

Year-End Report
Senate Diversity Committee 2019-2020
Submitted by: Dr. Rachel E. Bowen, Chair

Committee Members

Member	Source	Term Expires
Jane Jackman	Faculty Council	2022
Ajit Chaudhari	Faculty Council	2022
Glenn Martinez	Faculty Council	2022
Rachel Bowen	Faculty Council	2021
Eugenia Costa-Giomi	Faculty Council	2021
Andrej Rotter	Faculty Council	2020
Russell Hassan	Presidential	2021
Patricia Enciso	Presidential	2020
Roaya Higazi	USG	2020
Ehsan Estiri	CGS	2020
Fareedah Haroun	IPC	2020
Katherine Betts	Staff (USAC)	2022
Megan Sayres	Staff (USAC)	2020
Sara Childers	Staff (Presidential)	2022
James Moore III	Provost / Designee (Non-Voting)	
Linette Hillis	AVP OHR / Designee (Non-Voting)	

Introduction

The Senate Diversity Committee operates under the following charge:

The committee shall study issues that relate to the implementation of the university nondiscriminatory policy. It shall recommend policies that foster an environment of civility, tolerance, and mutual respect. It shall perform the following functions with appropriate administrative support from the office of academic affairs and the office of human resources.

- 1. Study and evaluate issues affecting diversity from an overall university perspective.*
- 2. Be informed on external requirements on the university affecting diversity.*
- 3. Advise the president, the executive vice president and provost, the associate vice president for human resources, and the vice president for student life about the institutional climate, policies, and priorities for ensuring justice, fairness, and equitable treatment to all members of the university.*

4. *Educate and inform the university community on issues of diversity, including the letter and spirit of all Ohio and federal rules regarding members of protected classes.*
5. *Oversee administration of university affirmative action grants and awards.*
6. *Report annually to the university senate.*

In furtherance of this charge, the committee held nine meetings between September and May, each with robust attendance and discussion. The Chair recognizes the enthusiastic participation of the committee in our collective efforts. Most meetings included a combination of dialogue with invited guests and discussion within the committee. In addition, members of the committee worked in ad hoc task forces as needed throughout the year. During the past year, the committee has focused much of our attention to four issues: 1) identifying and pursuing next steps and best practices to enhance diversity and inclusion at Ohio State; 2) communicating within the university towards recognition of the university's imperfect history and future commitments; 3) furthering the university's participation in systemic change; and 4) responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the university community. These will be discussed in turn below.

1) Identifying and pursuing next steps and best practices to enhance diversity and inclusion

The committee discussed and supported an initiative brought by our undergraduate student member, Roaya Higazi, to provide testing accommodations for students observing religious fasts during exam periods. This issue was seen as urgent given that the Muslim holy month of Ramadan would overlap with final exams in Spring 2020 and for several years following. Ms. Higazi was able to secure the support of the registrar to make accommodations for these students, including staffing the university's testing center after sundown so that students could take exams in a proctored setting after breaking their fast. Because of the shift to online delivery beginning in March, it is not known how this policy was applied. *Next year's committee is encouraged to work to institutionalize this change and to routinize communication about it to all faculty.*

The committee applauds the launch of the Buckeye Portal for Inclusive Excellence. Sara Childers provided the committee with a demonstration and extended access to the portal for committee members. The portal has been a lengthy and ambitious undertaking. We hope that the portal will help the committee and the university as a whole to identify, assess, and institutionalize best practices across campuses.

One of the more joyful duty of this committee is to participate in selecting and notifying recipients of the Distinguished Diversity Enhancement Awards. Committee members Sara Childers, Fareedah Haroun, Russell Hassan, and Rachel Bowen formed a committee with the coordination of Michele Bondurant of the Office of Human Resources to review applications and select recipients. Unfortunately, the remote work environment as a result of the pandemic response meant that the in-person surprise award announcements and the scheduled recognition event had to be canceled. However, the Chair worked with OHR to do surprise

announcements during Zoom meetings. *If possible, this year's awardees should be recognized more publicly in person in the coming year.*

The committee routinely invited guests from around the university to engage in dialogue. These discussions help in identifying problems as well as best practices. These discussions touched on most aspects of university life. Guests included:

October 21, 2019: Susan Basso, Senior Vice President, Talent, Culture, and Human Resources; Discussion of General Education Implementation with Co-Chairs Laura Podalsky, Professor and Chair of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, and Blaine Lilly, Associate Chair of Undergraduate Programs & Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering; Katherine M. Lasher, Associate Vice President, Office of Institutional Equity

November 21, 2019: Kay Halasek, Director, University Institute for Teaching and Learning; Beth Hume, Vice Provost for Student Academic Success and Dean of Undergraduate Education; Update on BuckIDream initiative and DACA students from Anna Babel, Associate Professor of Hispanic Linguistics

December 5, 2019: Leon McDougle, Chief Diversity Officer, College of Medicine

February 18, 2020: Several members of the Multicultural Center; Presidential Search Advisory Committee members Sharon Schweikhart and Devin Peterson

March 30, 2020: Gil Latz, Vice Provost for Global Strategies, Office of International Affairs

April 27, 2020: Donnie Perkins, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, College of Engineering

May 22, 2020: President Michael V. Drake

2) Communicating within the university towards recognition of the university's imperfect history and future commitments

The Undergraduate Student Government approached the committee seeking its support for their initiative to rename Bricker Hall because of John Bricker's promotion of racial segregation while Attorney General of Ohio. The committee prepared a letter of support, which was sent to Kate Greer, USG President, and copied to university leaders. The committee expressed its hope that the university host more dialogue regarding past and present-day treatment of historically underrepresented faculty, staff, and students. (This letter can be found in the appendix to this report.) It is the committee's understanding that USG had planned to introduce a resolution on this issue at their beginning of their new General Assembly, but the impact of the pandemic delayed that discussion until the next academic year. *The committee is encouraged to follow up with USG leadership regarding this issue.*

The committee worked to ensure that an appreciation of diversity and inclusion was included in future planning. Susan Basso shared with the committee the hope that the Career Roadmap, the HR Transformation, and the move to a \$15 minimum wage would help to build diversity and equity across the university. The committee shared its concerns with the GE Implementation committee to ensure that the diversity curriculum be robust and appropriate.

Discussion with Katherine Lasher included concerns regarding to the optimization of reporting, consulting, and monitoring around discrimination and harassment.

3) Furthering the university's participation in systemic change

The committee applauds the efforts of many across the university to increase Ohio State's contributions to systemic change on campus, off campus, and nationwide. The committee heard about the wide-ranging and essential work done by the Multicultural Center within Student Life to bring students and community members together across areas of differences to learn about each other's cultures. Donnie Perkins and Susan Basso shared efforts to enhance recruitment and retention of increasingly diverse faculty and staff, notably through the Diverse Faculty and Scholars Recruitment Collaborative. *The committee is encouraged to pursue how it can best partner with these initiatives in the coming year.*

In our first meeting, the committee discussed questions around "diversity training." The committee recognizes the need to continue to raise awareness and sensitivity across the university, but also acknowledges that many faculty and staff members may be resistant to educational offerings if they are seen as mandatory. Leon McDougle shared with the committee the approach that has been taken in the College of Medicine and the Wexner Medical Center. Because medical practitioners are obliged to participate in continuing education annually to maintain their licensure, COM provides a variety of offerings both in person and virtually that are focused on the medical context and can be included in annual CE requirements. The committee was told that the program has been successful because the offerings were both convenient and relevant. *The committee is encouraged to continue investigating different models of diversity programming and consider how to increase participation across the university.*

The committee also discussed internally the need to create and institutionalize systematic monitoring of all areas of the university's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. This monitoring may include, among other things, hate speech incidents, discrimination, budget allocations, programming, and public statements across the university. At its May meeting, there was considerable support within the committee for institutionalizing these efforts through a "scorecard" or other set of metrics that will need to be devised by next year's committee. *An initial table of issues to consider can be found below. The committee is encouraged to establish a robust set of metrics that can be easily communicated and that can dovetail with the university's own scorecards.*

4) Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the university community

Beginning in March, the COVID-19 pandemic had wide-ranging and intense impacts across the university, as it did around the world. The committee focused in this period on two major impacts on the university community. In both instances, the committee's primary activity resulted in communications to university leadership.

The first issue, which was seen as immediate, was the experiences of fear, discrimination, and actual threats experienced by Chinese and Asian-Americans students and other members of the university community and the surrounding communities. Gil Latz echoed the committee's concerns, especially given the hundreds of Chinese students and other international students who remained in on-campus housing, but he shared that there had been few formal complaints. The Chair brought these concerns to the following Faculty Cabinet meeting. Following a robust discussion in Faculty Cabinet, conversations were initiated between faculty leaders and university leaders. Subsequently, President Drake issued a statement against discrimination through university communications, including an email to all university members. *The incoming chair is encouraged to bring concerns to faculty leaders through participation in Faculty Cabinet meetings.*

The second issue became clearer and more pressing as the impact of the pandemic appeared likely to last for a prolonged period. The committee expects that the university will experience a negative fiscal impact from the pandemic, as have universities across the country. Recognizing that the university has begun planning for potential budget cuts of as much as 20%, the committee sought to amplify expressions of concern from The Women's Place, the President and Provost's Council on Women, and others that budget cuts will likely make existing inequities worse. The committee addressed a letter to President Drake, Provost McPheron, and Vice Provost Moore, exhorting university leaders to make equity, diversity, and livelihoods priorities in fiscal planning. The committee is particularly concerned that implementation of across-the-board budget cuts will fall to the leaders of individual units with neither adequate guidance on and accountability to university values such as inclusive excellence nor sensitivity to the capacity of different units to withstand seemingly equal budget cuts. *The committee is encouraged to continue monitoring this situation, including maintaining a record of the impact of these eventual fiscal decisions.*

Concerns raised for follow-up in 2020-21

The committee wishes to flag a number of issues for next year's committee to consider:

July 2020 will mark the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This occasion merits enhanced engagement by the committee in dis/ability issues as a part of Diversity & Inclusion.

Consider support or partnership with Council of Graduate Students to improve assignment of Writing Center tutors for international students, especially graduate students.

The Graduate School Comprehensive Review Task Force will have a report on graduate admissions over the Summer. The new Chair is encouraged to invite Dean Bertone back to the committee.

Next year's Diversity Committee is encouraged to partner with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion in preparation for and in response to the November 2020 election.

The incoming Chair should reach out to the new university president, once announced, to invite them to meet with the committee.

The incoming Chair should invite the Provost to meet with the committee as such a meeting was not able to be scheduled in 19-20.

Review of issues of continuing concern to the committee

Area of concern	Progress	Next steps
Testing accommodations for religious holiday fasting	Committee support Roaya Higazi in devising an accommodation through the Testing Center, which was communicated through the Faculty Cabinet and other channels.	-Communicate with new registrar -As this issue will recur, a policy should be formalized and may benefit from partnership with Council on Academic Affairs.
Renaming of Bricker Hall	Committee authored a letter in support of USG planned resolution, which was delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic.	Follow up with USG.
Equity in Faculty Compensation	The university hired a consultant (Mercer) to conduct a faculty compensation study.	Follow up with OAA regarding the results of the study
Hate Speech and campus climate	The committee studied best practices from other institutions.	Recommend including this issue in a scorecard to be developed.
Pandemic response I: concern for our Asian and Asian-American community members	The committee discussed their concerns with Dr. Gil Latz and subsequently brought them to Faculty Council, where the concerns were taken up by Senate Leadership.	Follow up with Office of International Affairs, Office of Institutional Equity, and Office of Diversity & Inclusion. Bias incidents and fear of them off-campus as well as on-campus continue to be a major concern.
Pandemic Response II: Budgetary concerns	The Committee addressed a letter to President Drake and others expressing its concern and subsequently met with Dr. Drake. To date, there have been no announcements of specific budgets cuts nor the guidelines that will be employed.	Incoming Chair will continue to monitor budgetary issues. Recommend that the committee begin systematic collection of budget information related to D&I as a part of a scorecard.
Diversifying the faculty	Met with Donnie Perkins	Follow up on expanding the reach of the Diverse Faculty and Scholars Recruitment Collaborative

Diversifying the curriculum	Revised GE includes a diversity foundation course requirement, as well as a theme on “Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World”	Follow course approval process and other implementation of the new GE
Diversifying the workforce	OHR is pursuing a variety of initiatives currently that may impact the recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce	Follow up with OHR for data on these initiatives over several years Look for data on an impact from the pandemic disruption
Regional Campuses	The committee discussed the particular issues affecting the regional campuses in numerous meetings.	Invite regional deans to meet with the committee in 20-21 to air concerns.
DACA student support	Explicit assistance and financial aid to DACA students remains difficult due to regulatory barriers.	Continue to monitor
Buckeye Portal for Inclusive Excellence	The committee applauds this year’s launch of the Portal.	Continue to work with Sara Childers and others to implement best practices through the portal.
Diversity training	The committee investigated models	Continue to investigate models; develop recommendations for relevant and meaningful education.

Appendices:

1. Letter regarding Bricker Hall Renaming issue
2. Letter regarding Budget Cuts



March 9, 2020

University Student Government
c/o Kate Greer
greer.219@osu.edu

Dear USG Executive Committee Members,

Thank you for reaching out to the University Senate's Diversity Committee to inform us of the effort to rename Bricker Hall. It is deeply troubling to this committee that a building at The Ohio State University that houses so many of its important offices, including the President and the Provost, is named for someone who actively promoted racial segregation while Attorney General of the State of Ohio. We believe that the honor bestowed on individuals by naming of buildings should reflect the University's core values and ideals of inclusive excellence.

We hope that this effort will create opportunities for the University to foster dialogue regarding our past and present-day treatment of our historically underrepresented faculty, staff and students who have contributed tremendous gifts and intellect to our university community. The University's sesquicentennial year strikes this committee as an appropriate moment to critically examine our past and chart a new future course to dismantle the legacies of institutionalized racism and oppressions associated with our University's– and our nation's – difficult history.

We ask, therefore, that naming honors be seriously reviewed and historical wrongs (and contradictory actions) be acknowledged, which may result in the removal of building names. Members of this committee will be willing to participate in this process.

Sincerely,

Rachel E. Bowen

Dr. Rachel E. Bowen, 2019-2020 Chair
Bowen.208@osu.edu

On behalf of the 2019-2020 Senate Diversity Committee:

Katherine Betts, Intercultural Specialist
Multicultural Center

Rachel Bowen, Associate Professor
Political Science
Mansfield Campus

Sara Childers, Director
Strategic Diversity Planning, Training, &
Assessment
Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Ajit Choudhari, Associate Professor
Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
College of Medicine



Patricia Enciso, Professor
Teaching and Learning
College of Education and Human Ecology

Ehsan Estiri, Graduate Student
Near Eastern Languages and Culture

Eugenia Costa-Giomi, Professor
School of Music

Fareedah Haroun, Student
College of Optometry

Russell Hassan, Associate Professor
John Glenn College of Public Affairs

Roaya Higazi, Undergraduate Student
City and Regional Planning

Jane Jackman, Professor
Chemistry and Biochemistry

Glenn Martinez, Professor
Department of Spanish and Portuguese

Andrej Rotter, Professor
Pharmacology
College of Medicine

Megan Sayres, Program Director of
Professional Studies
College of Pharmacy

James Moore III (ex officio)
Vice Provost and Chief Diversity Officer

Linette Hillis (ex officio, non-voting)
Associate Vice President
Office of Human Resources

Cc: Michael V. Drake, University President
Bruce McPheron, University Provost
Gary R. Heminger, Chair of the Board of Trustees
Sharon Schweikhart, Faculty Council Chair
Ben Givens, University Senate Secretary



May 4, 2020

Dear President Drake, Provost McPheron, and Vice Provost Moore,

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the University will experience significant financial and budgetary challenges. Nationwide, layoffs and furloughs have been mechanisms used without necessarily being intentional about the impact to staff and faculty who are members of historically underrepresented communities. In the process, many institutions may cut programs and services created to provide equitable opportunities for access and support to members of underrepresented groups.

As the Diversity Committee of the University Senate, we consider Ohio State's people its most important asset. We are concerned that many faculty, staff, and students are operating in a state of anxiety about our future at Ohio State. Across-the-board flat percentage cuts to salaries or wages have a disproportionate effect on those at the lower compensation levels, where people from minoritized populations are disproportionately located. In addition, any furloughs or layoffs that favor seniority will tend to disproportionately affect people from underrepresented groups given the efforts over the past decade to diversify hiring.

Given that these decisions will be undertaken during Summer when the University Senate will not be in session, we are concerned that these decisions will be made without the input of important stakeholders and without adequate transparency. While we understand that senior administrators also do not have all of the information they would like to have in order to plan our path forward, we ask that the priority goals that inform that planning to be transparently communicated to the Ohio State community.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rachel E. Bowen, 2019-2020 Chair

Bowen.208@osu.edu

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Intercultural Specialist
Multicultural Center

Rachel Bowen
Associate Professor
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Graduate Student
Near Eastern Languages and
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Eugenia Costa-Giomi,
Professor
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Fareedah Haroun, Student
College of Optometry

Russell Hassan, Associate
Professor
John Glenn College of Public
Affairs

Roaya Higazi
Undergraduate Student
City and Regional Planning

Jane Jackman
Professor
Chemistry and Biochemistry

Kathy Lechman
Associate Director
Kirwan Institute for the
Study of Race and Ethnicity

Glenn Martinez
Professor
Department of Spanish and
Portuguese

Andrej Rotter
Professor
Pharmacology
College of Medicine

Megan Sayres
Program Director of
Professional Studies
College of Pharmacy

James Moore III (ex officio)
Vice Provost and Chief
Diversity Officer

Linette Hillis (ex officio)
Associate Vice President
Office of Human Resources

Cc:

Gail Marsh, Senior Vice President, Chief Strategy Officer; Chair, Post-Pandemic Task Force
Susan Basso, Senior Vice President, Talent, Culture & Human Resources
Mike Papadakis, Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer
Sharon Schweikhart, Faculty Council Chair, 2019-2020
Susan Cole, Faculty Council Chair, 2020-2021
Ben Givens, University Senate Secretary
Andrew Jordan, USAC Chair, 2019-2020
Chrissy Sprouse, USAC Chair, 2020-2021
Gary R. Heminger, Chair of the Board of Trustees