



One priority I identified when I became Dean was **creating a more diverse and inclusive environment** at the Dietrich School. As a first step, we created a Diversity Task Force headed by Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, Kay Brummond, and populated with members representing our faculty, staff, and graduate and undergraduate students.

Early in their tenure, the Task Force recommended that we conduct a climate survey of the school's faculty and staff. The results of this survey—which we shared with the Task Force, our Faculty and Staff Diversity Committees, and our Chairs and Directors—prompted two immediate responses. The first was to establish a framing statement to guide our future work in this area. The Task Force—with input from the Committees—crafted the following:

The central importance of diversity, inclusion, and equity to the Dietrich School's mission of education and scholarly excellence will be recognized and embedded broadly in the ways we teach, conduct research, engage with each other in workplaces and classrooms, and participate with local, national, and global partners.

The Task Force's second recommendation was to engage a team of external reviewers to evaluate the school's policies, practices, and environment from the perspective of diversity, equity, and inclusiveness. In Spring 2019, three reviewers chosen by the Task Force visited the Dietrich School. Over the course of two days, the reviewers met with faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students, and senior leadership and toured our campus. The reviewers' final report to us was initially shared with members of the Dietrich School's Faculty and Staff Diversity Committees and our Diversity Task Force, as well as our Chairs and Directors. It is available here:

<https://pitt.sharepoint.com/sites/dsas/dean/Shared%20Documents/Diversity%20External%20Review%20Report%20-%20Final.pdf>

As you will see, the external reviewers identified many positive efforts and initiatives, but also shortcomings. Some issues they raised are beyond the control of the Dietrich School and have been referred to the appropriate units at Pitt. My Senior Leadership Team and I then considered each recommendation for change within the Dietrich School. We made two decisions. One is that lasting accomplishments are only possible with substantial engagement by faculty, staff, and students and careful attention to the immense variation in our workplaces and education programs across the School. The other is effective changes need to be phased in strategically over several years.

To create a foundation for meaningful, sustainable increases in the diversity of the Dietrich School, we will initially focus on two areas: fostering a common understanding of the importance of diverse learning and work environments to our mission and continued success as a school, and increasing the proportion of our faculty, staff, and students from social groups that are underrepresented and that have faced historical barriers to employment and educational opportunities.

To that end, every department, program, and administrative unit in the school has been asked to reflect on their most critical challenges and disparities relative to diversity, equity, and inclusion and to identify and implement effective strategies for addressing these challenges. Our goal is to increase recruiting and retention of faculty, staff, and students from diverse groups. Ensuring a climate of respect and inclusivity for our school's diverse colleagues and students will be central to that goal.

To bolster these efforts, we've created a temporary position—Senior Advisor to the Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The charge for this position—and, consequently, the person in the position—will change depending on which priorities we seek to address. The Senior Advisor will work collaboratively with the Dean's senior team, the Dietrich School Faculty Diversity Committee and Staff Diversity Committee, and the School's Diversity Task Force to guide focused efforts to plan, implement and assess strategies to advance the diversity, equity, and inclusion goals that are of central importance to the School's educational and scholarly excellence. I'm happy to report that after inviting applications and nominations for this position and interviewing candidates, Tara Meyer, Professor of Chemistry, will assume this new role on January 2, 2020.

As we begin this effort, the Faculty Diversity Committee will be working to enhance anti-bias training and assist departments that are interested in establishing diversity committees.

The newly-expanded Staff Diversity Committee will continue to focus on creating more inclusive climates in workplaces and assisting hiring managers in assessing translatable skills on applicants' resumes.

A new staff mentoring program supported with a seed grant from the Office of the Chancellor, CONNECTED will develop connections between staff that center diversity and equity through the Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) Campus of Difference training. Additional ADL training will be offered in the Spring for interested faculty and staff.

As we continue with this important work, I hope I can count on your commitment to building a community in the Dietrich School that is truly welcoming to all. I invite your participation and look forward to your contributions.