DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND JUSTICE

STATEMENT ON NON-VERBALIZATION OF RACIAL SLURS AND THE N-WORD: CULTIVATING ANTIRACIST AND ANTICOLONIAL CLASSROOM COMMUNITIES

STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY FROM DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LEADERSHIP--5 JUNE 2020

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND JUSTICE

The UW English Department aims to help students become more incisive thinkers, effective communicators, and imaginative writers by acknowledging that language and its use are powerful and hold the potential to empower individuals and communities; to provide the means to engage in meaningful conversation and collaboration across differences and with those with whom we disagree; and to offer methods for exploring, understanding, problem solving, and responding to the many pressing collective issues we face in our world--skills that align with and support the University of Washington's mission to educate "a diverse student body to become responsible global citizens and future leaders through a challenging learning environment informed by cutting-edge scholarship."

As a department, we begin with the conviction that language and texts play crucial roles in the constitution of cultures and communities, past, present, and future. Our disciplinary commitments to the study of English (its history, multiplicity, and development; its literary and artistic uses; and its global role in shaping and changing cultures) require of us a willingness to engage openly and critically with questions of power and difference. As such, in our teaching, service, and scholarship we frequently initiate and encourage conversations about topics such as race and racism, immigration, gender, sexuality, class, indigeneity, and colonialisms. These topics are fundamental to the inquiry we pursue. We are proud of this fact, and we are committed to creating an environment in which our faculty and students can do so confidently and securely, knowing that they have the backing of the department.

Towards that aim, we value the inherent dignity and uniqueness of individuals and communities. We acknowledge that our university is located on the shared lands and waters of the Coast Salish peoples. We aspire to be a place where human rights are respected and where any of us can seek support. This includes people of all ethnicities, faiths, gender identities, national and indigenous origins, political views, and citizenship status; nontheists; LGBQTIA+; those with disabilities; veterans; and anyone who has been targeted, abused, or disenfranchised.

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT DIVERSITY PLAN

The English department seeks to promote inclusion, diversity, and equity, especially racial equity, by recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse population of faculty, students, and staff in ways that counter ongoing legacies of systemic inequity and settler colonialism, and their organizing epistemologies.

The University of Washington acknowledges the Coast Salish people of this land, the land which touches the shared waters of all tribes and bands within the Suquamish, Tulalip, and Muckleshoot nations. The Department’s promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion values endeavors that build on this recognition as a means of transforming our research, pedagogy, and/or service. As such, we endeavor to:

- Stage serious, capacious conversations that articulate how a commitment to countering ongoing
legacies of systemic inequity transforms our discipline in intellectual and pedagogical contexts. These conversations should include mandatory workshops and other events. Within these conversations, it is essential that we are self-reflective about the historical and epistemological presumptions about the discipline.

- Build capacity to listen to and work with each other across differences/communities through collaborations across programs, sharing committee work across areas, and supporting and consulting with programs and groups that are doing active and innovative work in using research, teaching, and service to counter ongoing legacies of systemic inequity.
- Develop a speaker series on issues of diversity.
- Further our commitment to diversity and equity through the development of best practices and conversations about the difficult pragmatics and experiences of pedagogy: teaching better, teaching differently, and failing forward. (This might include a mandatory workshop addressing issues of cultural literacy around the topic of not doing harm such as recognizing and addressing issues of micro-aggressions, cultural or unconscious exclusions, tokenization of authors of color, and insensitivity to differences in language use).
- Continue to work towards a coherent and collective curriculum that is responsive to the questions that are transforming our disciplines (this might include considering the place of 202, 302, and the capstones, course development grants, etc).
- Support opportunities for students who are underrepresented in our major to gather and be heard.
- Create a culture of hiring to actively recruit underrepresented faculty. This cannot occur in isolation. In part, this pursuit should occur in relationship to our understanding of how a commitment to countering ongoing legacies of systemic inequity transforms our disciplines. Hiring proposals should not be overburdened in a way that would limit the pool of underrepresented applicants.
- Thus in terms of recruitment and active retention of underrepresented faculty, stage departmental discussion of how facultymight more readily enter the intellectual and cultural frameworks of colleagues’ work rather than primarily honoring an expectation that colleagues should somehow meet existing frameworks. This suggests that existing faculty, in addition to new colleagues, are responsible for transforming the department.
- Share best and required practice documents concerning hiring. These documents have been created by our department and the Vice Provost of Faculty Advancement. They ought to be systematically incorporated into every search.
- Be aware of the journey that students take prior to admission. With the goal of cultivating students who might otherwise be excluded or discouraged due to ongoing legacies of systemic inequity, work with existing programs at UW (UW in the High Schools, Summer Bridge, College Spark Grant, Alternative Spring Break, Access UW, Community Literacy Program, Running Start, Access UW) that reach out to students before they are admitted. These programs may be engaged directly or serve as a launching point for new programs.

**DIVERSITY (DIV) COURSES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

The English department supports the central importance of the UW’s requirement that students take at least one course dedicated at a primary level to the study of diversity. English courses that satisfy the DIV requirement include:

- ENGL 257 (Asian-American Literature)
- ENGL 258 (Introduction to African American Literature)
- ENGL 259 (Literature and Social Difference)
- ENGL 265 (Introduction to Environmental Humanities)
- ENGL 312 (Jewish Literature: Biblical to Modern)
- ENGL 316 (Postcolonial Literature and Culture)
- ENGL 317 (Literature of the Americas)
- ENGL 318 (Black Literary Genres)
- ENGL 319 (African Literatures)
- ENGL 357 (Jewish American Literature and Culture)
- ENGL 358 (African American Literature)
- ENGL 359 (Contemporary American Indian Literature)
- ENGL 361 (American Political Culture: After 1865)
- ENGL 362 (Latino Literary Genres)
- ENGL 367 (Gender Studies in Literature)
DEPARTMENT COLLABORATION GRANTS TO SUPPORT DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND JUSTICE

2020-2021 Grants

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN ENGLISH DEPARTMENT WRITING PROGRAMS

STATEMENT ON ANTIRACIST WRITING PEDAGOGY AND PROGRAM PRAXIS

The Expository Writing Program crafted a statement of commitment and support of antiracist and inclusive teaching and learning environments to guide ongoing work, action, teaching, and policies in our classrooms, teacher trainings, and broader writing program. The statement can be found here.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COLLABORATION GRANTS

The English Department's Expository Writing Program funds collaborative group projects that focus on developing composition curriculum, teacher resources, and/or research initiatives that center issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the writing classroom. Additionally, these grants seek to foster collaboration, conversation, and community among writing teachers invested in these issues and to generate resources that contribute to equity work within our teaching community.

2019 PRAXIS CONFERENCE: ANTI-RACIST PEDAGOGY: VISIONS AND PRACTICES FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

The English Writing Programs' fifth annual Praxis Conference focused its theme on anti-racist pedagogy, defined as a means of teaching and communicating that can apply to any learning space regardless of the subject matter rather than a mere inclusion of race as a classroom topic. An Anti-racist pedagogical framework is intersectional, meaning that it examines the multiple simultaneous forms of oppression that relate to race, class, gender, ability, citizenship, and other identity indexes. It helps us make progressive changes in our behaviors, social interactions, ways of teaching and learning, community norms, program policies, and institutional initiatives.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

At a time when many in our community are at increased risk and our core values are being challenged, this site offers resources we can use to support ourselves, each other, and our students.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION RESOURCES

GENERAL CAMPUS RESOURCES

Diversity at the University of Washington: The University of Washington's main diversity website

Diversity Research Institute

Race & Equity Initiative: A tri-campus initiative to directly confront bias and racism at the individual, institutional and systemic level

Recommended Reads for Equity: Recommendations for books about equity, diversity, and inclusion, curated by the UW Libraries

Resisting Racism Library Guide: Strategies and resources for resisting racism

Calendar of Holidays and Religious Observances: As instructional calendars and course/test schedules for the year are developed, the UW urges faculty and students to work together to accommodate scheduling constraints related to observing central religious and cultural practices. The UW also urges supervisors to
be mindful of faculty and staff schedules as they observe central religious and cultural practices.

**FIUTS:** (The Foundation for International Understanding Through Students) offers programs that build international awareness, cross-cultural communication, and informed leadership. FIUTS organizes social events & activities, English and Culture Conversation Groups (Wednesdays and Thursdays), a language exchange program, homestay and friendship programs with local Seattle hosts, and a Connections Program to help build relationships across cultures.

**Unite UW:** This is a quarterly program that pairs up international students and domestic students through weekly meet-ups and a 2-night retreat. It's fun and free! You can apply on its official website.

### MINORITY AFFAIRS RESOURCES

**Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity:** Works to increase diversity on campus and enrich the experiences of students, faculty, and staff

**Samuel E. Kelly Ethnic Cultural Center:** An inclusive space designed to foster academic and personal success

**Native Life and Tribal Relations Office**

**Graduate Opportunities and Minority Achievement Program (GO-MAP):** Committed to enhancing equity and social progression to promote access for and success of graduate students of color at UW

**Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EOAA):** Oversees and manages the University's affirmative action program

### IMMIGRATION RESOURCES

**Leadership Without Borders:** Resources for undocumented students

**International Student Services Office:** Visa and immigration advising for international students on F or J student visas

**DACA questions and answers**

### LEGAL AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES

**UW Bias Incident Reporting**

**Student Legal Services**

**UW Campus Food Pantry:** Provides UW students, staff, and faculty with nonperishable groceries and select fresh produce for no cost

### DISABILITY RESOURCES

**The D Center:** UW's Disabled and D/deaf cultural center

**Disability Resources for Students:** Resources for setting up access and accommodations

### GENDER AND SEXUALITY RESOURCES

**Title IX at UW:** Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 states: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Our interim Title IX coordinator is Valery Richardson, valeryr@uw.edu, 206-616-9713

**Education and outreach:** Online and in-person training for preventing sex discrimination and sexual harassment, and responding to those affected by sexual misconduct

**UW Women's Center**

**Survivor Support & Advocacy:** Health & Wellness offers confidential advocacy and support for students impacted by sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, sexual harassment and other related experiences.
TEACHING AND MENTORING RESOURCES

**UW Center for Teaching and Learning:** Teaching in the Current Political Moment

**UW College of Education:** Post election teaching resources

**University of Michigan Center for Teaching, Research, and Learning, Responding to Difficult Moments**

**Global Classrooms Manifesto,** written by Participants of the Praxis Conference 2017 at the University of Washington

**Diversity and Inclusivity—UW Faculty Senate resources for faculty seeking to foster an inclusive community for research, teaching and service**

**Engaging in Difficult Conversations**

**Holding a Safe Space for Someone**

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

**Livewell (Formerly Student Health and Wellness)**

**UW Seattle Hall Health Center – Mental Health Clinic**

**Counseling Center:** Resources for students seeking help in coping with stress or other mental health concerns

**Let’s Talk:** Free, confidential, informal drop-in counseling service at UW

REPORTING VIOLENCE

**Bias Incident Advisory Committee:** How to report bias incidents

**Safe Campus:** How to report violence or threats to the safety of yourself or others. NB: Faculty and TAs at UW must report to the authorities any reports or evidence of sexual violence they encounter; one way to do so is through Safe Campus.

RESOLVING CONFLICTS

**Office of the Ombud:** A collaborative and confidential environment to discuss your situation, consider options, and develop a plan for the future

**University Complaint Investigation and Resolution Office (UCIRO):** Investigates complaints that a University employee has violated the University's non-discrimination and/or non-retaliation policies

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION RESOURCES

**National Council of Teachers of English Statement on Anti-Racism to Support Teaching and Learning**

**National Council of Teachers of English Statement on Gender and Language**

**National Council of Teachers of English Resolution on the Dignity and Education of Immigrant, Undocumented, and Unaccompanied Youth**

**MLA Statement on Discrimination against Transgender Individuals**

**Modern Language Association (MLA) Statement on the 2016 Presidential Election**

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