



March 10, 2021

Dear Members of the University Community:

Now that we have successfully reopened campus for the Spring Semester, we want to update you on the continued progress on actions to combat racism and ensure racial equality at The University of Scranton. We continue to strive to be a more inclusive and welcoming community. We know we have much more work to do, but we are incredibly grateful to all who have done so much over the past year amidst the pandemic challenges.

- **Louis Stanley Brown Black Student Union**

Recently we announced the success of a group of students in securing approval last fall for the Louis Stanley Brown Black Student Union, named in honor of the University's [first Black graduate](#).

- **Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan**

Preliminary Work on a Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, a goal of the University's Strategic Plan, click [Plan](#), is under way. The Diversity and Inclusion Planning Team, co-chaired by Kathryn Yerkes, Assistant Provost for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, and Elizabeth M. Garcia, Esq., Special Assistant to the President, Executive Director for the Office of Equity and Diversity, and Title IX Coordinator, is bringing together the momentum and insights of two groups: the University Planning Committee and the Council for Diversity and Inclusion. In addition to membership from both of these existing groups, the Team includes students and staff from other areas. The Team is gathering information and data across four broad areas:

- Diversity and Inclusion in Student Life: Activities, Initiatives, and Programming
- Diversity and Inclusion: Faculty and Staff Experience
- Diversity and Inclusion in Academic Life: Curriculum, Learning, and Research
- Diversity and Inclusion: Alumni and Community Experience

For more information on this project, the team charge, and membership, please visit the [Strategic Plan](#).

- **Faculty Hires**

As noted in a November 2020 communication, the University approved four faculty searches that the History, English, Psychology and Theology departments proposed to increase racial diversity at the University. We are happy to report that two of the four searches have been completed. We hope that the remaining two searches will result in additional exceptional candidates. These new hires will work with current faculty to propose a Black Studies program for the University.

- **Diversity Hire Workgroups**

We also want to report on other progress related to faculty and staff hiring. At Father Pilarz's request, Jeff Gingerich, Ph.D., Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Patricia Tetreault, Vice President for Human Resources, convened a working group of faculty to assist the Office of Equity and Diversity in identifying and implementing steps to expand the pool of candidates and intentionally seek to build a faculty and staff that better represent the growing diversity of our student body. The group included George Aulisio, Lori Bruch, Elizabeth Garcia, Christie Karpiak, Michelle Maldonado and Nabil Tamimi. The Workgroup will be obtaining feedback from the Departments involved in the cluster hire before finalizing a hiring for diversity guidebook to be used by faculty search committees.

Patti will be establishing a similar group to work on and develop a similar project for staff hiring processes this semester.

- **Diversity and Inclusion Pedagogy Workshops**

Diversity and Inclusion Pedagogy Workshops continue to be offered by the Office of Equity and Diversity and CTLE. Later this Spring, Milagros Castillo-Montoya, Ed.D. will provide a two-day workshop. The first workshop focuses on what is anti-racist teaching and how it aligns with Catholic and Jesuit values. The second day will include a summary of the tenets of anti-racist teaching and how to apply it within specific disciplines. Faculty will be asked to work on one thing they want to improve in their teaching to advance anti-racist teaching. Previous Diversity and Inclusion workshop and other materials related to diversity teaching can be found on the OED [website](#).

- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Website**

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion [website](#) launched this past summer now includes information about University-sponsored diversity, equity, and inclusion programming. Anyone interested in up-to-date offerings are encouraged to visit this page. If you have a University sponsored diversity, equity and inclusion event that is not listed on the website, then please contact Liz Garcia for assistance. Thus far, the following events and programs are scheduled on campus:

- CAS collaboration with Jesuit Center: Racial Examen for Faculty Workshop (January 2021)
- Guest Speaker, Olga Segura, "Black Lives Matter and the Catholic Church: How to Work Toward Liberation." (February 2021)
- CBL Workshop: Dr. Tania Mitchell, "Community-Based Learning as Critical Pedagogy (March 2021)
- Jesuit Center and OED Collaboration, Lunch and Learn: Dr. Mary Wardell, "A Call to Conversion: Eliminating Anti-Black Racism as a Jesuit, Catholic University (February 2021)
- Black Scranton: Then and Now with Glynis Johns (February 2021)
- Lunchtime Roundtable with Black Women in Business
- Book Read with Erica Armstrong Dunbar, Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge.

- Diversity and Inclusion Pedagogy Workshop with Milagros Castillo-Montoya, Ed.D.
- The Multicultural Center sponsored a talk with Lynda Blackmon Lowery, the youngest person to march with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. from Selma to Montgomery (February 10).
- The Cross Cultural Centers sponsored three dialogues focused on racial healing, and five dialogues about race, racism, and racial privilege. The series will continue in the Spring.

Some Programs from the Fall Semester included:

- CAS and the Humanities Center presented guest speaker, Dr. Anthea Butler to speak on “Activism and Jesuit Education in the Age of Black Lives Matter, Race, and Nationalism?” (October 2020)
- The Office of Equity and Diversity continued with the DEI Lunch and Learn hosting Dean Michelle Maldonado speaking on “Rebuilding Our Wounded World: A Catholic Response to the Sin of Racism.” (November 2020)
- CAS collaboration with Community Relations: "Black History (and Future) in Scranton" Fall 2020 Faculty Community-Based Learning Workshop (November 2020)
- The Office of Equity and Diversity, in collaboration with the Cross Cultural Centers and the Counseling and Human Services Department, provide a DEI Lunch and Learn Three Part Series entitled Understanding and Confronting Bias: A 3 Part Series for Faculty and Staff. (Fall 2020)
- Two Workshops with CAS Faculty: “What does it mean to do anti-racism work at a Jesuit University?” and “What resources do we need for faculty development in order to do anti-racism work?” (October 2020)
- Campus Ministries joined people of all religious traditions across the country to pray for racial justice in an Examen for Racial Justice. (September 2020)
- The Center for Service and Social Justice planned, promoted and assisted in the facilitation of a four part series on collaborative/cross campus program on Collaborative Racial Justice Across Campuses Immersion Experience
- The Jesuit Center facilitated a CAS Dean’s Workshops on Racism and Faith in January 2021 entitled A Racial Examen: Contextualizing Race, Intentionality, and Mission at The University of Scranton. Speakers included Rev. Raymond Kemp: Special Assistant to The President: Georgetown University; Melissa Foy: Executive Director: Georgetown Scholars Program; Alberto Morales: Associate Director of School Growth and Student Recruitment for the Cristo Rey Network; and Oliver Street: Assistant Dean for Enrollment Services at Harvard

We are grateful to the many members of our campus community who are providing resources to support important conversations that are moving us to greater understanding and growth.

- **Council for Diversity and Inclusion**

In the Fall semester, the Council for Diversity and Inclusion oversaw the implementation of the a HEDS Diversity and Inclusion Needs Assessment. The results, which are expected

this month, will help inform the Council in their work. Additionally, a subgroup of Council is working this spring to finalize the curriculum for a training program that will be offered in the same manner as Safe Zone training.

- **Diversity and Inclusion Training for Staff and Administrators**

OED is also working with each divisional vice president and their leadership teams to provide customized diversity and inclusion training to meet their department's specific needs.

- **Diversity and Inclusion Faculty Development**

We are grateful to faculty, administrators and staff who started to meet with us to plan for strategic and effective faculty development for diversity, inclusion and anti-racism: Jessica Nolan, Ph.D., Jean Harris, Ph.D., Tara Fay, Paul Datti, Ph.D., Peter Andersen, Ph.D., Michelle Maldonado, Ph.D., and Amy Simolo, Ed.D. Our goal is to develop a plan for faculty development that will be the most effective and impactful to educate our faculty and to serve all of our students.

- **Student Government**

Student Government continues to put their commitment to inclusion and diversity at the forefront of their work in different ways. Noteworthy efforts include:

- Educating themselves through book reads and implicit-bias training while also encouraging other students to further their own education about topics including racism, privilege, and identity;
- Organizing a January workshop on the topic of "Racism and Other Ism's: Understanding Privilege, Power, and Oppression" and promoting other cultural events hosted by clubs and departments on campus;
- Advocating for more robust cultural competency requirements in general education requirements;
- Chartering the Louis Stanley Brown Black Student Union, a new student club primarily focused on support of Black students in our community;
- Assisting in establishing cultural diversity requirements in the Passport Professional Development Program;
- Seeking ways to amplify the voices of students of color in our community particularly to University leadership; and
- Working with the Office of Equity & Diversity on social media campaigns and videos to educate students on the updated Non-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy.

- **Diversity and Inclusion Certificate Program**

Several members of the President's Cabinet are registered for or have completed a course offered by the University of Michigan entitled "Leading for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education". The course objectives include:

"Understand[ing] the historical narrative of institutions as well as institutional structures that have created instances of inclusion and exclusion in colleges and

universities. Describe how transformational leadership is enacted for diversity, equity, and inclusion in a complex and contested environment. Compare legislative, governance, and public accountability and expectations in relation to contemporary issues in higher education. Analyze the strategic diversity planning process and documents of a selected institution. Recommend innovations and opportunities for transformational change at various levels of the ecological model using the strategic diversity planning process as a tool.”

- **GE Curriculum and other curriculum overview**

Faculty started a productive discussion to ensure that a review of general education this year includes an assessment of the diversity requirement and how the University addresses issues of diversity and inclusion. In addition, some academic departments have already had significant discussions about how to strengthen their disciplinary curriculum and teaching methods.

- **Alumni Groups**

The Alumni Society Advisory Board established its first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Chaired by Sameera Desai '05, the committee assists University Advancement staff with creating educational opportunities for alumni volunteers and identifying strategies to foster a more diverse and inclusive network of engaged alumni. The committee will partner with alumni of color to develop and introduce new engagement opportunities, such as a BIPOC alumni network.

Additionally, the University launched [Rainbow Royals](#), Scranton's LGBTQIA+ alumni network. To learn more, or to get involved, visit [Scranton.edu/RainbowRoyals](#).

Diversity, equity and inclusion work is central to one of the goals of our new University strategic plan, and it will take continued effort and work due to its complexity and importance to the University Community. We are committed to this work and to expanding it to make the University an inclusive place for all its members.

Sincerely,

Jeff Gingerich, Ph.D.
Provost & Sr. Vice-President for Academic Affairs

Elizabeth M. Garcia, Esq.
Special Assistant to the President,
Executive Director for the Office of
Equity and Diversity, and Title IX Coordinator