Team assessed that the College was generally in either the early or middle stages of “maturity”; having made some progress in all areas, but with much more work to do before reaching higher levels of effectiveness. This assessment will be administered periodically as a means to measure progress the College is making on overall DE&I initiatives and to prioritize the DEI Implementation team’s priorities.

Section 2: Priorities requiring groundwork for further action

The following set of priorities required additional conversations, data collection and input from relevant offices. It is important to note that the DEI Planning Team produced its initial recommendations within a short time-frame, and that the team did not have ample opportunity to seek input from outside offices.

- **Goal:** Living Learning Collaboration (formerly known as the Montserrat 4th Hour; see A-1-1)
 - **Progress:** Montserrat, the First-Year Advising Program, the first-year Class Dean, and Student Affairs are working on plans to ensure that a robust first-year living-learning community is in place in order to introduce our students to our

Jesuit, Catholic mission and topics related to DEI and sexual respect. Significant groundwork was laid this fall with the class book, *The Uninhabitable Earth*, and subsequent cluster discussions. Future work will focus on sexual respect and diversity themes.

- **Goal:** Provide courses/trainings on DEI topics for faculty and staff (see A-2-2)
 - **Progress:** The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Student Affairs, and the Office of Human Resources are considering the development of a “*DEI Certificate Program*”. We are in conversation with colleagues with Clark University to learn more about a similar initiative on their campus, which was launched in Fall 2017. Additionally, the Associate Provost for DEI and the Director of Montserrat (Prof. Alison Ludden) have continued a partnership to offer a number of “Faculty Think Tank” conversations.

- **Goal:** Coordinate campus resources for students’ financial needs (see B-2-1)
 - **Progress:** This priority has been expanded and groundwork has been laid to launch an equity study to better understand the experiences of our students from lower income backgrounds. This equity study will allow us to better define the needs of our students, and to bring to constituents who hold potential funds and resources for students’ financial needs.

- **Goal:** Educate faculty advisors about imposter syndrome (see C-1-2)
 - **Progress:** The groundwork has been laid to share resources with the Director of Vocare (Rob Bellin), the Class Deans and the first year advising team. This information will likely be incorporated into multiple training venues including first-year advising, Faculty Think Tanks (already scheduled for March 2020), Ignatian Pedagogy Seminar, or Montserrat events.

- **Goal:** Work with faculty governance structures (AGC, CFA) to further refine policies and procedures around faculty misconduct (see D-3-1)
 - **Progress:** The Academic Deans and Class Deans have met to create a list of the policy and procedural issues that might benefit from further refinement. Further conversations will be initiated with relevant parties (e.g., Human Resources, the new Title IX/EEO Director, CFA, etc.) to determine next steps.

- **Goal:** Enhance opportunities for meaningful engagement and dialogue across difference by especially focusing on physical space or through targeted programming (see D-4-2)
 - **Progress:** The groundwork has been laid to enhance Kimball as a space to engage in meaningful dialogue. There is a group of students led by Dean Michele Murray to brainstorm solutions on keeping students engaged in Kimball. Montserrat faculty are being encouraged to use Kimball as a way to connect with students for office hours or dialogue circles. The Hub (Hogan Basement) has been actively used as a space for forums and dialogues.

- **Goal:** Bridge the gap between athletes and non-athletes by fostering a community which allows for students to take pride in all aspects of their identities (see A-4-1).
 - **Progress:** On-going conversations are in play regarding the potential structure(s) of how this strategy will manifest.

Section 3. Priorities that were deferred

The DEI Implementation Team was charged to prioritize both the urgency and feasibility of implementing the 47 recommended strategies in the original DEI plan. The [original DEI Plan](#) included a recommended time-line (see Appendix B). A number of considerations informed our decision to defer some goals, including staff transitions, searches for key positions, availability of data and need for further engagement from community members.

- **Goal:** Request Faculty to vote on making [ENGAGE Summit](#) an annual event (See A-2-1)
 - **Progress:** Our initial inquiries on this from peer institutions with similar programs indicate a need for further study. Some institutions are reporting that events like Engage are often well attended in the first year, especially when organized in response to a precipitating series of events, but that long term sustainability is questionable. As an alternative, we are investigating the possibility of engaging Essential Partners for a modified campus wide conversation instead.
- **Goal:** Develop a commuter student base meal plan (See B-5-2)
 - **Progress:** OSI sent out a call to all commuter students to gauge their interest in developing a “Commuter Students Association”. We felt that more conversations might help inform specific needs for commuter students.
- **Goal:** Form an Ad-hoc committee for dining options (See B-6-1)
 - **Progress:** We deferred this goal to the Spring of 2020.
- **Goal:** Pilot “Student Nominations Working Group” (See C-3-1)
 - **Progress:** Associate Provost Taneja convened an initial group to think about structures that might enhance this work. This work might be better conceived after the completion of the equity study of students with low income backgrounds.
- **Goal:** Create mechanisms to discuss/address patterns of misconduct (see D-3-2)
 - **Progress:** This goal might be best addressed once the structure and staffing of the new Title IX/EEO office has been completed. Plans are in place to engage the new Director of Title IX/EEO on this goal.

Section 4: Priorities for the Spring 2020 Semester

The implementation team will focus on priorities that require some additional ground work and those that are still “in progress” (as outlined above). We will continue to be attentive to the

recommended timeline and strategies outlined in the original DEI plan. We will also need to think about some assessment processes to determine the effectiveness of our strategic interventions. Additionally, the DEI Implementation team has identified additional strategies that were not part of the original DEI plan report.

Additional New Projects for Spring & Summer 2020

The following projects support one or more goals articulated in the DEI plan, but these were not specifically mentioned in the DEI plan report:

- (1) **AACU Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation (TRHT) Centers:** The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) is working with higher ed institutions to establish “[Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation](#)” (TRHT) campus centers. We are considering sending a team of faculty and staff representatives to the [2020 Institute on TRHT Campus Centers](#) to learn more about this nation-wide initiative.
- (2) **Diversity Dashboard for the College website:** We are working with a number of offices to make our student, faculty and staff demographics data accessible online. In addition, we will include key outcomes (such as retention and graduation data) by demographics.
- (3) **Equity Audit for students from lower income backgrounds:** As outlined above, we will initiate an equity audit to better understand the needs and resources available to our students from lower income backgrounds.
- (4) **Enhancing accessibility processes and resources for event planners:** We have charged a small committee to look at guidelines and resources available to all campus event planners to ensure equitable access for people of all abilities. Additionally, the College plans to hire an American Sign Language interpreter in the near future.
- (5) **New website for First-Gen College Students:** As a member of the [American Talent Initiative](#) (ATI), the College adopted a key best practice recommended by ATI by creating a [new website that consolidates resources for first generation college students](#). The Office of Multicultural Education will continue to enhance this website by developing additional resources, including information for parents of first-gen students.

Conclusion

The DEI Implementation team would like to thank the many campus partners and collaborators who have helped us move many of the strategies forward. We welcome the input and collaboration of students, faculty and staff as we continue this work. We encourage individuals to reach out to any of us with questions, concerns or recommendations. We look forward to providing our next update to the campus community at the beginning of the Fall 2020 semester.

Respectfully submitted,
DEI Implementation Team

- Amit Taneja (Chair), Associate Provost for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Aaron Dashiell, Assistant Director of Athletics for Student Development
- Amie Archambault, Assistant Director- LGBTQIA+ Special, Office of Multicultural Education
- Bruce Bacon, Associate Director of Human Resources for Employee Relations
- Kasey Catlett, Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Rev. Keith Maczkiewicz, S.J., Assistant Chaplain for Liturgy, Chaplains' Office
- Love Wallace, Associate Director of Residence Life & Housing
- Michelle Bata, Associate Dean for Student Engagement, Student Affairs
- Michelle Rosa Martins*, Director of the Office of Multicultural Education, Student Affairs
- Prof. Oliver De La Paz, Associate Professor of English

*joined February, 2020.