Progress Report on The Antiracism Initiative

Faculty Senate 12/16/2020
Today’s Agenda

• **Report on the process, and the work done so far** so the Senate can respond to President Pollack’s charge to the Faculty Senate (in her July 16 letter to the community) to develop proposals for
  • A For-Credit Educational Requirement for Students
  • A Required Educational Program for Faculty
  • An Antiracism Center (update will be presented in January)

• **Get feedback on the draft proposals prepared by the Working Groups on educational requirements** so a final set of proposals can be prepared, discussed in the Senate and voted on early in the spring to send back to President Pollack and Provost Kotlikoff
The Process

- **Survey of earlier efforts**
- **Meetings with**
  - Heads and/or faculty of ‘impacted’ or named units
  - Student Leadership
  - Heads of Centers
  - Vice-Provosts + unit heads
  - Faculty activists and others involved in earlier efforts

- **DoF website .... resources ............. meeting agendas / summaries ............ draft reports for comment**
  - End October
  - Working Groups start meeting

- **WG-C (center)**
  - Academic
  - Activism
  - Governance

- **WG-F (faculty education req)**

- **WG-S (student education req)**

6/17
Senate Res

7/16/20
Pres Pollack’s Email

8/5
Update #1

8/17
DoBetter Cornell

8/26
Cornell Reopens

9/2/20
Update # 2

9/9/20
Update # 3

9/30
WG-Charges

End October
Working Groups start meeting

12/16/20
Update # 4
Progress Report & Feedback
Ongoing Projects

The Antiracism Initiative

News:

The (12/6) draft report from Working Group S is open for comments here. The (12/6) Draft Report From Working Group F is open for comments here.

President Pollack’s July 16 letter to the community charges the Faculty Senate to develop proposals for:

(a) An Antiracism Center (Working Group C)
(b) A For-Credit Educational Requirement for Students (Working Group S)
(c) A Required Educational Program for Faculty (Working Group F)

The referenced Working Groups will report (at least) a draft of their recommendations to the Senate in December keeping students and faculty fully informed of their deliberations all along the way via this website.

The Senate will debate and possibly modify the recommendations before registering formal support through a vote or multiple votes. The recommendations will be made to the President and Provost, who then, in consultation with the deans, will consider academic implications and financial resources.

Familiarity with this terminology, these references and resources and these related efforts in the colleges is important. See also these Senate discussions and presentations.

Announcements

Online Senate Meeting Dec 16
Proposed Student Code of Conduct
F2O Guide for Faculty
COVID-19 Resources for Faculty

Quick Links

The DoF Office
Directory of Other Offices
Resources for Instructors
Academic Integrity
Retirement-Emeritus-CAPE
The Faculty Trustees
F2O Academic Calendar
University/Messenger Lectures
Before We Start...

Going public with messy incomplete rough drafts is all about getting valuable feedback.

Keep in mind that the Working Groups are not homogeneous in their thinking.

This particular topic requires maximum transparency and mutual respect.
Are You Anti-Pandemic?

Do you take steps when you see someone without a mask?

Reasons why you may not:

You are not wearing a mask yourself.

You are wearing a mask and are therefore “doing your part.”

You are wearing a mask and would like to say/do something but lack the confidence.
Are You Anti-Racist?

Do you take steps when you see a racial situation that needs addressing?

Reasons why you may not:

You willingly buy into the situation yourself.

You shake your head and are therefore “doing your part.”

You shake your head and would like to say/do something but you lack the confidence.
Working Group – F
Required Educational Program for Faculty

- Ariel Ortiz-Bobe
  AEM, Dyson School
- Beth Lyons
  Law School
- Charlie Van Loan
  DoF, co-chair
- Durba Ghosh
  History
- Eva Tardos
  Computer Science
- Jack Liufu
  Chemistry ’21
- John Cawley
  PAM
- Mark Lewis
  ORIE
  Engineering
- Neema Kudva
  City & Reg Planning
  ADoF, co-chair
- Ufuoma Thaddeus
  Biological Sciences ’22
Working Group F

Discussion of the (12/16) Draft Report

Charge:

As part of the antiracism initiative, recommend to the Senate an educational requirement for faculty. More.
The Logic

Structural racism and systemic bias stand between what Cornell is and what it should be.

A faculty that actively works to dismantle racial and cultural barriers is critical.

The required educational program aims to support the faculty in this effort.
Key Features

1. Expanded DEI Programming of the kind now offered through OFDD. E.g., more 1.5 hr workshops like “It Depends on the Lens” which covers faculty recruiting.

2. Historically-oriented programming designed to educate faculty on matters that concern structural racism, bias, indigeneity. E.g., How was the Morrill Land Grant Act implemented? Why was there a water crisis in Flint or a Superdome situation during Katrina? Affecting behavior through historical knowledge.

3. Enhanced Participation via Accreditation. E.g., You can’t be a DGS unless you are accredited and you become accredited through participation in a DGS education workshop. If you are asked to be a DGS and you refuse accreditation then you are refusing to do part of your job.

4. Enhanced accountability via course evals, promotion dossiers, and program reviews. View these as opportunities to uplift our commitment to DEI.
Voiced Hesitations

I know this stuff.

Have you ever had your implicit biases exposed?

I do not have time.

What about your colleagues who may have to spend hours cleaning up after missteps?

I am not a racist.

Not good enough. Cannot be passive. Must be antiracist.

I stand against indoctrination.

Learning about alternative viewpoints does not imply you have to share them.
Tacit Assumptions

The excellent programming managed by the Office of Faculty Development and Diversity (OFDD) will continue with extra resources as required.

The proposed Center will not be involved directly with the faculty education piece, it will simply be a partner with the OFDD.

The make or break of the requirement will depend on having educational workshops that are interesting: “If we build it we will come”.
Discussion
Working Group – S
For-Credit Educational Requirement for Students
Working Group S
Discussion of the (12/16) Draft Report

Charge:

As part of the antiracism initiative, recommend to the Senate an educational requirement for students. More.
The Logic

Our students need to be

**literate** in matters that concern the historical basis of structural racism, colonialism, bias and injustice.

**skilled** as antiracists in their everyday life, within their fields of study and beyond.

This requires engagement with scholarly content in the tradition of liberal education and practice through challenging discussion and writing within the disciplines.
The “Central Course”

Students see this as a unit

In-person discussions and exercises throughout to learn and practice antiracist skill-sets

Content primarily produced by colleagues in
  - Africana Studies
  - American Indian & Indigenous Studies
  - Asian-American Studies
  - Feminist, Gender & Sexuality Studies
  - Latino/a Studies
and packaged in modules that promote rich in-person discussion and easy use.

Embedding antiracist content into the disciplines is key and there must be adequate support and incentives for the faculty engaged in this work.

Considerable progress in this direction already.

We recommend that departments and colleges draw on these efforts to develop an introductory version of these materials for their version of the central course.

Proximity of the 2 halves essential
Some Questions for Discussion

What should be the overall volume of the requirement?

We think 3-4 credit hours with rough parity between the two halves.

Won’t this disrupt student schedules?

On the one hand it is supposed to do just that. But it doesn’t have to be a zero-sum game.

Does this reduce college control of requirements?

Very slightly, but so does the swim test and the Freshman Writing Seminar.
Tacit Assumptions

Additional resources will be required.

The literacy piece will be developed under the auspices of the proposed center.

A realistic rollout strategy is essential.

Special implementations need to be developed for graduate and professional students.
Discussion