18 August 2021

To: Glynis Ridley, Chair, Department of English  
From: Frank Kelderman, Chair of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee  
Re: DEI Committee Report, 2020-21

**DEI Committee members:**

Frank Kelderman, chair

Joan D’Antoni

Andrea Olinger

Charlotte Asmuth, graduate student representative

**Events and Activities**

The DEI committee organized two workshops during the academic year:

* On **19 November 2020**, the DEI committee organized and hosted a virtual “Community Dialogue on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Teaching.” The event was attended by 14 participants from the English Department: graduate students (6), part-time and term faculty members (3), and tenured/TT faculty members (5). This conversation was organized around two “occasional papers” written by members of the DEI committee (Asmuth and Kelderman), on student responses to Black language in undergraduate academic writing, and on the use of critical self-reflection on students’ positionality towards literature by writers from minoritized groups.
* On **March 18, 2021,** the DEI committee held a DEI Workshop on “Language Difference and Student Writing,” organized and hosted by graduate student representative Charlotte Asmuth and Dr. Bruce Horner. The event was attended by 21 participants from the English Department: graduate students (11), part-time and term faculty members (6), and tenured/TT faculty members (4). The conversation addressed how to understand and respond to matters of language difference and error in student writing. The group discussed sample student writings in conjunction with articles on relevant pedagogical approaches.

In addition to these events, the DEI committee held regular meetings to educate ourselves, as committee members, on how we can help the Department follow up on the principles outlined in the Departmental Statement on its [Commitment to Antiracist Action in Support of Black Lives](https://louisville.edu/english/about/commitment-to-antiracist-action-in-support-of-black-lives):

* In September 2020, DEI committee members researched scholarly literature on best practices for DEI committees, to educate ourselves on the committee’s potential goals and practices, and to investigate how best to support the goals outlined in the Departmental Statement. In addition, we collected information on minority-owned businesses in Louisville, to support the Departmental Statement’s goal of using catering services by minority-owned businesses when possible.
* On October 30, 2020, the DEI committee met with Dr. Carol Mattingly to share reflections and insights about best practices for mentoring graduate students from minoritized groups.
* In April 2021, Frank Kelderman collaborated with colleagues in Social Work and Education on a presentation about best practices for faculty approaches to equity and inclusion, to be presented at a future DEI workshop and/or departmental meeting.

**Goals for Next Year**

* To continue our programming of workshops and conversations for English faculty, staff, and graduate students, and to invite faculty/grad students to contribute their reflections in “occasional papers” for community conversations.
* To follow up on our research on best practices from the first year with presentations on DEI issues during faculty meetings and additional workshops.
* To find ways to share our research findings and recommendations easily with faculty and graduate students, via the website, listservs, or other technology.
* We will be available to faculty, staff, and program directors for questions and advise around issues such as teaching practices, committee work, curricular issues, student retention goals, and job searches as they intersect with diversity, equity, and inclusion.