Academic Senate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Special Committee

Senate Diversity Initiative Pilot Program

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June 14, 2024

To: Kathy Bawn
   2024-25 Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

From: Andrea Kasko
       Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

Re: Senate Diversity Initiative Pilot Program

At the June 6, 2024, meeting of the Executive Board (EB), members reviewed the Academic Senate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Special Committee’s (ASDEI) Senate Diversity Initiative Pilot Program conducted during spring 2024.

EB members voted unanimously in favor of a motion to informally continue this Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) program during the 2024-25 academic year for all Academic Senate committees and councils, incorporate the materials and guidelines into the new chairs’ orientation in fall 2024, and assess outcomes in spring 2025.

Specifically, this program will provide Chairs with support on DEI matters so that committees and councils will identify DEI-related issues for each meeting agenda item and subsequently include DEI implications in committee and council responses. In addition, committee and council annual reports will include a section on the committee or council’s DEI-related efforts.

Executive Board members continued their enthusiasm for establishing consistent DEI practices in the operations and infrastructure of all Senate committees and councils.

Encl.

Cc: Jessica Cattelino, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
    April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate
    Elizabeth Feller, Associate Director, UCLA Academic Senate
    Theodore Hall, Chair, ASDEI
    Megan McEvoy, 2024-25 Vice Chair/Chair Elect, UCLA Academic Senate
    Adriana Rosalez, Administrative Analyst, UCLA Academic Senate
    Lilia Valdez, Senior Policy Analyst, UCLA Academic Senate
Senate Diversity Initiative Pilot Program

Spring 2024

As part of the Academic Senate’s aim to support DEI values and implementation throughout the Senate, the Executive Board approved a pilot program as a step to determine what efforts could be incorporated into committee/council practice to achieve this goal. Through this pilot, the Academic Senate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee (ASDEI) will adopt and support the following four items for the five involved committees/councils (Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Council on Planning and Budget, Faculty Welfare Committee, Graduate Council, and Undergraduate Council):

- Support for Chairs on DEI Matters
- Identification of DEI considerations for each Agenda Item
- Highlight DEI implications and effects in committee/council responses
- Include a summary of DEI Efforts in the AY23-24 Annual Report

Item #1 – Support for Chairs
ASDEI plans to support chairs through a pilot introduction session, checking in throughout the spring quarter, and bi-weekly updates during the spring Executive Board meetings. At each meeting, different chairs will provide updates on the implementation within their committee/council. The update schedule is as follows:

- May 9th – Chair Samantha Butler (Faculty Welfare Committee)
- May 23rd – Chair Catherine Sugar (Undergraduate Council) and Chair Brooke Scelza (Graduate Council)
- June 6th – Chair Michael Emmerich (Council on Planning and Budget)

Item #2 - Identification of DEI Considerations for Agenda Items
Following the practices adopted by the Executive Board, the committee/council Chair (advised by the Analyst) will identify DEI considerations for the discussion of each agenda item. When preparing for discussion of each agenda item, some questions that can help identify these factors are:

- What groups are being affected (intentionally or unintentionally) by this change?
- Would a certain group of individuals be disproportionality impacted by this decision?
- How does this decision influence the experience of the involved parties?
- Could this decision be used against a certain group in an unfair way?

Item #3- Highlight DEI Implications and Effects in Committee/Council Responses
Through this action, the goal is to ensure that the written responses pertaining to agenda items will reflect the committee’s discussion of DEI considerations. Here is an example of a response that highlights DEI efforts:

Some members expressed concern about salary equity related to this program not only within the division but also across the university system where implementation has been uneven. ... A few members noted that the pilot offers a useful mechanism to help the university remain competitive as well as to potentially provide equity between those faculty who are eligible for the HSCOMP and those who are not.

(Excerpt from the Executive Board’s Response to (Systemwide Senate Review) Proposed New APM - 672, Negotiated Salary Program)
Item #4- Inclusion of DEI Efforts in Annual Report

In order to create some institutional memory of the Senate’s efforts, committees/councils are being asked to include their DEI efforts in their Annual Report. This section should clearly describe the DEI efforts and contributions of the group throughout the Academic Year.

Additional Resources

Inclusive Meeting Guide – An inclusive space for members to share opinions and voice concerns is pivotal, especially in efforts to acknowledge DEI in the work we are doing. The Harvard Office for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging has created a guide which outlines considerations when facilitating meetings to ensure they are inclusive to all.

Best Practices for Communication- The UCLA Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion states research shows that groups with higher social diversity (i.e., diversity of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation) share more information, are more creative, and perform better than those with lower social diversity. However, diverse groups may exhibit less cohesion and may encounter greater conflict and communication challenges. How, then, do we maximize the value of diversity and ensure that all group members have an opportunity to meaningfully contribute to the conversation? It all starts with communication.

Free Speech on Campus- The UCLA Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion states that free speech is critical to every democracy’s health and longevity. The same goes for higher education, where freedom of expression and freedom of inquiry form bedrock principles central to our mission to pursue knowledge and understanding. Nevertheless, translating theoretical principles into real-world practice is messy. This document offers a point of departure for this journey.

De-escalation Tips: While implementing new practices, it is possible that you may experience pushback from various members. The Crisis Prevention Institute has created a resource guide which includes the top 10 de-escalation tips.
Proposal for Senate Diversity Initiative Pilot

The Academic Senate has participated in a longstanding effort to address and further emphasize the Senate’s institutional commitment to DEI. Various efforts have been taken by the Senate following the implementation of the campus-wide Moreno Report, and the review of the 2021 “Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the UCLA Academic Senate” report. In February of 2022, the Executive Board approved a motion for a small group of members to make suggestions for concrete next steps for the UCLA Academic Senate. Over the last two years, this group has developed into a special committee, the “Academic Senate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” or ASDEI. Through ASDEI’s work over the last two years, it has been evident that though the Senate has attempted various efforts to address DEI concerns, many solutions have not been widely adopted.

Following discussions on faculty trainings, member awareness, and overall Senate response to DEI efforts, ASDEI is proposing four tasks for committees and councils to adopt which would establish an expectation for all Senate committees/councils and creates uniformity amongst the DEI efforts of Senate groups. ASDEI members have proposed that a pilot program be adopted for the Spring Quarter of AY23-24. This pilot would require that committees/councils represented on the Executive Board adopt four DEI practices to implement with their respective groups for the quarter.

This proposal is only for the 2024 Spring Quarter. Following the Spring Quarter, the committee alongside the Executive Board would evaluate the effectiveness and success of the pilot program, and determine whether Senate-wide adoption of these practices is the next step.

PROPOSAL

The ASDEI Committees propose that the following four actions be adopted by the committees/councils represented on the Executive Board for the Spring Quarter of 2024:

1. Chairs receive support on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Matters.
2. Committee/Councils will be required to identify DEI focuses for each Agenda Item.
3. Within committee/council responses, DEI implications should be highlighted and effects should be addressed.
4. Annual Reports will include a section on the committee/council’s DEI Efforts.

DEI Support for Chairs

To begin, an introduction will take place during an Executive Board meeting where the goals of this pilot program and expectations will be clearly communicated to the five participating chairs. This introduction will also include a time to provide examples of implementation for each proposed action item, and discuss concerns specific to certain committees/councils. During the quarter, updates will take place during Executive Board meetings to ensure that committees/councils are adopting new practices and to address any concerns. Throughout the pilot program, ASDEI members will provide Chairs with support through individual follow ups.
Identification of DEI Considerations for Agenda Items

When introducing items on the meeting agenda, committee/council Chairs and members will highlight DEI considerations and incorporate these items during the full discussion, similar to what is currently done with the Executive Board meeting items.

Committee Response with DEI Considerations

Following the identification of DEI implications for all discussion items, committees/councils would also be expected to mention this part of the discussion in written responses. This effort is to relay the committee/council’s focus on DEI efforts during the discussion.

Annual Reports

Every senate committee/council is required to submit an annual report that states the items reviewed by the committee every year. The proposal requests that an additional section be placed on the annual report which clearly describes the DEI efforts and contributions of the group throughout the Academic Year. This section could be used to hold committees/councils accountable, while also providing institutional knowledge on this matter.