

*2017-2018 Annual Report: College Diversity & Inclusion Committee*

Chair: Shannon M. Oltmann

Members: Tae Hyun Baek  
Jennifer Scarduzio  
Kyra Hunting  
Nancy Harrington  
Nathan Stevens  
Hailey Salyers

The College of Communication and Information Diversity & Inclusion (DI) Committee met monthly throughout the 2017-2018 academic year. The DI Committee contributed to the College in several ways throughout the year.

First, the DI Committee held a discussion on revising the College of Communication and Information's biennial diversity survey, to remove the possibility of reverse-identifying under-represented minorities. The committee recommended that demographic questions be removed, which was approved by Dean O'Hair.

Second, the DI Committee developed a diversity and inclusion statement for the College: "The College of Communication and Information is committed to fostering a diverse, welcoming, empowering, and inclusive community. We believe that diversity and inclusion are drivers of excellence, collaboration, creativity, and success. We strongly support intellectual freedom and the right to hold diverse perspectives, while at the same time condemning all forms of hatred and oppression." The statement was approved by Faculty Council, vetted by the First Amendment Center, and discussed at the last College Assembly meeting (4/25/18). It will be voted on for acceptance by the faculty. If approved, the statement will appear on the College website and faculty will be encouraged to include it in syllabi.

Third, the DI Committee supported the UK Student Chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) by providing funding for some students to attend the annual NABJ conference. This is an annual, recurring commitment of the DI Committee.

Finally, the DI Committee has collaborated to bring multiple speakers to the UK campus. With the School of Journalism and Media, the Committee hosted Dana Canedy for a talk, “The Road from UK to the Pulitzer Prizes” in September. Lecia Brooks, the Outreach Director for the Southern Poverty Law Center, spoke to the community in January. The talk was given in conjunction with a panel presented by the Department of Communication as part of the “Challenging Conversations” events. In collaboration with the School of Information Science, we are bringing Virginia Eubanks, author of *Automating Inequality: How High-Tech Tools Profile, Police, and Punish the Poor*, to speak to the campus community in April. In early April, the comedians Alison Gavin and Stewart Huff performed for the campus, focusing on critical thinking and reflection regarding inclusion and diversity issues. This was presented in conjunction with UK Student Services and the Office of LGBTQ\* Resources.

In April, the DI Committee met with Dr. Sonja Feist-Price, Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion, to discuss priorities for the upcoming year. Among her concerns was reaching students, enabling them to feel a sense of belonging, and empowering them to hold difficult but necessary conversations. Partially to address these priorities, the DI Committee has committed to help Dr. Feist-Price bring a speaker to campus in 2018-2019 to address “confident pluralism,” a theoretical/philosophical approach that allows space for such conversations to occur. Additional activities will also be planned.