

A Message to the Campus Community from the Diversity and Equity Committee
October 16, 2014

Committee Recommendations Regarding Diversity and Inclusion on Campus

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff of DePauw University,

As we promised, we write to report on the work of the Diversity and Equity Committee (DEC) since the open forum held on Tuesday, March 18th. In this letter we will highlight what we heard during the open forum, offer a brief report on the committee's subsequent work, share our recommendations for issues that should be considered and addressed by specific offices and individuals on campus, and outline our next steps as a committee.

The DEC would like to begin by thanking the students, staff and faculty who attended the forum on March 18th and engaged in the very important conversation about issues that are affecting the DePauw community. We appreciate the honesty with which individuals shared their experiences with us during this forum. Sharing difficult experiences is challenging even in more intimate settings with one's close friends and advisors, so we are particularly grateful that so many of you were willing to give voice to those stories publicly. In response to what we have heard, we commit to keeping these issues of diversity and equity in front of the students, faculty, staff and administration in the coming weeks, months and years.

At the forum many individual stories were shared, in the collected notes these stories coalesced into a series of themes that will guide our work. Below is a list of these broad themes:

- Accountability for faculty, staff, students, administrators and leaders in the local community
- Improved communication and transparency in those communications
- Revisit recommendations from the Task Force on Women and Families and the Campus Climate Task Force
- Additional Administrative Support for diversity and equity issues
- Consequences for all individuals who behave inappropriately
- Improvements in the Community Standards process
- Diversity Training for faculty, staff and students
- Safety in the community
- Inclusive classroom climate
- Housing locations and room assignments for students of color
- Sufficient staffing and availability in the Wellness Center for Counseling and Mental Health care
- Retention of students, faculty and staff of color
- Events that teach cultural competency
- Intervention and prevention programming for all students and support services for victims of Sexual Assault
- Course requirement for exploring diversity in curriculum (e.g., M, C, or I requirement)

In the past few weeks the DEC has met with a variety of campus stakeholders to discuss current campus climate and directions for the future. We met with President Casey and had several meetings with the Dean of Faculty, Terri Bonebright, in conversation about ways to increase communication and access to resources for students, faculty and staff.

It is the role of the DEC to "advise the Administration and the faculty on policy; . . . identify issues regarding diversity and equity in campus life and refer them to the appropriate University office and/or committee(s) for action; and annually review and assess aspects of the University's efforts

to attract and retain a diverse campus community" (Academic Handbook, <http://tiny.cc/n6t5dx>). This has been the guide for our conversations over the past few weeks and it is in this role that we provide the following initial recommendations for the campus. We look forward to working with the departments, offices, faculty committees, and the campus at-large as we explore these recommendations and build a better community.

Office of the President

- Continue consulting with and providing support to the Dean of the Faculty so that she may respond adequately to campus climate concerns
- Meet with campus stakeholders to address concerns directly related to the Office of the President when appropriate
- Review and bring to the appropriate campus organizations the reports from the Task Force on Women and Families and the Campus Climate Task Force

University Communications

- Create a website which lists resources for reporting and support services for students, faculty and staff and determine the best location for easy access to this site
- Consult with Academic Affairs, Student Life and the Dean of the Faculty to improve communication and transparency

Academic Affairs

- Provide diversity- and equity-related continuing education opportunities for the Dean of Faculty
- Create ongoing education opportunities for faculty to explore ways to add diversity components to their courses
- Improve access for students to share concerns related to classroom climate

Dean of Faculty

- Collaborate with Human Resources on the creation of a required faculty and staff diversity training program
- Consult with DEC on improving recruitment procedures to ensure a diverse pool of candidates in faculty and staff searches
- Partner with Office of Human Resources to explore retention among faculty and staff of color

CAPP

- Examine best practices for diversity/multicultural education requirements in liberal arts colleges and make a recommendation for such a requirement at DePauw

Human Resources

- Create and implement a required faculty and staff diversity training program (in collaboration with the Dean of Faculty)

Student Life

- Provide diversity training for all students with special attention to individual communities of support (i.e., Greek organizations, athletic teams, mentors, Resident Assistants)
- Expand programming and events related to identity, diversity and cultural competence
- Review and make recommendations related to safety on campus and in the local community, specifically as it concerns diverse populations
- Review concerns regarding Counseling and Mental Health services and make recommendations about ensuring access for all students
- Explore best practices for Community Standards and make changes to current practice to increase accountability, transparency and support for students
- Review concerns related to current housing assignments and make recommendations for changes as needed

The committee will continue to meet weekly for the remainder of the semester. During the time that remains, we will extend invitations to continue dialogue with Dean of Faculty, Terri Bonebright and President Casey; however, a majority of our time will be spent crafting our annual report which will include a concrete plan for continuing this work in the next academic year. The final report will be accessible on the DEC website which may be [found here](#).

As with all committees, the DEC is likely to experience some transition in membership between now and the beginning of the Fall 2014 semester. We feel that it is in the best interest of the campus and the future DEC to devote a significant amount of time to producing a comprehensive report that will provide next year's DEC with a template for their work. This template for the coming year will include plans for notifying the campus community about the membership of the DEC for the 2014-2015 academic year, a tentative schedule for regular conversation with the offices and departments mentioned above to review progress in their areas, and continued work with individual students and student organizations to address concerns and gather student input on campus climate.

Respectfully,
Members of the Diversity and Equity Committee

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