

Implementation Steering Committee for the Next Generation of Faculty
Spring 2020 Report: submitted June 10, 2020
Chair: Sara Rosen, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences
Consultant: Curtis D. Byrd, Special Advisor to the Provost, Provost Office

Executive Summary

Background and Work Summary

Provost Hensel selected inaugural members of an Implementation Steering Committee (ISC) in October 2019 to guide the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission for the Next Generation of Faculty (Commission) and to facilitate diversity and inclusion among the faculty at Georgia State University. At the first committee meeting in December 2019, the Provost charged the ISC with:

- Providing advice and guidance on how to best implement the recommendations and best practices initiatives as outlined in the report
- Serving as a liaison between the provost and university community on matters relating to the implementation of Commission recommendations and best practices initiatives
- Assisting with the publication of an annual report to the university community identifying action steps taken and progress toward achievement of recommendations and best practices initiatives.

The ISC has held five meeting meetings through May 2020 to address the charge from the Provost, meeting approximately once a month either in person or by WebEx in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ISC began this process by familiarizing themselves with the Commission report, reviewing readily available institutional data, and identifying the initiatives that have already started. During the spring 2020 semester, the committee divided into four subcommittees to facilitate in-depth work on specific recommendations of the Commission. Members of the subcommittees worked to identify the recommendations from the Commission report that should move forward immediately and identify the responsible parties in carrying out said recommendations.

The four sub-committees were:

- **Recruitment Subcommittee I:** Creating positions for faculty from underrepresented groups (URG): pipeline programming; post-doc, junior & senior positions; advertising & marketing
- **Recruitment Subcommittee II:** Hiring and onboarding practices: training and engagement of faculty including training for biases, microaggressions
- **Retention Subcommittee I:** Mentoring for academic success: mentoring and other structural systems for faculty success
- **Retention Subcommittee II:** Building community and engagement building a sense of community both informal and formal for faculty development

Recommendations for Immediate Action

The ISC recommends immediate action on the following items:

1. Expansion of pipeline programming to continue to increase underrepresented groups (i.e. ethnic & racial minorities, women) of graduate students, creating opportunities for advanced URG PhD/terminal degree students to visit our campus and receive mentoring to prepare future faculty, and creating targeted hiring of faculty from under-represented groups (URG)
2. Targeted recruitment of URG faculty at several national and regional events (i.e. SREB-Compact, McKnight Fellows) to create more diverse pools of candidates for faculty positions
3. Examination of hiring and onboarding practices starting with the university Affirmative Action Plan, and moving to education and training of all search committees within the colleges that meets university expectations and standards
4. Creation of comprehensive data collection and tracking of the hiring, retention, and climate for URG faculty members
5. Formation of Diverse Faculty Alliance and faculty identity organizations to create a sense of community and to enhance retention among URG faculty

Full Report

After meetings to familiarize itself with the Commission report, the Implementation Steering Committee divided into four subcommittees to carry out the detailed work of determining the status of the university in specific areas related to the Commission's recommendations. Two subcommittees examined progress in recruitment and two examined progress in retention and establishment of community. The following report details the work of the subcommittees. The membership of the Committee is reflected in the subcommittees here:

Subcommittees

Recruitment Subcommittee I: Chair-Collins O. Airhihenbuwa, Professor, Health Policy & Behavioral Science, SPH; **Members-**Kyle Frantz, Director of CASA, Professor of Neuroscience, CASA; Susan-Sojourna Collier, Lecturer, Film, Media and Theatre, Arts

Recruitment Subcommittee II-Chair: Alexis Martinez, Academic Professional, Dean of Students, College of Law; **Members:** Dean Dabney, Professor and Chair of the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology, Harry Heiman, Clinical Associate Professor, Director of the DrPH Program.

Retention Subcommittee I: Chair-Cirleen DeBlaere, Associate Professor; **Members-**Jessica Waldrop, Clinical Assistant Professor, Dr. Kellie Mayfield, Assistant Professor

Retention Subcommittee II: Chair-John D. King, Interim Associate Chair, Tonia Durden, Clinical Associate Professor and Kimberly Bennekin, Professor

Faculty Recruitment Efforts (recruitment subcommittees I and II)

Charge: Consider how best to create and fill faculty positions that attract underrepresented groups. This can include pipeline programming, post-doctoral positions, junior faculty positions, and senior faculty positions. Consideration an include advertising and marketing, as well as the interview process as an essential component of the recruitment process. Finally, the committee reviewed onboarding practices, training and engagement of faculty, including training for biases and microaggressions.

Charge of this subcommittee aligns with two of the Commission for the Next Generation of Faculty Transformative Recommendations:

- **Transformative Recommendation 2:** Invest resources into deepening the sense of community and engagement for all faculty, and celebrate the diversity of Georgia State’s people, programs, and campus cultures.
- **Transformative Recommendation 4:** Implement new strategies for recruiting individuals from underrepresented minority groups to Georgia State faculty positions.

Collaboration/Interconnectedness with recruitment and retention, their goals and priorities, also connections with other transformative recommendations

Given the reciprocal benefit between recruitment and retention, we need to integrate recommendations across subcommittees, so that other efforts, such as new mentoring programs, are included in marketing and advertising strategies in the early phases of recruiting job applicants, etc. We also recommend highlighting progress in the development of Faculty Special Interest Groups or Affinity Groups, with the goal to promote community belongingness that is often a challenge in an urban university. Further, we need to consider an emphasis of a university-wide nature of all considerations and need to have standardized processes across all academic units, with a “balance between university oversight and discipline-specific flexibility.”

Finally, for our recommendations and those of each subcommittee of the steering committee will need buy-in from the university community, which can be developed perhaps most effectively through listening sessions, opportunities to comment on pre-proposals, representatives recruited to assist with development of specific documents and procedures, and appropriate committee review and voting when university policy is under consideration. The following recommendations will adhere to “university-wide Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on best practices for faculty recruitment and onboarding activities.”

Faculty Recruitment Recommendations: We have five specific recommendations related to recruitment that we believe will help to advance the commitment of the President and Provost to diversify the professoriate across the university in the near future. These recommendations expand on the transformative recommendations presented in the Commission report, as noted below. A guiding principle in our discussions was the university-wide nature of these considerations. We should always consider recruitment strategies that include all fields, such as those in which non-doctoral terminal degrees are appropriate for faculty positions. For example, for some fields such as the Arts, the MFA is the terminal degree, and we should also note that some well-respected universities have faculty with the BFA as the terminal degree, complemented by professional credits and credentials based on accomplishments from the field that offset the MFA requirement. A balance between university oversight and discipline-specific flexibility is recommended. Summaries of our recommendations are provided with *institutional and college/school efforts* and given estimated timeframes.

- 1. Pipeline Development and Recruiting:** (*Short to Mid Term Goal*) Funds are needed for pipeline development and proactive recruiting. We recommend maintaining funding for the development of our own Georgia State undergraduate students into future faculty candidates. Specifically, expand the Center for the Advancement of Students and Alumni (casa.gsu.edu) and increase contact with Georgia State alumni about faculty recruitment and retention efforts that might be relevant for them. With regard to faculty recruitment, there are several forums around the country designed to bring together potential applicants from underrepresented groups for faculty positions. Given that some of these events may be more helpful to Georgia State than others (e.g. we do not have agriculture or engineering, etc.), a designee (e.g. Dr. Byrd) could help

scout these meetings to determine relevance. Examples include the McKnight Fellows program (mcknight.org), the Southeastern Regional Education Board (sreb.org), and the PhD Project (phdproject.org), but myriad opportunities exist in specific disciplines. Based on his assessment and consultation with faculty in departments considering new hires, institutional funds could be provided for deans to recruit faculty to attend the events and also to have Georgia State sponsor booths and advertisements, etc. In addition, Dr. Byrd could accompany other Georgia State representatives at these events to serve as a liaison for special initiatives from the Office of the Provost. Conversations with potential applicants at these meetings about which print or online outlets they use as they search for jobs; what they look for in job ads; and how they have experienced the interview process to date might help us optimize job ads for various outlets, including Diversity Issues in Higher Education, as well as how it might be received if the role of deans and other senior leaders was enhanced for junior faculty hires and emphasized at earlier stages of advertising and reviewing applications. This recommendation aligns most readily with Recommendation 4 from the Commission Report to “Implement new strategies for recruiting individuals from underrepresented minority groups to Georgia State faculty positions.”

2. GSU Institutional & College/School Sponsored Conferences and Meetings: (Mid-Term Goal)

We should invest in GSU-based Professional Development and/or Future Faculty conferences that serve advanced trainees in transition to faculty positions, while also celebrating Atlanta and introducing Georgia State to the broader community of professionals who are faculty candidates. The Steering Committee should support the efforts beginning in the Office of the Provost and Graduate School, with the **Future Faculty Conference**. As this conference is being piloted in November 2020 for advanced standing, ABD, PhDs and other individuals nearing the award of the terminal degree (e.g. MFA) in their disciplines, individual from this subcommittee should be involved in the planning process.

Also, per the focus groups with GSU faculty for the Commission report, Atlanta is considered to be a major factor that draws faculty from underrepresented groups to GSU, but more needs to be done to capitalize on the city as a major attraction. We recommend considering a GSU event for MLK Weekend in January during the week of MLK annual celebrations. This would be an opportunity for GSU campuses to showcase the rich culture around Black history and current communities in Atlanta. GSU could follow the model of the Faculty Diversity Weekend workshop and Fellowship at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) which coordinates prospective URM faculty being considered for hiring with an on-campus fellowship. This recommendation would be to create a URM hire/interview event during the MLK weekend. The **URM hire/interview weekend** would be coordinated and supported by the Office of the Provost, Office of Faculty Affairs and Colleges and Schools (with Academic Units). GSU Administration would reserve and sponsor locations, while Colleges and Schools would share the cost by sponsoring all events for the weekend. In addition, to follow our pipeline programming scholars who are being seriously considered for hiring from other activities (i.e. Future Faculty Program, Cluster Hiring Support) will be considered for this event first. This recommendation aligns not only with Recommendation 4 above (new strategies for recruitment), but also with Recommendation 2 from the Commission Report to “Invest resources into deepening the sense of community and engagement for all faculty, and celebrate the diversity of Georgia State’s people, programs, and campus cultures.”

- 3. Participation of Senior Leadership:** (*Short to Mid-Term Goal*) Deans and Department Chairs are critical to advance the commitment of the Provost. For example, training of search committees for hiring is important, but equally and more important is the commitment of deans and chairs to diversifying the professoriate. This recommendation aligns best with Transformative Recommendation 1 to “Make faculty diversity and engagement a visible priority coming from the President and senior leadership and infuse this commitment throughout the university with urgency to act and the resources to support it.” To this end, we believe colleges/schools could work with the Provost to accomplish the following.
- Identify areas of need that could lead to cluster hires that emphasize recruitment of applicants from underrepresented groups, i.e. Deans develop recruitment plans for their colleges.
 - Search committee trainings should consider the role of search firms when hiring deans and other related senior positions, putting a commitment to diversity at the top of the qualities list.
 - A diversity champion/officer/advocate should be identified on each campus and/or in each college/school. Short-term visiting programs, such as Provost Visiting Scholars, should be strengthened to include more engagement with senior leadership, either in person or via videoconference.
 - Colleges/schools with senior faculty lines should consider the Visiting Scholar program to bring in candidates from underrepresented groups and welcome them to the university.
- 4. President/Provost Funds for Diversity:** (*Short to Long Term Goal*) Establish President/Provost funds to support diversity hires. URM faculty hiring should be incentivized such that there is funding available and rewards provided for units that show success. Such funds can be used to support either parts of new faculty salary or leverage departmental and college funds for start-up and related packages. (When it is to support salary, there should a clear plan to transfer salary entirely to departmental funds no later than the end of third year.) There are similar models from other universities (e.g. SUNY program split faculty salary for three years, PSU Opportunity Hire to support a top candidate, if one is URM) and from Georgia State (Center for Behavioral Neuroscience). Funds could also be used to make counter-offers, or to support spousal hires. As with the prior recommendation, this recommendation aligns best with Transformative Recommendation 1 from the Commission Report to “Make faculty diversity and engagement a visible priority coming from the President and senior leadership, and infuse this commitment throughout the university with urgency to act and the resources to support it.”
- 5. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP):** (*Mid to Long-Term Goal*) We recommend developing university-wide Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on best practices for faculty recruitment activities. The SOP would include practices identified by the Commission as well as new ideas from the Steering Implementation Committee. Someone should be designated to prepare a highly detailed SOP for job development, advertisement preparation, candidate recruitment, interviews, and visits. The SOP should be required reading for all departments developing positions, as well as search committees. Moreover, the SOP should be accompanied by a position development guide that contains key questions to be answered in full by departments initiating searches. The guide would serve as a mechanism of oversight, but would offer critical

flexibility to individual departments to place their ads and conduct their searches in field-appropriate ways. This recommendation aligns with the Best Practice Initiative 1 to “Adopt and implement best practices for hiring faculty from diverse groups.” Some suggested highlights for the SOP are below, but this list is far from comprehensive.

- a. Schedule training to address biases such as microaggression with a focus on those who write job ads, review applications, and accommodate and work with candidates.
- b. Outline the personalized schedule and process that is standard for each candidate.
- c. Ensure someone meets candidate at airport arrival and ensure proper guidance and consistency in who is meeting all candidates at airport.
- d. Recommend a list of dos and don'ts topics for the ride, the lunch, the dinner, etc. For example, rules tend to be clearer for interviews of senior faculty/administrative candidates when it comes to being consistent in ensuring we ask the exact same questions of each candidate, but less so for junior faculty candidates.
- e. Plans for conversations about spousal hiring and related support.
- f. Discipline-specific meetings and publications should be listed as examples for recruitment venues, along with meetings and publications that emphasize candidates from underrepresented groups. For example, in the arts, the Director's Guild of America's African American Steering Committee (dga.org) could be targeted for communications, as could the Writers Guild of America West with its Committee of Black Writers (wga.org), the American Alliance of Museums with its Diversity Committee (aam-us.org), and the Georgia Film Academy (georgiafilmacademy.org).
- g. Review, and if appropriate, update the current methodology for determining the “availability percentage” for under-represented groups, in collaboration with this committee and the Faculty Diversity Committee.
- h. Develop and implement a process to clearly define faculty diversity goals for GSU that can be benchmarked and assessed annually.
- i. Include school/unit-level analysis in the University's Affirmative Action Plan.
- j. Mandate the University/HR-provided Search Committee training workshop (that was initiated in the Fall 2019) for all search committee members as a requirement for participation.
- k. Create uniform documents that provide general University guidance on best practices for conducting a faculty search. Documents can be supplemented by the academic unit with specific academic credentials
- l. Ensure that Deans are held accountable for compliance with University requirements for recruiting best practices
- m. Make the GSU Affirmative Action Plan (or pertinent versions of the plan) available to the university community on an annual basis.
- n. Formalize the relationships/reporting of the metrics of the Affirmative Action Plan (as it relates to faculty) with the Provost and/or or Commission
- o. Provide each of the academic units (for all potential hires/searches) the potential pool based on information gathered and published as part of the University's Affirmative Action Plan.
- p. Develop and implement a uniform onboarding process to welcome all new employees, including faculty. This should be managed by the Office of Faculty Affairs to include:
 - Once a semester welcomes/orientation (not just once a year)

- An outlined process with HR and the academic units designating who is responsible for the onboarding process with a checklist to be completed by all involved GSU entities.
- A process and timeline for establishment of a faculty mentor

Faculty Retention Efforts (Retention Subcommittees I and II)

Charge for Faculty Retention: Create programs and systems that will increase faculty success. Build a sense of community and engagement (both formal and informal) for faculty.

Commission for the Next Generation of Faculty Transformative Recommendations that align with the specific charge of this subcommittee is the following:

- Transformative Recommendation 1: Make faculty diversity and Engagement a visible priority coming from the President and senior leadership and infuse this commitment throughout the University with urgency to act and the resources to support it
- Transformative Recommendation 2: Invest resources into deepening the sense of community and engagement for all faculty, and celebrate the diversity of Georgia State’s people, programs, and campus cultures.
- Transformative Recommendation 3: Create a Center for African American and African Diaspora Scholarship and Outreach, which will serve as a research and resource center to foster intellectual community across the university and in collaboration with Atlanta partners.
- Transformative Recommendation 5: Create best-in-class, data-informed analytics to examine and address trends, including tracking faculty hires and implementing regularly scheduled climate surveys.

Collaboration/Interconnectedness with recruitment and retention, their goals and priorities, also connections with other transformative recommendations

Faculty retention efforts be supported by the creation of faculty affinity groups, as these groups will be obvious sources of professional mentoring and peer support for incoming URG faculty. Further, these faculty retention efforts will support URG faculty recruitment, through interactions with prospective candidates and seasoned faculty who have been nurtured in their academic disciplines.

Faculty Retention Recommendations to meet the charge and transformative recommendations.

1. **Collecting Data:** (*Short-Long term*) Collect data by identity (i.e., race/ethnicity and gender) across faculty type and level by college and department. Achieving this goal will involve connecting with the Office of Institutional Research (Erik Lauffer) to determine what data is available and how that data may be reported. We will review the data and provide a descriptive summary of the findings, including trends in faculty retention and promotion.
 - a. Meeting with the OIR took place May 7, 2020.
 - b. We do not anticipate external factors impacting our ability to execute this recommendation. The main limiting factor may be the time of year as subcommittee members enter the summer and are no longer on contract.
 - c. Gathering data from COACHE, DFA, and Listening Sessions to develop future retention planning; and implement institutional policies and initiatives that promote and deepen sense of community and engagement of all faculty and celebrate the diversity of GSU’s people, programs, and campus cultures.

2. **Summary and Trends:** (*Mid-term*) Informed by the descriptive summary and observed trends, we recommend conducting a mixed-method study of departments who have been successful in retaining URG faculty and women, as well as those that have experienced challenges in this regard. The objective is to identify strategies, programming, interventions, and supports that have been successful, as well as potential barriers to faculty retention. In addition, if given access, we would also incorporate data from the COACHE survey. These findings will be summarized in a report with specific recommendations for retention of URG and women faculty at GSU.

Given the uncertainty related to COVID-19, it is unclear whether the execution of the mixed-method study would be impacted. We anticipate the use of both surveys and focus groups. Certain aspects will likely be able to progress (i.e., survey administration), but other components (i.e., focus group interviews) could be delayed until social distancing restrictions are lifted.

3. **Proposal Writing:** (*Long-Term*) Develop interdisciplinary grant proposals utilizing the results from the mixed-method study as pilot data (e.g., pipeline initiatives).

The primary limiting factor will be interest and engagement of multidisciplinary teams interested in grant submissions.

4. **Develop Faculty Affinity Groups:** (*Short-Term Goal*) Establishment of a Faculty Organization, comprised of Identity Groups and Affinity Groups/Communities of Practice, with an initial focus on Identity Groups for URG faculty

5. **Assist with Coordination URG Events and/or Groups:** (*Mid-Term Goal*) Listening Sessions, Underrepresented Minority (URM) Receptions, Work with Diversity Faculty Alliance (DFA), Office of Faculty Affairs, and African American / Africana Center