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## **2019 Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Listening Tour**

In January 2019, the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) was established to facilitate Rowan's efforts to be a leading university committed to addressing persistent issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion that result in positive outcomes for students, faculty, and staff.

The Division of DEI at Rowan University leads and supports initiatives that promote diversity, equity and inclusion by developing and sustaining meaningful and collaborative relationships that result in a more diverse and inclusive community and centering the voices of our community to drive university- wide culturally sustaining initiatives and equitable opportunities.

One of our first objectives was to establish a mechanism for faculty, staff and students to share their experiences and recommendations to enhance diversity, equity and inclusive practices at Rowan University. From April through June 2019, The Division for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion launched a Listening Tour which provided an avenue for faculty, staff and students to voice their pride in Rowan as well as their desire for a more diverse, equitable and inclusive campus.

- The responses reflected areas of strengths and opportunities for growth.
- Participants provided insightful suggestions for programs, resources, and support for faculty, staff and students.
- Sessions were offered in two formats: face-to-face sessions and an online survey.
- 15 face-to-face sessions were held on the Glassboro, Camden Bank/ Camden CMSRU and SOM campuses. When possible, discussions were held in multiple rooms for attendees to select based on the affinity group they most closely align. The facilitators included doctoral students, faculty and staff members of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council.
- 98 students and 59 faculty and staff members participated in the face to face sessions.
- From May to June we launched the online survey using the same questions from the listening tour and received 34 responses from students and 34 responses from faculty and staff.

The following questions were asked in both formats:

- Please share your personal experiences around DEI, your needs, and your suggestions for creating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive campus environment. *(For students) When answering, please thinking about both academic and social spaces on campus.*
- What do you see as the most challenging aspects of an increasingly diverse academic community?
- What kinds of leadership efforts would represent a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion?
- What does a campus environment that is welcoming, inclusive and increasingly diverse look like?

### **Listening Tour Themes**

Upon completion of the sessions, all responses were transcribed and categorized into three themes, with reoccurring topics:

#### **1. Recruitment and retention of diverse students, faculty and staff, particularly those from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds.**

*“There was an accomplishment article that came out that had professor’s accomplishment. One of my professors had me in 8 different photos for 8 different projects and research that I am not even involved in but it was like, ‘hey you are a minority and we will just throw you in these pictures’. And everyone is looking at me like ‘I don’t know you’. It seems like an injustice to them because they have been doing months of research and they should be credited accordingly.”*

*“When I first came here, I didn’t know I was Black, well because I was always around Black and Brown people growing up. So, when I got here, it was kind of like a cultural shock and I didn’t have a problem with that. I just didn’t feel included...”*

*“I don’t think I see myself enough in students, faculty and curriculum and I think that plays a big part in my experiences at Rowan. I generally feel unsafe on campus because of incidents that have occurred and because it is a majority White campus.”*

*“One of the reasons that our student diversity initiatives have not been successful is because we have yet to address our employee staff and faculty issues. Meaning, our recruitment of diverse faculty and staff all across the board, not just racially, we have not addressed that as an institution”.*

## 2. Establish a common language for diversity, equity and inclusion

*“Having a better understanding of what diversity is and what it means to be inclusive and equitable and not just throw words around.”*

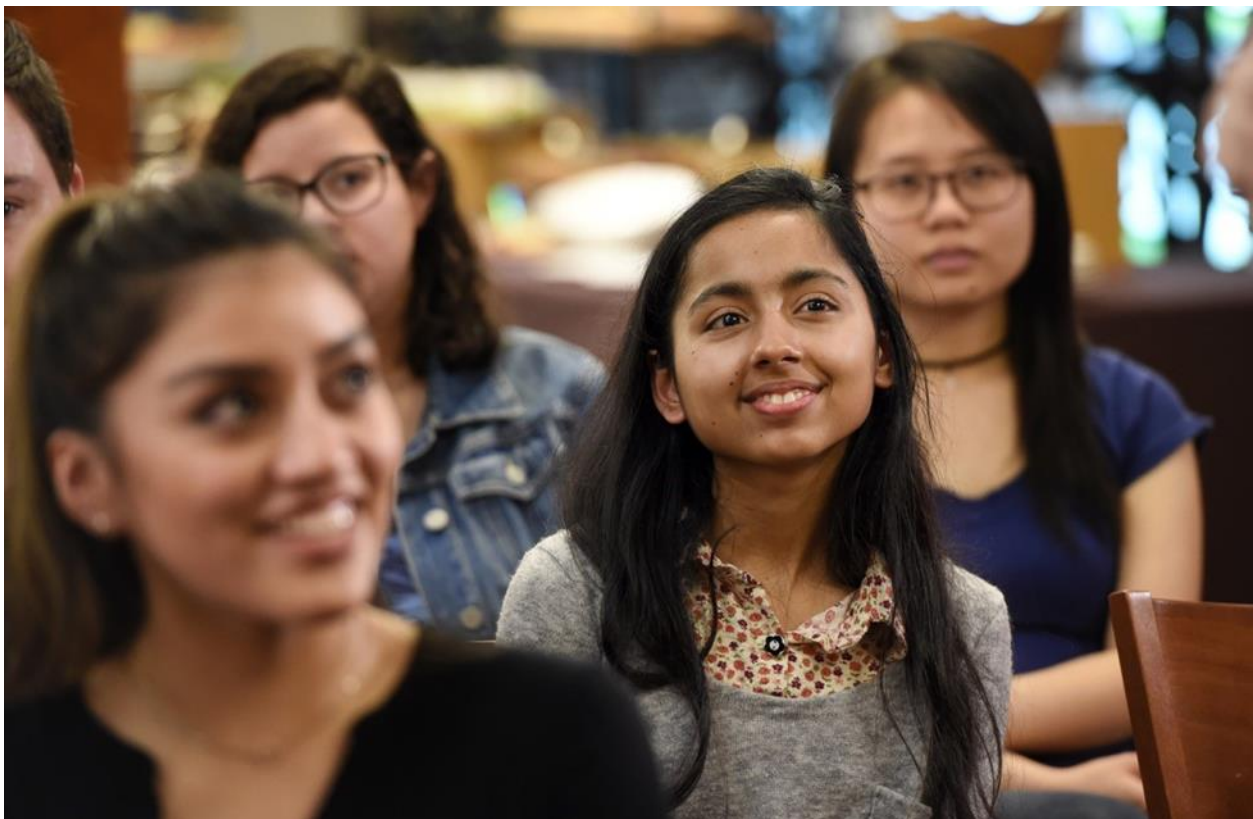
*“I also think that the leadership could be better about defining diversity because diversity could mean a lot of things. I think that message could be better defined so that it does feel like everyone has a place to be because diversity could mean so many different things. Even when it comes to lecturer vs tenured faculty. Diversity could be down to individual level of differences and how people bring a different lens to the table.”*

## 3. Leaders must model a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion

*“One problem is management training, I feel like they approach DEI pretty much as box ticking approach to it. I think they only see it as people of color and I think that’s a huge problem.”*

*“All staff need to be trained more regularly and with deeper understanding of diverse populations and their needs, and content in courses needs to reflect that.”*

*“There needs to be policies for everyone making hiring decisions or personnel decisions needs to be trained so that it not like someone is getting lucky but that is how just the campus is.”*



## Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Activities

**Since January 2019, the Division of Diversity has engaged in the following activities:**

- Developed and implemented the Foundations of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Certificate for Rowan University faculty and staff.
- Offered Unconscious Bias Training for faculty and staff.
- Provided language for the Rowan University Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement, which is now included on all job descriptions.
- Implemented a DEI Orientation session for new faculty and staff.
- Launched the institutional subscription with the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, a nationally-recognized, independent organization that provides online career development and mentoring resources for faculty, post-docs, and graduate students.
- Collaborated with the Office of the General Counsel on the development of the Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace and Educational Environment and Title IV: Procedure for Resolving Student v. Student Discrimination Complaints process.
- Streamlined reporting process for discrimination, harassment and retaliation complaints for students in the protected classes.
- Provided Title IX Deputy Coordinator training and Compliance and Athletics Training for Rowan employees.

***Upcoming Activities for 2019-2020 include:***

- Collaborate with Human Resources and the Office of Social Justice, Inclusion and Conflict Resolution (SJICR) on the development and expansion of affinity groups for faculty, staff and students.
- Collaborate with the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs on the development of a Center for Neurodiversity to address research, teaching, programming and community engagement.
- Develop an online Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Professional Certificate for external constituents.
- Implement the DEI/HR Search Advocate Program, which prepares faculty and staff to promote diversity, equity and inclusion principles and HR protocols on search and hiring committees.
- Develop a university wide DEI Strategic Action plan that includes unit/department/office plans. Develop an advisory group to the Division of DEI, the Office of Student Equity and Compliance Student Council.

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