A COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVITY AND BELONGING ROOTED IN CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

2020 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force
MAY 2024: 3-Year Update
Introduction

Under the umbrella of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force, more than 100 faculty, students, administrators, staff, and community members, served on 10 working groups during the Fall 2020 semester to engage in a holistic review of and action plan to address racism that exists on our campus and in surrounding communities. Each group submitted reports leading to 59 initiatives outlined in the 2021 Spring Task Force Operational Plan (Courageous Dialogue, Meaningful Action). The following three-year report provides an update on our efforts, highlighting our accomplishments that demonstrate our unwavering dedication to fostering a more inclusive and equitable university environment. We are currently implementing these initiatives, with progress detailed in this report.

Five Guiding Principles

In an era marked by increasing diversity and rapid change, the cultivation of a culture grounded in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging is indispensable for any educational institution. Mount St. Mary’s University, guided by the timeless wisdom of Catholic Social Teaching, is committed to advancing DEI initiatives using the guiding principles listed below. These principles underscore our steadfast endeavor to create an environment where all individuals feel welcomed, respected, and valued.

1. **Process, Not a Product**: We recognize that achieving cultural competence is an ongoing journey. To this end, we acknowledge the need to examine personal biases and stereotypes through continuous education, training, and development for all members of our university community. This principle reflects our commitment to self-awareness and personal growth as a foundation for fostering inclusivity and belonging.

2. **Marathon, Not a Sprint**: DEI is a long-term commitment. While immediate results are desirable, we recognize that sustainable change takes time. We are dedicated to the gradual but steadfast progress of our DEI initiatives, understanding that there are no quick fixes.

3. **Involves Both Head and Heart**: DEI is highly visceral, intertwined with justice and equity issues. We strive to create a campus environment that engages both the intellect and emotions, recognizing the inherent dignity and respect of every individual. This principle highlights the core values of our institution, echoing the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

4. **Requires Empathy and Compassion**: At the heart of DEI is empathy and compassion, echoing the Catholic Social Teaching principles of unconditional love and care. We aim to treat every member of our community with empathy and compassion, fostering an environment that upholds the worth and dignity of the human person.

5. **Be Comfortable Being Uncomfortable**: Real change often begins with confronting uncomfortable truths. We encourage education, dialogue, and action, urging members of our community to unlearn and reframe our perspectives for the betterment of our campus culture. Embracing discomfort is pivotal to our commitment to DEI.
Background

Our DEI endeavors are firmly rooted in the foundational belief in the inherent dignity and respect of every human person, as articulated in our undergraduate mission statement and embodied within Goal 6 of the Mount Strategic Plan (MSP): Culture of Teamwork/Diversity and Inclusion (MSP 6.2). Four strategic objectives outlined in our Five-Year DEI Strategic Plan guide our actions, emphasizing: (1) access and success; (2) climate and intergroup relations; (3) education and scholarship; and (4) institutional viability and vitality.

Our DEI efforts are informed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) Making Excellence Inclusive framework. In this framework, we define:

- **Diversity:** Individual and social differences encompassing race/ethnicity, religion, class, gender, country of origin, ability, and affiliations.
- **Inclusion:** Actively engaging with diversity in the curriculum, co-curriculum, and communities to enhance students’ awareness, knowledge, cognitive skills, and empathic understanding of societal interactions.
- **Equity:** Creating equal opportunities for historically underserved populations to participate in educational programs, aiming to bridge achievement gaps in student success and completion.

At the Mount, Making Excellence Inclusive is an ongoing process fostering excellence in learning, teaching, personal development, institutional functioning, and community engagement.

This report offers a comprehensive overview of our ongoing commitment to equity, inclusion, and belonging, highlighting the outcomes of the DEI Task Force Operational Plan and the university's progress across various initiatives.

1) **Access and Success:** The Mount will continue to diversify its student body and students will achieve equitable outcomes and success.

The Mount is committed to diversifying its student body and ensuring equitable outcomes for all students. Key initiatives include comprehensive DEI training and development programs for students, faculty, administrators, and staff. Noteworthy accomplishments include the launch of online DEI modules for first-year students, faculty equity, inclusion and success workshops/seminars, and the establishment of the **Women of the Mount Plan**. Additionally, efforts to increase diversity within the Honors Program have yielded commendable results, reflecting our dedication to fostering inclusivity at every level. Specific accomplishments include:

- **DEI Training and Development:** The university provides comprehensive DEI training and development programs for students, faculty, administrators, and staff. This ensures that all members of the university community are equipped with the knowledge and skills to create an inclusive environment.
a. All – Themed programming with a major speaker and corollary events (e.g., film screening, book group, other speakers)
   i. 2022-23 programming theme: James Baldwin; Major speaker: Dr. Eddie Glaude, Jr.
   ii. 2023-24 programming theme: racial justice and the death penalty; Major speaker: Anthony Ray Hinton
b. Students – Launched new online course “Welcoming Diversity and Promoting Inclusion” for first-year students and student leaders developed collaboratively by our Office of Equity and Success and Center for Instructional Design and Delivery
c. Faculty/Staff/Administrators – Social Justice Education Series, book groups, training tailored for offices, presentations to Leadership Team meetings, DEI Certificate launched in Fall 2022 – 59 employee completers.
   i. Since January 2022, approximately 40% of employees have attended at least one DEI workshop/event
   ii. Mandatory training on sexual harassment and assault
   iii. Title IX Reflection Sessions
   iv. Membership in the Council for Independent Colleges (CIC) Belong program with resources on belonging, cornerstone webinars, and access to online course Fostering a Culture of Belonging
d. Faculty – DEI training by schools/colleges in Spring 2023, annual yearlong weekly seminar (Faculty Equity and Success Institute), and inclusive pedagogy workshops
   • Quarterly DEI@the mount e-newsletter; 9 issues since Fall 2021
   • Fall 2022 development of the Women of the Mount Plan: Ensuring a culture of Equity, Inclusion, and Success.
     a. Fall 2023 - Opening of Ombuds Office including two Ombuds
   • Honors Program – Students of Color enrolled in Honors Program increased from 22% in 2019 to 27% in 2022.
     a. The National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) Commendation for DEI Efforts - conducted an on-site comprehensive review of our program for the first time in our program's history
     b. Honors Program annual persistence reporting
     c. Students of Color Honors Alumni focus group
     d. Founders Scholarship awarded to female Student of Color

2) Climate and Intergroup Relations: The Mount will embody a welcoming climate and a more inclusive learning community, workplace, and campus environment.

Creating a welcoming climate and fostering a more inclusive learning community, workplace, and campus environment is the cornerstone of this initiative. It involves a suite of 14 initiatives, such as promoting campus reporting options, conducting risk assessments, enhancing town-campus relations, and ensuring religious physical representations on campus that reflect the diversity of the Catholic Church. Specific accomplishments include:
• Campus Reporting Options: The university promotes and enhances campus reporting options to ensure that incidents of bias, discrimination, and/or harassment are addressed promptly and effectively (Mount Report, Reporting and Responding to Bias and Hate Crimes policy, Behavior Intervention Team, Incident Response Team, etc.).

• Advancing the universality of the Catholic faith on campus – religious physical representation on campus that are inclusive and reflect the full diversity of the Catholic Church:
  a. Our Lady of Kibeho devotional site placed outside of Bradley; rosary group formed, annual events
  b. Added 6 pictures of diverse servants of God on the path to sainthood in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception
  c. Annual St. Peter Claver Lecture series beginning Fall 2020 (hosted Tolton play and speakers Gary Steele, Dr. Nadja West, Sister Marcia Hall)
  d. Celebrating the Diversity of Saints joyfully – collaboration with Chaplain’s office
  e. Beacons of Faith print hanging outside of President’s Dining Room (including Mother Mary Lange, Servant of God)
  f. Professor Nick Hutchings has hung 33 pieces of art from faculty and staff on campus; many from students and alums of color
  g. Collaborative programming with the Catholic Identity Community – speakers
  h. Year-long partnership with Sisters from Historically Black Women Religious Communities, specifically the Sisters of Providence in Baltimore, MD
  i. Partnership with Vietnamese community with two Vietnamese Sisters on campus as well as Mount Admissions’ outreach in two Vietnamese Parishes in Arlington, VA and Silver Spring, MD
  j. Sunday Mass optional second reading in Spanish and celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month
  k. Celebration of Black Catholic History Month every November with Mass and Lecture event along with Black History Month (Fr. David Endres)
  l. Daily Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction in English and Latin

• Trauma Support Groups - Noteworthy progress in offering race-related trauma support groups and counseling sessions (anxiety management, conquering negative thinking, art therapy, social media stress, self-care hikes, etc.).

• Staff resources - Ongoing efforts to provide resources to faculty, administrators, and staff on trauma’s impact on learning has been made possible through our Counseling Center. They met with Symposium professors in Summer 2023 to discuss mental health challenges and barriers faced by first-year students, conducted mental health and suicide prevention training with Athletics in August 2023, and met with first-year faculty in September 2023.

• Restorative actions - In-progress initiative to address diversity issues in dispute resolution and student conduct processes. Partner across campus with other offices to work collaboratively on disciplinary cases.
• Grievance process - Ongoing development of a process for students to report exclusionary experiences, with progress on bias reporting information dissemination. Informational materials distributed to all students at August move-in.

• Campus Programming and Town-Campus Relations: Organize a range of campus programming events that celebrate diversity and promote intergroup relations. The university also actively engages with the local community to foster positive town-campus relations (e.g., working with Emmitsburg mayor, Orientation collaboration with Emmitsburg-annual Party in the Park, Mount Friday in Town, etc.).
  a. Campus Programming - Residence Life partnership with Orientation, Student Activities Office, and Center for Student Engagement and Success (CSES) on training student leaders on DEI topics during August training.
  b. Local businesses have Pop-Up tables on campus during August Orientation for students, encourage business to market using our digital displays on campus, creating Mount Fridays in town where businesses wear Mount attire and display Mount flags.

3) Education and Scholarship: The Mount will define and advance diversity, equity, and inclusion through education and scholarship.

Our commitment to advancing DEI extends to education and scholarship, evidenced by the development of DEI strategic plans by each school and college within the university. Student feedback on curriculum diversity, enhancements to the Core Curriculum, and initiatives within the orientation program underscore our dedication to promoting diversity in all facets of the educational experience. Specific accomplishments include:

• Development of DEI Strategic Plans: Each school and college within the university has developed its own DEI strategic plan, ensuring that DEI efforts are integrated into the curriculum and educational experience:
  a. College of Liberal Arts - Continue to diversify the faculty. Faculty engagement (two book groups that featured DEI themes; Ducharme lecture).
  b. Bolte School of Business - 75% of BSB faculty have participated in a day-long DEI training and identification has occurred for classes/areas where we can improve the integration of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (in the Strategic Planning process).
  c. School of Education - Successful integration of DEI across our entire program - occurs through a four-course sequence and carefully scaffolded objectives. Sequence begins with EDUC 100: Foundations of American Education, continues through EDUC 300: Modernity in Education, SPED 308: Introduction to Exceptional Children, and EDGE 343: Globalization in Education. The sequence culminates in Internship I and II.
  d. School of Natural Science and Mathematics - Departmental Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategic planning, Students of Color STEM Club established, alternate grading initiatives piloted.
• Curriculum Feedback – Students were encouraged to provide feedback on curriculum in relation to DEI efforts. Survey distributed in April 2023. Results analyzed for Committee on Curriculum and Assessment in July 2023. 70%+ students believe the curriculum reflects the diversity of students and classes have helped them learn more about people who are different from them. The scores increased from the previous year as well. Scores were lower (51%) for the Core curriculum.

• Enhanced DEI in Curriculum and Student Experience:
  a. Core Curriculum
    i. First-Year Symposium course - Input sought from faculty on increasing diversity of relevant readings for Fall 2020: four readings added. Course evaluations to all Symposium classes, students were asked to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of the readings. Out of 303 respondents: 92% agreed or strongly agreed, 7% were neutral, and 1% disagreed.
    ii. Updated version of Western Imagination to Atlantic Peoples course (offered for a second time) 93% of students agree that the course helped them learn about cultural encounters from multiple perspectives.
    iii. Philosophy - continues to work on revising the 2nd philosophy course in light of a review of fall 2022 offerings and ongoing discussions.
    iv. Theology – revisions underway (pilot versions Fall 2024 and Spring 2025).
  b. Orientation program
    i. Student Leader Training for Orientation Leaders, AMP, RAs, and CSES
       1. 2023 – Factuality: A 90-minute Crash Course on Structural Inequality in America
       2. 2024 – Wes Woodson – Mental health advocate focusing on student leaders and access and acceptance of mental health resources by minority students
    ii. Spanish Translation – Orientation pamphlet, packing list
    iii. Commencement – Spanish Translator and devices continue
    iv. Spring Expedition MSMU – Smoother integration of new students with more support and collaboration with coaches, especially for international students
    v. Spanish-speaking Parent/Support Person Panel Discussion
    vi. Spanish Translation for Individual Family Financial Aid/Accounting Meetings

• Significant conversations between Catholic Identity Committee and Mount’s Inclusive Excellence Committee with coordinated programming has been highly successful.

• Catholic Identity Committee with leadership by the Director of Mission Initiatives made substantial progress on developing a Mount charism.
4) **Institutional Viability and Vitality**: The Mount will have institutional viability and vitality through comprehensive development, continuous improvement, and active, intentional involvement with diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Institutional viability and vitality are integral to the sustainability of our DEI commitment. Key initiatives encompass measurable goals (key performance indicators), BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) faculty hiring, and integrating DEI elements into the recruitment and hiring process. Regular campus climate surveys, both for students and employees, will provide essential feedback for ongoing improvement. Specific accomplishments include:

- **Faculty Hiring and Recruitment**: Committed to hiring BIPOC faculty by way of increasing quality and numbers in candidate pool. Net gain over three years - 9 faculty (six tenure track). By strategically focusing on expanding recruitment from diverse resources while conducting strategic outreach efforts, we have successfully attracted a more diverse pool of candidates for faculty, administrator, and staff positions.

- **ASPIRE published the 2024 FactBook using Power BI which is an interactive platform. Most of the charts can be filtered by race, gender, Pell-eligible and First-Generation college students.**

- **Expanded listing of DEI advertising opportunities in all job postings. Ongoing efforts in recruitment have remained dedicated to diversifying our workforce, with a strong emphasis on outreach to high quality diverse talent pools. Search materials updated to include DEI-based interview questions. Hiring managers and search committees are more committed to a diverse pool of candidates.**

- **The loan payback program continues to be used by employees. Public Service Loan Forgiveness materials have been added to recruitment/onboarding benefits materials.**

- **The Human Resources Department partnered with ASPIRE in developing a Workforce Summary dashboard – included a Workforce Demographic Dashboard Summary. Dashboard is updated annually.**

- **Office of Equity and Success; includes a Director for DEI training and development.**

- **DEI Campus Climate Surveys administered every two years (Employees-Spring 2023, Students-Spring 2024).**
  
  a. **Student Campus Climate Survey was administered in January 2024 with an 18% response rate. The Summary Report has been released. Results were shared with Cabinet and at a lunch-and-learn presentation for about 50 faculty and administrators. DEI Newsletter featured some of the findings.**
  
  b. **Employee Campus Climate Survey was administered in April 2023 with a 25% response rate. The Summary Report was released. Results were shared with Cabinet and at a lunch-and-learn presentation for about 30 administrators and faculty. DEI Newsletter featured some of the findings.**

- **Key Performance Indicators**: As a way of accountability, key performance indicators have been named to measure progress and success in DEI efforts via a DEI Tracker (Smartsheet).
• 10th Annual Inclusive Excellence Leadership Award is an award for an employee presented annually at Mount’s Opening Day Celebration in August.

In conclusion, Mount St. Mary’s University remains steadfast in our pursuit of Inclusive Excellence. Our commitment is unwavering, grounded in the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and the transformative power of our diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives. We are devoted to nurturing a campus culture where each individual feels a profound sense of belonging and actively contributes to our vibrant community.

Guided by values of empathy, justice, and ongoing growth, we aspire to a future where our campus embodies genuine inclusivity reflective of our faith and core values. Through collaborative efforts and steadfast dedication, we steadily advance towards realizing our vision of an inclusive environment that aligns with our mission.

As members of the Task Force, we extend our gratitude for your engagement in the educational opportunities and courageous conversations facilitated over the years. We continue to challenge every member of the Mount community to explore how you are called to live significantly to God and others, as we collectively strive for a more equitable and inclusive campus.
You belong here. Racism does not.

In harming one of us, racism harms us all. Contrary to what we preach as a university that practices Catholic social teaching, some students and employees do not feel welcomed and that they belong in our community. We are committed to changing this cultural divide so that everyone feels they belong. We have called the Mount community to action this fall in order to address our DEI issues. Ten working groups involving more than 100 faculty, administrators and staff are leaning in to making the Mount better.

**DEI Task Force Executive Group**
- Coordinate planning efforts of working groups
- Provide guidance
- Make and disseminate decisions

**Group Members:**
- Dr. Paula Whetsel-Ribeau
- Dr. Michael Driscoll
- Dr. Boyd Creasman
- Dr. Layton Field
- Dr. Timothy Trainor

**Physically Representing Diversity on Campus Working Group**
- Recommend artwork, architectural plans and designs that represent the Mount’s diversity and commitment to DEI

**Leads:**
- Rev. Martin Moran
- Nick Hutchings

**Campus Climate Working Group**
- Determine ways to best prepare our students and community to carry out and channel activism in positive ways
- Develop a plan for Fall 2020 that includes community discussions and dialogue to educate students and our community about the presidential election

**Leads:**
- Dr. Maureen Oakley
- Dr. Michael Towe

**Data Analysis Working Group**
- Engage in analysis of institutional data for evidence of bias or prejudice

**Lead:**
- Dr. Jeff Simmons

**You Belong Here. Racism Does Not.**

**Awareness, Education and Training Working Group**
- Develop recommendations for continuing training, education and awareness efforts
- Recommend incentive and accountability program for participation in professional development

**Leads:**
- Dr. Alejandro Canadas
- Stepheca Sawyer

**Preventing and Responding to Incidents of Racism Working Group**
- Promote a positive and supportive climate that integrates diversity in pursuit of academic excellence, engagement and sense of belonging
- Develop timeline for workshops on difficult dialogues

**Leads:**
- Dr. Levi Esses
- Dr. David McCarthy

**Workforce Diversity Working Group**
- Analyze how university and department climates are affecting recruitment and retention for diversity
- Recommend ways to eliminate patterns of inequity in human resources practices

**Lead:**
- Kristen Hurley

**Institutional Racism Working Group**
- Develop a department/office audit that thoroughly examines policies, practices and procedures for office personnel, displays/artwork and marketing media to ensure that the Mount’s commitment to DEI is represented

**Leads:**
- Leon Dixon
- Dr. Corinne Farneti

**Physically Representing Diversity on Campus Working Group**
- Recommend artwork, architectural plans and designs that represent the Mount’s diversity and commitment to DEI

**Leads:**
- Rev. Martin Moran
- Nick Hutchings

**Curriculum Initiatives Working Group**
- Examine inclusive excellence in teaching and learning across the curriculum and consult with discipline-specific experts on how to diversify curriculum

**Leads:**
- Dr. Greg Murry
- Dr. Richard Buck

**Interacting with Surrounding Communities Working Group**
- Identify the benefits of aligning priorities and cultivating stronger relationships
- Determine appropriate and impactful avenues to export the university’s goodness

**Leads:**
- Dr. Pete Dorsey
- Don Briggs
  (Mayor, Emmitsburg)

**You Belong Here. Racism Does Not.**

**Dealing with Trauma and Healing from Racism Working Group**
- Determine programs to help students to process trauma

**Lead:**
- Dr. Bernard Franklin

**University Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force**

**FALL 2020**

University Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force • msmary.edu/DEI
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force
Fall 2020

Executive Group
Co-leaders: Paula Whetsel-Ribeau & Michael Driscoll
Members: Layton Field, Tim Trainor, Boyd Creasman

Working Groups

Training, Education & Awareness
Co-leaders: Alejandro Canadas & Stepheca Sawyer
Employee Members: Rosie Bolen, Leon Dixon, Denise Marjarum, Liz Monahan, Stephen McGinley, Justine Miller, Tim Wolfe
Student Members: Thomas de Xavier, Lewis Mbuu, Parth Sharma, Ashari Cain, Maya Strudwick-Miller, Kiev Denby, Joseph Intolubbe, Tito Okpalannaka

Preventing and Responding to Incidents of Racism
Co-leaders: Levi Esses & David McCarthy
Employee Members: Benjamin Buhrman, Leon Dixon, Brent Johnson, Carol McIntosh, June Mugo, Jack Trammel

Campus Climate
Co-leaders: Michael Towle & Maureen Oakley
Employee Members: Jose Del Valle, Farrah Douglas, Jon Hager, Brendan Johnson, Pratibha Kumar, Sean Lewis, Nicole Patterson, Kristin Sites, Joe Vince, Kaleb Wiley
Student Members: Maryland Student Legislature, College Democrats, College Republicans, Discourse Society

Physically Representing Diversity on Campus
Co-leaders: Rev. Martin Moran & Nick Hutchings
Student Members: Raven Boatright, Tito Okpalannaka, Hunter Luers, Katie Creamer

Curricular Initiatives
Co-leaders: Greg Murry & Richard Buck
Employee Members: CCA Rep, Indrani Mitra, Mike Barry, Christine Blackshaw, Josh Brown, Tim Fritz, Russ Hamer, Francis Lukban, Christine McCauslin, Mike Miller, Susann Samples, Sarah Scott, Dave Wehner
Student Focus Group: Karla Salazar, Sydney Knider, John Weinheimer, Jackie Candito, Bryan Green, Katherine Stern, Caleb McCleaf, Rachel Lemon, Shahanaaz Soumah, Karington Smith
Dealing with Trauma
Leader: Bernard Franklin
Employee Members: Mindy Korol, Denise Marjarum, Gerald Rooth, Ernest Solar
Student Members: Matenyeh Kaba, Isaiah Williamson

Institutional Racism
Co-leaders: Leon Dixon & Corinne Farneti
Employee Members: Jessica Boyer, Jamie Brown, Scott Coley, Michelle Ohanian, Michelle Patterson, Jay Phillips, Athar Rafiq, Fred Reynolds, Brandon Rockwell, Andy Rosenfeld, Sara Ryan, Charles Strauss, Alexis Watson, Christina Yoder
Student Members: Chayla Thomas, Alyssa Tyler

Workforce Diversity
Leader: Kristin Hurley
Employee Members: Areli Aguilar-Hill, Alex Akpodiete, Don Butt, Denise Ditch, Katy Dye, Sara Laird, Indrani Mitra, Brenda McKeel, Maris Marchesano, Thane Naberhaus, Linda Northrup, Clare Tauriello
Student Member: Thomas de Xavier

Interacting with Surrounding Communities
Co-leaders: Pete Dorsey & Don Briggs (Mayor, Emmittsburg)
Employee Members: Bernard Franklin, Donna Klinger, Andi Overton, Kevin Robinson
Community Members: Sherman Coleman (Frederick Co Economic Development), David Brooks (Brooks Behavioral Health Services, Thurmont)
Student Member: Tye Golden

Data Analysis
Leader: Jeff Simmons
Employee Members: Chris Duffy, Rachel Jackson, David King, Barb Marinak, Tim Stanton, Mallory Wishard