

# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force Report

July 10, 2020

Given the national conversations that are emerging from the Black Lives Matter Movement, on June 9, 2020, Dean Oliver created the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force to address implicit bias among faculty, staff and students by:

- Ensuring coursework and the underlying curriculum prepare students to understand and address systemic racism in their academic and professional lives.
- Cultivating and supporting a racially and ethnically diverse community of faculty, staff and students within the UH CoAD.
- Developing and supporting just, inclusive, and equitable modes of professional practice in underserved and marginalized communities.

Toward that end, through facilitated “dialogue” among students, alumni, faculty search chairs and Third Ward community representatives (and anticipating the expansion of the dialogue to include all CoAD faculty, staff and students), the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force is examining:

- Our shared understanding, as a college community, of how a diverse, equitable and inclusive community is defined, what it looks like, and how it sustainably operates.
- Processes to ensure that UH CoAD becomes a model for leadership in the creation of a diverse, equitable and inclusive community.

Further, the DEI Task Force will examine how we, as a college within the university, can help achieve meaningful, long-term structural change and accountability in service of the following:

- a diverse faculty representative of our diverse student body,
- pay equity for faculty and staff,
- the inclusion and equitable treatment of students by an unbiased faculty and staff,
- an inclusive curriculum that recognizes and values a multi-cultural world,
- the development, recruitment, retention and professional placement of African-American students,
- mitigation of the financial pressures on students less able to afford its associated costs,
- the evolution of the university as an effective stakeholder in the equitable development of a healthy Third Ward community

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Over the past three weeks, the task force has been simultaneously engaged in three levels of activity: 1) understanding current structures that may allow or enable implicit bias within CoAD 2) making immediate requests to help facilitate the effectiveness of the task force and 3) planning short and longer term actions to further the agenda of the DEI Task Force.

- Understanding Current Structures
  - Define BIPOC\* and why this is significant to CoAD
  - Develop a survey that 1) allows students, faculty, and staff to express their concerns regarding diversity, equality, and inclusion within CoAD and 2) collects data that accesses perceptions of systemic racism in our society, the design professions, and academia (CoAD); gauges attitudes among faculty, staff, and students about the value of diversity; assesses opinions of existing systems of recruitment, support, and retention for BIPOC students, faculty, and staff; gathers personal experiences of racism and bias among all constituents; measures perceptions of the level at which our curriculum addresses systemic racism, inequity, and injustice, both presently and historically; and enlists proposals for actions we can take to address systemic racism
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- Immediate Requests
  - Meet with faculty search committee chairs to discuss diversity and the hiring/search process (completed)
  - Request the DEI task force be made a permanent committee in the current revision to the bylaws
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- Current Proposals
  - Distribute reading/film list to students and faculty to share and affirm the distinct histories of BIPOC communities, re-think dominant narratives and promote dialogues concerning power, privilege and oppression (Fall 2020)
  - Recommend unconscious bias training for all faculty and staff (TBD)
  - Plan curriculum revisions (planning meetings with coordinators and faculty to discuss revisions to curriculum to reflect a more inclusive and diverse world — Fall 2020)
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\*BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color)

*BIPOC aims to unite all people of color while also acknowledging the unique history of oppression, systemic racism, and cultural erasure that Black and Indigenous people face. BIPOC is a way of creating greater recognition and inclusion of these marginalized groups.*

<https://imdiversity.com/diversity-news/what-does-bipoc-mean/>

## Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Task Force Members

Michael Gonzales  
Javier Guerrero, student representative  
Trang Phan  
Susan Rogers  
Sheryl Tucker De Vazquez, chair  
Adam Wells

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