

COMMITTEE FOR DIVERSITY AND EQUITY ANNUAL REPORT

AY 2019-2020

To the Merced Division of the Academic Senate:

The Committee for Diversity and Equity (D&E) acts for the Division in all matters of equality and diversity in general, and in particular in reference to underrepresented faculty populations. This includes initiating studies and reports on campus diversity and equity, and evaluating institutional policies and procedures as they relate to equity and diversity. D&E maintains liaison with the [University Committee on Affirmative Action, Diversity and Equity](#) (UCAADE).

Professor Asmeret Asefaw Berhe, Chair of D&E, served as the Merced Representative on UCAADE and provided regular updates at committee meetings.

D&E held a total of 8 regular in person/zoom meetings and one special in-person meeting, and conducted some business via email with respect to its duties as outlined in UC Merced's Senate Bylaw [II.III.6](#). The committee's major actions and discussions are highlighted in this report.

Faculty Equity Advisors

Per the "[Roles and Appointment Mechanisms of Faculty Equity Advisors](#)", Faculty Equity Advisors (FEAs) are appointed to work with search committees to ensure they follow recognized best practices to help develop a diverse applicant pool. The FEAs serve as advisors to the search, helping with the search plan and evaluation criteria; they also provide advice on resources that might be shared with candidates at the time of interviews. FEAs are appointed for a two-year term by D&E, the school deans and Vice Provost for the Faculty (VPF), and undergo training to help them support their colleagues in this important task.

The AY 19-20 FEAs were:

- SNS: Professors Clarissa Nobile and Nestor Oviedo
- SOE: Professor Victor Muñoz
- SSHA: Professors Tanya Golash-Boza and Ramesh Balasubramaniam

On February 3, 2020, D&E met with FEAs to discuss how best to establish an accountability mechanism for ensuring that diversity goals are met in the faculty search process, including the use of the proposed FEA checklist created by D&E. Based on this meeting, D&E issued a memo, on February 27, 2020, to the VPF's office, delineating eight recommendations for the FEA program.

D&E's pursuit for accountability in diversifying UC Merced faculty culminated in a memo to the campus administrative leadership, issued on June 15, 2020, in which D&E highlighted UCAADE recommendations, as well as recommendations from the external review team for equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) at UC Merced, whose implementation would strengthen UC Merced's FEA Program, and lead to more diverse faculty and administrative leadership.

Given that the current FEAs' terms run through AY 20-21 except for one of SSHA FEAs (Tanya Golash-Boza), coupled with the significantly reduced number of faculty searches projected during AY 20-21, no calls for new FEAs were issued during AY 19-20.

Senate Award – Contributions to Diversity

D&E revised the Call for the Senate Award for Contributions to Diversity in Fall 2019 to specify that members of D&E are not eligible for this award.

D&E received three nominations for the award in AY 19-20, compared to one nomination in AY 18-19, which was the first year this award was offered, achieving the same level of nominations as Senate awards for mentorships and for Senate service.

Periodic Review Oversight Committee (PROC)

D&E responded to PROC's request for guidance regarding UC Merced's priorities for diversity, equity and inclusion in the context of academic program reviews. During Fall 2019, D&E suggested revisions to PROC's self-study template and reviewed the proposed Diversity Plan Form. In Spring 2020, D&E provided PROC with a self-study template that incorporates important elements from the Diversity Plan Form, so that the consideration of diversity, equity, and inclusion is an integral part of the self-study, rather than being addressed separately.

D&E also issued a memo on April 13, 2020, to PROC on how best to address equity, diversity and inclusion during the external review team visits. As a result, PROC issued a memo to D&E with a commitment to allocate time for discussion of EDI goals and practices during external team visits.

Responding to COVID-19 Emergency

During the COVID-19 emergency, D&E expressed its support for those faculty on whom a disproportionate burden fall, due to professional and/or personal circumstances. On April 20, D&E issued a memo to the Department Chairs regarding equity concerns during the COVID-19 emergency, urging them to communicate to department members that they understand and would consider the difficulty that faculty are facing in upcoming reviews. D&E received one response, from a SSHA department chair.

DEI Statement in Faculty Hiring and Review Process

In response to the Academic Council and Chair Hansford's request for information on the use of DEI statements in faculty hiring and review processes, D&E surveyed department chairs, school deans and FEAs. In its memo, issued on June 1, 2020, D&E concurred with a respondent on the need for measures to further institutionalize the values of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion on our campus to contribute to the positive impacts that DEI statements have already made. D&E also recommended, following the UCAADE recommendations and Academic Council's endorsement of the recommendations, that the use of DEI statements be also considered in personnel reviews for retention/promotion at UC Merced.

Campus and Systemwide Review Items

D&E opined on various campus and systemwide review items, including:

a) campus

- Proposal for a Master's Degree Program in Cognitive and Information Sciences at UC Merced
- Senate Representation of Unit 18 faculty and Librarians Association of the University of California-Merced
- Proposed Reading/Review/Recitation (RRR) Week Policy at UC Merced

b) systemwide

- Proposed Revised Presidential Policy on Native American Cultural Affiliation and Repatriation
- Proposed Revisions to APM 230 – Visiting Appointments
- Proposed Revised APM-120 – Emerita/Emeritus Titles
- Proposed Presidential Policy on Gender Recognition and Lived Name
- Working Group Report on Comprehensive Access
- Proposal from BOARS to eliminate the ACT/SAT Essay Writing Test requirement for undergraduate admission
- The Report and Recommendations of the UC Academic Council Standardized Testing Task Force

Consultations

D&E consulted with the Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Zulema Valdez, and the Associate Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer Dania Matos, on the effectiveness of the FEA program in increasing diversity among the faculty, and the need for accountability mechanisms at UC Merced, in the context of the UCAADE recommendations for Equity Advisors Programs issued in August 2019. D&E also consulted with Vice Chancellor and Chief External Relations Officer Ed Klotzbier and his staff on the possibility of establishing an Endowed Chair for Diversity and Equity.

D&E looks forward to future collaborations with the senate and administrative leaderships.

Respectfully submitted,

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Irene Yen, Vice Chair (SSHA)

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