

Student Conduct & Community Standards Departmental Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan Update

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BROWN

Introduction

In July of 2017 the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards published our Departmental Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan. The plan had been written earlier in the academic year and the published document included the progress that had been made between the initial writing and the publication. This document is to serve as an update to progress made since July 2017 as well as address the work that remains to be done.

We looked closely at four major areas of our work to assess how we can improve what we do in light of the diversity of our campus community. While all forms of diversity are important to support and celebrate, we placed a particular focus on Historically Underrepresented Groups and how we serve their needs and interests within our processes. The four areas we looked at include (1) the diversity and cultural competence of our staff, (2) the diversity and cultural competence of those serving in different roles within our processes, (3) the diversity of different groups referred to us as respondents, and (4) the diversity of those who seek our services as complainants and the knowledge of our process within different communities.

Staff Representation and Cultural Proficiency

We were able to accomplish our goal of creating vertical growth as well as more compositional diversity within our staff with the promotion of the incumbent coordinator to an Assistant Dean and the addition of the new Student Conduct Coordinator at the end of the last year. Since then we have additionally promoted the more experienced Assistant Dean to the position of Associate Dean of Students and Assistant Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards.

Therefore, our focus this year has been on cultural proficiency within the student conduct team. There were two action items related to proficiency delineated in the plan, one already completed and the other in progress and due to be completed.

ACTION ITEMS PROGRESS

1. Schedule conversations two times in the 2017 - 2018 academic year around issues of diversity and inclusion as a staff. We will select a reading or a case to look at through different lenses and discuss how we perform our work in the context of our diverse community.

We have participated in readings and conversation on the topic of class earlier this year. Our next scheduled conversation is on the topic of gender and gender identity. However, as a staff we are constantly engaged in learning and in conversation on topics of

diversity and inclusion. These structured conversations are as a supplement to the constant thinking and discussion around these issues.

2. Each staff member will participate in at least two events in the 2017 - 2018 academic year outside our office on a topic related to diversity and inclusion.

We have more than exceeded this action item. Our staff is constantly searching for ways to grow and learn. We have all worked to participate in a myriad of lectures and conversations around inclusion. Some of the work we have done includes training on Transformative Justice, engaging in the Critical Consciousness Reading Group as a facilitator, and Restorative Justice training.

Diversity and Cultural Proficiency of Hearing Officers and Advisors

We had three pending action items under this commitment at the end of last year. Part of the difficulty with this piece is that we cannot control who is hired into positions which have serving as a hearing officer as part of their resume. We can, however work toward cultural proficiency while also focusing on compositional diversity.

ACTION ITEM PROGRESS

1. We will conduct trainings of others in Restorative Justice Practices and use the tools learned in this practice to enhance our work and improve our work across different segments of our community.

We have scheduled a training with David Karp, one of the premier trainers in restorative justice programs at university level. The training, to take place in August will train partners across the division, including Residential Life, Student Activities, and Student Support Services. It will include work on restorative justice practices as well as implicit bias.

2. Review processes for recruitment and assess if improvements can be made in the recruitment and selection of those who serve as hearing officers or advisors within our process.

We have made significant progress with this in recruiting advisors within our process. Last year, out of sixteen advisors, twelve were new on our list and nine of the twelve identify as people of color. We continue to think of ways to increase compositional diversity of our hearing officers, both at the lower level as well as for administrative and board hearings at the higher level. As we begin the next phase of our review of the Code of Conduct, we plan

to look at ways to increase compositional diversity of hearing officers by opening up the role to more members of the community.

3. Review training and materials for all hearing officers and advisors and increase information shared around cultural proficiency.

We have continued to adapt our training and improve the materials around cultural proficiency. This summer we will make additional changes to the training so as to include more information about cultural proficiency as well as materials regarding having difficult conversations with those who do not share our identities.

Referrals to Student Conduct

This is another area in which we cannot completely control the progress, however we can monitor the work as well as collaborate and share information with our partners. We had two action items in regards to referrals which we continue to work on and monitor.

ACTION ITEM PROGRESS

1. We will continue to monitor race and gender of respondents in cases referred to us by others, including the Department of Public Safety, Student Activities, Residential Life, Dining Services, and student complainants. We will generate yearly reports of these statistics.

We plan on looking at these numbers again at the close of the fiscal year to see if there have been any improvements in regards to referrals. Based on the information from last year we have implemented a change to our work to help look more closely at cases in which there is concern of bias before assigning the case to hearing. This change formalized what we call a preliminary review to serve as a reminder to think about how, when presented with information about a case, we may need to gather more information before determining what, if any, charges should be brought forward.

2. We will work to assess how to best share the data with these departments as well as with the community as a whole so as not to compromise confidentiality.

We have made less progress in this area as sharing data with other departments can be delicate in regards to confidentiality but also in thinking about how to approach information collected that might indicate bias. We have begun having conversations with our partners and one of our staff members is currently serving on the Department of Public Safety Oversight Committee in an effort to increase communication and education around this topic.

Student Awareness of Our Process

One important aspect of our work is student awareness and perception of our process. It is important for students to feel they can come to us directly when confronted with difficult situations, however they can only do so if they know more about what we do and what our mission is as an office. We had two items in progress regarding student awareness and continue to build upon the work we have started.

ACTION ITEM PROGRESS

1. We are in the process of building up a peer group of students, the Student Conduct & Community Standards Ambassadors, to work on community engagement around issues of our standards and our process. We are in the beginning stages and will be piloting the program during the 2017-2018 academic year.

We have built this program and had a small, but committed, group this year. We opened applications for the 2018-2019 academic year and have a wonderful group of eight new student ambassadors for the upcoming year.

2. We will work to assess how to best collect the data needed in this area, both regarding use of our services and knowledge of our process. We will then assess how to best share the data with the community as a whole.

We have begun data collection with a [short survey](#) made public at the beginning of this summer and will be convening focus groups in the fall. We hope that this work will help guide our outreach and branding as well as our review of the Code.

Conclusion

Although we have made significant progress in meeting our goals under our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, we anticipate there is much more work to be done. We will continue to work toward completing these goals as well as keep in mind how we incorporate diversity and inclusion in our work as it is now and as it will be in the future as we build a new Code of Conduct with the campus community. We are committed to making our new Code and our new processes reflective of our mission and vision of education and social justice. This will drive us to become more inclusive and aware of how our work can be improved.