

2022-2023 Annual Report

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The College of Communication and Information Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee met monthly throughout the 2022-2023 academic year and additionally as needed. The DEI Committee continued both in person and virtual events this year and engaged the community in many ways.

The focus of this year was on creating a more predictable event schedule and increasing our attendance at events and we were successful at both of these goals. We also continued to work on implementing strategies for various sections of the previously approved strategic plan. We also continued raising the profile of DEI by having the Chair of the Committee provide DEI updates at College Assembly's, attend leadership meetings, and regularly post as part of a weekly college newsletter. The Chair also appeared at University wide Advance events held by the Office of International Diversity and shared efforts of the college. The Chair of the Committee also appeared in courses on request to talk to students about how DEI operated in the college and what resources we offered.

In 2022-2023 we began what we hope will become a predictable cycle of events – a pedagogy event for the community in fall, at least one guest speaker in spring engaging the whole college community (ideally we'd like to extend this to a fall speaker as well), and a professional development event in the spring. To promote inclusivity and accessibility –

particularly for disabled and immunocompromised members of our community – we ensured that our major in person events were also made available by Zoom. To ensure our work is as much as possible serving our community, we also held a listening session with undergraduate students to discuss what their primary concerns are and think about how we can best meet their needs. As a result of this session we implemented a pilot supporting smaller stipends for in-class guest speakers from underrepresented backgrounds, as students indicated they wanted more diverse guest speakers in their courses instead of just as special events. We also learned that there continued to be an awareness gap among students about events and resources, to begin to address this we worked with a committee members course in ISC to develop promotional strategies to reach students and faculty. These findings will be implemented in the 2023-2034 year.

Events

Our major guest speaker for this year was CI alum and award-winning journalist focused on international issues Ashley Westerman. This speaker was well known for her coverage of the war in Ukraine from on the ground and her recent coverage from the Philippines. There were approximately 30 guests at this event with a combination of in person and on-line attendees. The event was covered by local television news and our students were interviewed about the event. Faculty in the Journalism and Media program made the video of the event available to additional students in their courses who were unable to attend but wanted to learn more about careers in journalism, international news, and the experience of working as a female and AAPI reporter in the news industry. Attendees in the Q&A spoke of how much it meant to them to be able to talk to a successful and alumni professional who shared a similar background and life experiences and this demonstrated the importance of continuing to bring in professionals from diverse backgrounds for our students to connect to.

We also worked to support both faculty and students through a series of pedagogy events that were either lead or supported by the DEI committee. In fall semester we conducted an Inclusive Pedagogy Roundtable that highlighted faculty and lecturers that participated in our annual inclusive syllabi program. They talked about their experiences with the program, the different approaches they took to increasing the inclusiveness of their syllabi, and the positive impacts they found on their courses. Several faculty and graduate students attended the event and there was a productive Q&A session. This years call for inclusive syllabi proposals had more applications than in previous years so the event seemed to have a positive impact. The DEI committee also co-sponsored an event with student success in spring semester focused on working with neurodivergent university students. This session was also well attended. Individual units, with the involvement of committee members from the unit, also held relevant pedagogy sessions. SIS and CELT conducted a workshop focusing on engaging and equitable discussions which was promoted by the DEI Committee.

As a reflection of the university wide goal of investing in our people the DEI committee made a significant investment in a professional development opportunity for women and non-binary faculty. We brought in an “Academic Writing Full-Day Virtual Retreat” in collaboration with Scholar’s Voice with Cathy Mazak. This full day virtual event helped faculty reflect on their academic mission, their responsibilities and activities, and how these things can be productively aligned. The event also provided strategies for examining each scholars pipeline or workflow and where individuals met challenges that undermine productivity. This was a productive session in particular because scholars at every level attended, with a special emphasis on junior scholars, and met in small groups, forging connections between researchers throughout the college. It is

clear that continued opportunities for these kinds of support and connections should be considered in the future.

Visibility and Outreach

Another major goal for 2022-2023 was to make resources more available to the college community and to make the DEI Committee and CDO a more visible and reliable resource for the College of Communication and Information community. We started off this goal this year by sending the College Diversity Officer/Committee chair to welcome day events where she distributed cards with a QR code sending students to a graphic of key resources. We expanded on this by providing advice and materials to the College IT team to construct a new DEI page for the College Website. This page included extensive resource lists for students, faculty and staff compiled with the assistance of DEI committee members. This page also highlights our ongoing event efforts, in some class including videos of events for those who missed it, our strategic plan, and past annual reports. We hope this page will not only be a significant resource for members of the college but will also effectively communicate our DEI efforts to prospective students and team members who may consider joining our College and its mission.

We also worked toward this goal by working with faculty to bring the College Diversity Officer to courses to highlight the DEI efforts and opportunities within the college. The chair of the committee attended courses by invitation, including UK 101 sections, and worked with a DEI Committee member, Montina Jiang, to partner with her course to provide a learning opportunity for students while also supporting the DEI Committee's Mission. The chair of the committee was invited by Dr. Jiang to represent the DEI committee as a client for her strategic planning class. The students got an opportunity to learn about DEI in the college, work on a diversity oriented project – which is important for many current employers - and to do research on the college in

forming their proposals. The committee learned a lot about student perspectives and gained insight on how to create more effective outreach to faculty, staff and students.

An additional effort this year was to make the diversity committee a stronger resource for the college as a whole by meeting with individuals and groups from various units and providing funding and support. The chair of the committee met with select individuals working on search committees and/or provided materials to help support recruiting more diverse pool. The chair of the committee also worked with the associate dean of the graduate school and faculty in the College of Communication and Integrated Strategic planning to help locate resources and information to support students. The chair of the committee and a committee member worked with SIS to help support their own diversity, equity and inclusion programming. The chair also answered questions, researched needed information related to DEI and provided that information to faculty in SIS and JAM to support the specific needs of individual members of the college related to inclusive pedagogy and/or supporting faculty and staff.

The committee also provided funding support for both groups and individuals within the college. The committee co-sponsored an event with the College of Education called “Critical Interrogations of Race, Gender and Sport” in alignment with our colleges sports curriculum. The committee sponsored the NABJ club to help them attend the annual NABJ convention . We also conducted another year of the Inclusive Syllabi Project and supported faculty participants in accessing materials to diversify their syllabi. We also provided financial support for a faculty member in engaging in targeted professional development. The committee continues to look for structured opportunities to support DEI work in the College and individuals who are engaging in this work. This is also manifested in our second annual Contributions to DEI Award which was awarded at the College Awards Ceremony to our winner, a graduate student in the college.

Indicators of Progress

The committee has been happy to note many positive indicators of progress in areas of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion within the college. Many of these positive measures are the reflection of the labor of other members of the college not only committee members.

- While work remains to be done there has been a notable increase in the number of attendees at DEI committee events as well as the number of applicants/nominees both for the Outstanding Contributions to DEI Award and the Inclusive Syllabi Project.
- JAM and ISC both passed AEJMC accreditation in the area of diversity.
- The College of Communication and Association's Student Success team reports an over 40% increase in first-gen and URM students in the College.
- The graduate admissions committee noted a diverse and international pool of applicants and applications mentioned a commitment to diversity as an attraction of the program.

Looking Forward

- The committee is planning a workshop on UDL pedagogy for fall in response to faculty and lecturer requests/interest.
- The committee is working on increasing recruitment and retention support for College search committees hiring faculty and staff.
- The committee endeavors to increase the scale of events by partnering more often with other units as suggested by the Deans Student Advisory Council.
- The committee is developing and hopes to implement an inclusivity outreach scholarship and program for students to increase opportunities for students to become involved.
- The committee plans to work with the Associate Dean of Graduate Student's office to increase support and programming for first-gen, international and URM grad students.