USC Academic Senate

Campus Climate Committee Report

AY 2020-2021

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Purpose

The USC Academic Senate Campus Climate Committee ("CCC") was convened by the Academic Senate for AY 2020-2021 to research and recommend strategies/practices for anti-racist and inclusive teaching. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of our work during the fall and spring semester of the 2020-21 school year, our findings, and recommendations. Our charge was as follows:

1. Take stock of faculty learning/development efforts currently under way at USC specifically directed at anti-racist, inclusive teaching practices (i.e., CET, school-based workshops etc). Gauge the current assets available at USC to promote inclusive and anti-racist teaching practice
2. Conduct a literature review of faculty learning/development practices, and
3. Develop a practical resource for faculty that we can disseminate across the campus community.

Current USC Assets

The CCC explored the assets for anti-racist and inclusive teaching across the university. In some cases, committee members were able to communicate directly with individuals leading efforts

to promote anti-racist and inclusive teaching practices within specific academic units, while attempts at collecting information from other schools was limited to surveying publicly accessible information published on websites. While not all schools had easily/publicly available information detailing current or developing practices, the committee was able to obtain information from the following 14 schools/entities:

- Dornsife College of Letter, Arts, and Sciences
- Keck School of Medicine
- Division of BKN & PT
- Division of OS & OT
- Gould School of Law
- Leventhal School of Accounting
- Rossier School of Education
- Marshall School of Business
- Center for Urban Education
- School of Pharmacy
- USC Dworak-Peck School of Social Work
- School of Cinematic Arts
- USC Libraries
- Center for Excellence in Teaching

Review of the collected material revealed that the majority of anti-racist and inclusive assets at USC are comprised of the following initiatives, programs, policies, and efforts:

- Literature, instructional videos, workshops, and toolkits developed and sponsored by the Center for Excellence in Teaching, the USC Libraries, the Center for Urban Education,
- Councils, task forces and work groups convened to promote school/program-wide diversity/anti-racism/inclusion/equity initiatives
- Book clubs to explore anti-racist and inclusive teaching practices and engage in shared learning experiences
- Faculty learning communities (communities of practice)
- School and program-level presentations on anti-racist and inclusive teaching approaches
- Comprehensive curriculum reviews and identification of opportunities to add inclusive and anti-racist pedagogy
- Attendance at sponsored intramural and extramural state/national workshops on topics of anti-racism, equity, and inclusion
- Community partnering to promote idea exchange and shared anti-racist mission/vision
- Incorporation of anti-racist and inclusive teaching activities into the annual faculty merit review
- Development of student affinity groups with faculty sponsors
- Use of equity toolkits available from internal and external sources

In general, these efforts have sought to involve all pertinent stakeholders (faculty, students, staff, community partners, etc.) in developing mission and vision statements and designing programing to reach across faculty groups in teaching spaces (tenure-track, clinical, teaching, professional practice, etc. including full-time, part time and adjunct appointments). In many

cases, these assets are available in completed or in-progress form, but it is unclear whether there is accountability for using them in faculty practice as well as the degree to which they are used. Of note is that while many schools initiated or deepened faculty antiracist/DEI groups during 2020-2021, fewer of these groups addressed antiracist and inclusive *teaching*. For example, the School of Cinematic Arts has a Council for Diversity and Inclusion and both the Physics and Marine and Environmental Biology departments have DEI committees, but there don't seem to be any resources that support faculty in implementing antiracist and inclusive teaching. Some of these assets seem to be targeted to external audiences (e.g. state and national presentations) and not necessarily for internal use. For example, the USC Race and Equity Center primarily consults with external entities.

In addition, depending on the School, there is not always a central place within schools/units, for faculty to access resources or support related to anti-racist and inclusive teaching strategies. In Marshall and Leventhal, resources are housed in a Faculty Development Companion on Blackboard and on Sharepoint, but not all schools have such a central place for resources. This may be due, in part, to the observation that several of the programs and initiatives are the result of grassroots efforts (in some cases perhaps the result of the Excellence in Teaching Initiative) that are slowly making their way into division and school-wide policy planning. With the full implementation of the Excellence in Teaching Initiative, it's possible this will change. There is also inconsistency across and within schools in terms of the ideological leaning (i.e., some schools make reference to both multiculturalism and antiracism, while others mention DEI or inclusive teaching). It is noted that such variation in framing the work of anti-racism and inclusion is inherent in the unique cultural identity of individual academic units, which may make it more challenging to develop a comprehensive community-wide approach to the mission of advancing anti-racist and inclusive strategies. At the same time, such ideological variation could be problematic because outdated ways of conceptualizing DEI practices will fall short of addressing systemic issues that are reproduced in our classrooms and clinical settings. The results of our current assets survey seems to suggest that campus-wide buy-in to promote the success of antiracist and inclusive teaching practices is slowly building, but much work remains to be done to make them part of our community's cultural fabric.

Highlights from Anti-Racist and Inclusive Teaching Practices Across the Campus Community
To provide a general sense of the progress that is being made to promote antiracist and inclusive teaching strategies across the campus community, the CCC would like to call attention to some of the work that is continuing to make its way into the mission embraced by individual academic units. The focus here is on the *teaching practices* rather than on other DEI efforts. Given that these efforts are still evolving and there is limited data and outcome assessments to support the assertion of promising practices, these examples are best characterized as emerging practices.

<u>Center for Excellence in Teaching (CET)</u>
The CET has assembled a collection of practical resources to aid faculty in designing and implementing an inclusive and diverse classroom experience. These include:

- Resources addressing course design and specific components relevant to supporting diverse student populations. Content related to anti-racism and inclusion encompasses current events, controversy, perspectives, instructor neutrality, culture, lifestyle, and comfort (http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching/)
- Video resources for planning and facilitating classroom discussions involving potentially difficult and/or controversial topics. Modules provide instruction on 1) how to build an inclusive course, 2) speaking about race and gender, 3) planning a challenging discussion, 4) leading a challenging discussion, 5) managing upset/stress, 6) evaluation of teaching efforts, and 7) specific speech that violates USC policy (http://cet.usc.edu/challenging-discussions/)
- A syllabus checklist viewed through the lens of best practices to promote diversity and inclusion (http://cet.usc.edu/resources/course-design/)

USC Libraries
- A collection of resources (manuscripts and textbooks) that can serve as the basis for several framing approaches, including 1) framing classroom discussions in the context of political or societal conversations, 2) contributing to the development of lecture material tailored to the objectives of the class, 3) the pedagogy of cultural competence, and 4) integration of white supremacy, Black Lives Matter, white fragility, etc. into the classroom conversation (https://libguides.usc.edu/c.php?g=744325&p=5908981)

Dornsife College of Arts, Letters, and Sciences
- Developing resources and committees supporting inclusive teaching practices at the departmental level.
  - For example, the Environmental Studies Program (ENST) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, in conjunction with the larger ENST faculty, generated a set of actions for the ENST Program to address Racial and Environmental Justice (and their intersection) moving forward, with curriculum and teaching a core area of focus.
  - The Writing Program's Diversity Committee created a website with resources focused on equity and inclusion in teaching, such as an anti-bias statement to include on syllabi and a DEI resource library.
- Proposal for a Cross Cultural Learning Community for Faculty Development, developed by Writing Program with the Dornsife Faculty Council and the DFC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Caucus. The proposal seeks to create a faculty-to-faculty learning community on inclusive teaching practices. The Learning Community offers both a certificate program consisting of biweekly modules on meaningful pedagogical strategies for engaging disproportionately impacted students, and a drop-in supportive community for faculty to consult on questions that arise in the classroom, assignment design, etc.

Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work
- A series of training exercises (designed for groups of 10-60 people) to promote constructive and fruitful discourse around issues of diversity and the role of identity in

social relationships (https://msw.usc.edu/mswusc-blog/diversity-workshop-guide-to-discussing-identity-power-and-privilege/#intro)

School of Pharmacy
- Restructuring and expansion of the PharmD curriculum in cultural humility and health equity/justice, including vertical threads throughout
- Development and implementation of preceptor training on inclusive teaching practices in the classroom setting
- Dissemination of a document sponsored by UCLA's Office of Diversity and Faculty Development that includes talking points on how classroom climate impacts learning and recommendations for creating an inclusive classroom experience (https://equity.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CreatingaPositiveClassroomClimateWeb-2.pdf)

Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy
- Formation of a Diversity, Anti-Racism, Inclusion, and Community Engagement (DARIC) Council to advocate for diversity, anti-racism, and inclusion across its teaching, research, and patient care spaces, as well as the integration of community partners/stakeholders as representative voices within the Council's functions, initiatives, and internal oversight
- Launch of a workshop series presented by the Division Institute for Excellence in Teaching (DIET) that include:
  - Addressing safe spaces, empowerment to speak up, managing classroom comments that undermine the safe space
  - Educating faculty on how to recognize social-cultural aspects of the workplace/classroom/teaching/research and how faculty and staff can use this understanding to make small and/or large changes in their work
- Implementation of a policy that asks each faculty member to make progress towards using diverse and inclusive content in each course and include a personal action plan for promoting anti-racist and inclusive initiatives as part of the annual merit review process

Rossier School of Education
- Development of a robust collection of resources to assist faculty in developing an inclusive learning environment to more effectively teach and advance the concepts of diversity (https://rossier.usc.edu/tools-for-inclusive-teaching/). Resources include:
  - Seven Effective Ways to Promote Equity in the Classroom (https://rossier.usc.edu/seven-effective-ways-to-promote-equity-in-the-classroom/)
  - Racial Equity in Education: Seven Key Points (https://rossier.usc.edu/racial-equity-in-education-seven-key-points/)
  - Gender Equity in Education: Eight Ways to Reduce Bias (https://rossier.usc.edu/gender-equity-in-education-eight-ways-to-reduce-bias-with-infographic/)

- Center for Urban Education's Racial Equity Tools that promote reflection on racialized characteristics of everyday practices to promote equity-minded processes and build a foundation for advancing meaningful change, providing flexible approaches to meet specific organizational needs and practical activities to support implementation (https://www.cue-tools.usc.edu/)
- Curriculum revision across all programs using CUE's syllabus rubric
- Formation of Faculty Learning Communities that focus on critical reflection and how positionality shapes teaching practice.

Chan Division of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy
- Formation of Communities of Antiracist Practice
  - Creation of safe, consistent spaces for community members to check in, have meaningful dialogues, and share knowledge
  - Expansion of brave spaces to promote critical self-reflection, shared accountability, and encourage raw conversations about race to advance racial and social justice
- Presentation of workshops to update courses in existing degree programs to assist faculty with ensuring that Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusive practices are evident
- Creation of a training series on navigating difficult dialogues for all staff, faculty, and students, including the topics of upstanding instead of bystanding, calling people in instead of out, etc.
- Partnering with the Center for Urban Resilience at Loyola Marymount University to train the entire Division in Restorative Practices

Keck School of Medicine
- Expansion of Race, Equity, Diversity, Social Justice, and Well Being Committee Initiatives
  - Antiracism Education, Allyship Training, and Institutional Climate Change: Social justice book club, training in allyship to improve institutional climate by providing workable interventions
  - Gender Equity Advancement, Sexual Harassment and Assault Prevention Strategies: A "train the trainer" initiative that empowers participants to become allies/active bystanders, aims to establish a social media student ambassador program to disseminate gender equity messaging, and intends to develop a Gender Equity in Medicine and Science (GEMS) Scholar Program
  - Inclusion Resource Groups: Leveraging the existence of student affinity groups, this initiative aims to establish affinity groups for faculty and staff that will also invite participation from established student affinity groups
- Establishment of Health Justice and Systems of Care: An Anti-Racist Medical Education Curriculum
  - Outlining of a new health justice curriculum designed to empower students to effect transformative changes that lead to health equity and racial justice in medicine, address disparities in the care environments in which they train and where they eventually practice, increase BIPOC representation in medicine, improve access to care, and train competent, empathetic and transformative

physicians who are experts in the art and science of medicine and committed to health justice

Gould School of Law
● Formed the Anti-Racism Working Group consisting of faculty, staff, and student members of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, combined with the members of the Administration and Finance Committee, and the dean, charged with developing actions and activities that the law school should take to address issues of racism and injustice
    ○ Institution of training for faculty, delivered by the USC Race and Equity Center, on facilitating discussions on race-related topics and fostering a sense of community and inclusion in the classroom
    ○ Development and implementation of a course on Race and the Law within the curriculum focusing on race in the legal system (Gould is the first of the top 25 law schools in the nation to add a required course on race and racism to its curriculum)

Marshall School of Business
● Establishment of the Marshall Critical Thinking Initiative, a comprehensive, fully integrated, yet ever-growing approach consisting of best practices/knowledge, a faculty support system embedded within each department, and an instructional dissemination method (this website) to help students achieve success through critical thinking. Key knowledge-based components include the following:
    ○ 5 Step USC-CT Problem Solving Process designed to tackle ambiguous, ill-defined challenges
    ○ START CONCEPT Analysis designed to teach fundamental concepts/formulas
    ○ Individual learning modules designed to help students build important critical thinking skills such as how to foster creative thinking, how to eliminate biases, and how to evaluate claims and evidence
● Presentations and workshops offered at the annual USC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Week. Those relating to anti-racism and inclusion in the teaching spaces include:
    ○ How-to workshop presenting the latest research in specific teaching strategies to translate the theory of inclusion to active practices to address the inadvertent default of marginalization in the university classroom and beyond
    ○ Talk focusing on educating the remote learning community with operational definitions and examples of current language related to anti-racism and diversity, equity, and inclusion
● Developed and launched a mindfulness series as a practical tool to disrupt explicit and implicit bias and foster inclusive communication, interpersonal empathy, cultural and emotional intelligence

Literature Review
The CCC conducted a literature review, focusing on antiracist/inclusive teaching practices in higher education. While some of the sources did not specify higher education, we avoided

drawing on sources that explicitly speak to PreK-12 contexts so as to maintain relevance with our educational context. Below are the themes found to be important strategies for antiracist and inclusive teaching in higher education. While there are discipline specific considerations, the CCC worked to find commonalities across disciplines and settings.

- Faculty should look to decolonize, not just diversify curriculum
  - Incorporate topics of race and inequity
  - Reveal and disrupt Western norms and epistemologies (non-White authors often also use Western epistemologies)
  - Incorporate writing and perspectives from the Global South
- Faculty reflection and inquiry are critical
  - Anti-racist and inclusive teaching is a mindset that requires sustained intentionality
  - Critical reflection is a lifelong process that all faculty must engage in
  - Reflection is not a linear process but rather an iterative one where mistakes are expected
  - Faculty who reflect model meta-cognition for their students
- There are many pedagogical/andragogical moves faculty can make in the classroom/teaching environment
  - Work to create a brave, not just a safe space (There are 5 elements: 1. Controversy with civility 2. Owning intentions and impact 3. Challenge by choice 4. Respect 5. No attacks)
  - Know your students and use their "funds of knowledge." This approach views students holistically and recognizes that all students bring assets into learning spaces
  - Show (authentic, not just aesthetic) care; develop relationships that allow you to see the whole students
  - Hold high expectations for academic achievement/learning
  - Cultivate cultural humility, but work to be intentionally antiracist (i.e, while faculty can demonstrate they are not fully knowledgeable about all the cultures represented in the classroom or clinical setting, they can actively center historically marginalized and systemically excluded students).
  - Develop critical thinking and sociopolitical consciousness in your students
  - Use active learning approaches such as creating the conditions for collaboration; encourage students' voice and draw on their lived experiences

While our charge centered on teaching practices in higher education, we would be remiss not to talk about what is needed to support faculty to reach these anti-racist and inclusive teaching goals. As such, we offer the following:

- Professional/faculty development is critical to support faculty in developing the knowledge, skills and disposition to enact anti-racist and inclusive teaching practices:
  - Antiracist and inclusive practice should be an essential component of faculty development efforts

- o Implicit bias trainings tend to be superficial; There is a need for more intensive approaches (Faculty Learning Communities where small groups of faculty meet regularly over a long period of time to examine their practices and make informed changes might be a viable option)
  - o Higher education institutions might consider requiring continuing education as a part of their contract
- At the institutional or school level, there needs to accountability and/or incentives for faculty to engage in antiracist and inclusive teaching practices. For example, improvements in teaching might be part of the faculty merit review process.
- At the institutional level, provide the support and assurance to faculty that, as a learning organization, mistakes will not be addressed in punitive ways, but as opportunities for growth, except for egregiously harmful conduct that violates applicable laws and university codes of conduct.
- At the institutional level, address the problem of focusing only on individual rather than institutional racism.

Practical Resource: A roadmap for schools or individuals

While a USC-wide effort is certainly desirable, the CCC would like to provide suggestions for how individuals and/or schools/departments can make strides to enact antiracist and inclusive teaching. Below is the beginning of a draft roadmap:

- Step 1: Explore the CET and USC Libraries guides online as well as organizational/departmental structures and resources
- Step 2: Identify needs and goals around antiracism and inclusion so as to inform what faculty learning resources and training are needed. A needs assessment could derive from a survey of all faculty.
- Step 3: Read and understand the current literature on antiracist and inclusive pedagogy. In school-wide efforts faculty who are facilitating faculty learning opportunities should take time to build this knowledge base. (The references in this report can be a starting point).
- Step 4: Seek out/provide faculty learning opportunities to develop a common language. These opportunities might be outside USC (i.e., online or in person modules/training provided by other institutions such as ACUE or Columbia University. If the opportunity presents itself, join in on training done by the Race and Equity Center that focus on teaching). This step might provide what to look for in a training, what content they should be covering, (i.e., a focus on equity and antiracism, not "multiculturalism")
- Step 5: Conduct syllabi review to ensure diverse perspectives and authors are included as well as to interrogate the epistemological orientation and alignment to antiracist and inclusive practices. (CET has a syllabus review template that might be useful)
- Step 6: Examine the classroom climate that is created. These might include the development or co-construction of discussion agreements, discussion of and work toward developing a brave space etc. Formative peer observation is an option for departments/schools to help faculty understand their classroom climate.

- Step 7: Examine instructional practices to ensure alignment to antiracist and inclusive teaching practices and ensure instruction is student-centered, including inclusion of active learning approaches.
- Step 8: Examine assessment practices to ensure alignment to course learning objectives and to antiracist and inclusive practice. For example, providing students with a choice in their representation of knowledge in assignments is considered one important assessment practice.
- Step 9: Establish recurring opportunities for reflection on antiracist and inclusive teaching, both individually and in discussion with colleagues. For example, this may take the form of Faculty Learning Communities; professional learning/development; writing reflections as part of merit and promotion materials.
- Step 10: Support and incentivize faculty in this work through creating structures that value faculty learning/development in the area of antiracist and inclusive teaching. For example, through rewarding and requiring faculty to discuss their inclusive teaching practices as part of merit and promotion materials.

Recommendations

While antiracist and inclusive practice is important at all levels of the university, supporting faculty to enact these practices in their classrooms and clinical settings with students is often overlooked or undervalued. While faculty are experts in our respective fields, many do not have training in pedagogy/andragogy, much less antiracist and inclusive pedagogy/andragogy. Institutionally, it is important to not only support the recruitment, hiring and retention of historically marginalized and systemically excluded faculty (the topics of our committee's last two reports), but to support effective teaching in our many learning spaces. The CCC recommends adding the focus of antiracist and inclusive *teaching practices* to our university's priorities.

As has been recommended in the Campus Climate Committee's 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 reports, this committee recommends again that the Academic Senate Executive Board expand the committee's membership in light of the import and scope of its work. While the Campus Climate Committee has been able to fulfill its charge every year and produce quality work that has been relied upon by groups such as the USC Racial Equity, Inclusion & Diversity (REDI) Task Force, more support by the Academic Senate in enhancing the size of this committee would allow us to support cross-school initiatives such as cataloguing and sharing how different faculty use different resources and training opportunities. An expanded group could also do additional, deeper work such as conduct interviews to better understand the teaching practices and what's needed.

We also recommend that committee members meet with Christopher Manning, our new Chief Inclusion and Diversity Officer to support university-wide efforts. Combining the work of this committee over the last few years and the findings of the REDI report could enable a more cohesive approach to ensuring our university is enacting antiracist and inclusive practices in all realms of university life, including in our classrooms and clinical training settings.

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