

Progress Report on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

August 27, 2020

This report will be issued quarterly and includes but is not limited to the College's actions to address specific [Black Student Union Demands](#).

President's Office

The Director of DEI Initiatives—[Dr. Daleah Goodwin](#)—was appointed to this position in July 2020. Since that time, she has been working closely with the Director of [WIDE](#) and Academic Affairs (see section Academic Affairs). In August, we appointed an Advisory Committee. (The Board of Trustee member is still being filled.) The Advisory Committee met to begin framing their work in response to the BSU demands and the general campus climate. Immediately, the Advisory Committee has decided to hold campus-wide listening sessions for faculty, staff and students through September to determine the wants, needs and expectations for racial DEI at Wilson. The listening sessions are designed to give the campus community an opportunity to share their perspectives concerning racial DEI at the College. After hearing from the campus community we will make recommendations as to next steps.

A Cabinet-level position (currently planned as the Vice President for DEI and Strategy) will be advertised nationally by early October, and the community will be apprised of progress towards this hire as it develops. The new position would begin by Fall 2021, ideally by July 1, 2021.

The President continues to work with all Cabinet members to plan and track strategies across the College related to advancing our DEI initiatives and ensure accountability for progress. The President contributed directly to the writing of this report and has pledged to continue to post quarterly reports as well as ensure that an annual comprehensive report is shared.

Academic Affairs

Listening and Consultation

We have held a series of meetings with key stakeholders since the release of the Demands and the College Response. Those include meetings with BSU representatives, with members of the Alma Shippy Coalition, and with Dr. Daleah Goodwin—the new faculty Director of DEI Initiatives. We also held a meeting with a faculty development and DEI expert from the University of Alabama to learn more about best practices in developing Faculty Learning Communities around DEI work.

Faculty Development

During July and August, Faculty initiated Anti-Racist Curriculum Development working sessions. We organized and planned a five-hour DEI segment in the Faculty Retreat facilitated by Dr. Goodwin and Gary Hawkins, the Director of the Center for Teaching Innovation and Excellence (CFIE). As part of this segment, faculty were asked to complete a Course and Departmental Racial DEI inventory of all fall courses so we could measure the extent of content and coverage

across the curriculum. Faculty were then shown the preliminary data and opportunities to discuss impressions and next steps were shared. This fall, Dr. Goodwin will also partner with the CFIE to run a series of DEI Faculty Learning Communities centered around current books, including *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla Saad, *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo, and *How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi.

BIPOC Faculty Support

Dr. Daleah Goodwin was appointed as the Director of DEI Initiatives this summer and has begun her work in this new role. The BSU Demands included a demand for a review of compensation for BIPOC faculty and staff, and Human Resources is addressing this in the context of compensation for employees and developing appropriate metrics and benchmarks for that study.

Next Steps and Items Not Yet Completed

In terms of faculty hiring and support for our current BIPOC faculty, Dr. Goodwin is in close conversation with Jay Roberts, new Vice President for Academic Affairs about next steps. By the end of this year, we aim to work with Human Resources to review existing procedures in place for faculty searches and determine how we can improve our processes to maximize diversity in the search pool with the ultimate aim of increasing the diversity of our faculty, and in particular, our BIPOC faculty. We also aim to hold meetings with our BIPOC faculty to hear what kinds of support and resources would be most beneficial from their perspective and to develop an action plan from that by the end of this academic year. We will also ask each department to complete a “DEI Engagement Plan,” which will include measurable goals and objectives as well as commitments moving forward. The preliminary report will be due in January, and the final report will be due in May. We will be tracking all DEI activity and progress over the course of the year in preparation for our first Annual Progress Report on DEI (planned for May). This report will note what we have accomplished, what is in process, and what we have not accomplished to ensure we stay honest and accountable to our goals in this area. We will also be asking for DEI activity information on each faculty member’s annual report for the first time this year (and we will continue to track that moving forward).

Applied Learning

Work Program

The [WPO](#) has been in touch with student representatives from the Alma Shippy Coalition regarding the BSU requests of instituting mandatory crew cultural competency training once a term and identified two students to be part of the planning group. The intent and goal of implementation will be utilizing the online work modules as the platform and outside trainers as facilitators. The sessions will be viewed both synchronously and asynchronously with opportunity for reflective dialogue or written prompts. Additional delivery of broader issues related to the intersection of work and race is also a target, though outside of the direct language of the BSU requests. These would include conversations around the black business/employment sectors in Asheville/WNC, as an example.

Community Engagement

While the College was not able to add a staff position in the [Center for Community Engagement](#) to focus on this work, we re-evaluated staff time and are pleased to share that Jeremy Lett, Assistant Director of Community Engagement, will now focus a significant amount of his work time to actively build and strengthen our relationships with Black-led and Black-serving community partners. Through this effort, we aspire to build greater alliances, share resources of the College, and connect students to important work happening in our community. As an alum of Warren Wilson, an eight+ year Asheville resident, and a former employee of Green Opportunities, Jeremy has quickly been able to build on his networks with organizations and community leaders. These relationships will provide a base for community engagement opportunities including work site placements and internships for students. Jeremy is deeply committed to building strong relationships first, relationships that can be sustained for the long-haul and are not just a short-term fix.

Student Life

WIDE

Student Life has been interviewing candidates for the interim Director of Wilson, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity ([WIDE](#)) and hopes to have someone in place within the next several weeks. A national search will follow for a permanent Director.

Counseling Center

[Counseling](#) has been assertive with efforts towards DEI initiatives for some time. We began with data acquisition from our demographic intake info, which is indicating that we were already providing services to students of color (SOC) at a higher rate than non-SOC. This increased awareness inspired shifts to include developing intentional collaborations and participating in appropriate events and activities. Efforts included forging closer relationships with the WWC WIDE staff and crew, programming and participation with athletic staff and teams, and increased outreach efforts.

In Spring of 2016, Counseling acted quickly to respond to BSU demands to increase diversity among Counseling staff providers, and in short order was able to identify and contract with a POC Professional Counselor. Things have evolved since then, with the previous Professional Counselor provider being replaced by a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, but again in response to BSU demands in Summer of 2020, with the support of the WWC Administration, we have facilitated a large increase in the hours of this provider who identifies as a person of color.

With the ongoing cultural shift toward racial justice and equity, along with the COVID-19 pandemic, it is clear that in addition to the general upheaval we are experiencing, People of Color and typically marginalized communities are experiencing disproportionate levels of loss and impact. For this reason, Counseling staff will be meeting regularly and intentionally with the intent to increase awareness and sensitivity around these shifts, and to collaborate to meet the

needs. Current plans include staff professional development targeting increased knowledge, awareness, and sensitivity. Programming ideas will be in collaboration with BSU, WIDE, and Wellness, and we will identify appropriate areas of need,

Spiritual Life

The office of Spiritual Life and accompanying Minor in Interfaith Leadership have been regular collaborators in DEI work on campus. We have been in conversation with student leaders about hopes for shifts in the dialogue project, and we have given some context for the direction the project took in the past. We are currently working with WPO and our off-campus partner, Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC), to make online training available to other crews that explores the intersections of interfaith work with racial justice movements. Matt Hoffman is also writing a grant proposal to IFYC to help support deeper intentionality around a racial justice/antiracist lens in the Introduction to Interfaith Dialogue course. We are working with student crew leaders, some of who are involved with antiracist movements on campus, to sharpen our antiracist focus in our interfaith programming.

Student Activities

This summer the Student Activities Office has been approved by students from WIDE and BSU for continued support with programming, as well as additional funding for new endeavors. Previously Student Activities has co-sponsored events throughout the year and especially during Black History Month including panel discussions, movie nights and screenings, Goombay festival and other off campus trips/events, dances, and receptions. Through written and verbal communication, Student Activities again committed to support events with staffing, publicity, and funding from the Student Activities account. BSU has also been given funding from the Club and Student Organizations budget and, depending on the request and events planned, that fund will also have some funding available.

Center for Student Well-Being

We hear BSU's request for Guided Meditation for POC and Intercommunal Self-Care Nights and will work with the crew to provide these programs. In addition, please know that we are happy to work with student organizations to create a specifically tailored program to help support student well-being at Warren Wilson College. Please let the Center know how we can support students. The Center for Student Well-Being is always happy to work with any student group for specialized or focused programs. We cover so many focus areas (wellness, substance abuse, relationships, etc.) that it is easy to find something for everyone within the department.

Advancement

Funding for DEI work and scholarships for BIPOC Students

On Giving Day, the Advancement team raised new funds to support the WIDE office and to grow endowed scholarships for BIPOC students. We are working with ENS faculty, enrollment staff, and others to find and pursue additional funding for underrepresented students in the sciences and in the institution overall.

George Floyd Memorial scholarship

The conversation has begun at the Trustee level to create a new scholarship for Black leaders on campus in memory of George Floyd.

Partnering in the community and visibility

Our team is working to develop authentic relationships with Black-led organizations in Asheville and creating events to amplify racial justice topics and stories.

Accountability and leadership

Team members have read articles, held ongoing discussions, and created individual DEI goals to purposefully integrate racial justice and inclusion in our office culture. We are building relationships to increase the diversity of leaders on the Alumni Board and Board of Trustees.

Next steps

Create resolution for Trustee approval to create new scholarship from our endowment. Increase focus on including diverse voices in institutional leadership, visible stories, and authentic histories represented by our office in written materials and at events.

Athletics

The [Athletics and Adventure Sports Department](#) staff have had intentional dialogue around diversity, equity, and inclusion. The department has developed a goal for the academic year to have frequent conversation/dialogue, intentional education, collaborative efforts/planning among staff, students, and campus to support the overall college DEI efforts and develop specific athletic department DEI initiatives. Additionally, one coaching staff member is now a part of the DEI Initiatives Advisory Committee and another staff member has been designated as the Athletics Diversity and Inclusion Designee (ADID) to help lead the department-wide DEI efforts. The ADID serves as the department's conduit for information related to national, local, and campus-level issues of diversity and inclusion and is the promoter of diverse and inclusive practices related to athletics.

Various athletic coaches have had one-on-one dialogues with their teams around DEI. During the summer, the department offered a virtual session with a guest speaker that focused on how to make the world better through WWC Owl's DEI efforts. Some athletic staff members attended the NCAA Inclusion Forum this summer. Intentional DEI conversations have started with the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and will continue as students return to campus. Some athletic teams are working with and will be partnering with WIDE on future programming. A student-athlete survey has been developed and will be shared with returning student-athletes soon to gather more information to further develop the athletics DEI plan.

Finance and Administration/Human Resources

In general, the Finance and Administration team continues to talk regularly about DEI Initiatives as it pertains to students, faculty and staff and strives to ensure that our work focuses on equality for all members of the community.

Financial Aid

We continue to work in conjunction with Advancement on any existing or new scholarships or grants for BIPOC students.

Human Resources (HR)

Human Resources continues to talk with supervisors during the recruitment process about fair and equitable processes for all applicants. Positions have the opportunity to be posted in diverse locations to attract diverse applicants. HR continues to work closely with managers on employee relations matters focusing on fair practices, open communication and accountability equally applied.

Enrollment and Marketing

This summer, we established the Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity in Admissions (IDEA) working group, composed of members representing the division's three functional areas, Admissions, Marketing, and Operations, to identify DEI work that needs to be done in the division, research relevant DEI issues to inform action and policy change, review policies, procedures, and behaviors, and make proposals through an inclusive process. The IDEA working group is leading conversations and sharing resources internally around DEI, and will be establishing priorities and goals after an initial inventory and review. We will report back on our plan once finalized. In particular, the Marketing Department will continue its work of identifying opportunities for inclusive language in printed materials and web content. Additionally, we are in close conversation with Advancement and Academic Affairs to establish, implement, and market additional scholarships and other programs to support BIPOC students in the natural sciences and the institution broadly.