



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
College of Arts and Sciences

December 4, 2015

Yvette Alex-Assensoh
Vice President for Equity and Inclusion
1 Johnson Hall

Dear Yvette,

We've been considering your questions about the concerns of students of color in the College and how we are responding to them. Since the College is large and disbursed—nearly 11,000 majors in 46 degree-granting programs housed in 49 buildings across campus—our students identify with their major departments rather than with CAS. Thus, a first step in answering your question will be to ask departments about the climate for students of color in each unit and their structures for addressing concerns when students report them.

We will begin this conversation in an open discussion on these issues with department heads and program directors at our December 9 meeting. We will ask them to give us a picture of the climate and support for students of color in their units and their ideas for establishing clear lines of reporting and response for all students in the College. The very fact that units in CAS are numerous and dispersed makes our monthly heads' and directors' meetings important occasions to communicate about these issues, and we will continue the practice we've already begun this year of using that as one forum for discussion and information sharing about these issues.

Additionally, all CAS units submitted an inventory of their work towards diversity, equity, and inclusion this term, and we will be studying the survey results in December and presenting a summary to heads and directors in winter term. Our hope is that the inventory will help us identify effective practices and promising ideas, so we can develop CAS initiatives that expand on the work some of our colleagues have already begun. The inventory will also help us understand where we need to work harder. In light of the recent events at the University of Missouri and your questions to us, we will use the inventory as one tool to assess what we have in place that fosters a safe climate for students of color and what we need to establish to assure that our students can pursue their studies in an inclusive, encouraging environment.

Three weeks ago the CAS leadership team met to consider your questions in the context of the IDEAL framework, and we identified a number of tactics and strategies that we believe provide guidance for improving the campus climate for students of color. (We were working from the IDEAL Framework and Appendix that we downloaded from the DEI website on November 10, so the letters, numbers, and text below refer to those versions of the documents.)

INCLUSION

- A. The UO will conduct regular assessments of climate and will use the information to design and implement training programs that help to build student staff, and faculty agility in the areas of inclusion, equity, and diversity
 - 1. Work with colleagues in Human Resources, Academic Affairs, Student Life, the Schools and Colleges, and Enrollment Management to assess the climate and use results to incorporate principles and practices of inclusion
- B. Develop a comprehensive on-boarding and exit process for UO students, staff, and faculty based on

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most promising practices in inclusion

DIVERSITY

- C. Establish and implement an active hiring process for underrepresented staff and faculty that relies on the most promising practices
- D. Implement intentional retention policies that include remuneration and other incentives
 - 5. Institutionalize and enhance existing mentoring resources and in the CoDaC. Develop a mentoring policy that provides a baseline mentoring experience for all faculty and staff on campus
 - 6. Incorporate implicit bias training into the on-boarding and training process for all faculty and staff who oversee GTFs and also as part of GTF training
- H. Create a comprehensive strategic communications and marketing plan that is culturally responsive and ensures that all appropriate internal as well as external communities are informed about and engaged in the Diversity Framework
 - 1. Enlist leadership and support of UO communications team

These strategies and tactics point to assessment; hiring, onboarding, and retention efforts that entail mentoring and implicit bias awareness; and strategic communications. We are actively working in some of these areas and intend to increase our efforts in others.

Regular climate assessments

Currently, the best tools we have for climate surveys are the Graduate School Exit Survey and the Graduate School Experience Survey. We will read the most recent of these (Exit 2008-2013; Experience 2012 available now, and the 2015 will be posted soon) in December and ask heads and directors to read the surveys for their units in anticipation of the January conversation about climate and response for students of color.

We will put university-wide climate assessment on the Academic Leadership Agenda for January in the expectation that a discussion there will initiate regular, full-campus assessments. Any assessment tools should be designed so that we can examine climate responses at not only the college and school level, but also at the department and program level. Consideration must also be given as to whether we need different assessment tools to gauge faculty and staff perceptions versus those of students.

Hiring

This year, we asked all CAS TTF and NTTF search committees and their department heads to take a brief implicit bias survey and watch a short video about implicit bias in academe and charged them with foregrounding awareness of implicit bias in all their search committee meetings this year. We will be checking with them at the end of the search season to hear about whether active consideration of implicit bias issues affected the process or the outcome of their searches. We will develop a search plan for future years based on their feedback, and we will continue to make use of the best practices information and resources at the Hiring for the Future website.

By winter term 2016, all CAS OA and staff search committees and their department heads will be conducting the same awareness-raising process that faculty searches are undertaking, and we will likewise check in after those searches have concluded to learn more about how we can conduct equitable and inclusive searches.

We have also made increasing diversity a key criterion in our evaluation of proposals for the Provost's "TTF Hiring AY 15-16" initiative.

Onboarding

We have just dedicated CAS funds to offering every new TTF hire tuition to enroll in a National Center for Faculty Diversity and Development boot camp, and we will introduce the NCFDD resource to heads and directors in winter term at a meeting with a panel of faculty who have gone through the boot camp and can describe their experiences and answer questions. Realizing that timing and individual readiness are crucial to success in the boot camp, we will be working with heads and directors to establish local mentoring for junior faculty as well. Offering boot camp tuition is the first step; departments need to provide regular mentoring to untenured colleagues, encouragement to enroll in the boot camp, and advice about the right timing for the experience.

Retention

The winter meeting to introduce heads and directors to NCFDD will also be an occasion to recommend the boot camp for associate professors, who may benefit the most from twelve weeks of training in time management and prioritizing research after several years of working at the university. Our panel members (we have invited Lara Bovilsky, Lynn Fujiwara, and Priscilla Ovalle) are all tenured professors with major service contributions to the UO and feel strongly about the value of the boot camp.

We are in an ongoing conversation with five senior faculty—Vickie DeRose, Miriam Deutsch, Karen Guillemin, Sandra Morgen, and Lynn Stephen—who met with us in October to discuss their concerns about gender equity in hiring and retention. In our next meeting with them on December 9, we will be focusing on dual-career hiring and retention with the aim of examining our recent efforts to arrange partner hires and finding new ways to respond quickly and effectively to requests from department heads, especially in cases where retention would preserve or increase diversity.

Mentoring

Mentoring for faculty, staff, and students is an area we need to develop. The IDEAL Framework's call for "a mentoring policy that provides a baseline mentoring experience for all faculty and staff on campus" is urgent for all units but such policies will be most effective if they are nuanced to each unit. CoDaC's advances in campus mentoring—with the Faculty Writing Center and membership in the NCFDD in particular—have already helped many colleagues in CAS, and, as you've seen, we are facilitating access to the NCFDD boot camp in the College.

We will be looking at the diversity, equity, and inclusion survey with attention to local mentoring programs, and we will work with heads and directors this year to establish mentoring practices for faculty, staff, and students in each unit.

Strategic Communications

We have the IDEAL framework's recommendation about strategic communications on the agenda with our CAS director of communications, Lisa Raleigh, and we will also be discussing whether she should join the UO-Wide Diversity Committee, so she has a seat at those conversations. She has already produced stories, profiles, and informational materials that highlight diversity, equity, and inclusion in the College, and we will work closely with her as we develop our central plan, so she can reflect and support our efforts with effective and inspiring communications materials about our diverse faculty, staff, students, alums, and programs that will contribute to an inclusive environment.

In addition to pursuing the ideas and actions suggested by the IDEAL Framework above, the College has a number of developments afoot this year (some of them already mentioned) that we hope will aid us in our efforts to improve the climate on campus and our awareness of and responsiveness to the concerns of students of color:

1. As of this year, CAS has an associate dean assigned to oversee diversity, equity, and inclusion work in the College
2. For the first time, we have nominated two representatives from each the three CAS divisions—humanities, social sciences, and sciences—and the American English Institute to serve on the University-Wide Diversity Committee, assuring representation from all of CAS
3. Within CAS administration, two associate deans—Bruce Blonigen and Karen Ford, members of the UODC from its inception—will continue to serve, and Shari Powell, Director of Operations, will also serve, bringing OA and staff perspectives to the committee
4. We are sponsoring the development of an interdisciplinary Disability and Deaf Studies minor and graduate certificate
5. We have included space for a universal access student lounge in Tykeson Hall, the new CAS building slated for opening in 2018 to be associated with the Disability and Deaf Studies program office, but available to all CAS students
6. I have given significant funding to help the English Department launch its Postdoctoral Fellow in Ethnic American Literature and Culture program that will bring scholars working on race in the US to campus for two-year appointments
7. I have committed \$150,000 to supporting initiatives relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the College, and these resources will be focused on faculty and staff in the College
8. We have instituted implicit bias training to encourage awareness for all search committee members and their heads and directors
9. We have collected inventories of contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion from CAS units and will be developing a College plan that is informed by the inventory
10. We are developing materials for our administrative website, CASweb, to resources, best practices, and processes related to diversity, equity, and inclusion easily available to CAS faculty and staff
11. We are assembling information on various reporting units on campus, with descriptions of the scope of their duties and contact information
12. We are assembling information about opportunities for faculty and staff to contribute to diversity, equity, and inclusion, so colleagues can imagine a wide range of ways they can contribute.

Finally, the CAS leadership team noted some general questions and thoughts that we think are important to consider:

- A. We should be sure that everyone on campus has access to information about reporting units and resources for people with concerns
- B. We should raise awareness of not just *how* to report a complaint but *when* someone is hearing a complaint
- C. The UO's mandatory training should be improved or enhanced
 - a. There is no way to fail, so it's hard to know when you need to improve
 - b. There should be a text-only version for some readers
 - c. There could be a reference sheet at the end providing the kind of information in item A above
- D. We should encourage every unit to have a diversity committee or liaison, so everyone in the unit knows where to go for information and so the unit is in good communication with the UODC and other sources of information and advice
- E. We would like to know what kind of messages our graduate students and undergraduate

- students are receiving about racial equity, racial bias and harassment, and reporting
- F. The annual “UO Respectful Workplace” memo from Doug Blandy and Jamie Moffitt to the campus community is a resource and guide we can refer to as we try to raise awareness and provide information about the climate for students of color and the need to be responsive to their concerns
 - G. We’ve been discussing the role of the Bias Response Team as a resource for reporting and have made suggestions to the Dean of Students and the Provost about how it might function more effectively.

Thank you for your responsiveness to the Missouri situation and your ongoing leadership and advocacy for and IDEAL campus. We look forward to continuing this work with you.

Sincerely,

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