



**University of Pennsylvania School of Design
Faculty Diversity Plan Update
May 2013**

I. Background and Introduction

PennDesign has a longstanding commitment to cultivating an environment that celebrates and promotes diversity. We seek to prepare students to become design practitioners and scholars in a global society, which requires that we provide direct experience working with diverse disciplines, sectors, geographies, populations, cultures and perspectives. Strengthening the diversity of our academic community is therefore essential to our educational mission in general and our focus on urban environments in particular. PennDesign's community includes our *staff, students, faculty visitors* and *academic partners*.

II. PennDesign's Faculty Diversity Plan: Documenting our Commitment and Building Momentum for Change

Increasing the diversity of our *faculty* is a critical component of our larger commitment to creating and maintaining a diverse community. Development of the *PennDesign Faculty Diversity Plan*, submitted last May, helped the School to build momentum around the importance of promoting and celebrating diversity. Meetings, focus groups and one-on-one discussions with faculty, staff and students – including underrepresented minorities (URMs) in each of these groups – provided valuable feedback about strategies to attract and retain more diverse faculty and students. These activities also provided opportunities to reiterate PennDesign's commitment to inclusivity and increase our awareness of the challenges we face. Continuing efforts to implement action steps included in the Plan will help ensure that this momentum is maintained, and ongoing data collection and focus groups with faculty will help us to monitor its impact.

Since adoption of the *Faculty Diversity Plan* in May 2012, PennDesign has made progress toward increasing the number of female standing faculty, with the appointment of Winka Dubbeldam as Full Professor and Chair of Architecture in January 2013 and the promotions of Anuradha Mathur to Full Professor of Landscape Architecture in July 2012 and Amy Hillier to Associate Professor with tenure in December 2012. We have also selected two new female Assistant Professors in City Planning, Megan Ryerson and Francesca Ammon, who will be joining the faculty in July 2013.

This year, PennDesign also increased the number of international standing faculty with the appointments of Richard Weller (Australian) as the Chairman of Landscape Architecture; Ken Lum (Canadian and Asian) as Full Professor in Fine Arts and Director of the Undergraduate Program; and Stefan Al (Dutch) as Associate Professor in City & Regional Planning.

Since May, we have implemented a number of specific strategies to increase student and faculty diversity and to promote a culture of inclusion that values and celebrates difference. These strategies, associated outcomes and plans for the future are discussed in greater detail below.

A. Appointment of A Diversity Search Advisor and Inclusion of Diverse Faculty & Students on Search Committees

Professor C. Dana Tomlin, who has served as the School's Affirmative Action Officer for the past six years, has been appointed as the PennDesign Diversity Search Advisor (DSA) for the current academic year. As DSA, Professor Tomlin continues to represent PennDesign's commitment to recruiting and retaining faculty from diverse backgrounds, including underrepresented minority groups (URMs). He works closely with each search committee to ensure that all searches have

been conducted in a manner consistent with the University's policies and procedures regarding diversity. The DSA also helps link faculty search committee representatives to diversity training (described in greater detail below) and encourages search committees to broaden their networks in order to identify more candidates from URM groups (also described below). Further, the DSA routinely encourages faculty to explore how their unconscious bias may be affecting their decision making about potential candidates. In the past year, PennDesign has also made additional efforts to include URM faculty and students on search committees in an effort to ensure the integration of diverse perspectives on each search.

B. Diversity Training for Search Committees

In September 2012, DSA Dana Tomlin attended a Diversity Training workshop, *Effective Faculty Searches*, offered by Penn's Vice Provost for Faculty. Information from this training – which focused on best practices in faculty searching, how to avoid introduction of unconscious bias in hiring, recruitment for diversity and excellence and Penn resources designed to improve faculty recruitment and retention – has been disseminated to representatives on faculty search committees and forwarded to the full Personnel Committee. Professor Tomlin also plans to attend future trainings offered by the Vice Provost for Faculty.

C. Increased Outreach to Underrepresented Minority Candidates

PennDesign's Faculty Diversity Plan highlights our commitment to ensuring that we are reaching professional, academic and alumni networks that are inclusive of underrepresented minorities (URMs). We have asked our faculty – several of whom are journal editors, members of executive boards of professional and disciplinary associations – to tap these networks and identify promising URM candidates. Networks of particular interest include: National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA), Women in Architecture, and Women in Planning. We are also utilizing a broader array of outlets to advertise faculty openings and seek more diverse applicants, including Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education, Insight Into Diversity, the Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, Women's Transportation Seminar International and the Society of Women Engineers. Department Coordinators, working in collaboration with PennDesign's Associate Director of Faculty Affairs, continue to complete university required Equal Opportunity Compliance forms in order to document the steps each search committee has taken to reach a diverse pool of potential applicants, including URMs.

D. Improved Information Dissemination

In an effort to enhance communication and help promote a sense of inclusion among faculty, PennDesign launched a new Faculty Affairs website in October 2012. The website includes orientation materials, relevant policies and procedures, and information about important university resources. The site also includes a link to the PennDesign *Faculty Diversity Plan*.

Several of the policies included on the Faculty Affairs website demonstrate PennDesign's commitment to recognizing the diverse contributions of faculty and to providing ongoing support. A key component of our efforts to create a culture of support for faculty, including URM colleagues, is PennDesign's recently strengthened *Junior Faculty Mentoring Program*. Although the program is not specifically focused on diversity, it is an important mechanism to strengthen retention and advancement to tenure. In July 2013, we will review written reports regarding the past year's mentoring activities from department chairmen to assess the program's effectiveness and recommend potential improvements, including those focused on diversity issues.

III. Preparing the Next Generation of Diversity Candidates

One of the challenges to building a more diverse faculty that we identified in our Faculty Diversity Plan is having an adequate pipeline of diverse candidates from which to recruit. In response to this challenge, PennDesign continued efforts to attract larger proportions of URM students (both master's and doctoral) through increased outreach to minority-serving institutions, participation in Graduate Fairs targeting minority students (including the McNair Scholars Graduate Fair at the University of Delaware), and using the GRE Search Service and National Name Exchange to identify and reach out to potential URM candidates. Several PennDesign faculty members also served as guest lecturers at universities serving a large number of minority students – both here and abroad. For example, Professor Frank Matero (Historic Preservation) has been an annual lecturer at Polytechnic University in Puerto Rico, and he recently established a cooperative agreement with Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado, which serves a large proportion of Native American Students. In previous years, Terry Adkins (Professor in Fine Arts) visited a number of historically black colleges and arranged meetings with student diversity groups at several other schools, and David Gouverneur (Associate Professor in Landscape Architecture) also lectures in Puerto Rico and Venezuela. These visits provide opportunities for faculty to introduce the design professions to communities who may not otherwise have considered a career in design, planning or fine arts, in addition to promoting PennDesign. We look forward to working with faculty and our Admissions Department to increase the number of visits to colleges and universities throughout the country and the world – including minority serving institutions – in the coming academic year.

PennDesign continues to partner with the Provost's Office to offer full-diversity fellowships each year to students in every discipline across the School. Although tuition is discounted on average by 22% for financial aid, it is difficult for us to compete with our peer institutions who are offering much more substantial aid packages to our top candidates – not just full tuition but stipends as well. For the upcoming academic year, the School will be offering more fellowships and in some cases, attaching teaching assistantships to the overall package. The School has strategically set aside \$1.27M, or 28% of its total aid to master students to attract a more diverse student body.

IV. Activities to Promote a Climate of Inclusivity

PennDesign continues to celebrate diversity and foster a climate of inclusiveness through its global initiatives, lecture series, diverse student associations, and informal social events. PennDesign offers design studio courses and summer programs in cities around the world. This past year's ambitious lecture series featured more than 50 lecture and panel discussions facilitated by internationally-recognized architects, urban planners, theorists, designers and artists from diverse disciplines and backgrounds. Featured speakers included Teddy Cruz, Rudabeh Pakravan, Theaster Gates, and Laura Kurgen. The Make-ing Space symposium, hosted in fall 2012, featured more than 25 designers (a mix of artists, architects, landscape architects, urban designers, media, policy shapers), who lead by example in creating non-traditional forms of innovative and entrepreneurial practice.

In the past year, we have increased support for *Diverse Design*, a student-led group that is dedicated to fostering a PennDesign community that celebrates and promotes diversity. In October 2012, *Diverse Design* hosted *Demystifying the Design Professions*, the opening event at the School's fall-semester Open House. Sample banners designed by participating students to promote *Diverse Design* and the event are attached. Despite the impending arrival of Hurricane Sandy, the event was well attended by prospective students from many different backgrounds and fields of design interest. *DiverseDesign* also hosted several culturally-specific happy hour events throughout the year, including East Asian Happy Hour and Holi Happy Hour (held in partnership with the University's PennRangoli Association). These events attracted more than 500 participants, and they highlight PennDesign's commitment to celebrating diversity.

This year marked the pilot year of *Mixplace Studio*, an Urban Education Initiative that provides PennDesign students with opportunities to engage in real-world design projects with a diverse group of stakeholders in a largely African American Community in West Philadelphia. The goal of Mixplace Studio is to increase community participation in design and planning discussions, with a particular focus on youth in West Philadelphia. PennDesign graduate students work closely with neighborhood high school students to discuss the urgent problems facing cities. Developed in partnership with People’s Emergency Center, a community-based housing and social service organization, Estudio Teddy Cruz and the Center for Urban that encourages cultural inclusiveness and engages the public in dialogue about cultural and socio-political change, Mixplace exemplifies PennDesign’s commitment to bridging the gap between theory and practice, to building community, and to the contribution of design to improving the quality of everyday life.

One of the lead organizers of Mixplace Studio, PennDesign Associate Professor Amy Hillier, is also the recipient of a 2013 Provost’s Excellence Through Diversity Fund award for “*The Ward: Race and Class in Du Bois’ Seventh Ward.*” The Ward is a research, teaching, and public history project focusing on W.E.B. Du Bois’ timeless lessons on race and racial inequality. The project, which includes an interactive mapping system, walking tour, documentary, board game, curriculum materials, website, and an oral history collection, has received support from PennDesign since 2005. In the coming year, PennDesign students will also serve as research assistants on the project. The Ward provides another example of PennDesign’s commitment to diversity and our school-wide focus on the importance of community building – both on and off campus.

We also use other social events, such as Dean-sponsored dinners, to promote peer support networking for junior faculty, with a special focus on URM faculty. For example, this April, the Dean hosted the annual PennDesign women faculty dinner at her home. This event provides an informal opportunity for socializing, networking across departments and peer support. Although some of these initiatives are not specifically focused on promoting faculty diversity, they help signal PennDesign’s commitment to inclusivity. We believe that our success in diversifying our faculty must be a collective effort, embraced by all members of our community: students, faculty, staff, and academic partners.

V. Next Steps

PennDesign recognizes that increasing the diversity of our community is essential to our goal of preparing students to assume leadership roles as designers, planners and artists in a global society. In the coming year, we will continue implementing many of the strategies outlined in the Faculty Diversity Plan, including increasing efforts to attract more URM faculty by conducting more expansive searches, targeting promising minority PhD candidates and faculty in other universities to join the PennDesign faculty, promoting a climate that celebrates diversity, and increasing the pipeline of URM students in the design professions. We look forward to keeping you apprised of our progress.