

UCIC Annual Report -2019-20

An Opportunity 2019-20

July 2020

Background

This Annual Report is being written in an extraordinary time with respect to matters of diversity and inclusion. The murder of George Floyd on May 25 has sparked protests and focused worldwide attention on systemic racism and police violence. The current racial climate reminds us of the history of the University Council on Inclusiveness and Community (UCIC). It was five ago, when the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri triggered protests and activism on college campuses across the country. At the University of Redlands, student protests and organizing led to a November 2015 Forum on Race attended by 500 people. That same month, President Kuncl announced the creation of the UCIC. The President sought nominations from the various university constituencies (faculty, staff, admin, and students). In January 2016 the 34-member council convened.

The UCIC was charged by President Kuncl to “consider, plan, and communicate actions and progress on our commitment to improve the University of Redlands’ culture and climate for all.” To guide the work of the UCIC the council adopted President Kuncl’s language: “We’re in a process of becoming... a process of becoming and evolving... remaining committed to a rich history of excellence by redoubling and sustaining our efforts in important areas and exploring new way of being in the modern world.”

Mission and Vision

Today, the following Mission and Vision statements expand upon President Kuncl’s initial charge and function to guide our work.

Mission - The UCIC is a University-wide body with broad representation committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment for all students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders. The Council will pursue recommendations ensuring programs, policies, and practices that are just, equitable, and ingrained in the fabric of the University.

Vision - The UCIC is dedicated to promoting inclusiveness and excellence across all units, curricular and co-curricular, for the purpose of moving beyond realizing numerical diversity in order to advance achievement, respect, regard, and involvement for all in the workings of the university.

2019-2020 – UCIC Activities

As in previous years, it is possible to think about UCIC activities as falling into three categories.

- 1) ***Deepening Our Understanding and Connections*** – Over the past two years, we have established a pattern of inviting key University actors to come to a UCIC meeting to help inform us of diversity and inclusion issues, actions, and concerns in their spheres. In this way, we develop a more comprehensive understanding of the University, and build connections with people. This year, we began by having Deans Brown, Wall and Horan come to our September meeting to talk specifically about what they were doing to help diversify hiring in their units. Dean Wall spoke about his on-going efforts in the School of Education. He has had considerable success in diversifying the racial, ethnic and gender composition of his faculty. He noted that a key to this success was building diversity into the heart of position descriptions and highlighting the School of Education’s overall priority on educational justice. These diversity priorities helped to diversify the candidate pool, and guided deliberations of qualifications.

Dean Brown outlined an extensive set of actions he was planning to take in faculty searches in 2019-20, which were critical since the College of Arts and Sciences had 10 full-time faculty searches slated for the year. These included having all candidates post materials on Academic Jobs Online, which centralized the process, and allowed the Dean to keep track of the diversity of candidate pools. He also encouraged search committees to ask for Diversity Statements, and to make sure that diversity was part of the criteria for assessing candidates. Dean Brown also worked with committees to recruit applicants with diversity goals in mind, and to use scoring rubrics to ensure consistency in the review of applications.

Dean Horan noted that he did not have an upcoming full-time faculty search.

We also invited Michelle Rogers to come to our September meeting to fill us in about the search for a Senior Diversity and Inclusion Officer.

In November, Amy Wilms from Academic Success and Disability Services visited. We learned about the work her office performs and about the growing needs she’s facing. In October, 307 students had accommodations for disabilities, and around 240 students have mental health issues. This is mainly in the College, but 20-25 students from the School of Education and School of Business have come through her offices.

The diverse membership of the UCIC also helps us to keep abreast of what is happening on campus. Paige Mann, for example, brought issues of Open Educational Resources to the group. Dalyn Montgomery helped us understand admissions issues in the School of Education. Chris Barnes keep informed and involved in the Martin Luther King Day events.

- 2) ***Responding to Pertinent Events and Issues*** – Another dimension of the UCIC’s work has been responding to diversity and inclusion issues that surface and raise concerns in the University community. This year, we directed energy to two circumstances. The first was the “Thin Blue Line” flag incident that occurred at an away football game in Fall 2019. A player led the team onto the field carrying a Thin Blue Line flag, that has been commonly identified as a counter sign to the Black Lives Matter movement and has been appropriated by white supremacist groups. Tensions arose afterwards between students, families and community members. The UCIC called a special meeting on October 30, 2019 and invited people from a range of administrative offices to attend, including Student Affairs Public Safety, Communications, the Johnston Center, and the University Counsel. The conversation produced a clearer understanding of the complicated

dynamics link to conflictual racial issues but did not lead to any actions beyond that one meeting.

Second, the confluence of extraordinary events in spring 2020, prompted UCIC actions. The Covid-19 pandemic, the economic crisis, and the protests in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder, led the UCIC to author and submit to the President and Cabinet two memos (April 4 and June 24, attached) expressing our concerns, and urging the Administration to take actions consistent with our priorities on diversity and inclusion

- 3) ***Actions to Advance Inclusion and Community*** – The UCIC took an active role in three areas of diversity and inclusion work this year. First, responding to Dean Brown's request for assistance in the faculty search process, we held three one-hour implicit bias trainings for search committee members in the College of Arts and Sciences. Members from 8 distinct search committees attended one of the trainings. Three members of the Dean's office as well as UCIC members attended. A total of 44 people participated in the interactive training. A description of the workshop and discussion of lessons learned can be found in the UCIC Implicit Bias and Faculty Diversity – Report on Trainings (attached).

In November 2019, co-facilitator Keith Osajima offered a workshop entitled, "Listening for a Change – A Workshop on the Radical Power of Listening." The idea for this emerged the previous spring, when UCIC conducted a listening tour to ask students what kinds of activities they wanted. Students talked about being tired of having meetings where people were criticized, dismissed, talked over, or called out. So this workshop was designed to teach people how listening could create powerful conditions for change. Sixteen people (a combination of students, staff, administrators and faculty) participated.

In December and January, UCIC participated actively in the SDIO search. We attended open forums and held UCIC meetings with candidates. Through the spring 2020 semester, we invited new appointed SDIO, Christopher Jones to our meetings, thus establishing a new and promising pattern of collaboration between our group and his office.

UCIC also took part in the planning and implementation of Martin Luther King Jr Day events in January, 2020

Future Directions

Based on work in 2019-20, we anticipate working in the following areas in 2020-21:

1. Continued and enhanced communication with the President, Cabinet and Board of Trustees. We will meet with the President in August and may be invited to the Board of Trustees meeting in October. Other regular opportunities to be in contact with upper administration will be developed
2. Improve our visibility and communication of our work to the University community. This could involve working with University Communications for assistance, and paying closer attention to the UCIC page on the UR website.
3. Actively participate in efforts to develop University policies and practices related to diversity, equity and inclusion. This could mean UCIC participation in the strategic planning process, in the campus climate survey, etc.

4. While we will continue to be attentive and responsive to issues and concerns that surface during the year, we would also like to think more proactively about areas that would be focus our energies to advance. These can be identified in early meetings of the academic year.