Motion 76-2020

Resolution of the Emory College Faculty Senate

Creation of Working Group on specific actions for Emory College Faculty’s re-commitment to actions on race and diversity

As faculty, we exist in this job to be educators, mentors, advocates, and allies to our students. Ensuring justice in how we treat our students is fundamental to this mission and inseparable from our responsibilities as faculty members. The ECAS faculty are firmly committed to creating and maintaining a diverse and welcoming learning community for faculty, students, and staff.

Over the past week, we have read several well-crafted and moving statements condemning the racial violence that is perpetrated against Black people in America and expressing outrage at the ongoing racism that fuels this violence. We, too, are grieved and infuriated at these events and systems of oppression. We recognize that we own a portion of the blame for the slow progress at Emory. We also realize that statements alone are not enough and that words need to be translated into action. Going forward, we commit to do more than we have done so far to foster allyship, diversity, and equity in our community.

We propose establishing a working group to investigate and offer deliberate actions the Emory College faculty might pursue. The working group will meet this summer, and in consultation with stakeholders and constituencies across the university, will develop both immediate and long-term concrete actions to fight systemic racism in our community. In devising specific actions plans, the working group should consider broad objectives, including but not limited to: (1) increasing recruitment and retention of Black faculty and graduate students, (2) implementing inclusive teaching practices, and (3) increasing faculty and student awareness of challenges faced by Black students and intersectionality with other forms of underrepresentation.

A. **Composition.** The working group will have at least three (3) ECAS senators with one (1) from each division, and at least three (3) members of the College faculty. Any interested faculty member can provide background, voice concerns, or make other contributions to the work of the committee. A representative from the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion may be included as ex-officio.

A. **Nominations and Appointment.** Faculty will be invited to participate via email, and self-nominations will be welcomed. The Executive Council of the Senate will be responsible for selecting working group members from among the nominees in accordance with Article V of the Senate Bylaws. If overwhelmed by nominations, the Executive Council will make every effort to keep the task force small enough to remain agile, yet still represent the college faculty community in composition. Incoming ECAS Faculty Senate President, Jen Heemstra will co-chair the working group.
B. **Charge.** The working group will consider specific actions that the Senate and the Emory College can take to fight anti-black racism in the Emory community and system. The group will work to delineate specific actions that emerge from listening sessions with multiple constituencies among the faculty and the university. The WG may consider some preliminary ideas noted below that have been discussed among the faculty, as well as actions that emerge as the group listens and gathers information from multiple constituencies.

   a. Consideration of the possibility of reviving aspects of the Transforming Community Project with the goal of providing a network of facilitated conversations about race, diversity, and social justice among our community members, including conversations about the history of race and diversity at Emory University.

   b. Gathering the resources available at Emory for the creation of a training program that will educate faculty allies on the experiences of black, indigenous, and people of color, to undergird creation of classroom environments that provide safety and belonging for our students, as well as engagement in dialogue with our students on topics of racial justice. This will include consultation with the appropriate constituencies and stakeholders.

   c. Planning listening forums to provide both one-on-one and group listening sessions for faculty, students, and staff around issues of belonging, safety, and social justice.

   d. Analyzing ways in which faculty can continue and expand efforts to recruit and support faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds to ensure the development of department cultures that are equitable, inclusive, and demonstrate our commitment to the success of the recruited scholars representing that diversity.

   e. Working closely with the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence and other campus partners to develop workshops and resources to help faculty create more inclusive classrooms, and new courses addressing race, ethnicity and social justice.

   f. Suggesting a system to assess the unfolding actions and their effectiveness.

C. **Reporting.** The working group should provide a report to the Senate at the September 2020 meeting that delineates specific steps that we can begin in Fall 2020, as well as pointing to longer term actions that we can continue to develop and implement on a specified timescale.

The faculty in the Emory College of Arts and Sciences are committed to nurturing a more verdant educational environment seeded with racial justice and understanding in our classrooms and departments. True excellence in education must be inclusive.

Approved by the Emory College Faculty Senate, June 15, 2020