

Equality and Diversity Committee

Actions from the meeting on 16th June 2020

The Oxford Law Faculty is committed to efforts to eliminate discrimination, create equal opportunities and develop good working relationships between different people. We pride ourselves on our multinational and multiracial staff and students. We know we still have much to do, but we acknowledge that fostering inclusiveness and diversity must be a central objective of any first-rate research and education institution.

The Faculty's Equality and Diversity Committee and Race Equality Coordinator have been working for several years on promoting racial equality and diversity within the faculty. We have been consulting with students and faculty produce the following action plan. We acknowledge that this is not the time for platitudes, but for action. It is not enough simply to declare opposition to racism; positive action is required. We wish to mainstream equality and racial justice throughout the faculty's culture and activities. We acknowledge our responsibility to promote equality and diversity throughout the faculty. There is no "magic bullet" which can achieve this and it requires a wide range of on-going activities. We acknowledge too the importance of intersectional discrimination and will seek the address the ways racial injustice intersects with other sources of injustice.

We have produced a set of action points (set out below) which will develop over the coming months. The Committee will report termly to the law board on the progress made on these points.

List of Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
BAME	Black, Asian and minority ethnic
BLL	Bodleian Library
D	Dean
DO	Development Office
EDC	Equality and Diversity Committee
EDO	Equality and Diversity Officer
GSC	Graduate Studies Committee
REC	Race Equality Co-ordinator
SG	Student Group
USC	Undergraduate Studies Committee
VD	Vice Dean
VD (ADED)	Vice Dean and Associate Dean for Equality and Diversity

Curriculum and Teaching

1. REC to distribute among the faculty good practice gleaned from the returns of the Curriculum Health Check. Teaching groups to be asked to address diversity issues in their reading list and teaching. There were 2 forms of diversity to consider: diversity of the authors used and diversity in the kinds of issues addressed/ approaches taken. Both were needed

2. USC and EDC to be asked to develop further faculty encouragement/support for teaching groups to develop alternative means of assessment.
3. USC to consider an introductory course to focus on putting Law in its broader social background, highlighting issues around race, gender, class, etc. This could be a compulsory Mods course or a course in TT of the first year (a little like the LRMSP).
4. USC to consider encouraging the creation of a third-year option which could address diversity issues and/or encourage the use of the dissertation options to address diversity issues.
5. EDC to consider ways of assisting providing materials that could be used for teaching groups seeking to diversify curricula and make these available on the EDC microsite.
6. BLL to continue with their excellent work on making available materials on diversity issues, particularly on race and post-colonial developments.
7. USC to assess the feasibility of a non-mandatory Equality & Diversity Essay Competition for all undergraduate students, covering any Mods or FHS course, with the Prize possibly being a summer internship within an internal or external research project/programme looking into Equality & Diversity issues in different areas of the law (*e.g.* the Bonavero has several projects along those lines). The stipend for the internship could be sought by the development office or by applying to the University Diversity Fund.

Diversifying the Faculty

1. VD to take care when drafting job advertisements to make them as attractive as possible to BAME applicant (*e.g.* by being flexible about the number of subjects that need to be taught).
2. VD (ADED) and REC (plus volunteers) to produce a list for teaching groups of BAME and especially Black scholars who would be appropriate as visiting professors. Fundraising may be needed to help with funding BAME visiting professor in some cases.
3. VD to allow a pause during job interviews, after the initial shortlisting, to ensure there was an appropriate conversion rate from applicants from marginalised groups to the shortlist and to review as necessary. VD to encourage the whole committee to be involved in identifying BAME and especially Black candidates to apply for posts.
4. VD to explore the possibility of a policy to have no all-white shortlists without a strong justification.
5. DO and D to encourage further fundraising for scholarships aimed at BAME students and to liaise with colleges who may be interested in these.
6. REC to consider how we can obtain better data on admissions from UCAS or elsewhere and whether there are ways we can improve BAME representation at undergraduate admissions.
7. GSC to consider what steps can be taken in the admissions process to increase the number of Black graduate students in the law faculty.

Student Experience

1. VD (ADED) to have a more coordinated approach to unconscious bias training/intervention. To explore evidence as to the efficacy of unconscious bias training or whether there are better ways to deal with the issue.
2. REC to find ways of engaging with the students in curriculum development (*e.g.* one teaching group e-mailed all students to ask for input and another used Canvas to encourage input as the course went on) and to disseminate good practice.
3. USC to facilitate the students arranging their own forum for finding out and disseminating their experiences of issues around race and diversity within the faculty.
4. EDO to put up on the microsite (open) minutes of the EDC and to explore ways of alerting students to meetings and encouraging input.

Student Action

1. SG to reach out to more students to form an organizing committee for the student consultation.
2. SG to collect resources, including previous consultations, academic studies, and guides, on formulating a suitable form for the consultation.
3. SG to consider the technical logistics of how to broadly circulate the consultation when it is finalized.
4. SG to build a broad coalition of support for the consultation so that it can be widely circulated across the Faculty.
5. SG to explore ways of having a welcome event at the beginning of the academic year with a focus on diversity. The faculty to assist with funding as possible.

Jonathan Herring, 6th July 2020