

## College of Arts and Sciences Diversity Committee Final Report for Academic Year 2014-2015

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Submitted by

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For academic year 2014-2015, the College of Arts and Sciences Diversity Committee consisted of the following members:

Judith Bryant, professor, Department of Psychology

Stephanie Hill, staff, College of Arts and Sciences

David Howard, undergraduate student, Department of Psychology

Gary Lemons, professor, Department of English

Inna Ponomareva, associate professor, Department of Physics

Kersuze Simeon-Jones, associate professor, Departments of World Languages and Africana Studies

Jennifer Whalen, doctoral candidate, Department of Communication

Kevin A. Yelvington, professor, Department of Anthropology (chair)

### **Goals**

The Diversity Committee met three times during the fall, 2014 semester, and three times during the spring, 2015 semester. In the fall, it set about a plan of work in four main areas:

1. To collect and analyze data on diversity in the College of Arts and Sciences, including regarding students and faculty.
2. To collect information on other units across campus who are concerned with diversity.
3. To promote, co-sponsor, and/or facilitate campus events.
4. The overall goal of the committee was to provide by the end of the academic year recommendations to the dean for the promulgation of a comprehensive diversity policy for the College of Arts and Sciences that would include such policies at the departmental level.

### **Activities**

1. The committee was provided with data by College staff regarding rates of faculty tenure and promotion with respect to race/ethnicity and gender. 2

2. The committee became aware of other similar committees in the College of Education, College of the Arts, and elsewhere. In order to find out about the resources on campus devoted to diversity and related activities, it invited Dr. Aziz Tablani, the director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA), to speak to us about his office's programs, Dr. José Hernández, the director of the Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity Office (DIEO), to speak to us about his office's purview and responsibilities, and Bernard Batson, the Director of Diversity Programs in the College of Engineering, to inform us of the activities of his office. The committee explored areas of cooperation with these campus units.

3. The chair and members of the committee attended a number of events put on by the OMA and DIEO throughout the year, such as the USF 11th Annual LGBT Community Gala Event, the Diversity Summit, and various lectures in the DIEO office's Diversity Lecture Series, and encouraged their students to attend as well. The signature event organized by the committee was the showing of the 2013 film *Living Thinkers: An Autobiography of Black Women in the Ivory Tower*, directed by Roxana Walker-Canton who appeared at the screening held on February 25, 2015, in the TECO Room of the College of Education. This event was jointly planned with the College of Education's Diversity Committee, with sponsorship from the DIEO office, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Education, the Institute on Black Life, the Humanities Institute, the Department of Sociology, the Department of Anthropology, and the Department of Women's and Gender Studies. The event exceeded our expectations. There was a standing room-only crowd in the TECO Room, and the event lasted an hour longer than the planned time because of the generation of discussion and debate.

4. Given the information the committee has collected during the year of its investigations and experiences, the committee strongly urges the dean to form a working group in order to develop and promulgate a comprehensive diversity policy for the College. This policy would be consonant with diversity efforts across campus, as well as the Global Citizens Project. USF's diversity statement (available at <http://www.usf.edu/diversity/diversity-inclusion/index.aspx>) ends by stating: "USF...recognizes that enhancing diversity requires leadership and commitment. Therefore, the University endeavors to implement a university-wide, multi-faceted, comprehensive diversity program that will accomplish the following goals: Sustain diversity as a dynamic, on-going process that demonstrates appreciation for all individuals, including their differences; Promote institutional policies, practices, and initiatives that support this process; Maintain accountability regarding diversity at all levels and across programs; Evaluate the effectiveness of diversity practices for continuous improvement; Encourage thoughtful and deliberate integration of diversity into everyday practice; Prepare students for an increasingly pluralistic and democratic society; and Empower students to compete in the global marketplace."

Given the College of Arts and Sciences's status as the largest college on campus, the committee feels that the College must assume a leadership role among the other colleges. The committee feels that it is time to move from stated diversity goals to tangible policies to consequent practices. The committee suggests that this policy entail the following: 3

1. The systematic collection and publication of data with respect to diversity within the College, including information on racial/ethnic and gender status of faculty and staff at all levels of employment, including information on recruitment and promotion. These data would be used to create metrics where success could be judged.

2. The creation of the position for a Diversity Officer who would be responsible for working with the relevant units on campus for the recruitment and retention of faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, and staff who are members of under-represented groups. The College needs to look no further than USF's College of Engineering as a model. The College of Engineering's concern with diversity is evident from the prominent place provided on the College's website:

There, the activities of the Diversity Officer, Bernard Batson, are highlighted. These activities include recruiting students and obtaining funding from federal sources as well as private foundations interested in diversity: