

Staff Senate
Ad hoc Committee on Anti-Racism
Preliminary Recommendations

In September 2020, Chair John Smith charged this *ad hoc* committee with exploring ways in which staff at the University of Louisville could become involved with promoting the university's anti-racism agenda. Between September 11 and October 12, the committee met three times and discussed various ways in which the Senate specifically and staff in general could contribute to the university's anti-racism mission. The committee considered a broad range of topics, including—but not limited to—the potential impact of training programs (unit-specific and university-wide); alignment with the university's strategic plan and Cardinal Principles; cataloging resources for staff; and internal senate efforts related to the composition of the senate and to the work of its committees.

The committee is pleased to present the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1

Establish an anti-racism resource toolkit that can be used by Staff Senators to support dialogues about racism and racial justice. Designed to meet staff where they are, the toolkit will include resources that address best practices on how to hold conversations about racism and racial injustice, action steps that Staff Senators can take, allyship, and race in the United States.

Recommendation #2

Collaborate with the Center for Employee Resources to create and implement dialogue circles. Designed to allow participants to gain an in-depth knowledge about racism and racial equity, these circles are led by a skilled facilitator and will follow an anti-racism curriculum. Through dialogue, exercises and readings, participants will learn skills needed to show up and speak out when racism occurs. First-year senators will be required to participate in lieu of committee participation during their first year.

Recommendation #3

Create and implement a CARA Series aimed at building senators' capacity to understand structural and systemic racism and learn strategies to address racism as individuals and collectively. These workshops can operate one hour prior to Staff Senate meeting or follow a stand-alone schedule. Topics could include a history of racism, what is systemic racism, implicit bias, macroaggressions, racial trauma, and allyship. Compensation of some kind to be provided to workshop facilitators. Consideration of a kick-off event with a prominent community speaker or other off-campus speaker.

Recommendation #4

Encourage constituents to attend Staff Senate meetings and invite constituents to bi-monthly anti-racism trainings sponsored by Staff Senate. These trainings could also be advertised to units and integrated into their respective diversity plans.

Recommendation #5

Assess the climate of the body of the Staff Senate in a fashion similar to the annual Campus Climate survey.

Recommendation #6

Enhance existing communication within the senate and with constituents to increase awareness of racism and anti-racism efforts. Senators should regularly share relevant opportunities in Human Resources and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion with their constituents.

Recommendation #7

Explore the possibility of soliciting and using demographic information from senators and applicants in order to promote diverse representation in the senate; in all senate standing committees and *ad hoc* committees; and for all university-wide committee representatives appointed by the senate. The senate may also consider establishing goals related to diversity and inclusion among the body.

Recommendation #8

All Staff Senate standing committees should add diversity and inclusion-related goals to their committee charters. Additionally, each committee should strive to view the matters before it through an anti-racist lens. Specific suggestions include:

- Policy, Economics, and Development (PED) committee should explore and advocate for policies related to:
 - Mandatory implicit bias training for new senators as part of their orientation and for any senators wishing to serve on committees.
 - Mandatory implicit bias training for university staff
 - Incorporation of restorative justice principles into the Staff Grievance process
- Credentials and Nominations (C&N) committee should explore and implement a mandatory diversity training for Staff Senate committee chairs.

Recommendation #9

Create a standing committee related to anti-racism and diversity. This committee could monitor and coordinate the Senate's ongoing anti-racism efforts and serve as a conduit to the university's wider anti-racism efforts.

Recommendation #10

Proactively pursue partnerships to combat racism and encourage diversity and inclusion with Faculty Senate, the Student Government Association (SGA), the Commission on Diversity and Racial Equality (CODRE), the Commission on the Status Women (COSW), and other relevant stakeholders. The three constituencies may consider developing a joint anti-racism agenda on which they can collaborate. These conversations could take place through constituency leadership or perhaps by the formation of a joint anti-racism committee (either from new members in each constituency or represented from existing committees). Among other actions, this combined group should submit a joint recommendation to administration requesting that the diversity plans for each academic unit/department be made public and accessible in an effort to be more transparent.

The committee thanks senators for their consideration and welcomes feedback as we look forward to the implementation phase of its work.

Committee Members

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Presented to the full body of the U of L Staff Senate, Tuesday, October 13, 2020.