Program Inclusion Audit

Academic structures are typically inflexible with deep bureaucratic and highly regulated contexts. Typically, changing administrative structure is more concept than practice because of these features. The role of the inclusion audit is to help administrators and faculty to think in concrete terms about incremental changes that can be accomplished and that also move toward larger structural and systemic changes. Focusing on both smaller challenges that faculty and administrators have direct control over allows for important change to happen, while working on strategies and tactics to make larger changes. larger changes are always the goal, but changes at the program and departmental level are things in which faculty and administrators can likely change more directly and in many cases have more effect on students.

Initial categories for the audit should be

- Institutional
- Departmental
- Faculty and Staff
- Programs
- Courses (with specific questions for faculty in relation to their courses)

Administrators and faculty need to consider how well your curriculum and policies are meeting the needs of diverse students and faculty. The following questions are the start to a program inclusion audit, which can be defined as a deliberate and thoughtful examination of policies, procedures, and curricula that considers how well your program is addressing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The audit below is still a work in progress and should always be a work in progress based on local contexts, but it does give faculty a starting place in considering issues of race, ethnicity, ability, class/economics, gender, sexuality and religion more directly and explicitly when we build, expand, and sustain academic programs.

Institutional
The following questions should be considered first to strategically and tactically plan how programs and departments can work toward larger systemic and systematic changes at the institutional level.

- Does the institution have a specific policy or policies regarding equity? Is it conceptual or practical and if only conceptual are there ways you can make it more applied in your program (see below)?
- Does the strategic plan mention diversity, equity, and inclusion as a key goal or foundational principle?

- Has the institution developed an equity plan of action based on the policy, mission statement, and analysis of its current equity needs?
- Does the policy clearly explain the procedures for reporting complaints, fact finding, and appeals?
- Who does the institution typically recruit and accept in terms of student population? Does recruitment and retention reflect institutional commitments to diversity, inclusion, and equity?
- How do financial aid and cost play roles in the recruitment and retention of under-represented student groups?
- How do admission policies (e.g. articulation agreements) affect enrollment, particularly of under-represented groups?
- What policies are in place to ensure access to online courses and programs?
- Do student policies and practices such as the Student Code of Conduct specifically include an awareness of implicit bias or the necessity for non-bias language and approaches to application of said policies?
- What explicit inclusive expectations are in place for faculty and staff hiring and retention?
- How are inequitable labor issues such as adjunctification being addresses institutionally?
- Are student end of term evaluations mandated at the institutional level? If so, has due diligence been given as to why and how they are being used given that research has found them to be biased, racist, and sexist?

Departmental

The following questions should be considered first through a policy perspective, that is, what explicit, documented policies are in place departmentally. The goal of the questions then is to move a department toward one that is committed to dismantling racist structure and commits to anti-racist multicultural diversity through policy, support, and actions (such as strategic plans and vision statements).

- Can departmental policies enhance, expand, and put into action the institutional plans for diversity, equity, and inclusion? Are there ways the department should intervene differently or more concretely that can then be used as a model for the institution and other departments/units on campus? Have you recently completed a unit-level climate audit (https://ethicscenter.csl.illinois.edu/academic-leadership/ccc/audit/)?
- Is there a commitment to hiring diverse faculty in documented hiring plans? And what policies are in place to overcome bias in hiring? What policies are in place to overcome bias in hiring? Has the department made policies or other explicit commitments to creating an inclusive and equitable department culture that would enable diverse faculty to join and succeed in the department?
- How can departments operationalize institutional policies around equitable hiring practices?
- Is there a commitment to diverse representation I departmental leadership positions?

- What kind of diversity policies in place that address race, ethnicity, ability, gender, sexuality, religion, and socioeconomic class?
- Are there policies and practices in place to move the department toward a transforming unit rather than one of symbolic change? That is, are committees and faculty actively putting into action the statements and policies or is currently only writing performance?
- Are tenure and promotion guidelines written in such a way that they are not perpetuating racist and ableist forms of scholarship or requirements?
- Do bulletin boards, displays, hall decorations, classrooms, and offices reflect the diversity of the department and its programs? E.g., by showing diverse students of varied racial, ethnic, language, gender or gender identity groups, and people with disabilities in a variety of roles?
- Is the code of student conduct applied fairly and equitably to all students?
- Are their policies in place to ensure special programs, and speakers reflect the diverse nature of the institution and larger community?
- Does the department (or college) have a mentoring program, or other efforts, in place aimed toward faculty retention?
- How does the department use student end of term evaluations in the role of faculty evaluations (if applicable)? Are policies or processes in place to ensure that if they are institutionally mandated they are placed in context as only one data point in a larger picture of teaching effectiveness?
- Do departmental evaluation processes (such as annual evaluations) encourage and promote the incorporation and discussion of course materials (e.g., readings) that offer a diverse view of content and representation of diverse author backgrounds (race, ethnicity, ability, gender, etc.?

Faculty and Staff
Should be considered through a professional development lens, that is, how can TPC PAs help faculty address these questions within the courses they teach.

- What opportunities exist on campus and within department to help train faculty in issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion within their courses and programs?
- How are faculty modeling diversity, equity, and inclusion for students?
- How are faculty being trained to Use culturally responsive pedagogy and instructional materials that reflect diversity?
- Are opportunities offered to provide dialogues between administrators, faculty, support staff and students to develop comprehensive strategies for addressing equity issues?
- Are faculty trained to identify equity needs and to use instructional methods to meet the learning preferences of diverse students and groups?

- Are faculty (and staff) modeling techniques and authentic perspectives in committees, meetings, and more importantly, in the classroom? which are relevant to the diverse

- Are staff members adequately trained in these same issues? What opportunities do they have for professional development around diversity and equity issues?

Programs

These questions should be considered at the program level which includes policies and practices that direct and guide all programmatic decisions.

- Does the program have a clear mission that is committed to equitable access, processes, treatment, and outcomes for all students, regardless of race/ethnicity, gender, home language, disability status, gender identity/sexual orientation or socioeconomic status?
- Is all assessment data analyzed according to individual student progress as well as disaggregated patterns and outcomes by race, gender, ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic status, and geographic location?
- Is the program using diverse methods and means of assessment from self reflections, portfolios, and other approaches that center learning and help to avoid bias? If student evaluations are required, are they being framed for students in a way they understand the problems inherent with these instruments of evaluation?
- Are program outcomes used as a just means of assessment to ensure students have a clear understanding of what they can take away from courses and the program?
- Has he program set up co-curricular activities to be inclusive (such as not requiring internships and/or creating hands-on/engaged learning opportunities for nontraditional/adult/working students?) Are there policies and procedures to assure that no student is denied participation in co-curricular activities because of race/ethnicity, language, gender or gender identity, socioeconomics, disability status, or transportation limitations?
- Do program outcomes encourage faculty to include texts that offer a diverse view of the content and representation of diverse author backgrounds (race, ethnicity, ability, gender, etc)
- Are requirements for the degree clearly written to account from a range of backgrounds and abilities and offered in various formats? (e.g., looking closely are requirements and pre-requisites to ensure they are not inherently bias or creating barriers for students unintentionally.)
- Are there a wide variety of electives where students are able to see themselves in the content and the experiences?
- Has the program developed relationships with various entities on campus that provide services so that students can be fully supported? (e.g., student counseling and general support services or student groups support students from particular cultural or identity backgrounds.)
- Does the program support a wide variety of instructional strategies to meet differing learning styles and backgrounds? (e.g., multiple approaches of delivering information for students with various disabilities)

- What is your program doing to market and demonstrate itself to diverse students such as first-generation studies? For example, is there information on scholarships, work study, and other financial information?
- Are advisory boards being consulted to enrich the curriculum, provide consistently high expectations for all students, and develop supports and opportunities for all students? IS the board comprised with an attention to diverse representation of the student body and the community>?
- Are community- and client-based partnerships providing opportunities for all students? And do those partnerships reflect the diversity of the communities around the institution?
- Can you obtain adequate institutional data to help drive programmatic decisions to address the students on your campus and in your program?
- Do special programs and speakers reflect the diverse nature of the school and larger community?
- Are efforts being made to recruit from student organizations with underrepresented students? Do you have diverse representations of student ambassadors of the program?

Curriculum and courses

- Are the instructional materials culturally inclusive and nonbiased regarding ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, race, language, age, socioeconomic status, and disability?
- Do recommended textbooks and other instructional materials reflect, as much as possible, the experiences and perspectives of diversity among racial, ethnic, language, religious and gender groups?
- Is the classroom an invitational environment where commonalities are appreciated and differences are understood and valued?
- Are discussions taking place between and among faculty about ways to diversify readings, exercises, and projects or assignments?
- Do syllabi include a program inclusion statement and an understanding faculty will engage with the statement in class?
- Are course polices focused on equity and inclusion (such as the discontinuance of attendance policies that are ableist and exclusionary)?
- Are critical educational issues addressed in ways that do not stereotype or stigmatize particular groups by choices of course materials?
- Is content training offered to provide staff with curricular information and knowledge of multicultural print, non-print, and human resources available to enhance educational equity?
- Does the instructor structure classroom activities in order to promote student learning outcomes at the assignment, course, and program level?
- Is the instructor considering the various socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, language, gender, and disability groups within the community when considering client and service learning projects?

- Are assessment mechanism within the class focused on the programmatic goals and clearly articulated
- Is there space for alternative literacies within the courses and curriculum?
- Are special efforts made to achieve classroom integration when students self-segregate in the classroom (e.g. teams for contests, groups for instruction, or other forms of classroom organization)?
- Does the teacher use classroom activities to increase awareness of the effects of bias and discrimination often inherent implicitly and explicitly in course materials and pedagogical approaches?
- Are expectations for students clearly defined with an orientation to opportunities for advancement?

Curriculum and course interventions for faculty to consider as they reflect on their courses. Faculty should ask, do I

- Ask challenging and engaging questions?
- Communicate high expectations?
- Use culturally responsive pedagogy and instructional materials that reflect diversity?
- State requirements for successful completion of assignments clearly and definitively?
- Avoid ambiguous statements and directions? 5. Encourage students to explore new ideas and approaches to problem-solving?
- Encourage student self-assessment and evaluation to identify strengths and weaknesses?
- Analyze the impact of teaching styles on students learning and make appropriate adjustments in style? Encourage students to set realistic timetables for completing assignments
- Help students identify milestones in reaching their goals?
- Assist students in celebrating milestones and utilizing failure as constructive learning for planning?
- Provide opportunities for students to relate their experiences in the curriculum and classroom?
- Provide challenging work to engage students in learning?
- Consider alternative means of feedback and assessment that highlight anti-racist assessment practices (such as collective feedback or a version of contract-based grading)
- Incorporate hands on activities that center student experiences as it could relate to the course content?