

## **Advancing the College's Goals in Inclusion and Equity**

As the College continues to monitor and advance its goals of creating the equity and access articulated in the Principles of Community, Principles of Diversity, and the 2013 Strategic Plan for Diversity and Inclusivity, the need for more robust channels of communication and community engagement has been identified. The Committee on Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (CIDE) has been established to serve as a conduit for information sharing and to provide recommendations that will assist the President and her cabinet in continuing their desire to effect meaningful and impactful change.

CIDE develops annual recommendations to the President for improving College policies and practices. Central to CIDE's goals, are the proposed initiatives that enhance public dialogue on gender identity, ethnicity, religion, race, diversity, and other topics critical to the future of the College and facilitating campus conversations on race, equity, and inclusion. CIDE is composed of faculty, staff, students, and an alumna collaborating in working groups dedicated to exploring critical topics and issues important to the continued development of Scripps as an inclusive, welcoming, and supportive community of scholars.

### **Background: From Multiculturalism to Inclusion and Equity**

As a growing number of higher education institutions adapt and evolve in response to changing demographics and student identities, Scripps continues to affirm and advance the statement of purpose as announced by its founder, Ellen Browning Scripps, in 1926:

“The paramount obligation of a college is to develop in its students the ability to think clearly and independently, and the ability to live confidently, courageously, and hopefully.”

When Ms. Scripps addressed the educational needs and aspirations of women in her words, it became the College’s mission statement. The mission statement has been updated over time, however the spirit and intent of Ms. Scripps—to provide opportunities for those who had historically been denied the opportunity to be part of a community of learners—continues to be relevant and applicable to the diverse student population of today’s Scripps College. Over the decades, Scripps has engaged in rigorous self-reflection, identifying opportunities to strengthen and enhance all areas of the academic and co-curricular programs and affirm the importance of diversity, inclusion, and equity in achieving institutional and educational excellence.

Nancy Bekavac was appointed the sixth president of Scripps College in 1990. By 1993, the President and Board, among others, recognized that financial challenges threatened the stability of the College, and that in order to advance the mission of the College, Scripps would need to engage in re-imagining and re-inventing while drawing upon its historic strengths and respecting its unique culture. The outcome of this re-imagining was a planning document that set forth a path for the College to become one of the premier liberal arts colleges in the country and one of the three top women’s colleges in the nation by 2001.

Over the next five years, Scripps increased its academic strength, strengthened its endowment, and grew student enrollment. As the community expanded and focused on the sense of community, diversity at Scripps emerged as a key area for expansion.

In the 2017 Inside Higher Education article entitled “Latinxs in Academe” Salvador Vidal-Ortiz wrote about his “rage” against diversity work. Vidal-Ortiz stated: “‘Diversity’ has become a shorthand for the insertion of minority students into predominantly white academic spaces, while at the same time leaving untouched the historical enforcement of exclusion inherent from the inception of these institutions. Often times, to ‘diversify’ means to change brochures, update website pictures, hire key administrators who represent the face of any given historically excluded group. Yet colleges and universities still prioritize enrollments and registration over spending time and resources to support the retention of students.”

While Scripps’ aspirations in this area precede Vidal-Ortiz’s article, it is this sentiment that was on the minds of the architects of the pre-planning process for the submission of The James Irvine Foundation Campus Diversity Initiative grant. The planning committees’ stated goals included to “create an environment in which the campus community acknowledges, and [to] engage issues of race, ethnicity, religion, belief, opinion, sexuality, economic class, and physical ableness, understanding that doing so is critical to institutional and educational excellence.”

In 2001, the College was the recipient of a 3-year \$800,000 James Irvine Foundation grant focused on strengthening and enhancing its goals in becoming a “multifaceted and diverse community.” The grant supported new faculty hires, diversification of curricular offerings in

intercultural studies, enhanced multicultural programming, strengthened support for the Multicultural Resource Center, and added a summer program targeted for ninth and tenth grade girls from underrepresented communities in order to increase the College's applicant pool of Latinas and African Americans. As part of the planning process leading up to the grant submission, President Nancy Bekavac appointed the Diversity Steering Committee. "The committee was charged with the responsibility of developing the *Blueprint for Diversity*, a comprehensive institutional plan to guide Scripps toward its goal of becoming a multicultural academic and residential community."

The Diversity Steering Committee's work was augmented and supported by the Diversity Advisory Committee, composed of twenty-one members of the Scripps community. After substantial research, the Diversity Steering Committee presented its preliminary *Blueprint for Diversity* to the Foundation in 2001. The *Blueprint for Diversity*, like other planning documents, was regarded as a dynamic document that would be modified and adapted over time. The Diversity Steering Committee created an updated draft of the Principles of Community, which was first adopted in 1992 as part of the College's response to racially charged incidents at the Claremont Colleges. Upon completion of its work in 2002, the Diversity Steering Committee was replaced with the Diversity Coordinating Committee (DCC). The DCC was charged with identifying programs and projects dedicated to increasing diversity at the College, and as a body to respond to diversity issues as they arose. DCC was restructured in 2012 to meet the changing needs of the College community.

The President's Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (PACDI) replaced the DCC and was reconstituted as a policy recommendation group to advise the President on issues of diversity and inclusion and propose policies and practices that would significantly improve support for underrepresented students. PACDI concentrated its efforts on making recommendations to increase diversity among the staff, faculty, and students; faculty and staff education opportunities to become engaged members of the campus-wide diversity dialogue and workshops; Campus Pulse, a forum for students to share their daily experiences and identify ways to effect change; and sponsorship of events that directly advanced the College's goals in diversity and inclusion.

As we reflect on the progress of the past twenty-seven years, we note that many of the goals set forth as aspirational are now in practice. Following are a few examples:

Scripps Communities of Resources and Empowerment (SCORE), the second generation of the Multicultural Resource Center, has developed into a hub for social justice programming with an emphasis on intersectionality. SCORE includes dedicated space for students of marginalized identities.

Increased enrollment, retention, and support of Latina/Latinx/Hispanic and Black/African American identifying students is in progress. In 2000, 41 of the 779 degree-seeking students identified as Chicana/Latina, 127 as Asian/Asian American, and 22 as African American. In the fall of 2019, the 1,048 degree-seeking students 156 identified as Hispanic/Latina/Latinx, 174 as Asian/Asian American, and 40 as Black/African American. The first year retention rate for the

2018 entering cohort were as follows: 97.4% Hispanic/Latina/Latinx, 96.8% Asian/Asian American, and 100% for Black/African American. Information on four and six year graduation rates can be found in the publicly accessible 2019-2020 [Scripps College Fact Book](#).

The total number of full-time faculty in 2000 was fifty-eight (58), eight (8) of whom identified as faculty of color. The 2001 objective of conducting faculty searches in accordance with procedures set forth in the Statement of Diversity and following the recommendations advanced in Resources for Recruiting Minority Faculty (1999), along with cluster hires, has resulted in sustained impact. In fall 2019, the total number of full-time faculty was one hundred and two (102), thirty-six (36) of whom identified as faculty of color.

Scripps College Academy (SCA) persists and has developed into an intensive, multi-year, pre-college program for high-achieving young women with limited resources who seek to become the first generation in their families to attend college. Following a rigorous summer residential experience, SCA Scholars participate in monthly programming throughout high school. Since the first graduating class in 2005, SCA Scholars have enrolled in more than 75 different colleges and universities across the United States, including Scripps College.

These are just four examples of the ongoing impact of the work launched and strengthened over the years. It is notable that Scripps does not rest, cannot rest, and continues to challenge, push, transform, transition, and identify ways to optimize its resources and assets in support of its goal of an inclusive community.

## Committee on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access

CIDE continues the College's commitment to:

- transform relationships
- build capacity to genuinely listen to each other deeply enough to be changed by what is learned
- build trust
- develop shared ownership in developing an inclusive campus environment
- address concrete community problems
- develop implementable solutions
- sustain progress

Scripps has intentionally identified its goals in inclusion and equity as a shared responsibility of all community members. CIDE researches, monitors, and assesses existing initiatives, programs, and practices with the goal of making implementable recommendations to the President that strengthen and advance the College's Principles of Community and Principles of Diversity.

While CIDE conducts its work, it must be acknowledged that there are a substantial number of academic and co-curricular programs, initiatives, and activities that challenge and strengthen the goals and reality of community at Scripps. At the core of all these efforts is the unyielding focus on developing and supporting a campus-wide culture of inclusion.