USC Academic Senate
Faculty Committee on Equity and Inclusion Report for AY 2021-2022

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Charge

1. Investigate how DEI-centered service and leadership are valued, recognized, and/or rewarded within each school. For example, to what extent is DEI-centered service explicitly required or incentivized in merit review or promotion?

2. Investigate the extent to which faculty from groups underrepresented in academia [are able to] participate in service and leadership apart from/in addition to DEI-centered endeavors. To this end, the committee will research best practices in the literature and at peer institutions for supporting faculty from underrepresented groups to move into leadership positions.

Contents

Executive Summary

The USC Academic Senate Faculty Committee on Equity and Inclusion ("FCEI") was convened by the Academic Senate for the 2021-2022 academic year to study diversity, equity, and inclusion-centered ("DEI") service and leadership. Specifically, the FCEI's charges were to:

1. Investigate how DEI-centered service and leadership are valued, recognized, and/or rewarded within each school. For example, to what extent is DEI-centered service explicitly required or incentivized in merit review or promotion?

2. Investigate the extent to which faculty from groups underrepresented in academia [are able to] participate in service and leadership apart from/in addition to DEI-centered endeavors. To this end, the committee will research best practices in the literature and at peer institutions for supporting faculty from underrepresented groups to move into leadership positions.

The committee members divided into three subcommittees to focus on different aspects of the charge: peer institutions, literature review, and faculty focus groups.

The *peer institution subcommittee* examined how DEI activities are evaluated at peer institutions as well as how faculty members of underrepresented groups are encouraged to move into leadership positions, based on their service. Based on publicly available data from fourteen schools surveyed, the overwhelming majority of schools explicitly recognize and value DEI activities in faculty review (appointment, promotion, tenure, and merit review). Further, these DEI-related contributions are considered not just in the area of service, but in all areas of faculty responsibilities including teaching, research, creative activities, and professional development. These DEI-related activities are often weighted equally among similar non-DEI activities, and multiple schools provide promotion and tenure cases specifically for significant contribution to DEI. To promote leadership opportunities, some schools have established funding programs to support targeted interventions.

The *literature review subcommittee* searched for research on good practices for rewarding and supporting DEI service, along with quantitative research on methods of increasing participation of underrepresented faculty in leadership roles. For both topics, the subcommittee found a dearth of research in terms of measurable outcomes. While there is significant research regarding the existence of extra labor performed by underrepresented faculty, there are currently little quantitative analyses available that present findings on how to reward DEI service and how to encourage involvement in leadership positions.

The *focus group subcommittee* developed a pilot study to collect preliminary data about perceptions and considerations of DEI-related service across the University – with the goal of creating a survey to administer to faculty that would address the FCEI's charge for AY 2021-2022. Individuals identified as holding a DEI-related leadership position or engaging in DEI-related initiatives were invited to participate in two virtual focus groups. Nine schools participated. While perceptions of what constitutes DEI-related service were consistent across

schools, perceptions of its value and its use in promotion, tenure, merit review, leadership opportunities, and career advancement varied.

Based on the findings from these three areas as well as work of past committees, the FCEI generated nine recommendations and identified which offices or persons should be responsible for their implementation as well as possible resources needed. These recommendations are designed to improve the hiring, retention, and leadership development of diverse faculty; promote an open academic culture that rewards DEI contributions; elevates the University to the level of its peer universities in the area of acknowledging DEI work; and hold the University accountable to its stated commitment that DEI is integral to its culture and values.

Action Plan: List of Recommendations

Below is a summary of the committee's recommendations. Detailed notes and identified responsible parties can be found in the report.

1. [Explicitly Acknowledge and Reward DEI Work](#)

2. [Establish Innovation DEI Grant Program to Target Faculty Retention and Advancement](#)

3. [Establish REDI Research Initiative](#)

4. [Develop Transparent Protocols for Identifying and Supporting Emerging Leaders](#)

5. [Provide Transparency on DEI-Related Data on Faculty Hiring, Retention, and Promotion](#)

6. [Enhance Coordination around DEI Issues](#)

7. [Improve Transparency in Accounting of the Provost's Diversity Fund](#)

8. [Support Longer Term Mission and Goals of FCEI](#)

9. [Publicize and Raise Awareness to Contributions Past Senate Committees](#)

Analysis of Peer Institution Practices

Subcommittee Charge

The charge of the peer institution subcommittee was to examine data on peer institutions to determine "the extent to which faculty from groups underrepresented in academia [are able to] participate in service and leadership apart from and in addition to DEI-centered endeavors." In particular, to what extent are faculty from groups underrepresented in academia at peer institutions encouraged to move into leadership positions. Specifically, the following questions were explored:

1. What types of DEI service are acknowledged (e.g. recruiting, retention, community partnerships, etc.)?
2. How is DEI service encouraged, weighted, or valued among all faculty?
3. How are faculty from underrepresented groups encouraged to move into leadership positions, based on their service?

Process

Given the time and resources of the committee members, this subcommittee identified a select group of schools that included those that were highly ranked or had notable DEI-related initiatives in the key domain areas of the committee members. This included the fields of journalism, communication, engineering, medicine, social work, education, and business. Subcommittee members relied on data from publicly-available institutional websites and faculty manuals for analysis.

Summary of Findings

DEI Considerations in Reappointment, Promotion, Tenure, and Merit Review

A consistent theme across the peer institutions was explicitly recognizing, incentivizing, and in some cases requiring DEI-centered activities (in service as well as teaching and research). The following examples are explicit policies regarding the promotion and tenure process.

Colorado State University (CSU)

In the [instructions for preparing dossiers](#), CSU explicitly asks for "evidence of incorporating diversity, equity, inclusion, and/or social justice (DEISJ)" in each of the main areas: publications and scholarship; teaching and advising; and outreach, service, and engagement.

Indiana University and Purdue University (IUPUI)

IUPUI recently approved a special path for promotion. [Balanced-Integrative Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) case creates an advancement path for faculty making contributions to DEI

through mentoring for students of color and community service by demonstrating "excellence across a range of integrated scholarly activities aligned with diversity, equity and inclusion."

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

MIT has [committed](#) to revising promotion and tenure guidelines to "better promote and incentivize equity, faculty peer and student mentoring, student outcomes, and contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion."

Michigan State University (MSU)

MSU [weighs](#) DEI activities in research, creative activities, teaching, and service during the reappointment, promotion and tenure process, and it also says "Significant involvement in DEI efforts can be viewed as a metric for advancement."

Oregon State University (OSU)

OSU [states](#) that contributions to DEI will be evaluated in promotion and tenure decisions. These can be teaching, advising, research, service, or scholarship. Faculty also expected to include contributions to DEI in their statement along with teaching and scholarship work. In addition, OSU also recommends that other types of faculty evaluation such pre- and post-tenure review include evidence of DEI contributions.

Salisbury University (SU)

A working group established by the SU provost in 2021 [recommended](#) requiring "evidence of commitment to increase equity, inclusion, and diversity…in at least two of the areas of teaching, scholarship, and/or service." This evidence would be "necessary but insufficient for promotion."

Stonybrook University

Faculty under review may provide [evidence of their DEI contributions](#) in teaching, scholarship, and service. Review committees and administrators are encouraged to value and consider contributions during the evaluation process.

University of California (UC)

The [Academic Personnel Manual for the UC system](#) requires that faculty "contributions in all areas of faculty achievement that promote equal opportunity and diversity should be given due recognition in the academic personnel process, and they should be evaluated and credited in the same way as other faculty achievements." This requirement is expanded in a [detailed explanation](#) of examples of DEI-related activities in the areas of teaching, research, creative work, professional activity, and service, such as showing a "record of success advising women and minority graduate students, "artistic expression or cultural production that reflects culturally diverse communities or voices not well represented in the arts and humanities, and "participation in academic preparation, outreach, or tutoring."

University of California, Berkeley (UCB)

UCB further expands on [qualifying DEI-related service contributions](#) including "participat[ing] in summer programs for K–12 education for students from underrepresented groups," "invit[ing] BIPOC researchers (or female-identifying scholars if your field is a "male" one) to organize and lead seminars, panels and workshops," and "contribut[ing] to committees working to increase DEIB."

University of Oregon (UO)

Per a [collective bargaining agreement](#) between the university and the faculty union, faculty personal statements must "include discussion of contributions to institutional equity and inclusion," which is mandatory in part to distinguish the university. These contributions can encompass service, research, or teaching; efforts within the institution as well as externally.

Leadership Opportunities

University of California, Davis (UCD)

UCD created a [pilot program](#) to support the faculty from underrepresented groups in three targeted areas: "community, leadership, and recognition." The program surveyed faculty's experience in "resource accessibility, recognition of their scholarly and service contributions, leadership development and support to build community with other faculty." Support and interventions include start-up funding for newly-tenured faculty, writing communities, peer mentoring, and leadership development.

University of California, Irvine (UCI)

From a grant from the UC, UCI [established](#) a program to support underrepresented faculty in the areas of "leadership, scholarship and service equity." The program created a leadership council of senior faculty who help with grants and mentor underrepresented faculty.

University of California, San Francisco (UCSF)

UCSF created a [pilot program](#) to increase the number of women and faculty from underrepresented groups in department leadership positions. In particular, the university is implementing a tool to collect and analyze data about the diversity of candidates in leadership positions and developing a set of resources to promote internal candidates for leadership, which include "educational resources on unconscious bias, procedural documents guiding faculty through practical steps in committee responsibilities and selection for departmental leadership positions."

Faculty Support During Promotion and Tenure Process

University of Oregon (UO)

UO's [Center on Diversity and Community](#) is a resource to help faculty showcase diversity contributions when preparing their dossiers.

University of California (UC)

Each UC campus has a team of Faculty Equity Advisors who oversee inclusive searches and assist faculty in presenting their DEI-related work for appointment, promotion, and tenure (example from [UCB](#)).

Wayne State University

[Affinity groups](#) such as the Black Faculty and Staff Association and LatinX Faculty/ Staff Association help faculty "navigate [the] university system."

Funding Initiatives

University of California (UC)

[Advancing Faculty Diversity](#) (AFD) was established within the UC system in 2016 and serves as a grant funding program designed to "support development of innovative and focused campus projects conceived to increase faculty diversity" within UC campus. In 2020-2021, AFD awarded $3.7 million to pilot programs designed to improve underrepresented faculty retention, fund diverse faculty cluster hiring, and encourage underrepresented to move into leadership positions

Summaries of the peer institution analysis are available upon request.

Review of Relevant Literature and Publications

Subcommittee Charge

The charge of the literature review subcommittee was to research promising practices (based on measurable outcomes) in rewarding and supporting DEI service in higher education. Additionally, the subcommittee was asked to collect research on how underrepresented faculty are supported and encouraged to move into leadership positions.

Summary of Findings

While we found some research on the possible penalties of DEI service (sometimes defined as a "cultural tax") on underrepresented faculty due to increased demands of DEI service, we could not find research (with measurable outcomes) on how DEI service may be efficaciously supported and rewarded. Similarly, our research on how underrepresented faculty are encouraged to take on leadership positions yielded similarly scant results.

Our review of the literature indicates a fairly widespread acknowledgement of the existence of a "minority tax" or "cultural tax" on underrepresented faculty who engage in DEI work, as they are disproportionately asked to engage in DEI work (such as mentoring others and volunteering in community settings) that is not explicitly acknowledged to be part of traditional academic service (Davenport et al). The failure to "count" DEI service may be grounded on the misguided notion that DEI work is likely a personal "passion project" that is likely pursued regardless of whether it is formally part of one's service profile (Armani et al).

That one's service happens to intersect with an area of personal interest should not, however, disqualify it for professional and tangible acknowledgement as time-consuming and worthy labor. Currently, if faculty happen to be personally invested and passionate about their teaching and researching duties, they still are paid or otherwise compensated for their work. This should apply to service labor as well.

If DEI service is not counted as academic service (despite outsized expectations for underrepresented faculty to engage such DEI work), this results in faculty having to engage in additional service activities that are deemed to be more acceptable or "valued" (Davenport et al) in order to fulfill their service profile. Such additional service workload may in turn cause faculty to spend less time on other aspects of one's profile such as teaching or research (Gewin; Williamson et al), which are often more important in tenure and promotion decisions.

In terms of possible methods to address the increased burdens of cultural tax, some recommend that underrepresented faculty engaged in unacknowledged DEI work do the following to leverage or re-frame such efforts in the following ways:
1. re-characterize DEI service to show alignment with academic profiles such as teaching and mentoring

2. use DEI work as a chance to improve professional skills such as leadership and communication
3. use DEI service as a chance to attend education training programs to enhance their administrative and program management skills - which may help in promotions

([Trejo](#))

The need for such re-characterizations or re-formulations of DEI work in order to align with traditional measures, however, can be mitigated if there are structural changes within institutions such as:
1. waiting to engage minority faculty in DEI work until career promotion is under way
2. encouraging White faculty to share in DEI efforts
3. paying minority faculty for additional DEI efforts in grant/admin support
4. including and measuring DEI efforts in promotion parameters

([Williamson et al](#))

The recommendation to explicitly include DEI work in one's service profile as part of the merit and promotion process has recently been put in place by the ten schools in the University of California system ([O'Rourke](#)). This recommendation, proposed by the Academic Senate of all ten campuses of the University of California system, was seen as a remedial effort to address the previous devaluation of DEI work in assessments for "appointment and promotion," while simultaneously not penalizing faculty who do not engage in DEI work (O'Rourke).

The import of this issue of acknowledging DEI service linked to the issue of retention of faculty from underrepresented groups, as research indicates that when faculty report having "equitable work conditions and practices (e.g., transparency, clarity, rotations of time-intensive roles)," they report higher rates of satisfaction ([O'Meara et al 2019](#)).

Summaries of the reviewed literature are available upon request.

Analysis of Focus Group Data

Subcommittee Charge

The focus group subcommittee was charged with examining "how DEI-centered service and leadership is valued, recognized, and/or rewarded within each school" and determining "the extent to which faculty from groups underrepresented in academia [are able to] participate in service and leadership apart from/in addition to DEI-centered endeavors."

Process

To collect preliminary data, the focus group subcommittee hosted two virtual focus groups during the first week of December 2021 with individuals holding a DEI-related leadership position or engaged in DEI-related initiatives at USC. Nine schools participated in the focus groups. Initially, the subcommittee planned to use the focus group data as a pretest for a survey of all faculty in January 2022 ([Cyr, 2018](#)). Thus, the focus groups were considered a pilot study. The subcommittee created group discussion and survey questions for the virtual sessions. Each session was moderated by an FCEI member. Focus group data was analyzed to identify themes using NVivo, a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CADAS).

Summary of Findings

While the size of the focus group precludes its generalizability to a larger population, its findings identify issues that may warrant further exploration. Below are key themes identified from the focus groups and survey data.

Types of DEI-centered Service

As for what constitutes DEI-centered service, a majority of respondents *strongly considered* the following as such: "serving on and leading DEI committees," "promoting equitable access for student success," "mentoring and advising underrepresented students," and "promoting equitable access for faculty success." Other "types" included "outreach to USC's internal and external communities," "supporting research," and "uplifting the mission of the school." Responses reveal a broad perception of DEI-centered service that encompasses leadership, teaching, research, community outreach, and engaging in practices that embody the University's mission ([USC](#)). Together, the perceptions reflect higher education's traditional taxonomy of teaching, research, and service.

Perceived Value of DEI-centered Service

Although clarity regarding the scope of DEI-centered service exists, respondents expressed concerns about its perceived value when compared to non-DEI-centered service in the context of promotion, tenure, and merit review. Examples of statements reflecting the concerns include the following:

> "[DEI-centered service] is valued if it is published or presented as part of scholarship,"

> "Is not weighted as heavily as other service"

> "Should account for the labor that goes into mentoring and other activities that are not 'formally' outlined in the review process" so that "those who want to do or who are doing DEI-work do not burn out."

> "For some, it was included in annual performance review (APR) related to teaching and incorporated in the classroom"

Responses above suggest a concern about equity that could lead to a lack of incentive for faculty to participate in DEI-centered service. Additional comments supporting concerns about the perceived value of DEI-centered service were conveyed in participants' responses to questions about its evaluation. Given institutional requirements for service, faculty face a dilemma when considering DEI-related service, especially as it pertains to promotion, tenure, and merit review. Should they accept the penalty that comes with engaging in the service, or should they forego it in the interest of advancing in the academy?

Evaluation of DEI-centered Service

A majority of responses (62%) indicated that policies to evaluate DEI-centered service do not exist. When policies do exist, they are "accessible with moderate effort." Respondents indicated that some programs use a rubric and some rely on the description in the job announcement. Regarding evaluation, these comments stood out:

> "This is an area that needs significant development,"

> "DEI-related service activities are not weighted as heavily as other service activities," "Evaluating the significance of the work [...] is a challenge," ...

> "There has to be a way to capture the differential impact of the work."

> "Standards exist for research, but not for clinical for some schools"

> "We have statements and values and we need to have policies and procedures so that DEI becomes part of everyone's job; DEI needs to be baked in; not sprinkled on in USC community"

While perceptions of DEI-centered service are clear, concerns and inconsistencies regarding its perceived value, weight, impact, standardization, and prioritization suggest a need to establish coherent evaluation protocols that reflect its role in the University's mission. Evaluation protocols should include specific expectations for service efforts and outcomes. Whereas the literature acknowledges the commonly used elements for assessing faculty service, it also finds that no studies "describe or evaluate" ways to assess participation ([Baker, Neely, et al.](#)).

Concerns About DEI-centered Service

Respondents expressed a number of concerns about DEI-centered service, among them: disparate expectations, the emotional cost (tax), lack of guidance, incentive, institutional dynamics-policies, lack of administrative support, and the perceived value of underrepresented faculty. More specifically:

> "DEI-related service and activities have to go beyond performative measures and symbolic commitments to see change in the opportunity structure at the school and university level"

> "We need to consider ways to rethink institutional dynamics and the effects of policy regimes and processes on underrepresented faculty"

> "Underrepresented faculty (all BIPOC) get tasked to take on every single DEI-related service and teaching, with very little recognition, [...] by only including (or exclusively relying on) BIPOC faculty, the school and the faculty assumes no responsibility or accountability, yet claim the school is doing something"

> [...] please know that each person [including underrepresented faculty member] has value and worth"

Comments above mirror findings in the literature regarding the need for criteria to clearly and consistently evaluate service activities and their weight. This is especially salient to unpacking some of the invisible attributes of service ([Domingo et al](#).).

Processes to Identify Underrepresented Faculty for Leadership Opportunities Based on their Service

Except for "Cast[ing]" the Net Widely" ([Quick, 2017](#)), most respondents were unaware of any formal processes to identify underrepresented faculty for leadership opportunities based on their service. Informal processes included the following:

> "The support for emerging leaders comes from discussions and their peers and network (internally and externally"

> "Personal communications"

On August 17, 2017, Provost Quick issued a "Casting the Net Widely" memo to academic deans ([Quick](#)). Aimed at increasing faculty diversity, the memo lists steps for posting job

announcements, identifying, and recruiting candidates. It does not address internal protocols for identifying underrepresented faculty for leadership opportunities. As well, relying on informal tactics such as discussions with peers, their networks, and personal communication suggest a lack of interest in identifying underrepresented faculty for leadership opportunities.

Effective Policies and Practices for Supporting DEI-related Service

Focus group participants were also asked to discuss effective policies and practices for supporting underrepresented faculty in pursuing career advancement and leadership opportunities. A sample of responses is below:

> "Implementing hiring practices that create a rich network of diverse experience and identit[ies] that reflect the student body; once these individuals are hired, make sure there are mentors and support systems that respond to their needs"

> "Intentionally including voices (not a seat) of underrepresented faculty at the table"

> "Protecting the time of younger faculty who are often people of color"

> [Clarifying whether] "the work will be mine, or will it be shared or redistributed to others with no credit"

Comments above suggest that effective policies and practices for supporting underrepresented faculty's career advancement and leadership opportunities must be intentional. As an aspect of fulfilling its mission, the University must be intentional in identifying and implementing supportive policies and practices.

Challenges in Supporting Underrepresented Faculty

Focus group participants also identified challenges in supporting underrepresented faculty's career advancement and leadership opportunities. In addition to disparate treatment based on status (rank) and privilege, and a dearth of faculty of color, challenges in supporting underrepresented faculty included the following:

> "Need to consider under-represented faculty and how that <u>definition</u> can change based on specific schools"

> "Mentorship, informal support and opportunities, networking connections, [and] micro-aggressions from faculty, staff, students, and staff"

> "Costs associated with DEI work for underrepresented faculty participation; BIPOC faculty carry a tremendous burden of time and participation"

> Lack of "on-going professional development within USC"

> Lack of DEI-focused "succession planning"

Comments regarding some of the challenges in supporting underrepresented faculty's career advancement and leadership opportunities suggest a need for a clearly delineated support infrastructure that is operationalized throughout the University. Said infrastructure would mitigate uncertainty, prioritize retention and advancement, and align with the University's mission.

Potential Interventions to Support Underrepresented Faculty

In light of challenges in supporting underrepresented faculty's career advancement and leadership opportunities, focus group participants proposed some potential interventions. They include:

> "Metrics for evaluating impact need to continue evolving"

> "Developing central metrics to evaluate faculty work, particularly RTPC faculty"

> "Develop[ing] a faculty equity plan [and] giving all faculty the opportunity for leadership roles and career advancement"

> "Look[ing] at data in terms of who gets included in senior mentor's projects, publications, etc.; who gets included on committees that are formed informally; who's talking to whom?"

Based on the comments, potential interventions could employ data analysis as a primary tool to create metrics that will identify, measure, and enhance underrepresented faculty's career and leadership opportunities. As a systemic endeavor, relying on data would provide an evidence-based metric that allows the University to determine the extent to which its faculty development efforts align with its mission.

As discussed above, the focus groups served as a pilot study for an anticipated survey of faculty. Despite the small sample size, issues reflected in the focus group data warrant further examination.

Summaries of the focus group data are available upon request.

Recommendations

1. <u>Explicitly Acknowledge, Measure, and Reward DEI Work</u>

What is it?

The university and all schools should explicitly acknowledge DEI-related work as part of service, teaching, and research profiles in annual faculty profiles or service dashboards, and develop transparent metrics for evaluating DEI contributions that include "contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion" for hiring, retention, merit review, tenure, and promotion.

Who is responsible?

Provost; deans; chairs and directors; faculty appointment, promotion, and tenure committees

What resources are needed?

No resources are required, but explicit endorsement and ongoing communication is needed from the Provost.

Explanation

At the university, school, and academic unit levels, DEI-related activities should be evaluated on equal footing as non-DEI activities within categories of faculty duties (e.g. service, teaching, and research) for all faculty evaluations (including appointment, promotion, tenure, and merit review).

All schools should also include clear examples of DEI-related activities in all categories of duties (e.g. service, teaching, and research) that relate to the relevant disciplines while allowing for evolutionary flexibility. Such examples should align with the University's mission and be codified in the Faculty Handbook (note: that this was recommended in the [2019–2020 FCEI report](#)).

Examples in the relevant literature and peer institutions indicate that such acknowledgement can, at a *minimum*, account more accurately for time spent by faculty in diversity activities that benefit the university.

Guidance on how to integrate examples of diversity work in teaching, research, and service criteria for review and promotion can be seen in the [University of California Academic Personnel Policy (APM - 210)](#), which *requires* that faculty who engage in diversity work receive recognition and reward in their academic reviews.

In addition to providing examples, schools should develop transparent metrics for evaluating these DEI-related activities that include "contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion" for hiring, retention, merit review, tenure, and promotion. Such explicit inclusion and evaluation would acknowledge diversity-related work as being part of the formal review process should

faculty choose to engage in such work, and may mitigate some of the burdens of the "cultural tax" on underrepresented faculty. Both Michigan State (MSU) and Oregon State University (OSU) [weigh](#) and [evaluate](#) DEI activities in reappointment, promotion, and tenure. Explicitly acknowledging, measuring, and rewarding DEI activities would elevate USC to the level of its peer universities.

2. <u>Establish Innovation DEI Grant Program to Target Faculty Retention and Advancement</u>

What is it?

Establish a sustainable grant program that funds projects across the university to target the recruitment, retention, and advancement of faculty who are supporting DEI efforts.

Who is responsible?

Provost

What resources are needed?

Sustainable university funds; an initial potential source of funding may be the [$50 million](#) earmarked for the [2018 USC Provost's Initiative on Fostering Our Diverse Community](#).

Explanation

The Provost should establish a sustainable grant program that funds projects across the university that target the recruitment, retention, and advancement of faculty who support DEI efforts. The University of California's [Advancing Faculty Diversity](#) (AFD) can serve as a model. Since 2016, AFD has provided $8.5 million in grants for programs across the UC campus with goals such as improving underrepresented faculty retention, funding diverse faculty cluster hiring, and encouraging underrepresented faculty to move into leadership positions.

This program can support innovative initiatives across the university that support the recruitment, retention, and advancement of faculty involved in DEI efforts. Another key goal of this funding could be to support and promote faculty from groups underrepresented in academia to participate in service and leadership apart from DEI-centered activities. This specifically connects with the [REDI report](#), which stated "the Task Force was particularly interested in encouraging faculty, students, and staff to all be seen and developed as leaders in racial equity." (p. 3)

Different domains might benefit from different interventions, and the results can be shared with the rest of the university and published. Part of this funding program could include annual gatherings for grant winners and DEI-related stakeholders. Annual gatherings would support the University's commitment to one of the [six unifying values that emerged from its "culture journey"](#): Diversity, equity, and inclusion: We all belong.

The [$50 million](#) earmarked for the [2018 USC Provost's Initiative on Fostering Our Diverse Community](#) was part USC's 2018 Strategic Plan – Answering the Call. Among its four strategic pillars: Leading Through Values, Leading Through People, Leading Through Impact, and Leading Through Transformation, the "People" pillar aimed to "invest heavily in intellectual capital – to recruit, and retain it, to build and diversify it, and to nurture and empower it." As of Spring 2020, the "People" pillar had collected and evaluated Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to fund grants that would "[Embrace the Inclusive Spirit](#)."

Additionally, the University should review funding for existing initiatives whose viability has been compromised due to inadequate resources, with the goal of improving their sustainability and visibility.

Establishing an innovation grant program to target faculty retention and advancement is integral to [USC's culture journey](#), specifically, the "embedding [of its] values into employee recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and professional development."

3. <u>Establish REDI Research Initiative</u>

What is it?

Establish and fund a research initiative to "inspire, mentor, and engage" USC graduate students and postdoctoral students working on DEI research.

Who is responsible?

Provost

What resources are needed?

Sustainable university funds; a potential source of funding may be the [$50million](#) earmarked for the [2018 USC Provost's Initiative on Fostering Our Diverse Community](#).

Explanation

A funded research initiative for USC graduate students and postgraduate fellows (i.e., future faculty) who study DEI issues would not only address the gap in research identified by this committee, but would also help the university fulfill some of the recommendations of the USC Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Task Force. In its March 2021 report, Pain, Promise, and Possibility: Towards a More Equitable & Inclusive USC (the REDI report), the REDI Task Force recommended that the university "[l]everage strengths to become the nation's leading institution on DEI…" (REDI report, p. 3) To achieve this goal of building USC's DEI leadership, the Task Force recommended "funds be set aside to support graduate student

research on DEI issues, perhaps through a competition that would also help highlight the importance of this work to the institution." (REDI report, p. 23)[1]

Some proposed topics for this research initiative include:
- impact of DEI service on faculty appointments, merit evaluations, promotions, and retention of underrepresented faculty
- ways to measure and reward DEI service, such as inclusion in service dashboards and time and money credits (O'Meara et al 2020)
- ways to increase leadership roles among underrepresented faculty

A DEI-based research initiative is already under way at the University of California, Berkeley, with its Berkeley Diversity Research Initiative. This initiative provides faculty with funding for interdisciplinary research on DEI topics in California and the U.S. (O'Rourke).

The REDI report acknowledges the University's "stellar faculty doing cutting-edge work, […] and [its] reputation for excellence in a variety of current DEI research areas." As a next step, the report proposes a "'moon shot' investment in enhancing research that will help to attract new faculty and signal [USC's] leadership in this area." The University would evaluate and measure the extent to which the research initiative achieves its goals by creating internal metrics. (p. 31)

4. <u>Develop Transparent Protocols for Identifying and Supporting Emerging Leaders</u>

What is it?

Develop transparent protocols for identifying and supporting emerging leaders.

Who is responsible?

Provost; deans; chairs and directors; faculty appointment, promotion, and tenure committees

What resources are needed?

No resources are required, but explicit endorsement and ongoing communication regarding expectations and accountability is needed from the Provost.

Explanation

This also aligns with recommendations from USC's Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Task Force. In the Task Force's March 2021 report "Pain, Promise, and Possibility:

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[1] A potential source of funding may be the $50million earmarked for the 2018 USC Provost's Initiative on Fostering Our Diverse Community.

Toward a More Equitable and Inclusive USC," one of the key recommendations was to "Value the leadership potential of all, including students, staff, and faculty." (p. 2)

Additionally, the REDI Report's recommendation to "Examine systems that are barriers of DEI" includes a call to "reevaluate merit [and] better support faculty of color" (p. 2). The REDI Report's recommendation to "Create multiple pipelines to equity" proposes "clarify[ing] the review process for faculty and creat[ing] a better performance management process for staff" (p. 3).

Also included in the REDI Report is a call to "see staff as leaders and invest in their training and development" (p. 25). This should extend to faculty, especially in light of the acknowledgement that "staff are not seen as leaders nor supported in leadership development, and this was particularly so for staff of color" (p. 25). Transparent protocols for identifying and supporting emerging leaders also aligns with USC's culture and values initiatives, specifically "implement[ing] effective evaluation processes to align goal performance and demonstrated behavior with Unifying Values, including DEI" (p.37). Again, while staff are the focus of the proposal, it should be extended to faculty.

In its AY [2019-2020 report](#), this committee (formerly, the Campus Climate Committee) recommended that the University take a multi-pronged, multi-level approach to retaining marginalized faculty. In reviewing the literature, the committee found that retention efforts should not redound to expecting marginalized faculty to be solely responsible for their own retention through means such as professional socialization. Rather, successful retention efforts should be the responsibility of the University and its respective academic units.

While recognizing the importance of traditional mentoring for faculty socialization, the literature also acknowledges the benefits of horizontal, peer mentorship models. With this in mind, the [Provost's Mentoring Award for Faculty Mentoring Faculty, Postdoctoral Scholars, Medical Residents, and Fellows](#) should be expanded to include criteria that focus specifically on identifying and supporting faculty who are emerging leaders. Currently, criteria in this category do not include leadership. As well, individuals who are identified as emerging leaders should receive targeted support with measurable leadership goals.

Lastly, three peer institutions: University of California, Davis ([pilot program](#)), University of California, Irvine ([a UC grant](#)), and University of California, San Francisco ([pilot program](#)) have created programs to identify and support leadership opportunities for underrepresented faculty. Developing transparent protocols for identifying and supporting emerging leaders would elevate USC to the level of its peer universities.

5. **Provide Transparency on DEI-Related Data on Faculty Hiring, Retention, and Promotion**

What is it?

Collect, analyze, and disseminate DEI-related data on faculty hiring, retention, and promotion.

Who is responsible?

Provost; Office of Institutional Research (OIR); Schools

What resources are needed?

None

Explanation

Since 2016 and subsequent years, the FCEI (formerly, the Campus Climate Committee) has called for greater transparency in DEI-related issues. The Provost, Office of Institutional Research, and schools should disseminate demographic data on faculty hiring, retention, promotion, merit evaluation, and leadership positions as it relates to DEI. Anonymized, raw data should be provided for transparent investigation.

This also aligns with recommendations from USC's Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Task Force. In the Task Force's March 2021 report "Pain, Promise, and Possibility: Toward a More Equitable and Inclusive USC," one of the key recommendations was to "Create systems of transparency and accountability with regard to DEI." (p. 2).

As the committee found in its [AY 2019-2020 report](#), disaggregated data that could be examined for the effectiveness of hiring, retention, and promotion efforts was not accessible. Faculty, staff, and students identified transparency, accountability, and diversity as three of the five values in their "desired" [USC] culture ([USC Values Poll, 2019](#)). Transparency in data collection and accessibility would facilitate what Bensimon, Dowd, and Witham (2016) describe as equity by design – a "continued process of learning, disaggregating data, and questioning assumptions about relevance and effectiveness."

6. **Enhance Coordination around DEI Issues**

What is it?

Enhance coordination and information exchange among different schools and units around DEI issues.

Who is responsible?

Provost; Chief Inclusion and Diversity Office; School Diversity Liaisons; DEI stakeholders

What resources are needed?

Sustainable university funds

Explanation

Since 2016 and subsequent years, the FCEI (formerly Campus Climate Committee) has called for greater coordination among schools and units on DEI issues. Gatherings of key stakeholders occurred, but without consistent sharing of goals and data.

The Provost should fund conferences around DEI work where campus stakeholders present their initiatives and also hear from outside experts. This could initially begin as an event internal to USC, and later years could expand to invite other institutions as well.

As a corollary to this recommendation, the university should reinstate DEI week. It was [announced in February 2022](#) that after five years, the campus-wide DEI week was changing. Instead, "the Office of Inclusion and Diversity [would be] devoting [their] energy to evolving DEI Week into a year-long series of events contributed from across our campus communities that address the great challenges of DEI today." Curating impactful events throughout the year is excellent and shows that DEI is ongoing, rather than something forgotten the rest of the year. At the same time, a separate week-long event provided an opportunity to focus attention on DEI efforts, and it allowed collaboration between different schools.

Moving forward, a re-envisioned engagement with DEI could begin with a week-long summit to stimulate interest, followed by signature events throughout the academic year. DEI engagement would be curated by faculty, staff, students, and community members – with the goal of acknowledging and responding to changing demographics and their implications for humanity and pedagogy.

7. <u>Improve Transparency in Accounting of the Provost's Diversity Fund</u>

What is it?

The Academic Senate should demand the Provost's office provide transparent accounting of the administration and distribution of disbursements from the provost's diversity fund.

Who is responsible?

Academic Senate Executive Board; Provost

What resources are needed?

Accounting of expenditures and proposals

In November 2018, Provost Quick [announced the creation of a $50 million fund](#) to "promote diversity, equity, and inclusion across our university." This would provide dollar-to-dollar matching between the Provost's office and the schools with the goal to "hire and retain world-class tenure-track faculty and extraordinary RTPC faculty" as well as to "to grow [USC's]pipeline programs that support postdoctoral fellows and their transition to USC faculty members."

Previously the FCEI has tried unsuccessfully to investigate the efforts of this funding. In the FCEI (formerly Campus Climate Committee) [AY 2019-2020 report](#), the FCEI wrote,

> "We asked an Assistant Vice Provost for information regarding the type of retention efforts funded and which schools received funding for specific retention efforts. We were notified that retention funding "can be requested by the schools to retain extraordinary faculty who contribute to/promote diversity in their field." It was further noted that the office was "unable to share information about specific schools' requests or commitments."

In four years, there has not been transparent accounting of this fund. If there is funding still available, it could be used to support other recommendations listed above. If funding has been exhausted, then anonymized information regarding proposals and their results could improve assessment for future hiring and retention efforts.

8. **Support Longer Term Mission and Goals of FCEI**

What is it?

Consider establishing committee charges that extend beyond one year.

Who is responsible?

Academic Senate Executive Board

What resources are needed?

None

Explanation

Currently, the committee charge changes every year typically. Since the committee does not have staffing support, this limits the scope of projects and investigations that can be undertaken. For example, if charges were extended across multiple years, the first year could focus on research and drafting a survey while the second year could focus on administering the survey and analyzing the results, which would provide a more detailed investigation.

9. <u>Publicize and Raise Awareness to Contributions Past Senate Committees</u>

What is it?

The Academic Senate should bring attention to the contributions of past committees in shaping and effecting university policies and practices.

Who is responsible?

Provost; Chief Information and Diversity Office; Academic Senate Executive Board

What resources are needed?

Tracking of committee reports; dashboard on Academic Senate website

Explanation

Each year, various Academic Senate committees execute their charges, often producing reports and recommendations. The Academic Senate will reference these reports in advocating for constructive changes in university policies, but there is often a lag of months or even years between the time of the committee work and the time the university takes action. This can often lead to a negative perception among faculty members about the value of committee service and self-governance.

The Academic Senate should highlight the impact that committee reports and recommendations have in effecting change. To be clear, this recommendation is not intended to single out individual committee members for praise or recognition. Instead, the goal is to support transparency as well as to help all faculty recognize the merits of collective service, which will also encourage future volunteers.

This raising awareness should take three forms:
1. Senate website: Create a dashboard that shows significant changes to university policies along with committee work that supported it
2. Senate meeting / newsletter: When announcing successful efforts to improve university policies, mention any applicable committee work
3. Contacting committee members: When a committee's work contributes to substantive changes, the executive board can let the former committee members know via email

Conclusion

To respond to its charge, the Faculty Committee on Equity and Inclusion examined the extent to which DEI-centered service and leadership are required and/or incentivized in merit review and/or promotion. The Committee also examined the extent to which faculty from groups underrepresented in academia are able to participate in service and leadership apart from/in addition to DEI-centered endeavors. Research included analyzing DEI-centered practices at peer institutions (from publicly available sources), reviewing the literature on DEI-centered service, and hosting two virtual focus groups as a pilot study to inform a potential survey of faculty. Collectively, several of the Committee's findings and subsequent recommendations intersect with ongoing conversations surrounding the University's commitment to DEI as integral to its culture, values, and improving the experiences of faculty, staff, and students. The committee's recommendations are designed to improve the hiring, retention, and leadership development of diverse faculty; promote an open academic culture that rewards DEI contributions; elevates the University to the level of its peer universities in the area of acknowledging DEI work; and hold the University accountable to its stated commitment to DEI.

Appendix

<u>References for Peer Institution Practices</u>

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