

# Diversity Work Group

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## Recommendations for Action

Respectfully submitted to Dean Frederick Steiner, June 6, 2017 by Diversity Work Group Members:

### Faculty

Sharon Hayes: Diversity Search Advisor; FNAR Associate Professor, Standing Faculty; Hina Jamelle: ARCH Senior Lecturer, Academic Support Staff; John Landis: CPLN Dept Chair and Professor, Standing Faculty; Ken Lum: FNAR Dept Chair and Professor, Standing Faculty; Chris McAdams: ARCH Adjunct Lecturer, Academic Support Staff; Cindy Sanders: LARP Adjunct Professor, Associated Faculty; Lisa Servon: CPLN Professor, Standing Faculty; Dana Tomlin: Diversity Search Advisor; LARP Professor, Standing Faculty (on sabbatical in Spring 2017); Franca Trubiano: ARCH Associate Professor, Standing Faculty (on sabbatical in Spring 2017); Domenic Vitiello: CPLN Associate Professor, Standing Faculty

### Students

Student Council Co-President: Caroline Morgan; Student Council Co-President: Doug Breuer; DiverseDesign Co-President: Kat Engleman; DiverseDesign Co-President: Libby Bland

### Staff

Kimba Johnson, Financial Manager, Grants & Contracts; Kate Daniel, Coordinator, City Planning; Joan Weston, Director of Admissions & Financial Aid; Karyn Tufarolo, Associate Director for Faculty Affairs; Leslie Hurtig, Associate Dean for Administration

# Diversity Work Group

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## Background

In October 2016, Dean Frederick Steiner convened a Diversity Work Group to advise him on strategies and initiatives to increase the diversity of the school's faculty, staff and students, promote a more inclusive PennDesign community, and foster a learning environment that encourages and celebrates difference.

Expanding beyond the Dean's initial invitation to Faculty, the DWG invited staff and student representatives to join the group in November 2016 and met monthly throughout the 2016-17 academic year.

# Opportunities and Obstacles

The School of Design lacks diverse representation in the Standing Faculty, the Associated Faculty, the Academic Support Staff, the Administrative Staff and the Student Body. This absence is most glaring in terms of underrepresented minority representation but extends to other populations such as the LGBTQI and disabled community.

The lack of diversity among faculty, students and staff negatively impacts on many areas of work and activity in the school, including curriculum development and review, student assessment, programming, student support and recruitment. This lack of diversity contributes to the production of a homogenous culture in PennDesign that constructs and promotes values, content and policies that ignore the specific needs, interests and urgencies of those members of our community who do not identify with it.

These obstacles are challenging and difficult to dismantle in as much as they are bound up with the problem of a foundational lack of diversity among faculty, students and staff in PennDesign. However, the Diversity Work Group identified many areas of opportunity and positive action.

The DWG focused on four primary areas of consideration: Faculty Support and Curriculum, Student Support and Recruitment, Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Programming.

The primary goal of the Diversity Work Group was to offer Dean Steiner, short, medium and long-term actions aimed at increasing diversity in the School of Design, supporting current faculty, staff and students from underrepresented and/or marginalized communities, and supporting faculty, staff and students engaged in curricular and non-curricular projects that interrupt and challenge unrecognized bias and unchallenged homogenization in scholarship and practice.

Our specific goals included strategies and protocols to achieve:

- A faculty, student body and staff that better reflects the communities and populations with which we work.
- The expansion of the curricular content (particularly that of the core courses) to better reflect the diversity of scholarship in our fields, including the inclusion of scholars, practitioners and content that speak to and from, not just of, diverse communities.
- A shift in the culture of the school to prioritize and value difference and diversity.
- A means to redress the experience of exclusion, bias and disrespect perceived by many of students of color and other marginalized students.
- Protocols for the implementation and maintenance of the proposed actions.
- Proposed actions that require financial commitment as well as those that can be immediately implemented with minimal financial demand.

# Diversity Statement

During the 2016 -17 year, the Diversity Work Group drafted a PennDesign Diversity Statement to publicly communicate the School's commitment.

## **PennDesign's Commitment to Diversity**

PennDesign is committed to creating an educational setting in which all students, faculty members, and staff members are valued.

We strive to create an inclusive culture that celebrates difference and is strengthened by contributions from people of all races, religions, countries of origin, genders, ages, sexual orientations, physical abilities, learning differences, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

We aspire to support and retain a student body, faculty and staff who are representative of the multiple communities and publics with which we collaborate and work. A diverse community at PennDesign enhances our ability to prepare the next generation of artists, architects, landscape architects, planners, and preservationists to become leaders and innovators in a multicultural society.

# **Recommendations**

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## **Faculty and Staff Recruitment**

1. Expand protocols and internal goals for all standing faculty searches to insure more diverse representation in the group of short-listed candidates, including a requirement that at least two of the short-listed candidates for each search be African-American, Latinx, Native American or, to the extent knowable, LGBTQI or disabled.
2. Increase diversity in the part-time faculty by setting goals for the Chairs or Directors of each department: 10% more faculty of color and LGBTQI faculty by 2019-2020.
3. Immediately expand diversity amongst visiting critics, senior critics, jury members by requiring chairs to increase the diversity of their pool of such candidates to 30% of the total pool.
4. Immediately recommend to each Department Chairs the appointment of one or more Secondary Appointments in the Standing Faculty (see appendix for list of potential appointees).
5. Increase the number of minority post-doc teaching fellows by one next year, and an additional one the year after that, bringing the total to three in the school. [We recognize that College Hall contributes 50% of this cost, leaving the other 50% to PennDesign.]
6. Establish diversity as a critical component of all staff hiring, in particular for staff positions that directly support students.

# Elaboration of Recommendations

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## Faculty and Staff Recruitment

- I. *Expand protocols and internal goals for ALL standing faculty searches to insure more diverse representation in the group of short-listed candidates.*

There is a primary and urgent need for increased faculty of color in the standing faculty of each department, particularly faculty who are African-American, Native American and/or Latinx. There is an additional need for increased representation of LGBTQI faculty. The work group understands that, in each PennDesign department, historic underrepresentation of scholars and practitioners of color in higher education and in our disciplinary fields influences the number of candidates in the pipeline for such searches. However, evidence-based studies have continually demonstrated that unconscious bias has a deep impact on Faculty and Staff hiring in higher education. Remediation of such an impact requires both active work to improve search protocols and clear, unwavering goalposts for the short list of each search.

Expanded protocols for standing faculty searches should include:

- a. Enhance the role of the Diversity Search Advisors to include a mandatory meeting with the entire search committee at the very beginning of the process.
  - b. Use bold and direct language in search advertisements that convey the value PennDesign places on diversity. Language such as:  
“PennDesign is committed to building a culturally diverse faculty and pluralistic faculty committed to teaching and working in a multicultural environment and strongly encourages applications from minorities and women. All candidates are encouraged to describe how issues of diversity have been or will be brought into courses, or describe previous activities mentoring minorities, women, or members of other underrepresented groups.”
  - c. Encourage all faculty searches to take pro-active steps to promote a position such as, Writing directly to colleagues to request nominations of candidates that contribute to diversity; writing to historically Black, predominantly Latino, and tribal colleges and universities to secure lists of doctoral students graduating in a particular field; contacting local and statewide field-specific associations to secure a list of members from diverse communities; writing to minority caucus groups (e.g., Black Coalitions of Higher Education) that may have a network of professionals within their organization.
2. *Increase diversity in the part-time faculty by setting goals for the Chairs or Directors of each department. 10% more faculty of color and LGBTQI faculty by 2019-2020.*
  3. *Immediately expand diversity amongst visiting critics, senior critics, jury members by requiring chairs to increase the diversity of their pool of such candidates to 30% of the total pool.*

Given the slow speed with which Standing Faculty appointments occur, it is critical to increase faculty of

color amongst the group of lecturers and invited short-term critics and jury members. Setting concrete goals for increasing diversity and inclusion amongst these positions offers an incredible opportunity to significantly address both the gap in faculty of color and to affect the overall culture of the school without additional financial resources.

4. *Immediately recommend to each Department Chairs the appointment of one or more Secondary Appointments in the Standing Faculty.*

With the low numbers of faculty of color in PennDesign, students often reach outside PennDesign in search of faculty who can mentor them or offer feedback on their work. This informal process is difficult and unpredictable. An important and easy way to support our students of color is to formalize a relationship between Faculty of color, whose work intersects with art and design, and the school through a series of Secondary Appointments. Members of the DWG have developed a list of potential secondary appointments, included as an appendix.

5. *Increase the number of minority post-doc teaching fellows by one next year, and an additional one the year after that, bringing the total to 3 in the school. [We recognize that College Hall contributes 50% of this cost, leaving the other 50% to PennDesign.]*

The University's Postdoctoral Fellowships for Academic Diversity offer PennDesign shared financial resources to bring in young scholars of color for temporary appointments in the school. These scholars bring great energy, cutting edge research and critical perspectives that contribute greatly to our academic environment. The benefits of taking full advantage of this resource with two additional fellows greatly outweigh the financial commitment.

6. *Establish diversity as a critical component of all staff hiring, in particular for staff positions that directly support students.*

In addition to the faculty, students of color, in particular, and the student body in general, are in need of an increased presence of staff of color, particularly in the positions that serve the students directly. Staff of color continually demonstrate the importance of their presence as both models and mentors to the students as well as the benefit their work has on the development of an open and inclusive community.

# **Recommendations**

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## **Faculty Support and Curriculum**

1. Commit one school-wide faculty meeting per semester to diversity and implement ongoing anti-racism/unconscious bias training for all faculty, standing and non-standing.
2. Immediately instruct each department to undergo an internal review of the diversity reflected in their curriculum and to explore strategies to enhance diversity in course and studio content with critical attention directed at core course content.
3. Provide more tools and resources to assist faculty in creating and developing course work that more accurately reflects the work being done in our fields by scholars and practitioners of color, LGBTQI scholars and practitioners and other marginalized voices. This should include both one-time trainings such as “Queering the Curriculum” or ongoing protocols for improving course content.
4. Host a “Diversity in the Curriculum” event highlighting various courses focusing on diversity across the school (similar to the Elective Studio Presentation Event).

# **Elaboration of Recommendations**

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## **Faculty Support and Curriculum**

- 1. Commit one school-wide faculty meeting per semester to diversity and implement ongoing anti-racism/unconscious bias training for all faculty, standing and non-standing.*

The Diversity Work Group recognizes the enormous impact that the faculty has on the experience of our students. Early in our discussions, we reviewed commentary from some of our students that many faculty have not been able to adequately support diversity in their classrooms and/or adequately respect the experiences and opinions of our students of color. The impact of Faculty is enacted both in the culture and conditions that each individual faculty member engenders inside his/her/their classroom as well as in the collective decisions made by the faculty of each department vis a vis curricular content, the hiring of part-time faculty, visiting critics, jury members, visiting lecturers, etc. It is imperative to continue to engage the Faculty as a whole in discussions and trainings that support their ability to support a wider-range of positions and identities within PennDesign.

- 2. Immediately instruct each department to undergo an internal review of the diversity reflected in their curriculum and to explore strategies to enhance diversity in course and studio content with critical attention directed at core course content. These strategies should include the installation of mechanisms for ongoing review of curricular content vis a vis issues of diversity.*
- 3. Provide more tools and resources to assist faculty in creating and developing course work that more accurately reflects the work being done in our fields by scholars and practitioners of color, LGBTQI scholars and practitioners and other marginalized voices. This should include both one-time trainings such as “Queering the Curriculum” or ongoing protocols for improving course content.*

The curriculum, particularly core coursework, needs to be addressed and assessed both with respect to required course content as well as available electives. There is deep concern amongst our group that the curricular content overall does not adequately represent the diversity of scholarship and practice within our disciplines nor does it adequately cover urgent and important demands that are being made upon our disciplines to widen the scope of attention and to reassess the scholarly foundations on which our practices sit (namely that of unchecked and unmarked racial (ie. White) subjectivities). Urgent review is recommended through a process that allows for immediate change as well as for the ongoing assessment and improvement of the curricular inclusion of marginalized perspectives and positions. This is not easy work for faculty, as it often requires being willing to look beyond standard texts and standard case studies and into areas of scholarship that are not always given wide visibility in our disciplines and these two recommendations are geared toward initiating a sustainable curricular review process.

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4. *Host a “Diversity in the Curriculum” event highlighting various courses focusing on diversity across the school (similar to the Elective Studio Presentation Event).*

This recommendation is intended to serve the dual purpose of informing all students about important coursework available to them as well as publicly communicating the value of diverse scholarship and practice in the culture of the school.

# **Recommendations**

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## **Student Support and Recruitment**

1. Increase Full Diversity Fellowships for all departments by one to insure three FDFs per year per department.
2. Hire a Diversity Coordinator to advise Dean and Faculty on issues of diversity and to coordinate efforts of student programming, student services and student support. This could include the initiation of a Diversity Peer Educator program.
3. Increase support for incoming/first year students of color and LGBTQI students during orientation and first weeks of school.
4. Organize one student town hall per year to address diversity and inclusion.
5. Formalize financial support for student-organized groups addressing diversity and support for student-initiated events that engage issues of critical importance that aren't addressed in the curriculum.
6. Develop structures to connect students of color and LGBTQI students with alums of color and LGBTQI alums. This could happen through regular student/alum programming.
7. Facilitate contact between students and professional organizations such as NOMA.

# **Elaboration of Recommendations**

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## **Student Support and Recruitment**

- 1. Increase Full Diversity Fellowships for all departments by one to insure three FDFs per year per department.*

Increasing the diversity of our student body is critical and should be a top priority moving forward. Success in the realm of enrollment has a cascading and exponential benefit on all the other goals that the DWG has elaborated. The Full Diversity Fellowships are a critical tool to enhance the ability of each department to draw top students in our respective fields. At least three out of the five departments regularly have far more than two eligible candidates of excellent credentials. Adding a third FDF per department is a critical step in the overall efforts at stronger inclusion.

- 2. Hire a Diversity Coordinator to advise Dean and Faculty on issues of diversity and to coordinate efforts of student programming, student services and student support. This could include the initiation of a Diversity Peer Educator program.*

While the Diversity Work Group acknowledges that this recommendation requires a significant financial commitment, it is clear that the strongest way to support a deep and sustained commitment to the goals outlined by the Dean is to create an Administrative Staff position empowered to develop and maintain strategies to build and support a diverse community of scholars and practitioners.

- 3. Increase support for incoming/first year students of color and LGBTQI students during orientation and first weeks of school.*

To better support students of color, LGBTQI and disabled students, the DWG recommends that PennDesign host a specific orientation event every year in the fall, facilitated by staff but including faculty and current students (perhaps drawn from the DWG), to welcome students of color, LGBTQI and disabled students and to introduce these students to other members of our community who are interested and invested in issues of diversity and inclusion and to offer initial information about relevant curricular and non-curricular support that are available at the school.

- 4. Organize one student town hall per year to address diversity and inclusion.*

The student members of the DWG hosted a student town hall in March 2017 focused on issues of diversity. This event was highly successful. The town hall offered students a forum in which to ask questions and offer feedback about the work of the DWG. A yearly forum to build upon this communication is easy to facilitate and offers a necessary means of communication between students, faculty and staff.

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5. *Formalize financial support for student-organized groups addressing diversity and support for student-initiated events that engage issues of critical importance that aren't addressed in the curriculum.*

In the near past, student groups such as DiverseDesign organized symposia and/or events to address issues that were not otherwise discussed in PennDesign coursework or programming. While the School contributed financial resources to these events, students would be further supported by formal compensation for the intellectual and physical labor of such organizing, either through work-study compensation or credit-allocation.

6. *Develop structures to connect students of color and LGBTQI students with alums of color and LGBTQI alumni. This could happen through regular student/alum programming.*
7. *Facilitate contact between students and professional organizations such as NOMA.*

The DWG recommends PennDesign facilitate a regular series of social, information and/or networking events that utilize the support resources we already have in our community to connect current students of color, LGBTQI.

# **Recommendations**

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## **Programming**

1. Institute a named lecture, the Julian Abele Memorial Lecture, to bring a leading African-American architect to campus.
2. Require each Department to program at least 1-2 lectures per semester that enhance the diversity of the field and the diversity of the School.
3. Develop a multi-year, cross departmental series of public dialogues and conversations organized around diverse concerns in our disciplines.
4. Expand the website to include resources pages for diverse programming, curriculum and ongoing initiatives and special projects.
5. Fund the development of a Social Justice Archive that archives social justice projects done at PennDesign.

# **Elaboration of Recommendations**

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## **Programming**

- 1. Institute a named lecture, the Julian Abele Memorial Lecture, to bring a leading African-American architect to campus each year.*

Renowned Philadelphia architect Julian Abele was the first Black student admitted to the Department of Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania. A yearly named lecture in his honor reminds our community about his impact on the school and the field of architecture as well as affords the opportunity to engage the entire community in the work of a leading contemporary architect.

- 2. Require each Department to program at least 1-2 lectures per semester that enhance the diversity of the field and the diversity of the School.*
- 3. Develop a multi-year, cross-departmental series of public dialogues and conversations organized around diverse concerns in our disciplines.*

These two programming recommendations work with already existing funding structures to ensure that our current programming budgets expand to regularly include programming that introduces our students to diverse scholarship AND to an expanded field of scholars and practitioners.

- 4. Expand the website to include resources pages for diverse programming, curriculum and ongoing initiatives and special projects.*

Visibility is a critical tool to the overall efforts to increase diversity and inclusion at PennDesign. The website is useful resource for prospective students, faculty and staff as well as current students, faculty and staff. There are many already existing initiatives, resources, discussions and events that students, faculty and staff can benefit from not all of which are widely known. Additionally, the website provides a platform on which new initiatives can not only be publicized but developed (as evidenced in recommendation #5).

- 5. Fund the development of a Social Justice Archive that archives social justice projects done at PennDesign.*

Social Justice has emerged as a category of practice that intersects deeply with our work at PennDesign, in as much as Social Justice presumes the value of fair and just political, legal, social, economic and administrative relationships. The student-group Diverse Design has initiated a project to archive social justice projects that have been or are being done at PennDesign. This archive project significantly and generously contributes to the resources of the school. The DWG specifically recommends funding this work as well as considering this student-led effort as a model for future funding opportunities and initiatives.

# **Recommendations**

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## Ongoing Support

1. Convert the Diversity Work Group into a formal committee that includes faculty, staff and student representation charged with overseeing the implementation of these initiatives and continuing to expand school-wide efforts toward diversity and inclusion.
2. Charge each Department with selecting a liaison to the Diversity Committee, empowered to oversee individual departmental efforts and initiatives vis a vis diversity and inclusion.
3. Charge the new Diversity Committee with a report to be delivered end of year 2017-18 on the one-year progress of the implemented initiatives.

# **Elaboration of Recommendations**

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2. *Charge each Department with selecting a liaison to the Diversity Committee, empowered to oversee individual departmental efforts and initiatives vis a vis diversity and inclusion.*
3. *Charge the new Diversity Committee with a report to be delivered end of year 2017-18 on the one-year progress of the implemented initiatives.*

The conversation and discussion that Dean Steiner initiated through the Diversity Work Group is long over-due at PennDesign. The submitted recommendations represent the very first steps in a coordinated and committed effort by the School to recognize the importance of diversity to our future ability to educate leading designers and artists to address the most complex challenges of art and design in the 21st century. To support and maintain this work and these efforts, the School should create a formal Diversity Committee supported by the Dean's office and integrated into the administrative work of the school. This committee should include faculty, staff and students. Faculty inclusion would be constituted by: a liaison from each of the individual departments, the two Diversity Search Advisors, as well as 3-5 additional Faculty volunteers. Staff and student inclusion would be determined at the beginning of each year by the staff and students currently participating in the Diversity Work Group.

# Appendix

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## List of Potential Faculty for Secondary Appointment

Underrepresented minorities (African American/Black, Latinx):

Sandra Andino, Latin American & Latinx Studies (artist, arts education) – FNAR

Camille Charles, Africana studies (Urban Inequality) – CPLN

Daniel Aldana Cohen, Sociology (climate change, social movements) – CPLN/LARP

Fernando Ferreira, Wharton Real Estate – CPLN

Sebastián Gil-Riaño, History & Sociology of Science (history of racial science, international development) – ARCH/CPLN

Onoso Imoagene, Sociology (migration & development – perhaps a stretch, as this is not a big part of her work) – CPLN

Jennifer Ponce de Leon, English (Mexican Modernism) – ARCH

Dorothy E. Roberts, Law – CPLN

Gwendolyn DuBois Shaw, History of Art – FNAR

Other people of color & LGBT:

Nikhil Anand, SAS – Anthropology (water, infrastructure) – ARCH/CPLN/LARP

Amy Castro Baker, SP2 (housing) – CPLN

Siyen Fei. History (Gender and Urbanism, China) – ARCH

David Young Kim. History of Art – ARCH

Rahul Mukerjee. English, Media – ARCH

Other people who work on relevant content:

Dennis Culhane, SP2 (homelessness) – CPLN

Roberta Iversen, SP2 (poverty, workforce development) – CPLN