

We Can Do Better

Next Steps



DEI in our Learning Community

Hello and Welcome

Nearly one year ago today we all penned a letter and “wrote a big check”

Specifically we promised:

Promise #1

We vow to examine our curriculum to assure that it includes Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) voices. Our work is to educate future theatre and dance artists in a forum of equality through a curriculum that offers a deep understanding of cultural diversity and a department that embraces inclusivity.

Promises # 2 and #3

- **In recruiting, we commit to bolster black students and students of color.**
- **In hiring we declare to ensure that teachers of color are present in our classrooms and rehearsal studios.**

For me, I ballparked these.

Promise # 4

- **We will scrutinize our internal audition and casting practices in order to see and hear black students and students of color on our stages.**

Promise #5

- **We will choose and produce plays, musicals, and dances for our mainstage seasons in an informed way.**
- **We will seek diverse representation in the playwrights, choreographers, and theatre makers' work we choose to produce.**

Should also apply to our classes?

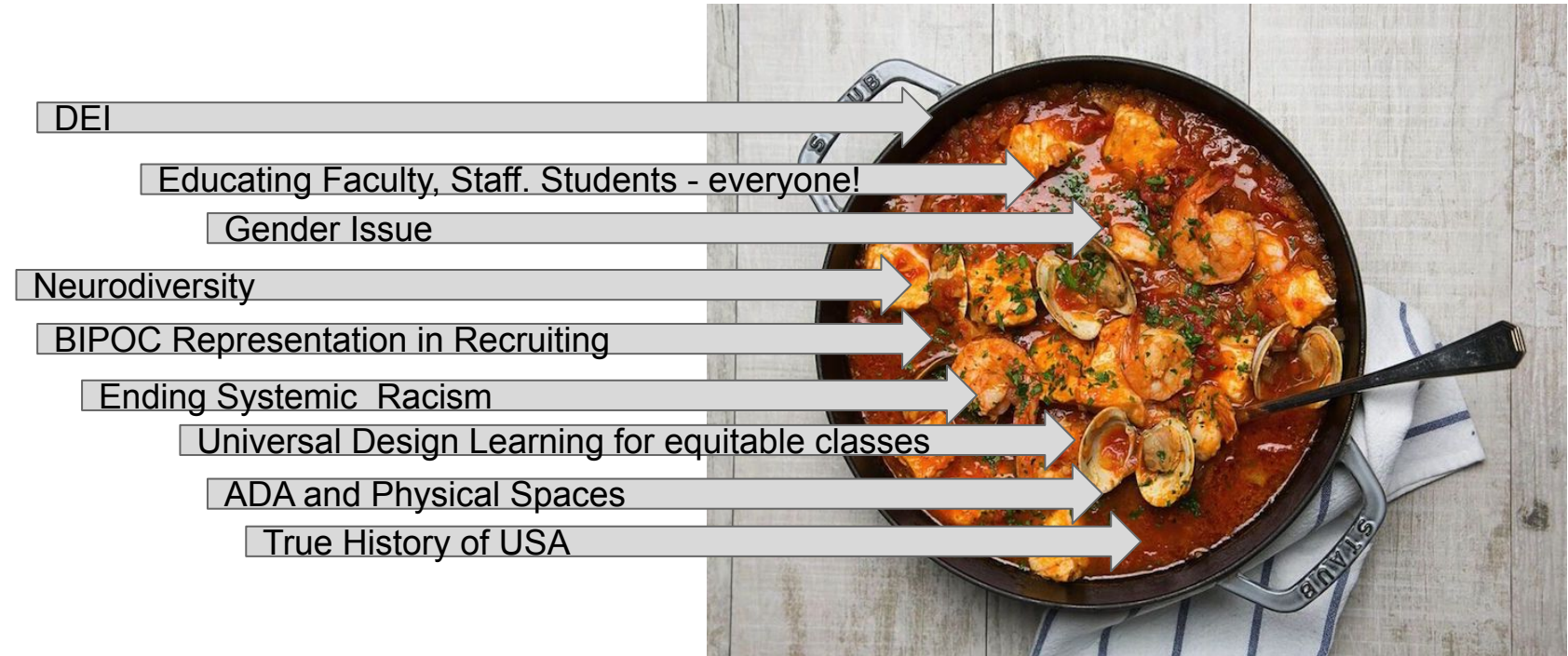
Promise #6

- **We will work to provide equitable space and opportunity for our dancers, actors, directors, and designers.**

Again, for our classes as well?

DEI Huge and Multifaceted and Pervasive

So much so that I have an image that comes to mind: Cioppino!



Each Topic I hit on has years of research behind it...

And it is fascinating, the issue is that it becomes it's own Rabbit Hole -



For Instance

I wanted to learn about Systemic Racism so here are some findings:



Literally hundreds of good pages and links to all sorts of topics and then I headed over to <https://www.zinnedproject.org/> and started to reread a People's History of the United States then I hit on "[How to be Antiracists](#)" by [Ibram X. Kendi \(2019\)](#) and then I joined a book club led by June DePonte Sernak the dean of Lifelong Learning at RCBC where we are working on the Racial Healing Handbook

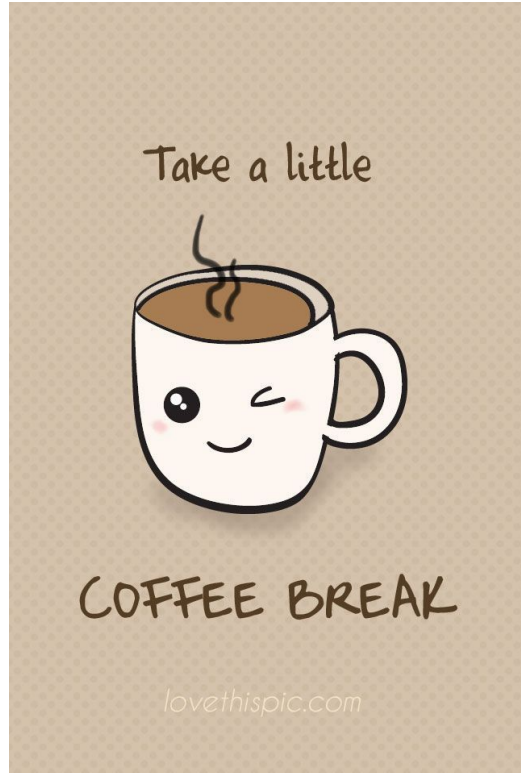
So my second analogy...

DEI is an Elephant, and as the saying goes...



One Bite at a Time.

So if my timing is on track



So I looked what I was Hungry for first

Promise #1 - We vow **to examine our curriculum** to assure that it **includes** Black, Indigenous, and People of Color **(BIPOC)** voices. Our work is to educate future theatre and dance artists in a forum of equality **through a curriculum** that offers a deep understanding of cultural **diversity** and a department that embraces **inclusivity**.

But I had my own take on this: **Change our curriculum to be diverse and inclusive and better make it equitable as well.**

Curriculum, what is that really?

Having no formal education in Curriculum Development I went in search of what does that really mean. After many boring definitions I found one I liked:

“The totality of the student’s experience.” but this is missing the teacher’s input so I added **“the totality of our experience throughout the learning process”**

Question for the Group - What do you think?

Curriculum comes in three types and some extras

Explicit curriculum: subjects that will be taught, the identified "mission" of the school, and the knowledge and skills that the school expects successful students to acquire.

(I was looking for examples from our values and goals but realized that they are a work in progress. Work for later)

Number 2

Implicit curriculum: lessons that arise from the culture of the school and the behaviors, attitudes, and expectations that characterize that culture, *the unintended curriculum*.

I do not agree with the last statement, or rather I believe we should have an intended implicit curriculum. I think this is why we are here, to change our culture

Number 3

Hidden curriculum: things which students learn, 'because of the way in which the work of the school is planned and organized but which are not in themselves overtly included in the planning or even in the consciousness of those responsible for the school arrangements (Kelly, 2009). The term itself is attributed to Philip W. Jackson and is not always meant to be a negative. Hidden curriculum, if its potential is realized, could benefit students and learners in all educational systems. Also, it does not just include the physical environment of the school, but the relationships formed or not formed between students and other students or even students and teachers (Jackson, 1986^[18]).

The term The Rowan Way comes to mind.

The Extras

Excluded curriculum: topics or perspectives that are specifically excluded from the curriculum.

Extra curricular activities

Environmental Factors that Affect DEI

1. Culture of the Institution (the key here is purposeful and active)
 - i. Actively inclusive
 - ii. Accessible to all types students
 1. ADA
 2. Neurodiversity
 3. Transgender
 4. Financial
 5. Racial boundaries/attitudes
 6. Power Structure Student / Teacher Relationship

Physical Spaces

Safe Environment

1. Physically
 - a. Healthy - proper air, lighting, clean
 - b. Secure
2. Emotionally -
 - a. not my forte, I teach people to respect power tools
 - b. MDM rehearsal process looks like to good model
3. Open and honest communication
 - a. People do not like to be Outed or Othered - motl

The Course Materials and Subjects

1. Actively Represent all voices, different points of view (readings, media, etc)
 - i. Empower students, decentralize teaching structure (remove the position of power)
2. Engagement of all senses and elements -
 - i. Modalities of teaching
 - ii. Neurodiversity - what do those letters really mean?
3. Relevant to the present, central to why teach this now
4. Reflect the current population
5. Honestly examine the past practices/histories of the systems that are broke

Actively Teach DEI methods and practices

1. Anti bias
 - a. **Anti-bias** education involves creating a community that supports all dimensions of human differences, including culture, race, language, ability, learning styles, ethnicity, family structure, religion, sexual orientation, gender, age, and socioeconomic differences.

2. Anti Racist
 - a. According to the book [“How to be Antiracists” by Ibram X. Kendi \(2019\)](#) he defines “antiracist policy” as “any measure that produces or sustains racial equity between racial groups. By policy, I mean written and unwritten laws, rules, procedures, processes, regulations, and guidelines that govern people. **There is no such thing as nonracist or race-neutral policy. Every policy in every institution in every community in every nation is producing or sustaining either racial inequality or equity between racial groups.**”

 - b. Institute example: [Brown University. Center for Teaching and Learning](#), defines their anti-racist teaching as “intentional syllabus design, class content, or pedagogy that creates or develops racial equity, with applications for face-to-face and remote/hybrid teaching environments.”.

Some other interesting Rabbit Holes

Social and Emotional Learning

According to [Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#), social and emotional learning is "the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions."

An example:

Before you speak:

THINK

T = Is it True?

H = Is it Helpful?

I = Is it Inspiring?

N = Is it Necessary?

K = Is it Kind?

My favorite rabbit hole

Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a way of thinking about teaching and learning that helps give all students an equal opportunity to succeed. This approach offers flexibility in the ways students access material, engage with it and show what they know.

(And that is why I gave you the UDL for Tired People Slides.)

A takeaway (see if you spot the themes)

Borrowing from the First Year Writing Program Syllabus (Thanks to Rachel Shapiro, DEI Provost's Fellow)

Rowan University's Statement on Diversity

Rowan University promotes a diverse community that begins with students, faculty, staff and administration who respect each other and value each other's dignity. By identifying and removing barriers and fostering individual potential, Rowan will cultivate a community where all members can learn and grow. The Rowan University community is committed to a safe environment that encourages intellectual, academic, and social interaction and engagement across multiple intersections of identities. At Rowan University, creating and maintaining a caring community that embraces diversity in its broadest sense is among the highest priorities.

Continued

FYW Shared Syllabus Welcome Statement

I am excited to work with you this semester! My goal is to meet each of you where you are as an individual, recognizing that we all learn differently, come from diverse backgrounds, and bring a variety of experiences to the classroom. Over the course of the semester, I will ask you to share information about yourself (privately, and as you feel comfortable doing!) that will help me support you as an individual learner--my role as your teacher is to be both your guide and your advocate. As the course progresses, please continue to let me know if you have concerns about the material or my teaching practices. I aim to create a course and a learning environment that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, culture, first generation college student status, political beliefs, and more. I always am open to hearing your concerns and receiving feedback on ways to improve the course further, and I look forward to learning from you.

Action Item

Starting in the fall I plan on contacting each student (which sucks for Colloquium but there ya go) with a confidential getting to know you survey. Like this:

Name (not preferred, their name is their name)

Pronouns

What would you like to have as your Zoom Title, [and here is how you can change it](#).

Learning Modality and if you don't know lets [go online and let them figure it out](#).

If online hows your tech? Or your space. (if needed we can provide a study space and or tech for you)

Special Note on those letters

So you get an email from the Dean of Students saying XYX need special accommodations. Problem is, it is the same email for every student so it really is not that helpful.

Couple of facts:

1. People do not like to be outed or othered
2. The hoops and hurdles that these students have to go through is demeaning, (their word not mine) so they are already miffed.

Suggestion, reach out the student and ask if they are comfortable talking about what they need and come up with a written plan of action.



This is where I need help

Productions and Curriculum Intersectionality (Theater & Dance)

So if we see our curriculum, as **“the totality of our experience throughout the learning process”** our productions are part of that experience then we should be looking at the ways fulfill our promises:

#4 We will scrutinize our internal audition and casting practices in order to see and hear black students and students of color on our stages.

#5 We will choose and produce plays, musicals, and dances for our mainstage seasons in an informed way. We will seek diverse representation in the playwrights, choreographers, and theatre makers' work we choose to produce.

Specifically

Do we have a written curriculum for our productions?

Do we need one, is it implied or should it be more explicit?

Can the principles from above be applied?

Curatorial Framework

1. What does that really mean?
2. Is this where we can Actively Teach DEI methods and practices and UDL?

Canon of work

1. What process can we use to make this happen? (PPP, Book Club)
2. Is this where “Actively Represent all voices, different points of view”?

Created New Works

1. If we are committed to doing this then I believe we should have a written plan of action that includes our DEI concepts.
2. Chris and Leslie have the Cabaret and the Devising class.
3. I think developing a process for creating new scripted works for the mainstage should be considered.
 - a. 3 semesters long? - write script, workshop, stage reading
workshop develop final production
 - b. Artist in Residence?
 - c. Incorporate classes/workshops

Actively hiring BIPOC

1. We did this, now we have to keep it up.
2. Bigger picture, need to develop a bigger budget

DEI is a process, not an end game

So we need to be constantly vigilant, and it is not easy because (here is another food analogy) everything is so interrelated and layered it makes me think of onions.



(If you not careful they
make you cry)

On going self reflection

It all starts with our Mission:

To transform society through artistic experiences that engage diverse communities, challenge habitual methods, and promote creative collaborations. Through our commitment to theater and dance, we prepare evolving artists/scholars/citizens to express personal and universal stories as catalysts for change.

Is it still relevant to what we want to do, are our values still good. Are we fulfilling the mission and if not what can we change to achieve our goals and aspirations?

Assessment (need to work on this)

1. Tools
 - a. Do they exist?
 - b. How do we implement ?
2. Internal
 - a. Departmental Classes
 - b. Productions
3. External
 - a. Institutionally
 - b. Regionally
 - c. Nationally

Layers - things to keep an eye on

1. Immediate surroundings - classes and productions
2. Department
3. College
4. University
5. Community

Next Steps

1. Continued engagement with Students and Alumni
 - a. Colloquium
 - i. Dedicate another Town Hall meeting
 - ii. Specific Programs with Division of DEI
 - iii. Ask students what do they want to do, what panels etc
 - b. Dedicated Web page on our site to DEI programs that we should run
 - i. Workshops
 - ii. Guided Discussion Groups - books, TED talks, etc
2. Any Other Ideas?

Next Steps - DEI committee

1. Department Committee
2. (suggested) Charges
 - a. Programming, finding ongoing opportunities for continuing education
 - i. Div DEI certificate, DEI in Pedagogy Certificate
 - ii. Consent workshop example
 - b. Assessment of ourselves
 - c. Examining course materials
 - i. Book club for classes
 - d. Keep an eye on the layers
 - e. Liaison with Dept Music DEI, CPA DEI Committee, Div of DEI

That is it for me, thanks for being here.

Anything else?