

Task Force on Diversity Programming for Faculty Development

Final Report & Recommendations

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In February of 2015, Provost Beeson convened a task force on Diversity Programming for Faculty Development. She charged the task force with building on the momentum of the Diversity 2020 Summit and past diversity programming to develop recommendations for diversity programming for faculty, to be offered over the next five years. She asked for a report with recommendations in the summer of 2015.

The task force met four times between February and June of 2015. Following an initial presentation describing current diversity initiatives at Pitt relevant to the Provost's charge, members of the task force began to discuss potential vision and goals related to diversity programming for faculty development. In doing so, the task force viewed such statements from other sources, including the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Maryland, as well as a statement articulated by the Graduate School in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences.

At the same time, task force members discussed various types of programming that have been offered at the University of Pittsburgh, and that could potentially be offered, over the next five years. To inform these discussions, task force members were provided with internal and external benchmarking data, which included:

- Historical data about the Provost's Diversity Seminar, offered from 1995 through 2013
- Overview of the Diversity 2020 Summit, held in 2014
- Overview of new programs offered in 2014-2015, including the Provost's Diversity Institute for Faculty Development and the Destination Diversity speaker series coordinated by the Center for Instructional Development & Distance Education (CIDDE)
- Report prepared by a diversity programming subcommittee of the Provost's Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence
- External benchmarking data

The data provided are summarized below.

Provost's Diversity Seminar. Since 1995, one of the primary vehicles for diversity programming at Pitt has been the Provost's Diversity Seminar, a two-week intensive workshop. The task force was provided with historical data about the Provost's Diversity Seminar, which was offered between 1995 and 2013. The data for each year included the name of the (co)directors, number of faculty attending, and the schools represented. Over this time span, generally 8 to 10 faculty participated each year, for a total of approximately 170 faculty participants (or "Diversity Fellows").

Feedback from faculty, obtained in various formats over time, was also discussed. The feedback highlighted the following points:

- The Diversity Seminar had a profound impact on many of the faculty who participated, in some cases transforming individuals and courses they taught. It

provided a forum and a safe environment for in-depth engagement and exploration of sensitive and potentially challenging topics.

- The Diversity Seminar received the Chancellor's Affirmative Action and Diversity Award in 2000.
- An outcome of the seminar was a book published in 2007, titled *Diversity Across the Curriculum: A Guide for Faculty in Higher Education*. This volume was edited by three seminar attendees, and contributors to the volume were primarily Pitt faculty who were also Diversity Fellows.
- The School of Nursing regularly sent faculty to the seminar. Other schools, including Law and Medicine, have noted that the timing of the seminar and the two-week commitment made it impossible for their faculty to attend.
- The focus of the Diversity Seminar was primarily on race and gender. Though at least some of the seminar directors did weave in discussions of multiple factors of social differences, feedback from recent attendees in particular indicated a desire for the seminar to go beyond its traditional focus on race and gender.
- Relative to the size of the Pitt faculty, this particular program's reach was modest in terms of the number of faculty who attended the seminar. However, ideas to extend the reach of the seminar over time (e.g., follow-up seminars and other mechanisms) were never enacted.

Diversity 2020 Summit. In 2014, instead of offering the Diversity Seminar, the Provost's Office sponsored the Diversity 2020 Summit. The Summit was intended to start a conversation in the Pitt community about how to enhance diversity programming by building on past accomplishments and expanding the reach and scope of the programming. The Summit was also conceived as a way to solicit input from the Pitt community to begin to build a 5-year plan for diversity programming that would cover the 2015-2020 time period. Of the 200 individuals invited, about 70 attended the Summit, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Task force members were provided with an overview of the content and format of the Summit, as well as data about the number of participants and feedback. In addition, task force members were given a detailed report from one of the facilitated exercises in which Summit attendees were divided into small groups and asked to make recommendations about activities related to diversity programming that the University of Pittsburgh should START, activities it should STOP, and activities it should CONTINUE. The groups were also asked to discuss challenges, resources and the potential impact of recommended activities. The report from this facilitated START/STOP/CONTINUE exercise represented a rich source of feedback, which was shared with the task force members.

2014-2015 Diversity Programming for Faculty Development. Programs offered in 2014-2015 were designed to build on the momentum of the Diversity 2020 Summit. Task force members were briefed on the 2015 Provost's Diversity Institute for Faculty Development, which was intended to build faculty awareness and capacity to teach a diverse, multicultural audience, and to create a classroom environment that is inclusive, welcoming and respectful to all. An explicit goal of the Institute was to expand both the

scope of the programming beyond race and gender, and the reach of the programming to a broad group of faculty. The plan for the Institute and registration data were shared with the task force members. As the Diversity Institute events were held in late April and early May, attendance and feedback information was provided to the task force. A total of 101 individual faculty attended Diversity Institute sessions, with many attending multiple sessions. Moreover, the majority of schools and all regional campuses participated in at least one of the sessions. Both informal and formal evaluations of the Diversity Institute were very positive, with the majority of evaluation scores above a 4.5 (on a 5-point scale).

The Institute was designed with flexibility and variety in mind, not only in terms of content, but also timing and program length. Four distinct sessions were held over a five-week period. Each session spanned two days, and formats varied to include interactive theatre performance, small and large group discussion, video-conferencing with guest speakers, and outside the classroom work. Topics ranged from building capacity and raising faculty awareness to race relations among students to creating a diverse and inclusive classroom for LGBT students.

The task force was also provided data about Destination Diversity, a program coordinated by CIDDE and offered in 2014-2015. This program is a series of lunchtime presentations at the intersection of diversity and education, typically offered in the spring term. An overview of the topics, as well as attendance data, was provided to the task force. In Spring 2015, about 75 faculty participated in these sessions, covering topics of accessibility and climate for LGBT students. During 2014-2015, the sessions were streamed live to the regional campuses and archived for future viewing.

ACIE Subcommittee Report. During the 2014-2015 academic year, a subcommittee of the Provost's Advisory Council for Instructional Excellence (ACIE) reviewed diversity programming offered over the past year, and submitted a series of recommendations, which were shared with the task force. The recommendations included: offering flexible formats for diversity programming (taking advantage of technology for delivery of some programs), creating a culture of expectations around diversity, and being discipline-focused in our approach to diversity programming for faculty development.

External Benchmarking Data. Finally, the task force members were also provided with external benchmarking data. CIDDE regularly benchmarks diversity programming at other universities. Because this data is voluminous, data for six universities were provided as a representative sample; CIDDE offered to provide additional data as requested or needed. Benchmark data were provided for Carnegie Mellon, Penn State, Rutgers, Maryland, Michigan, and North Carolina. Among other data, the benchmarking reported on institutional resources, programs, and departments. The external benchmarking report also included links to related workshops at other universities that might be of interest to the task force; this included links to programs at Cornell, Loyola, Missouri-Kansas City, and Northern Illinois.

After a review and discussion of the data, task force members were asked to provide their recommendations for future diversity programming at the University of Pittsburgh. A summary of the recommendations is provided next.

Recommendations

General Recommendations

1. The task force recommends that the Provost's Office articulate the importance of, and commitment to, diversity programming for faculty development at the University of Pittsburgh. The following statement is offered as an example:

The Office of the Provost values diversity and inclusion. We seek to increase the capacity of all University of Pittsburgh faculty to create an inclusive teaching and learning environment, which encourages learning about diversity issues and diffusing diversity in the curriculum, and emphasizes mutual respect and appreciation of differences across the Pitt community including different cultures, nationalities, ethnicities, sexual orientation, gender, socio-economic backgrounds, and religious affiliations.

This statement can be posted on the Provost's Office website. It can also be reinforced in messaging to the deans (e.g., in Council of Deans meetings, or in an annual memo to the deans) as a way to signal the importance that the Provost places on diversity and inclusion across the learning environment, and on diversity programming for faculty development.

2. The task force recommends that the Provost's Office begin immediately to gather information to define specific needs of diversity programming focusing on teaching and classroom dynamics at the University of Pittsburgh. The task force believes it is important to identify and articulate the issues that are being addressed with diversity programming. For example, to what extent do faculty lack awareness of diversity issues? To what extent do current course materials reflect a diverse environment? To what extent are students uncomfortable in the classroom? A deeper understanding of the needs of the Pitt community, as well as related data, would lead to more effective diversity programming for faculty development.
3. Similarly, the task force recommends that metrics to assess the impact of diversity programming be developed. The Provost's Office tracks the number of faculty who participate in diversity programming, and there have been some attempts to assess the impact of the programming (e.g., conducting a focus group of Diversity Fellows). More assessment is needed, which includes collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data. The task force specifically recommends reaching out to Diversity Fellows to assess the impact of the seminar on their courses, perhaps through oral

histories or focus groups, and to continue that with all diversity programs going forward, including assessing the impact of the 2015 Diversity Institute. In addition, the task force encourages the Provost's Office to consider some measures of accountability, or to encourage accountability throughout the University. This might take the form of asking faculty to report on their participation in faculty development programs on their annual performance reports; or, deans may be asked to report the number of faculty in their schools who participated in programs. Knowing that the Provost's Office is monitoring participation not only signals the importance of diversity programming to the Pitt community but it should also help to motivate broader participation in programs.

4. The task force also encourages the facilitation of an ongoing exchange of information related to diversity in the curriculum and inclusion in the classroom, possibly by providing a web-based repository of materials accessible to all faculty, or facilitating other exchanges of ideas and best practices among faculty across all campuses.

Programming Recommendations

The task force recommends that the Provost's Office, working in conjunction with faculty¹ and with the support of CIDDE, develop a portfolio of diversity programming over the next 5 year period, so that a diverse and evolving mix of programs can be offered to the faculty. The portfolio should encompass a range of programs to be offered on a rolling basis. The portfolio should include programs for different audiences, on different topics, and in different formats.

Audiences. The task force recognizes the importance of reaching a broad group of Pitt faculty, and recommends that:

1. All faculty, including tenured, tenure-stream, non-tenure stream and part-time faculty, have the opportunity to participate in diversity programming.
2. At least some programming be offered on the regional campuses to allow for greater participation of the faculty on all Pitt campuses.
3. Specific programming or activities be targeted toward faculty administrators so that they can help to move diversity programming forward within their schools or departments. For example, one approach may be to work with a department chair to develop programming around diversity in the curriculum for faculty teaching different sections of the same course. Another idea is to encourage department chairs or deans to devote at least one of their faculty meetings to diversity training (e.g., a video and discussion, training facilitated by CIDDE, etc.).

¹The task force emphasizes the importance of engaging faculty in the development of diversity programming, including the faculty associated with the Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies program and the faculty who serve on the Provost's Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence.

Topics. The task force agreed that the topics offered should go beyond the traditional topics of race and gender. A number of potential topics were identified, which included (but are not limited to): transgender populations, power dynamics, implicit bias and assumptions, religious beliefs and tolerance, privilege and the professoriate, and faculty responsibilities for accessibility.

The task force also notes the importance of hearing about diverse perspectives from the people who identify with the group in question. Personal experiences are powerful. Therefore, the task force recommends that when topics are being considered for programming, some consideration also be given to including presenters or instructors who represent a particular diverse population or minority perspective.

Programs, Formats, and Timing. The task force recommends that a portfolio of programs be developed that includes a range of topics and programming of various formats and durations. Such a varied portfolio will accommodate different needs, different styles of learning, and different flexibility in schedules. The portfolio might include some programming that is short in duration, as well as some programming that is longer in duration. In addition, and because many of the conversations related to diversity can be quite intimate and difficult, the task force emphasizes the importance of including programs in the portfolio that create a “safe place” and environment for conversation. Specific recommendations for the portfolio of programs include:

1. Continue the Destination Diversity Series that is traditionally offered in spring and is coordinated by CIDDE. Offer this program on an annual basis, varying the topics. In addition to offering these programs on the Oakland campus, these short programs should be recorded and/or offered via video links, where possible, to the regional campuses. Consider facilitating other face-to-face events on the regional campuses.
2. Begin a series of book, video or article discussions on topics related to diversity and inclusion. Materials or topics can be suggested by an ad-hoc faculty advisory group or faculty expert. Model this program after the existing book discussion program focused on topics related to pedagogy and offered through CIDDE. As with the Destination Diversity Series, consider recording and/or offering this series via video links to the regional campuses.
3. Continue the Provost’s Diversity Institute for Faculty Development, based on the demand and positive response to the 2015 Institute, but continue to vary the topics and format over time, based on faculty input and other feedback, including feedback from the Provost’s Diversity Seminar. For example, the Institute may include a series of short programs one year, similar to what was offered in 2015, and, other years, include as part of the Diversity Institute an extended seminar experience for faculty that encourages an in-depth examination of diversity in the curriculum over a prolonged

period of time, not unlike the type of experience designed into the Diversity Seminar. In providing a longer, in-depth experience every 2 or 3 years, it will be important to balance the length of the program against the amount of time that faculty can or will commit to a program. Feedback from the Diversity Seminar suggests that many faculty find it difficult to commit to a 2-week program. Feedback from the Diversity Institute suggests that many faculty would have considered attending workshops that are slightly longer in length than the 2-day workshops offered in 2015. Together this feedback suggests structuring a program in such a way as to achieve the in-depth experience but also allow more faculty to participate. One example is a program that consists of two components: a 4 or 5-day summer workshop, followed by monthly meetings in the fall term to encourage ongoing dialogue and exploration, sharing of best practices, and community building. Other models are possible as well. It will be important to work with faculty to develop Diversity Institute programming that varies in format and topic, that reaches a broad group of faculty, and that provides faculty with opportunities to participate in different types of diversity programming.

4. Each spring, hold a luncheon or other event, inviting all faculty who have participated in diversity programming over the prior year, to celebrate diversity and foster inclusion. This event can include a panel of faculty participants highlighting course changes or way in which the diversity programming event(s) have impacted their teaching, or high-profile speaker from Pitt or another university.
5. Sponsor a major, university-wide event in 2020 to celebrate diversity and inclusion, to reflect on progress between now and 2020, and to set the stage for the next 5 years of diversity programming. This may be modeled after the 2014 Diversity 2020 Summit.

Goals and Assessment. For all programs, it will be important to measure participation and impact. If the program is ineffective, or failing to meet a minimum participation threshold, it will not be offered again without significant revision. In addition, the task force believes it is important to engage more faculty who have not traditionally participated in diversity programming. To that end, yearly goals for participation should be specified. For example, one goal might be to increase participation in events by 50% each year, or to generate a 30% increase in new faculty participants each year; another goal might be to increase participation for each school by 50% each year. Finally, as noted earlier, the task force believes that, in addition to tracking the number of participants, assessing the impact of diversity programming is essential, and recommends that measures of impact be developed and implemented that also include qualitative assessments such as testimonials, focus groups, and/or oral histories.