



## President's Council for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Report 2022-2023

Last year, the President's Council for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion was formed to provide leadership and accountability for efforts that promote an equitable and inclusive campus at all levels and in all activities of the College. Through various working groups, Council is responsible for maintaining the College's Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, tracking the progress of the College's Racial Equity Plans, and addressing EDI-related matters that are high priority areas for the College. Accordingly, the President's Council for EDI has the authority to identify, prioritize, and address issues of academic community, as well as the institutional climate for faculty, staff, and students. The President's Council for EDI is comprised of faculty, staff, and students. Their names and titles are listed below.

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the Council identified 3 key areas of focus: Data collection through an EDI climate survey, the progress of the Racial Equity Action Plans that were assigned to each academic and administrative department, and training and development opportunities for the College community.

### EDI Climate Survey

In May of 2023, under the leadership of Michael Salmon and through the Institutional Landscape (IL) Working Group, the Council administered an EDI Climate Survey to collect information about the College's climate for inclusivity and belonging. The Survey was designed with the input of key administrators, faculty, staff, and students. Once finalized, it was administered during the months of April and May, and was offered to all staff, faculty, and current students. After a 4-week collection period, 530 surveys were completed, representing a 27% participation rate of the eligible population. A set of preliminary results have been shared with the Council, as a more detailed data analysis continues. These preliminary results will also be shared with the Cabinet, APC, the Board, and SGA. The results of the Survey are to be presented to the College community in the fall semester of 2023 through a set of presentations in early October. Following this, the IL Working Group, along with the support of the full Council, will launch a series of focus groups across the College to further explore aspects of the results. These focus groups shall take place between October and November. The results of the Survey, along with the findings of the Focus Groups, will inform the College's next EDI Strategic Plan to be drafted in the Spring term of 2024.

### Racial Equity Plans

In 2020, under the leadership of President Kerry Walk, each academic and administrative division committed to advance racial equity within their respective areas through the development of Racial Equity Plans (REP). The work was to evolve over time and become part of planning and priority setting within the College's respective

academic and administrative departments. After 2 years of submitting plans, in the spring of 2023, the EDI Goals Working Group of the Council reviewed the REP plans and interviewed faculty involved in the process. Based on its findings, in the spring of 2024 the EDI Goals Working group will recommend a more efficient and sustainable process for incorporating anti-racist practices in teaching, classroom management, and curricular design, and will facilitate the launch of a revised approach to Racial Equity Plans that is aligned with the priorities articulated in the College's next EDI Strategic Plan.

### Training and Development

Transformative Justice, as a social justice framework, has been successfully utilized by the Theatre Arts Department as an intervention strategy to address longstanding concerns within the Department regarding the climate for equity, diversity, and inclusion. Concerns were raised by theatre students in a series of town halls that took place in July of 2020. The Transformative Justice framework was implemented in the fall of 2021 with the goal of repairing wounds, easing tensions, and building trust between faculty and students. Since then, the climate for EDI in the Theatre Arts Department has significantly improved. The Department has created a culture of open dialogue and proactive planning to address harms that arise in the classroom.

Building on the success and lessons learned in the Theatre Arts Department, the EDI Council sought to bring the principles of Transformative Justice to the broader College community so other academic departments could benefit from the training, community building, and improved culture that this approach yields.

Led by Kenneth Finkle, Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts and member of the EDI Council, a small cohort of faculty and staff from the theatre department offered TJ training to faculty and students. The objective was to determine whether there was an interest in the TJ approach from larger community. Two introductory sessions were offered to faculty and a single session was offered to students. The sessions received extremely positive feedback. Participants expressed a desire for deeper more comprehensive training opportunities. To that end, all first-year students will receive introductory TJ training as part of 2023 new student orientation activities. Additional faculty training sessions related to managing classroom conflict are being developed for the fall, and funding has been provided by the College to support the further expansion of TJ to other academic departments.

### EDI Council Student Engagement and Activities

The EDI Council hosted a table at Strawberry Fest this year and provided information to the MMC community about our mission, goals, and activities. The Council unveiled its new logo, provided information about Transformative Justice, and encouraged participation in the EDI Climate Survey.

As Co-chair of the EDI Council, Christine Gregory, Chief EDI Strategist, met with the SGA to discuss their concerns about a range of institutional matters involving transparency of College policy, particularly with regard to outcomes of student reports of bias and discrimination. The Council will use these concerns to inform and improve transparency with respect to the College's bias and discrimination investigation and review process.

### Members of the President's Council on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- Michael Salmon (Co-Chair), Associate Vice President and Dean of Academic Excellence; Senior Advisor to the President

- Sarah Nelson Wright (Co-Chair), Associate Professor of Communication and Media Arts; Director, Theresa Lang Center for Producing
- Katie LeBesco, Ph.D., (Co-Chair), Associate Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, Professor of Communication and Media Arts
- Christine Gregory, Esq. (Co-Chair), Chief EDI Strategist
- Tseday Alehegn, Executive Director of HEOP (Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program)
- Kenneth Finkle, Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts
- Wilton Fontenette, Assistant Vice President of Advancement Operations
- Jazelynn Goudy, Assistant Professor of Dance
- Julie Huntington, Associate Professor of Writing, Literature, and Language
- Lorraine Martinez-Novoa, Assistant Professor of Marketing
- Ronke Morgan, Student; SGA Senator for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Norma Ortega, Assistant Director of the Counseling and Wellness Center Students
- Kristina Silva, Student and Theater Arts Major