



IB DEIA Committee Newsletter

June 2021

What you'll find in this month's newsletter:

Committee News, Spotlight: Reflecting on the year, DEIA Events around the BSD and Beyond

Committee News

Thank you to everyone who sent in nominations for the new committee members! We are sad to see Samantha and Heather go after a year of hard work, but we're also very excited to welcome the new members and introduce the 21-22 IB DEIA Committee to the department.

We are currently planning the last OBA-all meeting for this academic year and plan to introduce the new members there as well as update the department on the last couple of initiatives we were working on this year and where we plan to pick up next year. **The last OBA-all meeting will be the last week of June, exact date and time coming soon.**

The last **office hours** session for the 20-21 academic year is **6/24** from 10:30 – 11:30 AM via this [Recurring Zoom Link](#).

There will be a waiting room for OH, so we can listen to comments and suggestions one at a time. (We understand that not everyone can make this timeslot, so if you cannot make it but want to chat with us, just send us an email at ib-deia@lists.uchicago.edu and we can find another time to meet)

Curious what we talk about in our biweekly meetings? **Spring quarter meeting minutes** can be found [here!](#)

We are still looking for faculty and students interested in running the OBA Seminar Series on the History of Racism and Systemic Bias in Science next year. The job entails scheduling speakers and booking the space for the seminar approximately 2-3 times per quarter, applying to already-identified funding sources for speaker honoraria, and publicizing the seminar. **If you are interested in being a part of the seminar series team next academic year, let us (the IB DEIA Committee) know!**

And finally, this will be the last newsletter for the 20-21 academic year, but don't fret, we'll catch y'all again in the Autumn quarter. Thank you to everyone who took the time out of their days to give it a peek. We hope you found it informative.

Spotlight: Reflecting on the year

This past academic year has been one that no one could have predicted - I would personally characterize it as "a lot". Police brutality, political unrest, a pandemic that turned our world upside-down, finding a new home-life balance, and adjusting our productivity expectations; this year made us uncomfortable. We were forced to confront the ugly truths and prejudices that are ever-present in our country and have even plagued our own, 'inclusive' communities.

I could continue to wax poetically about how this year as opened our eyes to the everyday atrocities happening right in front of us, but instead I want to **focus on the growth we have made as a community** in response. When the Integrative Biology students organized last summer in response to the murder of George Floyd, we were hungry for change. It was not something we wanted; it was something that our peers showed us we needed. But a movement cannot be sustained by a subset of the community alone, so we created a space to engage with faculty and other trainees (what has now evolved into our OBA-all meetings). We gave our community members a platform upon which to speak and share their own experiences, they in turn provided us with a safe space to learn and grow. There were tough conversations had in these sessions and they rarely ended with everyone in the call in agreement on what to do next, however, we were all in agreement that something had to be done.

Enter the IB DEIA Committee. A group of community nominated faculty, students, and graduate admin, tasked with the daunting charge of cultural change. I still remember when I got the email asking me to serve; I was honored, that's true, and absolutely terrified. *What did I know about D&I efforts that made me qualified to be on this committee?* In our first committee meeting, it hit me. None of us were or are experts in this field, it's not our day job, but we were all motivated by the cause and abashedly unafraid to use our positions of privilege for good. From that moment when our shoes hit the track, we have not stopped. (Some of you may have snickered at that line, but it's true, it turns out that change just happens very slowly.)

Aside from the laundry list of D&I initiatives that I'm honored to have been a part of with the committee, I am the most proud of how I have seen the department engage with the programming: watching the attendance for the seminar series organized by our very own Kelsey, Vish, and Rossy, growing with more audience participation each time; setting aside the time for D&I related programming during an already hectic recruitment season; collaborating to draft a Diversity Statement that the whole program can stand behind; and experiencing the BSD Diversity Retreat alongside mentors and peers. This is

not to say our work is done; we're not even close to it. There are things we've had in the works for months and cannot wait to share, and there are things that have yet to be thought of!

I've learned that D&I work never ends and it somehow always feels like you're still at the beginning. In that way, it's like science. We can spend our entire lives chipping away at a specific problem, question, hypothesis, or existing inequality, but once we take a step back, we realize that we've only been attending to a very small portion of a large iceberg. This is why it takes 'a village' so to speak. Researchers across the globe collaborate to solve life's mysteries because they are aware it is too large of an endeavor for any one person to take on; we should view tackling systemic racism and inequality similarly. If we all can take up our own pick-axes and find a corner of the ice that suits us, eventually, we may be able to take down our own iceberg.

**I have one small request, maybe consider it a challenge, as we break for the summer:
don't stop engaging.**

Both institutional and cultural change are slow, but it starts with and is driven forward by every single one of us.

Thank you for trusting in me this past year, and I hope to continue to serve to the best of my ability in the upcoming year. But until then,

Best wishes,
Hannah

DEIA Events around the BSD and Beyond

Below you'll find flyers and information for the various DEIA related events happening (virtually) around campus:

**Sharing Our Stories: The Black Graduate Experience at UChicago – Tuesday, June 8th
from 5:00 – 6:00 PM**

“Join the UC community in listening and learning from stories shared by members of our Black graduate community. UC community members are welcome to submit questions/topics for the panelists [via this form](#).”

[Register here!](#)

UChicago Student Wellness Support Spaces

For Students of Color: “This is a semi-structured support space for students of color to receive support, build community, and learn resiliency and coping strategies to thrive.”

Dates: 5/17 and 6/9 from 4:00 – 5:00 PM

Black@UC: a space for self-identified Black students to share experiences, build community, and help celebrate each other

Black@UC: Social – Thursday, June 10th from 5:00 – 6:00 PM

“Join fellow Black graduate students for an informal social (open to all self-identified Black graduate students” [Register here!](#)

Open Mic – Thursday, June 17th from 7:00 – 8:30 PM

“Join our community of undergraduates, graduates, staff, and faculty to celebrate Black talent (open to self-identified Black folk). Want to perform or nominate someone to showcase their talent? [Sign up here!](#)” [Register here!](#)

D&I Planning Toolkit: Info and Support Session – Friday, June 11th from noon to 1:00 PM

“Join staff from the D+I Studio for an informal session on using the University’s Diversity & Inclusion Planning Toolkit. After getting a brief overview of the toolkit, attendees will have an opportunity to share how they are using the toolkit in their unit, ask questions, and learn from one another’s experiences”

[Register here!](#)

Allyship and Anti-racist Training – Tuesday, June 15th from 5:00 – 6:00 PM

“Join the UC community in engaging together in anti-racist training and building allyship.”

[Register here!](#)

CEB Juneteenth Celebration – Friday, June 19th from 11:45 AM – 3:30 PM

Tentative schedule is:

11:45 AM – 1:30 PM: Socially distanced nature walk for reflection in small groups

1:30 PM – 3:30 PM: Attend the Juneteenth programming scheduled at the DuSable Museum of African American History

Wrap up the event by remotely attending the Juneteenth Keynote Address (see below)

Keep an eye on your inbox for more information!

**Juneteenth Keynote Address: A Conversation with Angela Davis – Saturday, June 19th
from 4:00 – 5:00 PM**

“Join the UC community in commemorating Juneteenth with invited speaker Angela Davis. Open to all UC students, faculty, and staff.” Moderated by graduate student Derek Nettingham.

“Through her activism and scholarship over many decades, Angela Davis has been deeply involved in movements for social justice around the world. Her work as an educator – both at the university level and in the larger public sphere – has always emphasized the importance of building communities of struggle for economic, racial, and gender justice.

[Register here!](#)

Center for Identity and Inclusion Spring Quarter Office Hours:

Join CI+I for Virtual Office Hours!

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OMSA, SSS, and LGBTQ Student Life will be hosting open virtual office hours. Please see below for weekly times/dates. We're here for you if you'd like to chat and check in.

OMSA
Tuesdays 2-3pm CST
Chat with staff at the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs for group office hours!
bit.ly/vomsagroup2

Thursdays 9-10am CST
Chat with staff at the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs for group office hours!
bit.ly/vomsagroup

Student Support Services
Wednesdays 3-5pm CST
Speak with a Student Support Services staff member individually to learn more about what programs and resources our office offers or simply to chat. bit.ly/SSSIndividual.

Fridays 2-4pm CST
Come hang out with SSS staff, graduate assistants, and other students. We can share more about our office, give helpful resources, or just chat! bit.ly/SSSGROUP

LGBTQ Student Life
Tuesdays 1-2pm CST
Chat with staff at Office of LGBTQ Student Life for group office hours! This is an opportunity to ask questions or simply chat.
bit.ly/OHG_LGBTQ

Tuesdays 2-4pm CST
Chat with staff at Office of LGBTQ Student Life for individual office hours! This is an opportunity to ask questions or simply chat.
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OMSA
Multicultural Student Affairs

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

LGBTQ STUDENT LIFE

Center for Identity + Inclusion
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

“If you have any questions, please email the staff member you are trying to reach, or you can email us at inclusion@uchicago.edu”

Do you know of an event you would like us to share with the community? Send us an email and let us know!

Contact Us: ib-deia@lists.uchicago.edu

(All committee members receive the emails sent to this address)