Inclusive Excellence at Thayer School

Update on 2018-19

The following document summarizes Thayer School's accomplishments and challenges related to the School's diversity and inclusive excellence plans.

It addresses three questions posed by the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity:
- What did we state we wanted to accomplish over the next five years?
- Which objectives are complete and how are the ones in progress coming along?
- What challenges face you in the continuous work toward meeting the goals you set?

What did we state we wanted to accomplish over the next five years?

From Thayer School's Inclusive Excellence Plan (July 2018)

Thayer School is committed to our role in building a more inclusive and diverse Dartmouth. Broadly, our aims are to:
- Raise awareness of the importance of diversity, inclusivity and respect in the classroom and workplace, and in achieving excellence.
- Further improve the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty, staff and student body.
- Provide resources and support that enhance diversity and inclusivity at Thayer School.

From the report of Thayer School's Inclusive Excellence working group (January 2019):

Broadly, our goals are to build a teaching and learning community that reflects the diversity of the global workforce, and to create a culture in which difference is valued, where each individual's identity and contributions are treated with respect, and where differences lead to a strengthened identity and learning experience for all.

To this end, five specific objectives include:

A. Recruiting, developing and retaining a diverse faculty
B. Recruiting, developing and retaining a diverse staff
C. Recruiting and supporting a diverse student body in each of Thayer's academic programs
D. Building cultural understanding and a shared vocabulary in order to develop a faculty and staff capable of serving a diverse community
E. Creating organizational structures to operationalize and sustain these and related efforts

Update

Studies show that an important aspect of diversity and inclusion is cultivating a feeling of community among people that are different. Building a supportive and inclusive community--characterized by an atmosphere of openness, equity, belongingness and mutual respect--is necessary if we are to be successful in the above endeavors.

Which objectives are complete and how are the ones in progress coming along?

Building a supportive and welcoming community
- New in fall 2019, we are offering a formal half-day on-boarding program for new faculty. This first phase will introduce participants to the resources and programs of Thayer School; it will continue in fall and winter terms with workshops on course design, sponsored research, graduate student mentoring, and inclusive excellence (to be offered in partnership with Dartmouth).
- Multiple School-wide gatherings (e.g. Thayer convocation, faculty retreat, dean's mid-year report, all-hands meetings, Dean's welcome, et al.), both formal and informal, were held as ways to 1) more publically emphasize diversity and inclusivity as a core value and as central to excellence; 2) be transparent with information, and 3) encourage healthy interactions, mutual respect, and effective partnerships among members of the Thayer community.

Recruiting, developing and retaining a diverse faculty
- An aggressive and comprehensive national recruitment effort for a new dean resulted in the appointment of Alexis Abramson.
- Resources available through the Provost's Office helped us attract and appoint new faculty hires in a competitive market
- Beginning in 2019-20, new (and soon all) Assistant Professors are assigned a *team* of three mentors rather than a single mentor.
- Faculty searches for 2019-20 were launched in Spring 2019. This earlier start will allow more time to build a strong candidate pool. In addition, resources have been made available to search committee chairs in order to increase networking efforts and uncover potential candidates.

Recruiting and supporting a diverse student body in each of Thayer's academic programs
- Resources available through Guarini enabled us to attract and enroll new graduate students who will add to the diversity of our student body
- Hosted a recruiting booth at SPHE for the first time (in addition to SWE and NSBE, which we have done in recent years).
- We are hiring *many* TAs to provide additional student support and expand the notion of who can be successful in engineering.
- PhD students are forming thesis committees earlier and having annual reviews.
- Offer ongoing support to student groups such as SWE, NSBE, and SHPE.

- We continue to work intentionally to invite outside speakers, and build advisory and review boards that are diverse in composition.

Building cultural understanding and a shared vocabulary in order to develop a faculty and staff capable of serving a diverse community
- Professional development offerings related to inclusive excellence, including specific sessions for faculty, increased substantially (details below). Thayer leadership encouraged faculty and staff to participate more actively than in past years, and a number play lead roles in 3CI and other diversity and inclusiveness bodies on campus.
- Online Title IX training was completed by all but one member of Thayer community (faculty, staff, graduate students).
- Sessions on diversity and inclusive excellence will be included in both the fall 2019 faculty retreat and Board of Advisors meeting--a first in both cases.

Creating organizational structures to operationalize and sustain these and related efforts
- In August 2018 the Dean appointed an Inclusive Excellence working group composed of three faculty members and three staff members to think about values, goals, and metrics as they affect all of our community (faculty, staff, and students alike), and to think specifically about sustaining gender parity in our student body. The establishment of such a group broadened the conversation on this topic at Thayer School considerably, and resulted in the implementation of some of the groups recommendations (e.g. increased training for faculty and staff). As requested, the group submitted a report to the Dean in January 2019 (referenced above). The work of the group will continue; details regarding specific next steps are to be determined.
- A Sr. Associate Dean for Faculty Development position to focus on faculty growth, recruitment, mentoring, and tenure and promotion was created; Professor Laura Ray was appointed to lead these efforts.

What challenges face you in the continuous work toward meeting the goals you set?

Knowledge gap
- Knowledge of best practices and successful strategies at other institutions, including how to intentionally cultivate a welcoming, collegial environment where *all* faculty, staff, and students are proud to be (even those that are "different").
- Understanding of purpose, work and progress of Dartmouth committees focused on this, and ongoing communication loop between these central committees and those working at the department/unit level.
- Need to learn outcomes of campus findings (e.g. 2015 climate survey results -- how are we doing in creating a supportive, mentoring, collegial environment)?
- Need transparency on what happens with reports once they are submitted.

Resource gap
- Lack of dedicated resources for student and faculty recruitment
- Lack of IDE/3CI trainers on campus; need to build capacity on campus.

Lack of clarity

- Clear standards and consistency in reporting student and faculty numbers (e.g. How to count faculty/students with a country of origin other than the U.S.? Are we reporting minority #s or URM #s? How are those terms defined? Etc.). In order to better understand our context and progress, Thayer School is now following NSF guidelines for internal purposes (https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/2017/nsf17310/digest/introduction/). In keeping with these practices, the following groups are included in Thayer UR#s: Women, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Natives who are US citizens, permanent residents, or dual citizens. Students identified as "two or more races" are included in UR if one or more is from the preceding race/ethnicity groups. Persons with disabilities are not included in UR as this data is not readily available at Thayer School. Foreign national students are not included in the numerator or denominator for UR Total or UR Race/Ethnicity.
- Setting specific (i.e. measurable) goals. What is the baseline for moving forward? Are the goals achievable?
- Some faculty may not fully appreciate the value of mentorship and may not be actively participating. This might be overcome by providing additional training on mentorship (i.e. demonstrating the value) and/or by considering mentoring activity during the faculty review process.
- How do we partner with IDE in the midst of staffing changes?

Professional Development Programs, 2018-19

PROGRAM	ATTENDANCE	DATE	TARGET AUDIENCE
Implicit Bias training	19	January 2, 2019	faculty (+ senior staff)
Power Dynamics training	13	April 18, 2019	faculty (+ senior staff)
faculty search committee training (offered twice)		May 10, 2019 May 28, 2019	members of faculty search committees for 2019-20
Fair Hiring Practices workshop	15-20	October 10, 2019	staff
Title IX training (Kristi Clemens) (offered twice)	many many	October 22, 2019 November 8, 2019	staff faculty
Dumb Things Well Intentioned People Say (Maura Cullen)	many	March 6, 2019	staff
Some of My Best Friends Are White (Maura Cullen)	5	March 6, 2019	staff
Microaggressions (Gabrielle Lucke)		April 14, 2019	staff