



BROWN
Sheridan Center for
Teaching and Learning

Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), 2017-18

Key goals and outcomes of Sheridan's 2017-18 DIAP are noted below.

Goal 1: Develop staff capacity through hiring and professional development to support diversity and inclusion in teaching and learning contexts.

Center-wide

- Between June 1, 2017, and May 31, 2018, Sheridan hired one new staff member and collaborated on a hire of one new faculty member, both of whom identify as a member of a historically underrepresented group. Sheridan also collaborated on the hire of a HHMI postdoctoral fellow, who is located in the center and is a woman in STEM.
- For professional development, all Sheridan professional staff attended at least one conference session or on-campus opportunity about diversity and inclusion and presented key ideas and materials to other Sheridan staff at the Center's monthly meeting. Monthly reading groups, organized on a rotational basis by Sheridan staff, also engaged in professional development around research on diversity and inclusion.

Graduate Student Educational Development

- For Sheridan graduate student development programs, Sheridan hired two Head Teaching Consultants, one of whom is a woman in STEM. Among the 35 other Sheridan Teaching Consultants who engaged in at least one consultation, a majority are female (71%) and most participants are in a STEM-related field (66%). In terms of racial/ethnic composition, Registrar records identify 51% as White (U.S.), 34% as international students, 6% as unknown/race not reported, 6% as Asian-American, and 3% as a member of a historically underrepresented group in the U.S.

Writing Center

- The Writing Fellows maintained two diversity and inclusion outreach coordinators who fostered conversations around and training on diversity and inclusion for the program.
- The majority (70%) of Writing Fellows active in Fall 2017 were identified by Registrar data as female, while for the incoming (2018-19) cohort, self-reports indicate that 62% identify as female, 19% as male, and 4% as non-binary (15% did not report). While a small proportion (7%) of F17 Fellows were first-generation college students, a greater proportion of the incoming group (23%) identifies as such. Relatively equal proportions are international students in F17 (18%) and the incoming cohort (15%). In F18, Registrar records identify 9% of the group as members of HUGs. Incoming self-report data suggest a slightly different composition: 42% of our incoming cohort identified as white; 23% identified as more than one race/ethnicity; 12% identified as Asian; 8% identified as Black/African-American; and 4% identified as Latinx; 12% did not report. (Registrar data are used for F17 data because of low response rates to voluntary demographic surveys.)
- The Writing Center organized a visit by Dr. Asao Inoue in the fall, which was co-sponsored by OIED. The visit included one workshop for faculty and graduate students on inclusive assessment in writing-intensive courses and, for writing center staff and fellows, a second workshop focused on recognizing and navigating habits of whiteness.

- Writing associates received a total of ten hours of paid professional development addressing diversity and inclusion: (1) a presentation on white privilege by Dr. Peggy McIntosh; (2) a five-hour training module on habits of whiteness in Writing Center practice, guided by the work of Dr. Asao Inoue, (3) a portion of the spring retreat was dedicated to having difficult discussions with writers in the Center when their papers and ideas engage in promoting various structural "-isms," (4) a professional development meeting facilitated by CAPS addressed working with writers in emotionally charged sessions; and (5) a professional development meeting facilitated by La Pluma and Writing Center staff who engage in multilingual work.
- English Language Learning offered ongoing professional development for Writing Associates and Fellows on supporting multilingual writers. This included organizing and facilitating a Multilingual Writers' Panel for two sections of English 1190M which highlighted the experiences and reflections of current Brown undergraduate and graduate writers.

Problem-Solving Fellows

- Problem-Solving Fellows took the course UNIV 1110: The Theory and Practice of Problem-Solving, which focused on cultivating Fellows' inclusive teaching practices and was designed to foster conversations around diversity and inclusion. Specific topics addressed included biases and stereotype threat; acknowledging diversity of thought and background experiences in learning; culture and context in relation to problems, the classroom, and professional ethics; privilege, power, and positionality; and working with English Language Learners. In addition, due to the open nature of the course and the Problem Solving Fellows, most class discussions were infused with conversations on inclusivity and equity.
- Demographics are not presented for Problem-Solving Fellows because of small numbers (N=5), in accordance with DoC reporting guidelines.

Academic Tutoring

- Nearly a third (30%) of the 117 tutors are from historically underrepresented racial/ethnic groups, and a majority (64%) are women in STEM. (This is up from 10% and 43%, respectively, in 2016-17.)
- To enhance the sense of community and reflective practice among tutors, professional development for tutors included mid-term meetings with the Assistant Director to review formative tutee feedback, observations with peer feedback, and monthly discipline-specific meetings. Tutors also received invitations to attend three presentations on white privilege, inclusive teaching practices, and stress reduction practices they could teach their tutees (BWell). Tutors report that their tutoring preparation and practices improved as a result of their participation in these initiatives.

Goal 2. Develop Sheridan programs to be responsive to campus needs and build campus capacity to support diversity and inclusion in teaching and learning contexts.

Orientations

For faculty and TA development, Sheridan embedded principles of inclusive teaching in its New Faculty and New TA Orientations, which were attended by 56 and 87 instructors, respectively. Among faculty and TAs, nearly all (93% and 97%, respectively) reported that they would bring at least one idea to their teaching. TA participants found all sessions to be very effective (range of mean scores from 4.4 to 4.8 for sessions, where 5.0 signals strong agreement that session was effective). Likewise, faculty found the orientation to be very useful (mean of 4.6, where 5.0 signals strong agreement that the program held utility).

Certificates and Junior Faculty Fellows

All three of Sheridan's certificates and the Junior Faculty Fellows program embedded principles and practices of inclusive teaching. Feedback was extremely strong for these programs.

Sheridan Teaching Seminar: Reflective Teaching:

For Sheridan's largest certificate, nearly all (92%) of participants reported confidence after the program to create an inclusive and respectful learning environment for their students, compared to fewer than three quarters (74%) before its start. Further, the vast majority (85%) indicated that they could now effectively promote learning in a class where students have a variety of backgrounds, identities, skills and abilities, compared to only half (50%) at pre-survey.

"It completely redefined the way I think about teaching by introducing me to backwards course design and instilling a more refined sensitivity to inclusive and engaged pedagogy."

-Reflective Teaching Seminar participant

Of the 119 student completers, the group is relatively evenly split between students pursuing STEM (51%) and humanities/social sciences (49%) degrees. The demographic composition of the completers was very similar to the graduate student population at large, according to Institutional Research figures. A slight majority (52%) are male (compared to 53% of all graduate students) and students from historically underrepresented groups (HUGs) comprise 11% of the group, equivalent to the overall proportion. International students are slightly underrepresented, comprising over a quarter (27%) of certificate completers and over a third (37%) of all graduate students. (This small difference may be attributable to the fact that most certificate participants are doctoral students, the population of which has a lower proportion of international students.) Only four students did not complete the certificate (evenly split by discipline and gender, with no international students or participants from HUGs).

Course Design Seminar: 30 participants completed this program, with a majority reporting that they are now able to "identify ways in which my teaching practice is and could be made more inclusive" (mean rating of agreement with this statement was a 4.4/ 5.0).

According to Registrar data, the demographic composition of the completers is approximately balanced by gender (52% male/48% female). A majority (58%) are white, over a quarter (26%) are international students, 3% are members of HUGs, 3% are Asian, and race/ethnicity is unknown for an additional 10%. There was only one non-completer, whose demographic characteristics resembled the majority of certificate completers.

"This was a wonderful opportunity to pause and think critically about norms and goals regarding classroom justice."

- Course Design Seminar participant

Junior Faculty Teaching Fellows

There were seven faculty participants in the 2017-18 cohort, listed [here](#). By the end of the program, all respondents reported confidence in their capacity to create an inclusive and respectful learning environment for their students, compared to two-thirds (67%) before the program.

English Language Learning (ELL)

In 2017-18, ELL's Conversation Partners program paired 31 staff with 39 students. In a survey about their experience, nearly all (87%) student participants agreed that participation in the program made them feel more included on campus. Further, most (83%) staff reported that participation in the program helped them feel they were contributing to inclusion efforts on campus. This year, ELL also restructured its workshop model to offer multi-part series that allow for scaffolded practice in key language skills. Two 10-part Academic Speaking and Writing series were offered over the course of the fall and spring semesters, as well as 20 meetings of the weekly Brown Bag News reading and conversation group:

- The Academic Speaking Series addressed topics such as discussion and presentation skills. There were 99 attendees in 2017-18, and participant feedback was very strong, reflecting increased confidence in navigating linguistic and cultural differences (weighted mean of 4.7 on a scale of 1=not at all effective and 5=very effective).
- ELL’s academic writing programs focused on topics such as email etiquette and developing skills for self-editing. There were 163 attendees, who found the sessions highly effective (weighted mean of 4.7).
- The Brown Bag News group offered a supportive space for reading and discussing current events. There were 234 attendees at this program (not evaluated).
- The Language and Culture series addressed topics related to navigating linguistic and cultural differences. 26 attendees participated in this initiative (not evaluated).

Participant feedback included requests for more ELL workshops and longer workshops with dedicated time for practicing skills. ELL staff also held over 600 hours of individualized linguistic or cultural support meetings for multilingual members of Brown’s community, including students, visiting scholars, and faculty.

Tutoring

Academic Tutoring filled 1,791 tutoring requests, serving 1,272 undergraduate students across 353 unique group tutoring sessions throughout the 2017-18 academic year. First-generation and aided students represent 21% and 55% of the students utilizing the program, respectively. Students from historically underrepresented groups (HUGs) account for almost a third (30%) of undergraduates participating in tutoring.

“The tutors this year were exceptional; they all were well trained and did a thoroughly professional job....The tutoring program is the most effective way we have to deal with the wide range of preparation among students in the class.”

-Engineering faculty member

Writing

English 1190M, the course all writing fellows complete during their first semester in the program, was revised to: (1) be thoughtful and intentional about whose voices are required reading; (2) be mindful of course design so that inclusivity is at the center of the course rather than isolated as “special topics” or “advanced modules”; and (3) create a fluid classroom where students learn from and dialogue with the broad community of writing educators on campus both within and beyond the writing fellows program. One student’s comment on fall 2017 course evaluations summarizes the intended outcomes of the course: “The course taught me a lot about working with writing, both my own and that of others. In terms of practical skills, it gave me a solid, research-based foundation for providing comments on writing and for conducting face-to-face conferences. I also developed a better understanding of intersectionality within writing work and how to be a part of providing inclusive spaces for writers and their voices.”

Program evaluations completed by fellows in fall 2017 (15 respondents) indicated that 100% of fellows felt “well-prepared to enact inclusive following practices” (38% strongly agreed and 63% agreed). This is an increase from 88% in fall 2016 (17 respondents). Additionally, fellows emphasized their appreciation for programming facilitated by student diversity and inclusion outreach coordinators in their open-ended responses to a fall 2017 and spring 2018 retreat assessment question about impact: (2017) “I will be more careful in how I think about English – this retreat informed me that the power dynamics of ‘good English’ versus other Englishes can have stigmatizing and exclusionary impacts”; (2018) “The segment on making following practices more accessible- it's something I've been thinking about as well, so it's great to have something concrete!”

In summer 2017, the Excellence at Brown writing-intensive summer program served 116 students: 20% were international, 24% were first generation, 56% received need-based aid, 24% were from historically

underrepresented groups, and 60% were women. An assessment of Excellence at Brown found that participants tend to enroll in their first writing-intensive course earlier than a comparable group of non-participants, yet they pass at the same rate. A retrospective assessment of pre-/post- Excellence writing behaviors indicated that the program had a moderate-to-large effect on reported key writing and revision skills such as: planning, use of evidence to support arguments, revision strategies, as well as students' confidence in their own abilities as writers.

Assessment

Key activities in this area involved longitudinal analysis of a revised climate survey for a STEM department, implementation of the assessment plan for Brown Learning Collaborative programs, and consultation with stakeholders in academic and administrative units regarding inclusive assessment and evaluation practices.

Support of OIED Initiatives

For the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity, Sheridan offered three programs, with the vast majority (greater than 90%) of attendees reporting that they were effective:

- OIED professional development lunch series: "Not Dismissed: The Why & How of Addressing Microaggressions and Troublesome Current Events in Educational Spaces" (70 attendees)
- OIED Professional Development Day: "Inclusive Teaching in STEM" (12 attendees) and "Bringing the Personal Into the Classroom: Inclusive Teaching in the Humanities and Social Sciences" (12 attendees)

"[I now plan to] make sure that all students feel like they are valuable contributors to the STEM field, regardless of their background."

-Attendee at "Inclusive Teaching in STEM"

Workshops

Sheridan offered eight interdisciplinary workshops on inclusive teaching, addressing the first days of teaching, digital learning, writing assignment design and feedback, and teaching pre-college courses. There were 84 attendees, who found the sessions highly effective (mean of 4.7 on a scale of 1=not at all effective and 5=very effective).

Sheridan offered 11 customized workshops for departments on inclusive teaching. These programs drew 220 attendees, and they rated these sessions very favorably (mean of 4.4 on a scale of 1=not at all effective and 5=very effective).

In partnership with the Graduate School, Sheridan offered two sessions for faculty liaisons (14 attendees, mean rating=4.4) and a lunch discussion for graduate student liaisons (12 attendees, mean of 4.4) about effective and inclusive graduate student mentoring.

Goal 3: To scale up the reach of the center, develop more robust online resources

In November 2016, the Sheridan Center began distributing web newsletters on topics relating to inclusive teaching. As of April 2018, these newsletters are distributed to 821 subscribers (+200 from the previous year). These topics included (with analytics on the percent who opened and the web hits on the inclusive teaching page, from May 1, 2017 - April 30, 2018):

- September 2017: Teaching after Charlottesville (65% newsletter opening rate, 268 web visitors)
- October 2017: Inclusive Teaching Strategies for Teaching Fast-Paced Classes (56%, # unknown)

- November 2017: Inclusive Practices for Addressing Academic Integrity (60%, 93 visitors)
- February 2018: Effective Graduate Student Mentoring (52%, 71 visitors)
- March 2018: Inclusive Teaching Through Active Learning (51%, 149 visitors)

Additionally, Sheridan continues to develop an inclusive teaching section of web resources, <http://brown.edu/go/InclusiveTeaching>. These materials received 2,524 unique visitors in the past academic year, which is over double last year's total.