

2021-2022 Annual Report

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The College of Communication and Information Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee met monthly throughout the 2021-2022 academic year and additionally as needed. The DEI Committee resumed in person events this year and engaged the community in many ways.

A central focus for the DEI Committee this year was the completion, approval, and initial implementation of the College's DEI strategic plan. In Fall 2021 the finalized strategic plan was presented to the College and opened for a vote, the college voted to approve it and we began to implement it over the course of the year. In fall we reviewed and finalized our summer program, the inclusive syllabi project, and continued it with expanded participants. We also continued raising the profile of DEI by having the Chair of the Committee provide DEI updates at College Assembly's, attend leadership meetings, and regularly post as part of a weekly college newsletter. The Chair of the Committee also appeared in courses on request to talk to students about how DEI operated in the college and what resources we offered. The Chair of the Committee also regularly represented the College at meetings of College Diversity Officers from across the University held by the Vice President of Institutional Diversity.

In 2021-2022 The DEI Committee resumed in person events. However, to promote inclusivity and accessibility – particularly for disabled and immunocompromised members of

our community – we ensured that our major in person events were also made available by Zoom. This choice also allowed us to reach a wider community, in addition to college members – community members from Lexington as well as professionals in the field attended many of these events. We invited two major guest speakers this year. Our first event in Fall 2021 was *Virginia Moore: Communicating for all Kentuckians* during which Communicator of the Year Award Winner Virginia Moore discussed Deaf culture and supports in Kentucky and how communication strategies can be more inclusive of Deaf individuals. She was introduced by a teacher from the Kentucky School for the Deaf. Wrap around programming for this event including a pedagogy event about supporting deaf students and a video campaign in which community members taught UKY related signs. In Spring 2022 the DEI committee helped support the Angelo B. Henderson Lecture Series event *Surviving Deep Waters: Featuring WUSA-TV anchor and author Bruce Johnson*. This event included significant engagement with the community. Mr. Johnson held a master class and met with students in addition to his lecture.

We also supported pedagogy events and resources over the period of the academic year. .With the support of student success we put on the pedagogy event *Accommodating the Deaf/Hard of Hearing in the Classroom: Tips and Technology*. This event was well attended and offered both in person and virtually. A one sheet of tips was created and circulated after the event. We also furthered discussions of pedagogy and approaches to DEI by creating and distributing write ups of faculty who are engaging in inclusive pedagogy in the classroom, particularly focused on participants in our Inclusive Syllabi program. The committee also distributed information about University wide DEI pedagogy events, such as those put on by CELT.

In accordance with the new strategic plan the diversity committee and its chair, The College Diversity Officer, worked with unit heads and search committee chairs to improve our strategy for recruiting and retaining diverse faculty. This included a review of unconscious bias training, providing resources to unit to help ensure that job postings are reaching a wide variety of potential candidates and conducting a workshop with hiring committee chairs to review our strategies for equitable hiring practices and their success rates. This work aligned with our newly implemented diversity hiring plan for each search committee.

We also implemented a number of new programs to meet the strategic plan goal of highlighting and rewarding DEI work. This included the formulation of the college's first annual Contributions to DEI Award which was awarded at the College Awards Ceremony to our first winner. With the support of a committee member and grad assistant a news series on research profiles focused on DEI related research was initiated and distributed with the annual newsletter. The goal of this series was to publicize and promote research related to DEI – a goal that was also supported by promotion of the UNITE Research Priority Area and the participation of College members in it.

One significant goal for the committee and College Diversity Officer was to support the college in the AEJMC accreditation process by providing relevant information regarding DEI for review. Supporting the college with information more broadly was an important goal that was completed in the year. Significant work was put into creating resource guides for faculty, staff and students of DEI related resources throughout the University. After meeting with faculty and HR a one-sheet was developed summarizing the immigration supports and processes for international faculty to aid faculty and their mentors. Extensive meetings were conducted with members of student success and the graduate school to gather information about processes and

resources university wide. These were summarized and distributed to relevant faculty.

Additionally representatives of the committee met with the advising team to get a sense of the challenges faced by our students and how best to address them.

The committee also gathered touchstone data. Data on hiring diversity over the last two year was created and shared with relevant parties additionally the student success office shared that the incoming undergraduate class was more diverse then in previous years. Additionally members of the committee served in the graduate admissions committee and observed that the pool was highly international and diverse and the programs commitment to diversity was listed in many cover letters. The committee is also working to provide itself as a resource to the units, the chair met with a team from SIS to discuss their diversity audit process and a member of ISC to work on their hiring diversity plan.

The committee also worked to support community members. We financially supported a group of NAJB members ensuring that they could attend the annual NABJ conference. We also conducted another year of the Inclusive Syllabi Project. We hope to find more ways to support DEI efforts in the College in future years.

*Looking forward:*

- The committee has begun work on planning a new DEI website and gathering materials for it.
- The committee is planning on implementing a new regular events calendar with a pedagogy program in the fall, a professional development program in the spring and at minimum one guest speaker (ideally working up to more).
- Work more extensively to support our student success office including recruitment.
- Work to include profiles of graduate students in our news series.