

**Report of the Working Group  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

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## VISION AND GOALS

We aspire to be a community where all members thrive: where they feel a sense of belonging and being valued; where they can access the wide range of learning and growth opportunities the college offers; where they are heard and respected; where they engage in meaningful dialogue about a wide range of issues; and where they live and work in safe, welcoming, and comfortable spaces. These aspirations are based upon an understanding that in higher education, diversity, equity, and inclusion are inextricably linked to excellence. As our society continues to diversify and our world to globalize, we must prepare a diverse cadre of students for global citizenship and produce knowledge that is relevant to the issues of today and tomorrow.

Institutional transformation is both about understanding where people are and also, at times, pushing beyond the comfortable. Changing demographics require us to reflect on college operations to ensure they support our efforts to become more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. We acknowledge that there may be policies, structures and traditions that unwittingly make the college inequitable and uncomfortable for various groups of students, faculty, and staff, including many who are from groups historically underrepresented or often marginalized. We should position the entire campus to support the institution in becoming more diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion working group has focused on what, in our view, are the positive initiatives Williams has undertaken to increase the diversity—along many axes—of its student body, faculty, and staff. We have examined ways in which the college can further expand and strengthen these initiatives so as to reach all pockets of the college. We have also attempted to grapple with the ways in which Williams—with its particular history, its institutional structures, and its traditions—may continue to present barriers to the full inclusion and well-being of all members of its increasingly diverse community. Because barriers to inclusion and equity may inhere in the very stories the college commonly tells about itself and in historically-entrenched ways of operating, institutional transformation cannot be relegated to one office or one committee. Our working group thus believes that a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion must permeate the college's final strategic plan: our work appropriately intersects with the work of each strategic planning working group and with the operations in every area of the college.

The working group held more than two dozen discussions with representatives of departments, units and committees on campus, and facilitated conversations with constituents who attended fora at the Log, the strategic planning day, and many other planned meetings. During the discussions, we asked participants to reflect on the diversity, equity, and inclusion challenges they face as members of the college community; the potential for them or their unit to help ensure a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment on campus; and their hopes for what the college will look and feel like in the future. In addition, the group considered models of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion at institutions around the country.

Our working group has identified four main areas as its focus, summarized here:

**1) Study and reflection upon institutional history:** As a community, we should study and reflect upon the college's institutional history in ways that reflect our vision for a more equitable future.

**2) Common understanding of what it means to be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive**

**campus:** Given that a truly diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus is an institutional goal, the college should encourage and support the development, honing, and implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion plans across college units and throughout all college operations. We should also develop language and implement operations and systems nimble enough to support constantly changing practices of inclusion on our campus.

**3) Recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty, staff, and student body:** When we think about “recruiting” historically-underrepresented groups to become part of the community, we often focus on outreach, on expanding our pools of applicants. The college should consider how best to attract prospective members of the community who want to come to Williams and to include newer members of the community in ways that make them feel valued and supported in our community.

**4) Community learning and exchange of respectful dialogue:** We are all life-long learners, particularly in diversity, equity, and inclusion work. The college should equip all members of the Williams community with tools that allow them to engage in conversations around diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to negotiate these issues in the classroom and workplace; and to welcome and value the perspectives diverse members of the community bring to its conversations and decision-making processes.

## DESCRIPTION AND APPRAISAL

### I. STUDYING AND REFLECTING UPON INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY

The Williams' history that many know begins as a narrative of a struggle for survival: the founding of the college in 1793 as a result of the bequest of Ephraim Williams; Zephaniah Swift Moore's resignation along with half the student body to found Amherst College in a more hospitable place; and the establishment of the Society of Alumni to save the college in 1821. The college that survived these challenges was a white, male, Christian institution.

As many of those who have researched Williams' history have shown, this history is partial and incomplete. But its dominance and the ideal that it celebrates obscures other ways of telling Williams' history.

Over the years, students, faculty, staff, and alumni have added to histories of the college that recognize the importance of pioneering alumni and the activism of students, faculty and staff in shaping the course of the institution: for instance, the mere presence of African American and Jewish students in the early days of the college; the admission of the first women undergraduates; and the faculty, student, and staff activism that resulted in transformations of the college curriculum, including the establishment of courses and programs in African American and then Africana Studies (50 years ago), Women's and Gender, then Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (40 years ago), and Latina/o/x Studies (15 years ago). With each anniversary celebration of these early alumni and these programs, there has been a call to reexamine the college's history and its relation to where we are today.

In recent years the community has begun to research and to reflect upon the outward-facing role the college has played over time. The college, its committees, and individuals on campus have all examined institutional history. The college has been diligent and engaged in this reflection, particularly when prompted to address the concerns of constituents, as three recent examples illustrate. First, in the fall of 2015, students and other constituents raised questions about the portrayal of Native Americans in a mural uncovered in the Log during its renovation. That same semester, in response, President Falk appointed the Committee on Campus Space and Institutional History and charged it with making specific recommendations about what the college should do with the Log mural, and how the college should be guided in the future when community concerns emerge about institutional history within public spaces. Second, students have called upon the college to examine the role of its Christian "mission" (commemorated in a campus monument). This work began last year when the college Archives put on an exhibit titled "The Haystack, Mission Park, and Institutional Histories." Third, in addition to periodic panels on this topic, one recent exhibit has encouraged such reflection. Kailani Polzak and Sonnet Coggins co-curated an exhibit at WCMA titled, "The Field is the World": Williams, Hawai'i, and Material Histories in the Making."

Members of the college have also been proactive in examining institutional history. During the past two years, the Committee on Diversity and Community has researched the college's ties to native and indigenous people with the goal of developing a meaningful way to acknowledge the

Stockbridge-Munsee Band of the Mohican, who historically resided on the land on which the college now sits. Christine DeLucia, Assistant Professor of History, is working on a collaboration with the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of the Mohican. The Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is currently engaging scholars to lead campus discussions about the college's ties to slavery.

The college should foster community research and discussions about the college's history that acknowledge its complexity and the degree to which the college has been shaped by the activism of a diverse community. We can do this work with alumni (many of whom have been an integral part of historical change), through our academic programming, and in our co-curricular organizations. Augmenting an established narrative with one that more fully reflects the college's history as complex and dynamic will help give all members of the community a stake in our shared story.

## **II. COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A DIVERSE, EQUITABLE, AND INCLUSIVE CAMPUS**

Many individuals and units on campus have demonstrated a firm commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the college's history. In 1979, at the urging of faculty and staff, President John Chandler created the role of Assistant to the President for Affirmative Action and Government Relations. Decades later, in 2006, the creation of an office focused on institutional diversity, equity, and inclusion, led by the college's first Vice-President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity, was a significant development. The office has since grown in scope and staffing, expanding to include an Associate Dean for Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (held by a faculty member), three Assistant Vice-Presidents, including the Title IX and ADA Coordinator and the Assistant Vice President for Campus Engagement, two Faculty Fellows, and the Dialogue Facilitator. Leading institutional efforts to become more diverse, equitable, and inclusive, the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (OIDEI) also oversees the Office of Special Academic Programs and the Davis Center, as well as the Committee on Diversity and Community and the important college-wide initiative Claiming Williams.

We define diversity to be all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. Equity is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people. Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can participate fully and is welcomed, respected, supported, and valued.

Since 2015, OIDEI has taken part in developing and supporting various initiatives, including the following, that support a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus:

### *Hearing concerns and resolving conflicts*

- Integrating Title IX policies and practices.
- Supporting the drafting of college's non-discrimination policy and related procedures.
- Increasing bias and non-discrimination reporting, including making reporting available online. Increasing conflict resolution and receiving and resolving over 100 concerns each year.
- Collaborating with the offices of the Dean of the Faculty, Dean of the College, and Human Resources to resolve conflicts and adjudicate cases.

### *Recruiting a diverse staff and faculty*

- Partnering with the Office of the Dean of the Faculty around faculty hiring.
- Partnering with Human Resources around staff recruitment and retention.
- Partnering with the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Administration to work towards diversifying our vendor and construction workforce.

*Supporting inclusive learning environments*

- Co-leading, with the Office of the Dean of the Faculty, all-faculty retreats focused on teaching at Williams today, symposia on inclusive learning, including in the STEM plus disciplines, and facilitating faculty discussions geared towards supporting students and faculty from groups historically underrepresented in the academy.
- Providing assistance to academic units, in part through DART's enrollment project.
- Supporting student affinity and other groups focused on academic inclusion.

*Educating the campus and broader community*

- Offering a range of workshops on bias, social identity, nondiscrimination, Title IX, ADA, and LGBTQIA+ inclusion.
- Launching a grant program - Towards Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (TIDE) - designed to encourage community initiatives towards campus inclusion efforts.
- Expanding outreach into the broader community, partnering with and providing support and education to local schools, non-profits, law enforcement, and municipal organizations around issues of equity and inclusion.
- Engaging consultants whose expertise is germane to advancing equity and inclusion at the college; recent engagements have centered on minimizing bias and enhancing inclusion in the STEM+ disciplines; LGBTQIA+ inclusion; and understanding and minimizing harmful bias, including during the hiring process.
- Multifaceted cultural, educational, and recreational programming by the Davis Center.

Diversity initiatives and collaborations with the OIDEI and its divisions (the Davis Center and Special Academic Programs) have spread across campus, elevating awareness of diversity, equity, and inclusion issues. The college has been responsive to requests for more and greater access to opportunities, such as by increasing the number of prefrosh served by summer pathway programs in the sciences and humanities and social sciences, by developing the Allison Davis Research Fellowship (which complements the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Program), and by providing more funding and support for research and other development opportunities for students and faculty from groups historically underrepresented in the academy. Efforts beyond OIDEI are also important to note, such as the successful grant from the Sherman Fairchild, which supported the hiring of the Director of Quantitative Skills Programs and Peer Support, whose work focuses in part on access and inclusive pedagogies.

Nevertheless, the campus continues to face challenges that we hope can be addressed in the near future. The lack of a common understanding and language around diversity, equity, and inclusion issues is contributing to some of the challenges we face. We also acknowledge that our diversity efforts have focused more on some identities than on others and that we must expand our diversity, equity, and inclusion work to include all marginalized identities (e.g., ability status). We have begun this work, as illustrated by a fall 2019 lecture hosted by the Office of Accessible Education featuring Haben Girma, disability rights advocate and the first deafblind graduate of Harvard Law School, but we need to continue to push forward this expansion.

We heard quite a bit about the uneven ways in which units on campus (academic departments, administrative offices, student organizations, teams) prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion work and commit themselves to it. Indeed, many units do not regularly discuss or set goals around diversity, equity, and inclusion, while others focus on it with more urgency. In the absence of a shared Williams mission or a sense for the specifics of the college's diversity, equity, and inclusion pursuits, individual offices and departments are left adrift. With a limited understanding of their role in the larger picture, some units perceive the existence of unseen and unspoken diversity, equity, and inclusion expectations -- the feeling that a bar must be reached, without clear instruction about where the bar sits. One unfortunate result of this is a sense of burden felt by some towards diversity, equity, and inclusion work as well as a punitive link with OIDEI, whose mission is to advance these goals.

Crafting a common diversity, equity, and inclusion mission and overarching shared language would help each unit develop a set of diversity, equity, and inclusion goals. We will need to be sure the systems and structures for adapting and implementing those goals are in place.

In addition to a mission and set of goals, we would benefit from developing overarching language. We have a diffuse and fragmented understanding of what it means to be diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

It may be the case that our understanding of diversity and the ways we measure our diversity is driven in part by the data we collect and share. We appear to have robust database systems, and the systems across the college are different for different constituent groups (e.g., students, alumni, faculty and staff) and units (health center, admission, registrar). However, whether and how individuals with certain identities are listed in our data is unclear. In addition, college data are often presented in ways that collapse U.S. ethnic and racial minorities. We see that some students, faculty, and staff whom the college would include as people of color or in a particular racial group might not agree with the grouping and prefer explicit reference to the racial and/or ethnic group they choose. Examples such as these may cause individuals to inquire about what type of diversity "matters." Our working group hopes that Williams will utilize software that has the capacity to capture racial and ethnic, gender and sexuality identities in more nuanced ways.

Over the years committees, such as the Committee on Diversity and Community, Committee on Admission and Financial Aid, Diversity Action Research Team, Dively Committee, Committee on Student Life, Trans\* Inclusion Committee, and Affirmative Action Advisory Committee have all grappled with difficult diversity, equity, and inclusion questions. Their work has helped transform the campus, including the addition of gender identity and expression into the college's non-discrimination policy, the drafting of a preferred name policy, the development of plans regarding transgender inclusion, the routine evaluation of financial aid policies, the development of a new tuition benefit policy, and the study of classroom climate from both the student and faculty perspectives, access to co- and extra-curricular opportunities, experiences of student athletes of color, and experiences of faculty and staff who are members of underrepresented groups on campus.

They've also engaged in conversations and work to increase the number of constituents on campus from historically underrepresented groups, considered quantitative and qualitative data in the evaluation of college policies or practices that may lead to inequity, and intentionally created inclusive environments on campus. Although much of this important work is underway, there's

rarely an opportunity for follow up or follow through. A clear mission and set of goals will help guide our efforts to follow through with all of our initiatives and assess our outcomes.

### **III. RECRUITING AND RETAINING A DIVERSE FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENT BODY**

Recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty, staff, and student body is essential to the college's institutional commitments and goals. Over the years, the college has put energy and resources into recruitment initiatives aimed at increasing the diversity of the student body, the faculty, and more recently, the staff, with some success. The college's readiness to respond positively, proactively, and nimbly to its changing demographics can in turn positively affect its ability to attract and retain new members of its community. We recommend that the college continue and intensify its diversity recruitment efforts. We also suggest steps the college can take to make its institutional structures and culture more welcoming, equitable, and inclusive to diverse members of the community, since our ability to both attract and retain new members of the community depends on our ability to offer a culture that feels supportive and inclusive for all. For this to happen, diversity, equity, and inclusion must be central, rather than marginal, complementary, or peripheral, to every aspect of academic and institutional life at Williams.

#### **College Demographics**

Over the decades, the student body, faculty, and staff at the college have become increasingly diverse. As we review demographic data, we are aware that the college tracks and reports data in a few different ways, which can result in different reported numbers; and, as noted in section II, data reporting can vary based on the use of different college database systems and methods of data collection. The current demographic breakdown of the college community follows.

#### **Student Demographics** (degree-seeking, enrolled during fall of 2019)

##### *Undergraduate:*

International 9%

Hispanic/Latino 13%

Black or African American, non-Hispanic 7%

White, non-Hispanic 49%

American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic 0%

Asian, non-Hispanic 12%

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic 0%

Two or more races, non-Hispanic 6%

Race and/or ethnicity unknown 4%

52% on need-based financial aid

50% women

*Graduate (Center for Developmental Economics and Graduate Art):*

57% female

Asian, non-Hispanic 7%

Black or African American, non-Hispanic 4%

Hispanic/Latino 5%

International 50%

Unknown 4%

White, non-Hispanic 30%

**Faculty Demographics**

	<b>Assistant Professors</b>	<b>Associate Professors</b>	<b>Full Professors</b>	<b>All Tenure-line Faculty</b>
<i>Female</i>	47 (56%)	18 (54.5%)	68 (42%)	133 (47.5%)
<i>Male</i>	37 (44%)	15 (45.5%)	95 (58%)	147 (52.5%)
	<b>84</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>280</b>
<i>Asian or Asian American</i>	16 (19%)	5 (15%)	12 (7.3%)	33 (11.8%)
<i>Black or African American</i>	10 (12%)	3 (9%)	9 (5.5%)	22 (7.9%)
<i>Hispanic or Latina/o/x</i>	6 (7%)	2 (6%)	11 (6.7%)	19 (6.8%)
<i>Multiple</i>	4 (5%)	1 (3%)	-	5 (1.8%)
<i>White or Caucasian</i>	48 (57%)	22 (67%)	131 (80%)	201 (72%)
	<b>84</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>280</b>

For Athletics faculty (including 5 PE Lecturers):

Female 12 (34%)  
 Male 23 (66%)

White 32 (91%)  
 Faculty of Color 3 (9%)

**Staff Demographics** (as of November 1, 2019)

**EMPLOYEE TYPE                    SALARIED    HOURLY    GRAND TOTAL**

<i>Female</i>	56%	55%	56%
<i>Male</i>	44%	45%	44%
<i>Asian or Asian American</i>	2%	2%	2%
<i>Black or African American</i>	7%	2%	4%
<i>Hispanic or Latina/o/x</i>	4%	4%	4%
<i>Multiple</i>	1%	1%	1%
<i>White or Caucasian</i>	86%	91%	89%

**Recruiting**

For many years, the college has developed ways of leveraging various networks to aid in recruiting diverse student and faculty bodies: in the case of students, our admission team has tapped a range of preparatory programs serving low-income, first-generation, and / or students of color; in the case of

faculty, it has partnered with the Creating Connections Consortium (C3) and the Liberal Arts Diversity Officers Consortium (LADO) to reach diverse doctoral scholars at R1 institutions who are interested in a career in teaching and research. More recently, the college has begun to partner with local organizations to develop robustly diverse pools of candidates for hourly staff positions. Since the networks pertaining to faculty and students have been in place for some time and those pertaining to staff are relatively new, the former have had more impact.

These outreach efforts, aimed at producing more diverse applicant pools, complement two additional initiatives to diversify the faculty and staff. The college began a more robust faculty diversity initiative in 2014, engaging external consultants to work with faculty hiring committees throughout the hiring process; and the college's staff diversity initiative was implemented in 2018. Both initiatives have had some positive effect on faculty and staff diversity at the college.

In addition, the college hosts various "pathways to academia" programs: for pre-frosh, the Summer Science Program and Summer Humanities and Social Sciences have both seen many alumni go on to PhD programs; the Mellon Mays and Allison Davis Undergraduate Research Fellowships are specifically designed to support students interested in pursuing academic careers, as is the Creating Connections Consortium. We have also hosted symposia for doctoral scholars underrepresented in their fields, providing them mentorship opportunities and exposure to teaching and research in the liberal arts academy; and we continue to recruit pre-doctoral scholars who are from historically underrepresented groups for the Bolin Fellowship. These programs have all proven successful and we should continue to prioritize them.

We have been successful, to an extent, in diversifying the student body and the faculty, but less successful with respect to staff. We also heard widespread concerns that compensation for certain staff positions may not be competitive with compensation at other institutions, thereby negatively affecting our ability to recruit a diverse staff in a tight market. Others voiced concern that the lack of diversity in the present staff was having a similar impact. However, in the first two years of the staff diversity initiative, people of color represented 20% of those hired into positions (starting at a time when the college had only 11% staff of color).

We've begun to keep EEO data pertaining to contractors and subcontractors, which will prove helpful to our efforts to diversify our vendor and construction workforce.

## **Retaining**

Critical to retaining students, faculty, and staff is a strong sense of belonging to this community. Indeed, institutional culture can impact the college's ability to recruit and retain a diverse faculty, staff, and student body.

Over the years, the vast array of topics that have been covered by programming supported by the college, its units and individuals is an indication of the breadth and scope of some of the salient diversity, equity, and inclusion topics. The individuals and offices across the campus—the Davis Center, the W. Ford Schumann Fellowship, Academic Resources, Center for Learning in Action and countless students, faculty, and staff on campus—provide related programming and address related issues. For instance, recently the Trans\* Inclusion Working Group / Committee has done tremendous work to advance programming and to affect college operations in order to better support

members of the LGBTQIA+ community, such as working to ensure all-gender restrooms are available in every building and facility.

Even given these commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion programming and to an increasingly diverse student body and faculty, many of the college's learning and working environments don't reflect the demographics of the constituents on campus. In these environments, the college may not be reaping the benefits of its diversity, and in some cases, this has led to feelings of being unwelcome, overworked, and without voice. Some students, faculty, and staff we interviewed shared uncomfortable experiences based on their actual or perceived identities. For example, some reported that they were subjected to micro- or macro-aggressions or did not have access to a service or space that is essential to their identity. Many reported feeling overworked—students because of being overwhelmed by their own and their peers' challenging experiences, feeling that they have to educate their peers, and not seeing themselves reflected in the curriculum; and faculty and staff because of a dearth of faculty and staff of color and other marginalized identities available to support students and junior colleagues. In addition, despite faculty and staff demographics, governing bodies at the college, particularly for faculty and staff, are often not racially and ethnically diverse. The lack of representation of faculty and staff of color on key committees (Staff Committee, Staff Council, Steering Committee, Committee on Appointments and Promotions) has led to fears that certain voices are unheard or silenced.

The college has begun to take steps to recognize individuals who are positively contributing to building and supporting a diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus. Recent changes to the annual activity report for faculty, for example, invites faculty to speak to their contributions to these efforts, and it will be a criterion for awarding annual merit increases. We must continue to acknowledge these efforts as an essential component of working at Williams.

In an effort to provide individuals with avenues to voice concerns and have their concerns addressed, the college recently revised its Title IX and Nondiscrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policies and related procedures: both set forth community standards and expectations aimed at improving climate and curtailing problematic behavior. Furthermore, in an effort to better understand the experiences of faculty, the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity, along with the Dean of the Faculty's Office, conducts exit interviews with departing faculty to gain an understanding of any challenges faced, particularly with respect to being included or treated equitably.

In addition to experiences on campus or with campus programs, the lives of faculty, students, and staff are significantly impacted by their experiences in the surrounding region. We understand that the impact of a negative experience may be greater, particularly because the surrounding region is not as racially and ethnically diverse as the college. We should continue to grow relationships with community organizations doing important equity work, such as the Berkshire County branch of the NAACP, the Berkshire Immigrant Center, and others.

#### **IV. COMMUNITY LEARNING AND EXCHANGE OF RESPECTFUL DIALOGUE**

At the core of celebrating diversity, understanding equity, and centering inclusion is an appreciation of respectful dialogue. Differences in a diverse community should not lead to a non-negotiable

impasse, but rather to an awareness of the historical and structural vectors that inform our relations to each other.

Too often education on diversity, equity, and inclusion topics is reactive—a response to a painful situation that has already occurred, within, for example, the Williams community, local schools, or law enforcement. Proactive education typically occurs during various orientations: delivered, for example, by the Davis Center and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response during student first days; by Title IX and non-discrimination officers to panelists convened to hear discrimination cases; and bias workshops for faculty and staff hiring committees at the start of hiring processes. Some campus programming also strives to produce conversation around issues of equity and inclusion that is proactive rather than simply reactive: the events of Claiming Williams Day, for example, and much of the programming done by OIDEI, including the Davis Center and Special Academic Programs. Some of this programming intentionally reaches stakeholders and communities off campus. For example, in the spring of 2017, the college hosted over 200 students, faculty, and staff from colleges and universities around the country for the Creating Connections Consortium (C3) summit, *The Transformative Power of Race in the Academy: Measuring Change, Charting Futures*. In the fall of 2020, the college will again host the C3 summit, *Racial Healing and Transformation: Becoming the 21st Century Academy*; once again, hundreds of faculty, students, and staff from around the country are expected to attend. In the fall of 2017, we hosted the Northeast Regional Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship conference. Similarly, the annual *Davis Lecture* is delivered each year by a scholar whose work concentrates on some aspect of race, class, or education in the United States.

In addition, a new grant program, Towards Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (TIDE), has garnered significant interest, resulting in nearly two dozen grants having been awarded to projects that aim to implement and support diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives on and off campus. Much of this latter programming is initiated by members of the community, including staff, faculty, and students, often acting in concert.

However, to move the campus forward during the next 10-15 years, the college should position all members of the on-campus and surrounding community to approach diversity, equity, and inclusion as life-long learners. Education, in the form of workshops, training, and other methods, is necessary and valuable in certain moments and institutional settings—as a way to assist units attempting to improve classroom or workplace dynamics or at the start of a hearing or a hiring process—and many members of the community expressed strong appreciation of its role in fostering more open and equitable workplaces, classrooms, or communities. But a “top down” approach does have drawbacks. It is important for the college to be able to offer guidance and support to grassroots equity initiatives. In every instance, we should ensure that educational opportunities, regardless of their form, acknowledge and embrace the differences of experiences and views that people in the room bring to the table. Preparing participants to engage in what, at times, may be challenging conversations that call for self-reflection and acknowledgment of privilege and dynamics of power will encourage respectful dialogue that supports an inclusive campus.

We thus suggest a multi-pronged approach to community learning. Our outreach revealed appreciation for the educational programs we have been offering to promote cultural competency. We did hear, however, that these training modules need to be dynamic, nuanced in their understanding of “diversity,” and responsive and tailored to the lived experiences of the people in the room. For example, numerous comments highlighted the importance of establishing training

modules based on an intersectional, anti-oppression framework that recognizes various forms of diversity and identity (such as racial identity, gender identity, sexual orientation, class, disability status, and religious identity). While there was some disagreement about whether particular training ought to be mandatory, there were numerous calls for more resources to help staff, faculty, and students create learning opportunities suited to the needs of their own groups or units.

At the same time, it is important for the college to support and foster conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion that are generated from within the community: for example, students engaging in activism in an attempt to bring questions of power, privilege, and justice before the broader community. Over the course of Williams' history, some of its significant transformations—the abolishment of fraternities, the founding of the Multicultural Center, the hiring of faculty and the establishment of curricula in African American, Latina/o/x, Women's Gender, and Sexuality, and most recently Asian American Studies—have come about, in part, through student activism. Working to equip all members of the community with the tools to engage in respectful and productive dialogue around issues that provoke passion and disagreement—that is, working to educate the entire community in restorative approaches to conflict resolution—could result in more productive outcomes and reducing the feelings of isolation and alienation that some students, faculty, and staff describe. In this case, “training” would not be a matter of preparing a specific panel, hiring committee, or unit for a specific project; it would be a matter of inculcating in the community skills of respectful dialogue and conflict resolution that could be applied to local and broader conversations.

## **STRATEGIES/RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **I. STUDYING AND REFLECTING UPON INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY**

1) Studying the history of Williams will inform our future conversations and actions within and outside our campus community. Staff, faculty, and students often express an interest in studying our institutional history and subsequently engaging the community in meaningful ways, and they should be encouraged to do so. The college should consider charging a committee or group with coordinating and carrying this work forward. The college should also consider committing resources to individuals and groups interested in pursuing this work: since an interdisciplinary approach is most likely to acknowledge the breadth, scope, and diversity of interests shaping Williams' history, preference might be given to interdisciplinary work, and, of course, to student initiatives. Any research project should include a public-facing dimension.

2) Using recommended language provided by the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of the Mohican, the college should develop a written statement that could serve as an acknowledgement that the Mohicans historically resided on the land on which the college now sits; it should also develop partnerships with the Stockbridge Munsee Band of the Mohican to consider other ways to respectfully and meaningfully acknowledge the college's and Mohican's history.

3) The college should find ways to foreground and capitalize on the experiences of the alums who have lived, seen, or taken part in historical moments on campus. Many units in the college—for example, Special Collections and Archives in the libraries, WCMA, and the Alumni Relations Office—can serve as resources for this effort to use alumni experience as a way to augment and to document lapses in the “official” historical narrative.

As the college researches its history, it should take care to document what it finds in real time and to develop ways to engage the community in conversation about its findings.

## **II. COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A DIVERSE, EQUITABLE, AND INCLUSIVE CAMPUS**

- 1) Evolve a collective sense of Williams to fit the complex challenges of a 21st century campus and college experience. This is an important first step towards establishing common vision, goals, and language around diversity, equity, and inclusion -- doing so may involve a public engagement with the college's history and could additionally benefit any other number of foci (sustainability, pedagogy, etc). Language around diversity, equity, and inclusion must not be static, but must be able to adapt to the changing nature of how groups and individuals might choose to identify themselves at different moments and in different contexts.
- 2) Along with an examination of the college's history, commit to a vision for diversity, equity, and inclusion to which every department can align its own discussions, goal setting; provide definitions of diversity, equity, and inclusion and other key terms in order to support a common language for our efforts.
- 3) Encourage and support the development and honing of diversity, equity, and inclusion plans and goals throughout all college operations. Including, for example, making the campus and its operations more accessible to individuals who are differently abled, and reflecting on how we might develop and implement operations and systems nimble enough to support constantly changing practices of inclusion.
- 4) Regularize, for all units, education on diversity, equity, inclusion issues. For example, units frequently request assistance in keeping up with identity issues (e.g., terminology).
- 5) Encourage routine reflection about where we are, what progress we have made, and how to continue integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion into our daily work and lives; diversity, equity, and inclusion plans for academic and non-academic units.
- 6) Update data systems to make them flexible in order to effectively support measures of diversity and efforts around building a more inclusive community. Doing so will help capture and share identity data in ways that respect the identities of the individuals who make up the community. For example, we should be able to report data on non-binary gender identities.
- 7) Be more explicit in sharing demographic data in order to provide clearer information that reflects and respects the identities of our community members: for example, disaggregating our data for different racial groups and also ethnic groups within each racial group.
- 8) Revisit relevant campus programming over the past few years and determine whether there are meaningful and creative ways to re-engage the community around some of the topics.
- 9) Routinely review all operations of the college, including those codified in the faculty and student handbooks and disciplinary procedures, and curricular requirements and procedures for staff and faculty hiring, and assess them in light of their effect on diversity.
- 10) Conduct campus-wide climate surveys tailored to each constituent group that demonstrate progress over time.

### **III. RECRUITING AND RETAINING A DIVERSE FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENT BODY**

- 1) Streamline the collection and use of data for faculty, students, and staff to encourage more effective and transparent communication about who is on our campus; be diligent in communicating about the ways in which data will be used.
- 2) Give due consideration to what makes constituents feel valued and supported in our community. This could have a positive impact on student, faculty and staff recruiting efforts, retention, and thriving.
- 3) Give due consideration to the ways we support students as they experience and take advantage of various academic and academic-social opportunities and pathways.
- 4) Diversify our vendor and construction workforce to deepen the breadth and scope of services delivered to the college, which has some of the largest building projects and volume of service needs in Berkshire County.
- 5) Consider grouping, for purposes such as election or selection to governing bodies, faculty who teach in interdisciplinary units; the majority of faculty of color at the college teach in an interdisciplinary unit. Current requirements around representation from divisions may have an adverse impact on faculty of color.
- 6) Perhaps with the assistance of consultants, engage in efforts to deepen and diversify pools of candidates in staff searches.
- 7) Consider routinely adding Williams-specific questions to the HERI survey so that we may have consistent measures to assess faculty experience.
- 8) Ensure that invisible labor or “cultural taxation” is made visible, respected, and rewarded. Frequently, members of groups historically underrepresented or often marginalized in the academy bear a disproportionate amount of labor when it comes to advising and supporting students from groups historically underrepresented or marginalized.
- 9) Frequently reflect on the inclusivity of our curriculum, from individual course offerings to the broad sequences and clusters that form our concentrations and majors.
- 10) Discuss the types of faculty scholarship that are valued by the institution.
- 11) Support efforts to build a more welcoming, diverse, and inclusive Williamstown and surrounding region.

Our conversations with staff lead us to several recommendations that we believe will positively impact staff diversity and the experience of staff.

- 1) Develop and implement a program like First3 for new staff members, as they learn to navigate the college, work effectively, and take advantage of opportunities available to them. Part of such a

program could be a mentoring component whereby each new staff member is assigned a member who will not be evaluating them in any way.

- 2) Take a comprehensive look at staff salaries, with an openness to increasing salaries in units that are routinely failing to attract or losing job candidates or that are seeing high turnover in employees.
- 3) Consider a more nimble benefits package that might be appealing to younger staff members, those with student debt, and those without families.
- 4) Build pipelines of qualified staff for positions that are hard to fill, by means of internships, apprenticeships, and educational opportunities for professional development.
- 5) Train someone on staff to serve as a career coach for staff employees. This would help facilitate professional development and advancement, both areas that have received relatively low scores on the staff surveys and which we heard frustration about in our many conversations with staff.
- 6) Bring faculty and staff together to address the feeling among many staff that they are not respected by faculty; consider adding staff to committees where possible, and consider creating other opportunities for collaboration and socializing.
- 7) Give thought to what will make staff feel supported professionally.

#### **IV. COMMUNITY LEARNING AND EXCHANGE OF RESPECTFUL DIALOGUE**

Acknowledging that we are all life-long learners, particularly in diversity, equity, and inclusion work, will better position the college to effectively engage constituents on and off campus. We have an opportunity to equip all members of the Williams community with tools that will help them engage with priorities, and to integrate restorative approaches to conflict resolution. We propose, then, that the college provide relevant workshops and education, not only at isolated significant moments (first days, the start of the hiring process), but as an integral part of the Williams' experience.

- 1) Develop educational units that encourage a more holistic approach to engaging students, faculty, and staff, acknowledge a diverse set of thoughts and feelings, and prepare participants to engage in discourse with their peers.
- 2) Explicitly embrace intersectionality at college occasions and within college units—academic, co-curricular, student life, work—to ensure that individuals feel respected for who they are, irrespective of identity.
- 3) Develop diversity, equity, and inclusion tool kits for different constituent groups in our community to provide tailored educational resources for members of our community.
- 4) Build deeper institutional partnerships with higher educational institutions in the area, in order to position them as thought partners around these diversity, equity, and inclusion issues.

## CONCLUSION

As we consider the aspirational, particularly with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we ought to consider building in systems of accountability and assessment upfront. In addition, we should give thought to how dedicated members of the community might be recognized for their efforts to build a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community. Finally, as we move forward with this important work, we ought to communicate what we plan to do and how.

In conclusion, we highlight three themes that cut across all of our conversations: the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion work; the importance of communication and participation; and transparency and accountability.

The call for greater transparency and accountability responds to feelings that not all people are treated fairly on campus. We heard from some about decisions being made without input from those they most affect; about campus policies being followed unequally within and across departments; and about rewards (compensation, committee appointments, etc.) being distributed inequitably.

On a related note, we heard a call for improved communication and more meaningful participation on campus. Some people share or receive information when others don't; some people feel heard and others don't. Inconsistent or ineffective communication leads to unequal access to opportunities, a differential sense of belonging, and difficulty in working together toward common goals.

Finally, is the need to consistently value diversity, equity, and inclusion. We suggest that the college consider ways to acknowledge and recognize that work.

With careful attention to these themes as we address our four main areas, we believe the college can achieve our vision of becoming a community where all members can thrive.

## **Appendix 1: Working Group charge and questions**

The college has, over the decades, diversified its student body, faculty, and staff. We aspire to be diverse because understanding and respect across cultures throughout the world is essential and because “encountering differences is at the heart of the educational enterprise.” We aspire to be equitable so that all members of our community may take full advantage of the educational opportunities and resources that the college has to offer. We aspire to be inclusive so that the members of our community are welcome, valued, and supported and feel a sense of belonging. We understand that diversity, equity, and inclusion are inextricably intertwined with educational and institutional excellence.

This working group is charged to develop higher-level goals and strategies concerning:

1. What it means for our initiatives, programs, curricular, co-curricular offerings and built environment to serve our diverse community;
2. How we embrace optimal practices for engaging members of the community in ways that respect the identities, experiences and needs of community members so that they have a strong sense of belonging;
3. What it means for our diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to reach in and beyond the classroom and include the broader Berkshire Country and neighboring communities where our students, faculty and staff often engage and live.

The working group will consider the following questions:

1. How do we come to understand the experiences of all members of our community?

2. How do we encourage and support meaningful discourse so that we highlight challenges for consideration and emerge with opportunities for action, while maintaining a safe and inclusive community?
3. How can we ensure that all members of the community are heard and represented?
4. How can we best study and highlight the college's history, particularly regarding evolving understandings of its mission and who it serves?
5. How do we facilitate or support learning about identities and experiences so that all members of the community are engaged lifelong learners and citizens?
6. How do we empower members of the community to engage in meaningful exchange and action around issues of local, national, and international import that impact our sense of belonging?
7. How do we facilitate communication with individuals on and off campus regardless of ability, language, or opportunity to access information?
8. How do we ensure our built environment reflects our principles of inclusivity such that buildings and spaces are accessible and welcoming to all?

## **Appendix 2: Methods and outreach**

As a cross-cutting group that has talking points within each working group's efforts, the *Tuesdays at the Log* proved to be a beneficial medium to unify discussions alongside other groups. Specifically, conversations surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion objectives in Governance, Student Learning, and Williams in the World proved to be very engaging events.

Beyond these open conversations, the majority of our outreach came in the form of scheduled meetings with specific units and student groups. Departments were provided with framing questions to help them explore their current objectives and barriers for diversity, equity, and inclusion advancement. We were additionally concerned with how, in their opinion, the college could best support their work in improving diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus and where they would like to see their unit in 10-15 years.

Over the course of the semester our working group conversed with representatives of the following:

Office of Student Life  
Williams-Exeter Program at Oxford (WEPO)  
Williams Mystic  
Admission & Financial Aid  
Integrative Wellbeing Services  
Arts Council  
Committee on Appointments and Promotions

Facilities  
Academic Resources  
President's Advisory Group (PAG)  
Athletics  
Human Resources  
Steering Committee  
Student Leadership Roundtable  
Chaplains' Office  
Center for Learning in Action (CLiA)  
College Relations  
College Council  
Staff Council  
Dining  
Career Exploration  
First Three  
Davis Center  
Committee on Diversity and Community (CDC)  
Diversity Action Research Team (DART)  
Student Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC)  
Trans\* Inclusion Committee  
Williams Collaborative

In addition to meetings with these specific departments, we conducted three focus group dinner conversations with students. Each dinner began with a theme - Academic Inclusion and Resources, Identity Borders and Campus Fragmentation, or Campus Ownership; however, no conversation was restricted to the theme. Each dinner painted a broad spectrum of current student perspectives and experiences.