Action Items for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

In a Summer 2020 letter to the Notre Dame Engineering community, Thomas Fuja, interim dean, and Patricia J. Culligan, dean-designate, issued a call "to address issues of race, racial justice, and the challenge before us and to confront these issues with urgency and commitment."

In November 2020, the College of Engineering Task Force on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) was formed and charged with developing recommendations for action items in four areas:

- *Culture/Climate*
- *Curriculum*
- *Student Diversity*
- *Faculty Diversity*

The Task Force met weekly throughout Spring 2021 — building an understanding of the issues facing the College, identifying best practices, and developing their recommendations. The full report and action items were finalized in February 2022.

The task force carried out their work under the guidance of the University's principles of Diversity and Inclusion. Those principles lie at the heart of our Catholic mission and require that we 1) respect the dignity of every person, 2) build a Notre Dame community in which all can flourish, and 3) live in solidarity with all, particularly, the most vulnerable.

The recommendations in this document are a reflection of these principles. They address how we, as an engineering community, *must* move forward if we are to live up to our moral standards and become a community that "... recognizing the dignity of every member, welcomes each one fully, treasures their gifts as a reflection of God, supports them and shares their struggles."

ND COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Defining DEI and our Goal

Diversity is the presence of difference along many axes and their intersections, including race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, socioeconomic status, language, (dis)ability, age, religious commitment, or political perspective.

Equity is justice, impartiality, and fairness within the procedures, processes, and distribution of resources by institutions or systems. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of disparities within our society.

Inclusion is an outcome to ensure that people of diverse backgrounds feel included and truly are welcome. Inclusion can be measured by the degree to which diverse individuals are able to participate fully in decision-making processes and development opportunities within an organization or group.

Definitions above adapted from dei.extension.org

The College of Engineering's mission is to build *a better world for all.* As such, we seek to improve the engineering experience for all people, especially those from marginalized communities.

The Task Force on DEI began its work by focusing on groups the NSF defines as underrepresented in the engineering disciplines — women, people of color, and persons with disabilities. For this report, we also adopt the NSF definition of people of color narrowly as Black, Latinx, Native American, and Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders.

Ultimately, the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion does not conclude with improving life for under-represented groups. Rather, greater diversity, equity and inclusion benefits the entire College — enhancing and enriching the educational environment as we work to break down gender-based, racial, and cultural stereotypes; improve cultural competency across all students, faculty, and staff; increase understanding of race, gender, and justice and the dynamics at play when any of those factors intersect; and prepare students to be servant-leaders in an increasingly globalized and diverse workforce and society.

In short, our goal is to ensure that all of our students, faculty, and staff are able to engage and learn in a more diverse and inclusive campus and reap the benefits of such an environment.

Task Force Members

Julius Boateng
Undergraduate student

Jay Brockman
Center for Civic Innovation

Tom Fuja
iNDustry Labs

Victoria Goodrich
Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering

Bill Goodwine
Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering

Amy Hixon
Civil and Environmental Engineering and Earth Sciences

Scott Howard
Electrical Engineering

Yih-Fang Huang
Senior Associate Dean

Shreya Kumar
Computer Science and Engineering

Leo McWilliams
Assistant Dean

Ron Metoyer
Associate Dean

Kerry Meyers
Assistant Dean

Tijana Milenkovic
Computer Science and Engineering

Virginia Rodriguez
Graduate Student (CEEES)

Jennifer Schaefer
Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering

Jessica Woolley
Staff

Pinar Zorlutuna
Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering

Action Items

Culture/Climate

- Staff the DEI effort and build expertise throughout the College.

- Develop a comprehensive and effective communication campaign around DEI.

- Prioritize the creation of physical spaces for community to develop and thrive, with particular attention to student groups that support those who are currently underrepresented or marginalized.

- Develop a culture of responsibility around upholding DEI values and moving the DEI effort forward.

Curriculum

- Establish a College-level curriculum committee charged with developing a plan for managing changes and additions to our programs.

- Revise our undergraduate programs to support flexibility and multiple pathways through the curriculum, ensuring equity for all students.

Student Diversity

- Provide support mechanisms for undergraduate engineering majors, including cohort program strategies designed to promote success of currently underrepresented students.

- Use experiential learning to cultivate the development of an engineering identity for all students.

- Work closely with University Admissions and the Graduate School to support recruitment and yield of undergraduate and graduate students of color.

- Encourage and support College and departmental efforts to pursue grant funding for programs designed to recruit and retain students from underrepresented groups.

Faculty Diversity

- Commit to intentional and continuous recruitment of women and faculty of color.

- Support a culture of equity and transparency.

- Implement inclusive faculty search best practices across the College.

- Promote work-life balance policies within the College.

- Implement mentoring and career development initiatives and monitor their effectiveness.

A BETTER WORLD FOR ALL

COLLEGE OF
ENGINEERING

257 Fitzpatrick Hall of Engineering
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, IN 46556

A BETTER WORLD
FOR ALL

Follow our progress at
engineering.nd.edu/dei