



Mariette DiChristina  
Dean

June 4, 2020

Dear members of the COM community,

In my letter earlier this week, I promised you further information about resources and programming to help our COM community address critical issues around racism and injustice today. With thanks to COM's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, today I'm providing info on:

- **A panel discussion next Thursday (June 11) from 3-4 pm** following up on ways communicators must play an important role in identifying and fostering understanding to combat racism and injustice. Please save the date; details to come.
- Resources from BU, for self-care, and ways to get involved (attached).
- A way for you to help improve DEI at COM by taking our 10-minute survey: [https://bostonu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5uryW8i5TmybpC5](https://bostonu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uryW8i5TmybpC5)
- Info (below) about another important resource: our COM DEI Committee, founded in 2018. Our inaugural Associate Dean, DEI, Anne Donohue, is currently handing over the baton to Michelle Sullivan, who begins in the role formally on July 1. This committee works closely with me as dean to help improve COM culture and processes.

### **COM DEI Committee History and Mission**

The COM Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee was formed in the late spring 2018. This active and engaged committee helps make recommendations and implement programs and policies to improve the culture and climate at COM.

The committee exists to elevate and ensure a culture of inclusion in which all members of our community are valued and respected. We strive to create an inclusive and equitable environment that recruits, supports, and retains a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff. We celebrate the diversity of identity, culture, perspective, and expression in our community. As professional communicators, we have a responsibility to foster an environment that cultivates diverse storytellers promotes the value of research, and telling stories in academia and the various fields of professional communication that emphasize diversity, equity, and inclusion and inform, enlighten, and prepare the next generation of communicators to thrive in a diverse and inclusive world.

For students interested in applying for the COM DEI Committee E-Board, you can complete an application here: [COM DEI Committee Application](#).

### **Activities in 2018**

Created COM DEI committee of faculty and staff  
Created and approved bylaws requiring DEI Committee representative on all search committees  
Attended more than two dozen training/lectures/workshops  
Held listening sessions for female-identifying faculty and staff

Organized series of DEI speakers/panels at all Faculty Meetings 2018-2019

- September: Associate Provost for Diversity and Inclusion: Crystal Williams
- November: Transgender Panel from [Speak Out Boston](#)
- January: COM First Generation Student panel
- February: BU Disability Services Director: Lorraine Wolf, PhD
- March: BU Global Programs on cultural differences in learning styles of international students
- April: University services/accountability including Human Resources, Title IX, Ombuds office

### **Activities in 2019**

Developed an [Action Plan and Mission Statement](#)

Added a question to Faculty Annual Report (FAR) about “contributions to DEI”

Created a DEI “search checklist” to ensure inclusive language and outreach for new hires

Developed a COM DEI student committee

Created a gender-neutral bathroom in COM

Attended more than two dozen trainings/lectures, workshops.

Held training session for COM Dean’s leadership group.

COM JO department has hired two African-American journalism professors who joined Michelle Johnson at NABJ summer 2019

Organized series of DEI speakers/panels

- Feet in Two Worlds journalism event to train immigrant journalists
- Accountability/Reporting Mechanism Discussion with Med Campus reps, Genl. Counsel
- Changing Face of Advertising panel
- Rel Dowdell film screening at Cinematheque

Created a Facebook group: [BU COM Diversity and Inclusion Network](#) with more than 350 members

Developed an extensive database of more than 100 DEI professional organizations to build our networks

### **2020 Activities (So Far)**

Held two male-identifying listening sessions

Development of allies, bystander training

A survey was sent out to seniors and grad student to assess culture and climate in June. This will be done annually to gauge progress.

DEI Student group formed and is seeking funding as an SAO student group

Enhancing Website presence, Instagram

A DEI-focused Career Fair 2020

Scheduled Faculty retreat/workshop with DEI training

Stay tuned for more info soon on next week’s event, and additional programming. Until then, please do take care and stay safe.

Best,



Mariette DiChristina  
Dean, College of Communication  
Boston University