Student Faculty Task Force

July 20, 2020

(initial notes were posted 7/23; notes have been expanded and re-posted 7/30)

Taskforce members:
Tanja Kortemme, Christina Stephens, Geeta Narlikar, Elizabeth Bond, Roberto Diaz, Sandy Johnson, Lisa Gunaydin, Anna Lipkin, Todd Nystul, Sarah Knox, Antara Rao, Ryan Hernandez, Elizabeth McCarthy, Srikantan Nagarajan, Nadia Ayad, Jason Gestwicki, Douglass Wassarman, Aparna Lakkaraju, Dina Buitrago Silva, Matthew Spitzer, Yewande Alabi, Tejal Desai, Chase Webb, Jasmine King, D'Anne Duncan, Carol Gross, Nicole Foti

Agenda
1. Introductions
   Who you are + short (1-2 sentences) of your goals for the taskforce
2. Discussion of the Summary of major DEI points document
   Power point presentation (Attached) of an annotated version of the Summary of Major points in DEI plans.
   Discussion will focus on whether there is general consensus, whether we can build in cross program and program/grad division efforts, and whether others need more extensive discussion of merit.
3. Next Steps

MEETING MINUTES (*Meeting recorded for note taking purposes)
Attendees:
Tanja Kortemme, Christina Stephens, Geeta Narlikar, Elizabeth Bond, Roberto Diaz, Lisa Gunaydin, Anna Lipkin, Todd Nystul, Sarah Knox, Antara Rao, Ryan Hernandez, Elizabeth McCarthy, Jason Gestwicki, Douglass Wassarman, Aparna Lakkaraju, Dina Buitrago Silva, Matthew Spitzer, Yewande Alabi, D'Anne Duncan, Carol Gross, Sandy Johnson, Nicole Foti, Srikantan Nagarajan, Jasmine King, Chase Webb, Tejal Desai, Jennifer Thompson (note taker)

Key issues raised in introductions as goals for taskforce:
  - Learn from others & come up with a uniform set of guidelines around DEI to increase transparency & accountability across all Grad Programs and make UCSF a more welcoming place for all students, especially minoritized students
  - Build in accountability & sustainability to the changes we aim to make
  - Create better avenues to recognize & amplify students’ voices & ensure their efforts aren’t in vain
  - Compensate students for DEI leadership
  - Standardize & make admissions processes more equitable
  - Increase enrollment of black students; form coalitions and collaborations to come up with action items to improve experience for black students and black faculty at UCSF
  - Gain an understanding of the current landscape; what’s being done to increase efforts to address anti-black racism & how black students are integrated into that process
  - ID issues where we can speak with one voice to leverage all programs to effect leadership on issues that we cannot solve by ourselves
  - In addition to short-term plans & actions; develop medium and long-term plans that mobilize resources to address racism and anti-blackness on campus
  - Ensure that any changes in this space are implemented at all levels of UCSF – encompassing staff/faculty as well as students
Increase faculty engagement & training around these issues

- Collaboratively make a difference, so that in the near future the experience of a black trainee is exactly identical to that of a white trainee
- Understand how those of us in the majority demographic can lighten the burden on our URM colleagues by identifying opportunities to become more involved in doing this work
- Get up to speed with what has been done so far in this space, and as a faculty member, learn how to lift some of the burden of this work from students
- Bridge disconnect between efforts of students and grad programs vs. institutional leadership in embracing cultural shift through actions. Lend my voice figure out how to muster resources that will enable us to move from talk to action by changing the uppermost culture; to then influence everything else

Synergize efforts between work of grad div and grad programs

**Brief discussion to clarify end goal of meeting**

End goal is to come up with a document or list that can be used to show what grad programs are committed to, and to lay out the landscape, to inform anyone who is going to work with us. To get there, we need to identify commonalities, and any differences, and assess what is working vs. what is not. Some things are in progress and some things are in the planning stage. The PPT is derived primarily from BMI’s DEI plan, which is the most comprehensive and advanced & provides a snapshot as a starting point.

**Discussion of PPT – (an annotated version of the Summary of Major points in DEI plans)**

**Key issues raised re: yearly DEI trainings for faculty**

- BMI DEI plan: to date, very little has been implemented or tracked in data driven way, so there is no numerical sense of what is and isn’t working
- Consensus that DEI trainings for faculty should be mandatory; but which ones?
- Consensus that there has been little accountability for faculty to attend training. Mechanisms needed for holding faculty accountable (**more on this below**)
- Trainings need to be viewed as a starting point for an evolution of true commitment and engagement in these activities that emphasizes direct action
- Mandate that DEI be part of RCR (*D’Anne is developing anti-black racism content for next year's sessions*)

**Champion Training**

- Concern raised as to whether Champion Training has a built-in mechanism to ensure faculty engagement, so that they cannot simply tune out, then ‘check a box that they’ve fulfilled req.’
  - Per CG, in-person iteration of training was very interactive; Dr. Guy is working on re-imaging it for Zoom; and CG is confident that she would welcome our input
- Champion Training (in its most recent iteration) offers up very little on what actual changes we can make vis-à-vis anti-black racism
  - DD is working with Dr. Michelle Guy to incorporate an anti-black racism component as well as other issues of particular relevance to basic sci. faculty into Champion Training

**Restorative Justice**

- Overall, 1st yr. BMI students who underwent RJ training were very receptive; their collective feedback highlighted the importance of holding the Community Circles at the beginning of the year to head off issues before they unfold. Many taskforce members were not familiar with these offerings so Ryan & D’Anne provided a brief overview. Key components of the circles include enhancing dialog and vulnerability with the intent of fostering agreements to bolster community within programs; and so that ultimately folks are more comfortable with having the conversations that need to take place when harm is done in our community. For more info see [https://studentlife.ucsf.edu/RJP](https://studentlife.ucsf.edu/RJP)

- A plan to roll out these RJ circles to 1st yr. students in all the grad programs is in the works
Interest was expressed in broadening these activities beyond 1st yr. students, to which D’Anne noted a lack of staff resources; given the need for 1-3 trained facilitators per circle; as well as, ideally, targeted curriculums for each program.

See emails from Liz Silva encouraging grad program directors/administrators to continue on with RJ work so that it is not a one-time deal.

Community Circles have been scheduled and confirmed w/ea. basic sci programs and will take place between Aug. 28 and Sept. 14

Coordinated support across grad programs, fueled by the enthusiasm evident in this meeting for the grad div’s RJ initiative, exemplifies the kind of synergy that can come out of this committee

Other Avenues for educating ourselves on the origins and manifestations of white privilege/systemic racism

**DEI Sessions@ retreats**

- “Mandatory” DEI sessions at retreats have not worked
  - Several students observed that whenever DEI comes up at retreats, faculty leave the room; frequently it’s the same group of people who are truly engaged in these activities
  - Students would like to understand what is so difficult about making mandatory trainings work – why the disconnect?
  - Clearly the messaging needs to change to increase awareness among both retreat organizers and attendees that participation is mandatory, not optional and that these sessions have been carefully crafted to augment other trainings vs. presenting information that is redundant
  - A cultural shift is necessary to elevate DEI as an integral part of retreat programs on par with skits, rather than an add-on, afterthought, or obligation

**Other Challenges**

- Who is in charge of coming up with acceptable DEI trainings?
  - Some led by students/staff are not up to par
  - The DEI component of Tetrad’s retreat was spearheaded by students. The content of what was discussed in break-out sessions varied widely and was often way off-point
  - Clearly it’s problematic to promote these activities then let the burden of taking initiative fall on the students

**Seminar speakers on racism & research & systemic racism (for faculty)**

Plug for more BIPOC seminar speakers to nucleate discussions. This could be accomplished if programs pooled their resources

**Faculty (or student) led DEI book or journal club to educate majority on white privilege and structural racism**

- CG clarified that this would primarily be aimed at & led by non-URM faculty/students
- A Plug to seek out books written by black scholars (ie. don’t limit yourself to White Fragility)

**Dealing with faculty/student issues; inappropriate behavior etc.**

Carrot vs. Stick. Problem: Incentivizing faculty to attend trainings/align behavior with DEI values, has not always worked. Transparent & clear mechanisms needed to hold faculty accountable for transgressions of Title VI and community DEI values

**Potential Mechanisms**

**Transparency**

- Every grad program website will list what trainings/DEI activities faculty have engaged in below bio
Financial punishment? –
  • Tie DEI track record to obtaining 10 yr.?
    o For the benefit of in-coming students, advocate for transparency at the UCSF or UC-wide level around the university’s expectation that demonstrated involvement in DEI trainings and efforts is not only mandatory, but a requirement for advancement to 10-yr
    o Noted that this needs to be looked at by University-wide committee & is above power that individual grad programs wield
    o 10-yr. is a one-time event & many faculty don’t come up for it for years; may not be most effective tool. DEI mandates need to be continually enforced from day 1
  • Departments Chairs, not programs have prerogative of financial punishment

Remove non-compliant faculty from program
  • Grad programs hold the power of deciding which faculty can mentor their students, and should leverage it; including swiftly removing faculty from a program & preventing them from taking new students, when faculty are in violation of mandated DEI trainings, etc. There is precedent for this!
    o Having students is a privilege, not a right; and that privilege comes with a responsibility to value all students through demonstrated involvement in DEI activities. A cultural shift is needed to nail home this message
    o It’s critical to immediately message out to all programs when a faculty member is removed from a given program for failure to comply with DEI mandates, so that all programs the faculty is associated with can follow suit
    o One consideration is ensuring this is done in a manner that is not detrimental to other trainees. Caveat that while you Can kick faculty out of programs, they may still create a toxic lab environment for PDs, other trainees and staff

Enhancing DEI support on Campus
Discussion centered on amplifying D’Anne’s efforts & shifting burden from students
  • D’Anne is the only person supporting students of color and while there has been a positive sea change since D’Anne was hired, she is but ONE person; it’s a travesty that instead of uplifting her and providing her a support team, all DEI initiatives are routed to her and the onus of implementing them falls on her shoulders.
    o Wide consensus that we need to leverage our collective clout to find resources for D’Anne to move her vision forward at a pace that best suits her
    o Money is there – we need to come up with action plans to prioritize how we use it
    o We need to address siloed nature of DEI advocacy at UCSF. How can we leverage funds from across UCSF research entities to unify our efforts?
    o Perspective from 35+ yrs. at UCSF: University leadership will be on board if efforts are voluntary but is not supportive of grassroots efforts that take money
    o There’s a glaring disconnect between UCSF’s rhetoric around the importance of DEI and the lack of resources it earmarks for these efforts
  • URMs tapped or taking initiative to help educate the masses at UCSF around DEI issues should be acknowledged for their invisible labor with compensation (tuition credit/expanding existing leadership/mentoring awards to students)
    o In order to eliminate power dynamics, support for BIPOC students needs to be guaranteed; one costly initiative would be multi-year a fellowship that can be taken to any lab

3. Meeting outcome & next steps
1.) Todd N. & Carol G. volunteered to work on a “Master Doc” enumerating taskforce’s vision of best practices & outlining what is the minimum each faculty would need to do vis-à-vis DEI
  o Google Doc will be set up so that all can contribute
  o Once doc is complete, taskforce 2 will meet to ensure that we’re all on board before the Doc gets disseminated to all of the grad programs
2.) One output from this committee should be a request for $ from the university