

SUMA DEI Committee Meeting - 1st Session

Friday, December 11th

2:30 - 4:00 PM (EST)

Attendees

- Kizzy Charles-Guzman (Faculty)
- Steve Cohen (Faculty)
- Aditi Desai (Student)
- Shruti Deshpande (Alumna)
- John Anthony Hodges (Student)
- Rose Onwufor (Alumna)
- Mariví Perdomo Caba (Staff)
- George Sarrinikolaou (Staff)

Notes

The role of the committee is to drive the program's DEI work, to provide accountability, and to communicate to all stakeholders involved. The work will include oversight of the DEI audit that is getting underway as well as the implementation of recommendations that emerge from the audit.

Students

- Students want to play an active role in the DEI process: SUMA Equity Alliance (SEA) would like to review programming and curriculum content, work with the consultants, suggest changes
- Aditi and John and the SUMA Equity Alliance will reach out to current students and collect their interests and feedback

Alumni

- Alumni representatives will gather feedback from the alumni community; define how much can be shared with the alumni community
- Shruti and Rose will schedule a listening session for Alumni to gather their feedback on how they see SUMA's DEI efforts

Program Administration

- The program has been implementing a set of short-term actions to improve DEI, which the program announced to students and alumni last summer. The actions include a new course, bringing the total number of courses centering on issues of equity to three (Energy and Equity, Women in Cities, and Building Resilience in 21st Century Detroit: Roots and Remedies to Racial Injustice)
- While implementing larger changes that the audit will bring up, the program has asked faculty to include sessions on equity and environmental justice in the curriculum, whenever applicable.

- Altering existing course syllabi is a lengthy process that involves approval by the SPS Committee on Instruction.
- The program has been focusing on the curriculum and the diversity of its people, but it should also examine its contracting and purchasing in order to support minority-owned businesses.

Program staff

Share contact lists for student/alumni outreach if needed by SEA or Alumni members of the Committee.

- Reach out to SPS to request adding DEI questions for course surveys and evaluations at the end of the spring semester.
- Determine what SPS is planning in terms of mandatory DEi training for faculty and students.

Other Committee decisions:

- Meet every two months instead of every three months, especially as the audit gets underway
- The Committee will draft and issue the first communication to the program community in January.
- The program will create a DEI page on the SUMA website, which will house committee meeting minutes and other pertinent materials.

Next meeting: late January (date TBD)