

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL DIVERSITY PLAN

In summer 2018, Dean Jenn Rosato formed an independent Diversity Council (“Council”) with the goal of developing a Diversity Plan that is consistent with the Vincentian principles and that complements DePaul University’s existing Strategic Plan. The makeup of this independent council required that all stakeholders be represented at the table. The stakeholders included Alumni, staff representatives, student representatives, and faculty. It is the goal of the Diversity Council to have a frank and open discussion about Diversity, Inclusion and Equity as well as ensure that all voices are heard so that the Diversity Plan created is reflective of the thoughts, ideas, concerns of a diverse group.

STAKEHOLDERS AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

The participants were invited based on their involvement, work and interest in the Diversity, Inclusion and Equity work as well as their willingness and commitment to serve in a working group that is tasked with drafting and creating the first Diversity Plan for the DPU Law School. The following individuals were tapped to serve on the Diversity Council:

Aurora Austriaco	(Alum and Partner at Valentine Austriaco and Bueschel, P.C.),
Larry Rogers, Sr.	(Alum and Partner at Powers, Rogers and Smith)
Ray Koenig	(Alum and Managing Partner Clark Hill PLC)
Maryam Ahmad	(Alum and Chief, Juvenile Justice Bureau, CCSA)
Heather Adams	(Alum and Partner at IceMiller)
Ben Alba	(Director of Academic Success and Faculty)
Tristan Gunn	(Alum and Partner at Tapia- Ruano and Gunn P.C.)
Amanda Noascono	(Asst Dean and Director of Admissions)
Meredith Ritchie	(Alumnus and Sr. VP/GC of Alliant Credit Union)
Aaron Kreider	(Student)
Carmen Foster	(Staff)
Kimyatta Gainey	(Staff)
Maria Vertuno	(Assistant Dean of Student Affairs)
Nicole Childers	(Staff)
Sal De Los Angeles	(Student)
Ana Vazquez- Rivera	(Director of Diversity, Inclusion and Student Life)

Ashlee Germany (Student)
Daniel Morales (Faculty)
DL Morris (Alum and Partner at Hinshaw Culbertson)

The Diversity Council as a whole met several times over a period of time and its work commenced with the development of the mission statement and the framework out of which the Diversity Plan was developed. After a thorough discussion, the Council developed and adopted the Mission Statement below:

MISSION STATEMENT

Strengthen and enhance Diversity and Inclusion in everything the law school does.

Diversity is defined as including but not limited to socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, language, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, geography, disability, age, veteran status, genetic info, marital status parental status or political affiliation

THE PROCESS

In developing the framework for discussion, the Council discussed and agreed on five pillars to consider in developing the Diversity Plan. A subcommittee for each pillar was assigned to study, analyze and develop recommendations and suggestions to be incorporated into the overall Diversity Plan. The five pillars are set forth below:

A. Accountability- establish and measure key performance indicators (KPI) and track progress over time. What are the key performance indicators that we can track?

- Workforce representation
- Promotion in workforce; tenure
- Recruitment and retention of faculty and diverse students
- Partnerships
- Pipeline effectiveness – going into law school and after graduation
 - Middle school training
 - High School
 - Or grade school?
- Calling the Law Industry Out
 - Get stats of where our DePaul students get placed

B. Admissions and Recruitment

- Goals? Current stats of the law school (See attached)
- Diversity makeup of admitted class for this year and trend from last 5 years
- What is the recruitment process?
- Where are we looking to get more diversity?
- Pipeline programs – where are the initiatives?
- Do we have a statistic on where our students are going and whether they are getting real jobs after they graduate?
- How are we doing with jobs recruitment for our students after they graduate?

C. Retention

- What opportunities are offered?
- Leadership develop skills
 - Student activities
 - Mentorship
- Community engagement outreach
 - Staff steps
 - Staff representation
- Culture
- Improving relations
- Alumni
 - More involved
 - Mentorship
 - Have a hotline
- Resources
 - Alumni and their network
- Design and Branding
- Equity
- A welcoming environment at the Law School

D. Communication/Education

- Lead conversation on Inclusion, Unconscious Bias and power of diverse consumers
- Be the thought leader on D & I issues
- Ensure outreach to the Community at large especially the underserved communities

E. Resources

- Internal Resources within the University
 - Financial resources/scholarships/grants
 - Human Resources
 - Support Network

- Others
- External Resources (Partnerships)
 - Corporations
 - Firms
 - Alumni

In order for the Council members to have a deeper understanding of the issues relating to Diversity, Inclusion and Equity as it pertains to the law school, the Council hosted two substantive programs for staff, faculty, Council and DAC. These programs included “*A Conversation & Reception with D.A. Abrams*” who is the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer for USTA and a noted speaker and author on the topics of Leadership, Diversity and Inclusion as well as a “*Cross Cultural Dexterity*” training from Bill Leong who is the Sr. Director, Diversity & Inclusion for USTA. Both programs were well received and assisted attendees and Council members in developing their recommendations.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Subcommittee members met several times and provided written reports which identified recommendations to be included as part of the Diversity Plan. The Diversity Plan will be a fluid, working document which will need to be reviewed and revised on a consistent and regular time period. The strength and utility of the Diversity Plan will depend largely on the support and leadership of the Law School Dean and her leadership team.

I. ACCOUNTABILITY: ENSURE THAT THERE IS ACCOUNTABILITY AT ALL LEVELS

Accountability is one of the factors used to accomplish the mission of the Diversity Council. Leaders at all levels must accept accountability by implementing new initiatives and re-evaluating existing initiatives to achieve the mission and goals of the Diversity Council for the benefit of the

Law School and its stakeholders. The Law School must make clear its commitment to diversity and inclusion moving forward on a permanent basis.

RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES AND SUGGESTED ACTION STEPS

- Launch annual surveys to students, faculty and administration/support staff with anonymous results. Implement annual surveys that review the school's hiring, retention, and other diversity practices and create a report for the law school dean.
- Re-group following survey to analyze results and to formulate plan for focus groups. Conduct separate focus groups for students only, for faculty only, and for administration/support staff only. Use data obtained on focus groups re faculty hiring, and student enrollment for future planning on curriculum development, retention of diverse students and diverse faculty, outreach and recruitment.
- Utilize data collected from survey and focus groups to develop a benchmark or guide for the law school dean's use in implementing its diversity plan and achieving its diversity goals.
- Utilize data collected to develop and implement diversity and inclusion best practices for the law school to be used as a guide by the deans, faculty, staff and students.
- Require participation at all levels on a law school wide diversity, sensitivity or unconscious bias training on an annual basis to ensure accountability from leadership, top down. Possibly invite a notable guest speaker on diversity and inclusion to present to students, faculty and/or administration/support staff.
- Include the diversity report as part of the faculty chair review, department managers or leadership council review and use as a metric for diversity implementation and performance.
- Creation of a permanent in house Diversity Committee that must submit an annual diversity report that specifies progress on the diversity goals. This Diversity Committee must have a direct line to the law school dean and will be responsible for providing the overall report to the dean re progress of diversity on faculty retention, staff hiring and student enrollment as well as progress on the best practices for diversity and inclusion including compliance.
- Creation of a student diversity course requirement as part of the graduation requirement for students consistent with the IL Supreme Court requirement of diversity CLE hours for lawyers.
- Publish and maintain on the website the Diversity Plan and diversity best practices to ensure accessibility by all.
- Ensure that the law school continues to build an institutional culture that values and supports the highest levels of compliance with all applicable laws- federal, state and local.

- Commit to making diversity and inclusion funding a priority at all times. This includes increase funding for diversity and inclusion programs and initiatives that focus on increasing the presence of faculty, staff and students that are diverse and that come from the underrepresented communities. This may also include providing scholarships to prospective students who are of diverse backgrounds that come from the underrepresented communities.

II. ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT SUBCOMMITTEE: CONTINUE TO ACTIVELY RECRUIT AND ATTRACT DIVERSE BODY OF STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF

The law school must continue to actively recruit and support programs that assist in attracting, recruiting and admitting students of diverse background as well as in attracting and recruiting faculty and staff of diverse background. Recruitment strategies for students exist in the law school at every stage of recruitment, admissions and yield funnel. Active recruitment of racially and ethnically underrepresented students in law begins in pipeline programming and outreach.

The law school must make it a priority to recruit diverse faculty and staff. It is important to build into the recruitment process efforts at retention and professional advancement for any staff or faculty to ensure longevity and loyalty to the law school.

RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES AND SUGGESTED ACTION STEPS

STUDENTS

- Continue to attend recruitment events all over the country that are aimed at increasing the number of racially and ethnically diverse students in law school. Such events to be held at or geared towards geographic areas with proportionally high numbers of students of color. The recruitment of racially and ethnically diverse students is considered in active outreach by way of letters, printed publications, emails telephone calls and social media efforts.
- Continue to consider factors of diversity including but not limited to racial/ethnic background, socioeconomic status, gender and gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, and ability, both in admission and scholarship strategies.
- Strengthen the diversity pipeline to ensure a good pool of diverse students for admission.

- Engage admissions staff, current students, faculty and alumni to continue outreach of diverse students.
- Continue to work with student organizations such as APALSA, BLSA and LLSA in helping to reach out to racially and ethnically diverse students.
- Utilize Faculty advisors and Alumni and previous officers of APALSA, BLSA and LLSA in recruitment efforts including serving on panels and networking at receptions geared at admitted students.
- Collaborate with diverse community organizations and leaders of color in reaching out to potential students for the law school. This outreach may include an education summit or a shadow program for those interested in going to law school.
- Develop strong partnerships with alumni or external communities to increase scholarship funding to support students of diverse background who are from the underrepresented communities.
- Continue to work with communities of color to enhance law school visibility and presence consistent with the Vincentian principles and values.
- Develop competitive financial packages to increase enrollment of accepted students and to increase the pool of admitted students of diverse background.
- Develop or enhance diversity related course offerings consistent with the IL Supreme Court's diversity CLE requirement. Publicize such programming.
- Partner with national and local law firms in their recruitment of law student diversity fellows/scholars.
- Continue to monitor employment/unemployment statistic of new graduates and determine ways to improve job placement opportunities for new graduates.
- Establish a Best Practices Handbook for student recruitment of diverse candidates.
- Establish Best Practices Handbook in admissions process review to ensure diverse students are given the wholistic review approach together with statistical data in reviewing their application.

FACULTY

- Continue to post on the University Human Resources website open faculty positions and ensure that the application process is transparent, open for all and easy to follow.

- Collaborate with external community, diverse communities and alumni in publicizing faculty openings to encourage application to be an adjunct or a tenured professor.
- Pursue cluster hires where appropriate, particularly when the opportunities arise.
- Ensure that the hiring committee includes at least two diverse faculty/staff and that diversity is considered as a factor in choosing candidates.
- Commit to 100% participation of dean/associate deans/faculty in search committee training that addresses best practices, unconscious/implicit bias, equity, inclusion and cultural differences.
- Participate in diversity-focused professional development opportunities for faculty as part of their path to tenured status.
- Establish a Best Practices Handbook for faculty recruitment and hiring of diverse candidates.

STAFF

- Post the Statement of Equal Opportunity prominently on the LCS website and on the employer homepage of the LCS web portal Vincent and require employers to agree to the Statement before their positions are approved for posting on the jobs board.
- Update current hiring practices by collecting and analyzing hiring data to attract more diverse staff applicant pools.
- Publicize a list of affinity and support network available to employees of diverse background together with the application form to make them aware of available resources at the law school.
- Collect and analyze data in staff hiring processes to improve diversity of applicant pools.
- Commit to 100% participation of dean/associate deans/HR in search committee training that addresses best practices, unconscious/implicit bias, equity, inclusion and cultural differences.
- Provide professional development and leadership advancement opportunities to staff of diverse background and to promote equitable presence of diverse staff at leadership levels.
- Encourage staff to submit ideas and suggestions on improving the climate and culture of the law school without fear of repercussions. Create an idea lockbox or a hotline so that comments/suggestions can be dropped off anonymously.
- Encourage staff to participate in affinity groups by informing them of the existence of these networks.
- Establish a Best Practices Handbook for staff recruitment and hiring of diverse candidates.

III. RETENTION: CULTIVATE A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL

The Law School must actively work to create, cultivate, maintain and sustain a culture of inclusiveness at all levels. This means implementing and maintaining an inclusive climate in student learning and interactions, staff and faculty employment and working environment to ensure that students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds feel they can thrive. The environment should be inclusive, equitable, and welcoming to diversity at all levels.

RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES AND SUGGESTED ACTION ITEMS

STUDENT

- Develop an inclusive campus climate survey to current students, faculty, and staff to identify relevant issues that may be present on campus, with the annual climate survey to be conducted on an annual basis.
- Develop a process in collecting, collating and analyzing data as a result of the inclusive campus climate survey to ensure that data collected are properly interpreted.
- Provide climate survey results to appropriate level of leadership who can make and implement changes as needed in response to the survey.
- Provide climate survey results to faculty and staff who are responsible for specific initiatives and programs and strongly urge them to modify their programs and initiatives in response to the climate survey.
- Establish an exit interview for students, faculty, and staff who leave the university to understand the reasons for departure particularly as they relate to the culture and environment of the law school.
- Acknowledge and address student issues regarding equity, inequity and social justice by holding regular town hall meetings or small group meetings that are facilitated to learn and understand about their experiences with issues of equity, diversity, inclusion and privilege. Use data gathered to improve the school culture, curriculum and climate of the law school.
- Develop immediate action items at the appropriate level of leadership that will help diffuse, address and resolve the issues raised by the students regarding inequity and social justice.

- Develop and implement a procedure that encourages students to report incidences of bias without fear of retaliation or repercussions as a consequence of reporting.
- Create a safe haven forum so that students can engage in conversations around race, gender, sexuality, and differences without fear of being judged or discriminated upon.
- Commit to having a student Diversity & Inclusion staff who will be available to students of diverse background on matters relating to inequity, social justice, diversity, inclusion and social justice in an effort to assist students become better students.
- Create and offer a student Diversity course requirement as part of the course requirement to graduate consistent with the IL Supreme Court requirement of diversity CLE hours for practicing lawyers.
- Include a diversity and equity question as part of the course evaluations which shall be shared with the appropriate level of leadership and utilize to further improve the culture of inclusivity in the law school.
- Ensure that evening program students feel welcome and nurtured during their tenure at the law school by hosting evening events for the evening program students that promote networking and socializing.
- Ensure that any climate survey or course evaluations include evening program students to determine their needs and wants which may be different than that of day students.
- Continue to host events/programs to foster better camaraderie amongst evening program students and staff which converts to a more welcoming environment for all.
- Encourage students to be involved and engaged in bar associations while in law school. It is through bar association involvement early on in their career that provides one of the best opportunities for these students to network with partners in law firms, CEOs or General Counsels of corporations, heads of divisions in gov't offices or at least develop relationships which could lead to potential employment opportunities later on. Bar associations like the Chicago Bar Association, Illinois State Bar Association, American Bar Association and other bar associations are looking to engage, mentor and even sponsor young lawyers as early as in their law school years.
- Encourage partnership with bar associations on diversity and inclusion programming.
- Strengthen student mentoring by enhancing advising strategies, such as early warning and intervention systems, for diverse and underrepresented students. If there is no formal mentoring program, develop and establish formal mentoring opportunities for students of diverse backgrounds.

FACULTY

- Create a safe haven forum so that faculty can engage in conversations around race, gender, sexuality, and differences without fear of being judged or discriminated upon.
- Commit to 100% participation of dean/associate deans/faculty in search committee training that addresses best practices, unconscious/implicit bias, equity, inclusion and cultural differences.
- Ensure that the hiring committee includes at least two diverse faculty/staff and that diversity is considered as a factor in choosing candidates.
- Pursue cluster hires where appropriate, particularly when the opportunities arise.
- Expand and provide backing by appropriate level of leadership on diversity, inclusion and equity curriculum and educational programs so that it is truly a part of the educational curriculum and not a token program.
- Increase opportunities for faculty members to learn and apply effective teaching tools and curriculum for teaching diverse student populations by expanding offerings and resources available to them so they can enhance their effectiveness as teachers in an ever changing diverse population.
- Provide and allocate resources to have a systemic training to full time and adjunct faculty and teaching assistants on the impact of diversity in the classroom including climate, course design, sensitivity, assessment and cultural responsiveness.
- Develop and provide a formal onboarding training/ in-service/professional development for newer full-time faculty as well as effective mentoring programs particularly to faculty of color.
- Develop and provide a formal onboarding training/ in-service/professional development for newer adjunct faculty as well as effective mentoring programs particularly to faculty of color.
- Provide professional development and leadership advancement opportunities to all faculty including faculties of color.
- Provide transparency in the tenure and promotion process by providing a workshop explaining the process.

- Establish best practices in tenure and promotion review. Include recognition of a faculty member for their effort in mentoring underrepresented students/faculty/staff and their service to the underserved communities as part of their promotion review.
- Work toward 100% of faculty participation in sensitivity/unconscious/implicit bias training.
- Continue to post on the University Human Resources website open faculty positions and ensure that the application process is transparent, open for all and easy to follow.
- Collaborate with external community, diverse communities and alumni in publicizing faculty openings to encourage application to be an adjunct or a tenured professor.
- Establish a Best Practices Handbook for faculty searches to generate an understanding of techniques and points of interest that may better attract a more diverse pool of applicants.

STAFF

- Develop an inclusive campus climate survey to current staff to identify relevant issues that may be present on campus, with the annual climate survey to be conducted on an annual basis.
- Provide climate survey results to staff who are responsible for specific initiatives and programs and strongly urge them to modify their programs and initiatives in response to the climate survey.
- Establish an exit interview for staff who leave the university to understand the reasons for departure particularly as they relate to the culture and environment of the law school.
- Create a safe haven forum so that staff can engage in conversations around race, gender, sexuality, and differences without fear of being judged or discriminated upon.
- Develop strong partnerships among diversity and academic departments to secure outside funding for projects to increase the success of underrepresented students.
- Establish Best Practices Handbook in admissions process review to ensure diverse students are given the wholistic review approach together with statistical data in reviewing their application.

IV. COMMUNICATION/EDUCATION: COMMIT TO BE THE THOUGHT LEADER ON DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

The Law School must ensure that best practices are disseminated within and across the university and the community at large regarding its Diversity and Inclusion programs and initiatives.

RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES AND SUGGESTED ACTION ITEMS

- Enhance communication and collaboration amongst all law school departments and councils on diversity related programs, efforts, curriculum, successes and initiatives to ensure that Diversity and Inclusion goals are accomplished and redundancies are avoided.
- Develop an annual Diversity Update to be disseminated to students, faculty and staff to report on the progress and effectiveness of each Diversity and Inclusion programs and its effect on the climate and culture of the law school.
- Establish regular meetings for Diversity Officers and Diversity Leaders within the law school and thought leaders in the community to strengthen connections and sustainability of the programs.
- Develop and publicize successful diversity initiatives that describe the diversity-related progress made by students, faculty and staff.
- Develop a law school wide diversity newsletter that is disseminated to students, faculty, staff, alumni and community.
- Continue to support, promote and market students/faculty/staff of diverse background who have made an impact in the diversity and inclusion space.

V. RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE: COMMIT TO MAKE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FUNDING A PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES

The Law School, even before the drafting of this Diversity Plan has been actively involved in numerous Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives, both internal and external to the law school. It must continue its commitment to making diversity and inclusion funding a priority at all times. This includes increased funding for diversity and inclusion programs and initiatives that focus on increasing the presence of faculty, staff and students that are diverse and that come from the underrepresented communities. This also includes providing scholarships to prospective students who are of diverse backgrounds that come from the underrepresented communities.

RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES AND SUGGESTED ACTION ITEMS

- Continue with the Diversity and Inclusion Programs and Initiatives currently in existence at the law school.

- Commit to provide proper financial and manpower allocation to each diversity and inclusion program to ensure they are successful but continue to evaluate each program to determine their impact and effectiveness. If a program is determined to have shortcomings, immediately remedy the shortcomings or sunset the program so that the resources can be reallocated to other programs.
- Create an Impact and Futures Committee that will continue to monitor the impact and success of each program on an annual basis and report to the Dean directly on which programs require further funding and which ones can be reduced and reallocated to other programs.
- Provide comprehensive financial aid packages that will enable students of diverse background to earn their JD and implement proactive advising of students to ensure financial literacy and management of resources.
- Increase support for financial aid to students of diverse background.
- Continue to cultivate and engage law school alumni to provide support and funding to diversity and inclusion initiatives, programs and scholarships for students of diverse background.
- Increase funding and commit to pipeline programs.
- Continue to support the law school's clinical programs, experiential learning programs, and summer fellowships, and bar scholarships.
- Cultivate and develop relationships with corporations to encourage funding and/or sponsorship of diversity and inclusion programs/scholarships for students of diverse backgrounds.

In conclusion, this Diversity Plan is designed to be comprehensive and yet fluid to allow for adjustments and updates as the need arises or as the circumstances require. It is not a final document but rather one that will adjust as time progresses and as the population shifts. It is a document designed to provide guidance to the administration on matters of diversity, inclusion and equity affecting students, faculty and staff. More importantly, it is a document that will provide the law school dean and administration data that could improve the curriculum, climate, culture and

relationships amongst the student, faculty and staff and that will assist in ensuring that DePaul Law School continues to be a welcoming school to people of diverse background.

Respectfully Submitted,

_____ Dated _____

Aurora Austriaco
Chair, Diversity Council

Meredith Ritchie
Chair, Accountability Subcommittee

Tristan Gunn
Chair, Retention Subcommittee

Aurora Austriaco and Larry Rogers, Sr.
Co-Chairs, Resources Subcommittee

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