

VASSAR COLLEGE  
COMMITTEE ON INCLUSION + EXCELLENCE  
END-OF-YEAR REPORT:

2015-2016

SUBMITTED TO:

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1. Introduction	1
2. Executive Summary	2
2.1. Accomplishments	2
2.2. Primary Recommendations	2
3. Subcommittee Reports	4
3.1. Campus-Wide Climate Study Subcommittee	4
3.2. Diversity Statement Subcommittee	6
3.3. Historically Underrepresented Students Subcommittee	8
3.3.1. Expansion of the Transitions Program	8
3.3.2. DREAMers Website and DREAM Act support	9
3.3.3. Multi-Disciplinary Living Learning Community (MLLC)	10
3.4. International Students Subcommittee	12
3.4.1. Regaining lost diversity among international students	12
3.4.2. The needs of non-native speakers of English	12
3.4.3. Vassar survey to determine resources needed for international students	13
3.4.4. Funding for International Student Office	13
3.5. Social Justice Requirement Subcommittee	14
4. Updates on Work from Previous CIE Subcommittees	16
4.1. Gender and Sexuality	16
4.2. Financial Aid and Transfers	18
4.3. Faculty Development	19
5. Additional Work	20
5.1. Campus Diversity Structures	20
5.2. Diversity + Inclusion Conversation Café	21
5.2.1. Conversation Café Results	21
5.2.1.1. Access to Benefits, Resources, and Financial Aid	21
5.2.1.2. Vassar-Poughkeepsie Relationships	22
5.2.1.3. Dialogue and Collaboration Across Difference	22
5.2.1.4. Infrastructure	23
5.2.1.5. Learning at Vassar	23
5.2.1.6. Safety and Well-being	23
5.2.2. Conversation Café Participant Feedback	24
5.3. Faculty Diversity/Recruitment + Retention	26
5.4. Israel-Palestine Conflict / Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction (BDS) Movement	29
6. List of Committee Members	30
Appendix A: Full Set of CIE Recommendations	31
Appendix B: Campus Climate Data Trends and Questions	33
Appendix C: CIE Conversation Café Results	35

## 1. Introduction

The charge of the Committee on Inclusion and Excellence (CIE) is to make recommendations for institutional change to the President, Dean of the Faculty, and Dean of the College to assure that members of all groups in the student body enjoy the fullest promise of a Vassar education. In practice, the work of CIE goes much further than this advisory role. We often serve as a support system for Vassar students and other members of the college who are from historically underrepresented and underserved populations. We work independently and in collaboration with other campus offices and departments to implement programming, enact change, and develop policy that shapes the experiences of students and other community members on campus. We also provide a place for various campus entities who are engaged in diversity and inclusion efforts to work synergistically in developing solutions to the contemporary challenges faced by the College and its members.

Through these various avenues, the work of CIE has addressed an array of diversity and inclusion issues during the 2015-2016 academic year. This work has been primarily organized according to, but not limited to, five subcommittees:

- Campus-Wide Climate Study
- Diversity Statement
- Historically Underrepresented Students
- International Students
- Social Justice Requirement

Work has also continued for CIE subcommittees from 2014-2015 that were not reconstituted this year. These subcommittee topics include:

- Gender and Sexuality
- Financial Aid and Transfers
- Faculty Development

Additionally, CIE has worked on the following issues outside of its subcommittee structure and in collaboration with key offices and relevant administrators:

- Campus Diversity Structures
- Diversity + Inclusion Conversation Café
- Faculty Recruitment and Retention
- Israel-Palestine Conflict / Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction (BDS) Movement

## 2. Executive Summary

### 2.1. Accomplishments

Below is a list of the primary accomplishments of CIE for the 2015-2016 academic year:

#### *Campus-Wide Climate Study*

- CIE, in partnership with the Office of Institutional Research, has begun using institutional data to document and track trends among the student and faculty populations as they pertain to diversity, inclusion, and equity.

#### *Diversity Statement*

- CIE drafted a new College-wide Statement of Diversity and Inclusion, which has been officially recommended by the Vassar Student Association to the Board of Trustees to adopt this statement in the Governance.

#### *Historically Underrepresented Students*

- CIE has started to expand the Transitions Program beyond a pre-matriculation program that focuses on the transition to college, to a program that provides students with resources and support systems from pre-matriculation to graduation.

#### *Campus Diversity Structures*

- CIE worked within the Campus Diversity Structures committee to create a publicly available report with a set of recommendations regarding how Vassar should develop, evolve, and strengthen institutional practices to achieve heterogeneity, develop equity, and support the infrastructure for inclusivity.

#### *Diversity + Inclusion Conversation Café*

- CIE hosted a diversity and inclusion conversation café, attended by over 60 students, faculty, staff, and administrators, to solicit collaborative feedback from campus members to help shape the direction of diversity and inclusion work.

#### *Faculty Diversity/Recruitment + Retention*

- CIE worked with the Dean of the Faculty, the Director of Human Resources, the Assistant Director of Employment, the Director of Title IX and Equal Opportunity, and the Faculty Affirmative Action Officer to begin articulating necessary changes to the recruitment, hiring, and retention of faculty with a specific emphasis on prioritizing faculty diversity.

### 2.2. Primary Recommendations

The full set of CIE's recommendations can be found in Appendix A of this report. Below is a list of the primary recommendations to the Administration for 2016-2017. These recommendations are detailed and contextualized in the main body of this report.

#### *Campus-Wide Climate Study*

- The **President** and the **Dean of Faculty** should identify key faculty and staff to engage in the analysis of institutional survey data during the 2016-2017 academic year. The synthesis of these data should be made a priority of OIR.

#### *Diversity Statement*

- The **President** and the **Board** should review and consider the recommendation for the adoption of a new Statement on Diversity and Inclusion, as approved by the VSA Council.

#### *Historically Underrepresented Students*

- The **Office of Communications** should update the language on-line and in the catalog to accurately reflect the practice for admitting and funding undocumented students.

#### *International Students Subcommittee*

- The **College** should designate some FWS sections as focusing on writing mechanics fundamentals and provide faculty additional training on ESL-related issues.

#### *Social Justice Requirement Subcommittee*

- The **Dean of Faculty** and **CCP** should form a group of interested faculty to work with CIE starting Fall 2016 to develop an SJR pilot structure to be implemented in Spring 2017 and/or during the 2017/2018 academic year, with a report to the faculty with a concrete SJR proposal to follow.

#### *Gender and Sexuality*

- The **DoSPAR** should follow up on implementing the work Gender Neutral Bathroom Working Group to ensure that there are an equitable and accessible number of gender neutral bathrooms in all campus buildings.

#### *Campus Diversity Structures*

- The **current Administration** should seriously consider the report put forth by the Campus Diversity Structures committee, evaluate its feasibility, and implement all or some parts of the recommendations as soon as possible. We feel that these recommendations should not be postponed until the new President has been hired. Since the initial statement on campus climate issues by President Hill and Bill Plapinger was made in 2014, this report is time-sensitive and should be considered and acted upon with urgency.

#### *Diversity + Inclusion Conversation Café*

- The **Dean of Studies** and **Dean of Freshmen** should include the Navigating Vassar document in the materials that are handed out during the pre-major advising process. The College should work with the Deans to identify appropriate funding for the printing of this document.

#### *Faculty Diversity/Recruitment + Retention*

- The **Dean of the Faculty** should adopt the following faculty hiring practices
  - develop a Vassar handbook for faculty searches
  - modify the search committee composition, including the addition of an equity advocate
  - strengthen the language of the college's statement on diversity for all job ads
  - increase training for departments/programs, search committees, and FASC
  - increase the distribution of job ads
  - increase the number of approval stations in the faculty search process

### 3. Subcommittee Reports

The bulk of the work of CIE is completed by subcommittees, which are formed at the beginning of the year based on priorities identified by the committee as a whole. These subcommittees are made up, primarily, of CIE members, with non-CIE members added to the subcommittees as specific areas of expertise and perspectives are required.

#### *3.1. Campus-Wide Climate Study Subcommittee*

Coordinators: Ed Pittman and Eréndira Rueda

CIE Subcommittee Members: Kelly Grab, Christie Honore, Luis Inoa, Neena McBaer, B. Nathan, and Rachel Pereira.

Non-CIE subcommittee members: Carlos Alamo, David Davis-Van Atta, Dara Greenwood, Sarah Pearlman, and Michelle Tugade.

At the end of the 2014-2015 academic year, the campus-wide climate study subcommittee made two primary recommendations: 1) that a comprehensive, campus-wide assessment of the campus climate be undertaken in conjunction with independent campus climate researchers and 2) that a review of existing institutional data be undertaken to ensure that a new campus-wide assessment does not replicate already-existing data.

During the 2015-2016 academic year, the subcommittee worked with the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) to begin the work of reviewing existing institutional data relating to diversity, equity, and campus climate and to begin identifying the types of information that an additional campus-wide climate survey should gather. In an attempt to draw from the expertise of the faculty, President Hill extended an invitation to a group of faculty with the methodological and content area expertise necessary to engage in this work. Since the 2015/2016 subcommittee was comprised of almost entirely new members, including members who were not part of CIE and were new to the work of the subcommittee, it was necessary for OIR to provide a summary of the types of available data that can be compiled for review. In November, the subcommittee met so that OIR could introduce the five main surveys at our disposal--the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey, the Consortium on Financing Higher Education (COFHE) Senior Survey, the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Faculty Survey, and the Consortium for High Achievement and Success (CHAS) survey--as well as the types of data provided by these surveys.

At the first meeting, subcommittee members agreed to initiate a review of institutional data compiled by OIR, which was based on the design of Vassar's 2005 Equity Scorecard Report. The Equity Scorecard, developed by researchers at the University of California, is an instrument for measuring equity of outcomes, particularly around variables like race/ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic background. The Equity Scorecard outcomes provide data on measures of access, retention, excellence, and institutional receptivity. The subcommittee's initial goal was to examine data over the last ten years to establish how far the College has come on improving outcomes for a range of measures over the last decade and compare 2015 data to the data provided in the 2005 Scorecard.

At the beginning of Spring 2016, OIR provided the subcommittee with data on Admissions, Enrollment, Financial Aid Measures, Retention and Graduation Rates, Faculty Profiles, and Employee Profiles, in an effort to provide the subcommittee with comparable data to what was provided in the 2005 Equity Scorecard. The data also included the 2015-2016 Vassar Fact Book. A summary of the data the subcommittee was able to examine is provided in Appendix B. More work is needed to continue examining the data and summarizing trends over a ten year period, as well as establishing what kinds of questions emerge from outcome data and figuring out

which pieces of data from the various surveys at our disposal can answer questions about process and experience.

In late May, the subcommittee co-chairs met with OIR to discuss a plan for continued data review, with a particular focus on finding ways to use data from available institutional and national surveys to help us understand some of the processes that are shaping trends related to diversity, inclusion, equity, and community members' experiences on campus (i.e. understanding the processes that produce outcomes like the ones detailed in Appendix B). Informal feedback from offices like Campus Life and Diversity and Counseling Services suggests that having OIR provide interested campus offices with a summary of relevant data from surveys like the CIRP Freshman Survey and/or the COFHE Senior Survey is one potential way of making regular use of the data collected by OIR. The work of other CIE subcommittees may also find institutional data useful for shaping future recommendations and designing programming to address diversity and inclusion efforts. For example, the members of the Historically Underrepresented Students subcommittee would benefit from seeing the CIRP Freshman Survey data that is disaggregated by first generation status and family income brackets, and members of the International Students subcommittee may benefit from CIRP data that indicates what percentage of non-U.S. citizen students indicate a need for remedial work in English, reading, and writing (see discussion in Section 3.4.2 of this report). To these ends, we recommend that OIR work with CIE to establish which offices on campus and which CIE subcommittees can benefit from specific survey findings and find a way to maintain regular communication and updates from OIR (e.g. by way of a mechanism like "monitoring reports" on key survey findings relevant to the work of interested offices and subcommittees).

During the summer months, the subcommittee co-chairs will work with OIR to establish which questions from the various surveys are of particular interest to CIE so that OIR can provide data for the subcommittee to examine next year. To that end, as a start, OIR has agreed to pull together disaggregated data from the Senior Survey, as well as data on campus climate questions from a variety of surveys.

The analysis of these data is beyond the scope of CIE; therefore, we recommend that the President and the Dean of Faculty identify key faculty and staff to engage in this analysis during the 2016-2017 academic year. CIE can assist in identifying pertinent issues of diversity and inclusion that can be addressed by these data. Additionally, we recommend that the synthesis of these data be a made a priority of OIR.

### *Recommendations*

- OIR should provide the following data to CIE this summer:
  - senior student survey data disaggregated by measures such as race/ethnicity, SES, gender, and first generation status;
  - data pertinent to campus climate issues from HERI, Senior Survey, and CHAS;
  - data for Pell Grant recipients extending further back than 2012;
  - data for faculty demographic characteristics extending further back than 2012.
- The President and the Dean of Faculty should identify key faculty and staff to engage in the analysis of these data during the 2016-2017 academic year. The synthesis of these data should be made a priority of OIR.
- OIR should work with CIE to establish which offices on campus can benefit from regular monitoring reports on institutional data relevant to the mission and tasks of those offices.
- OIR should consider the feasibility of producing regular monitoring reports for interested campus offices and communicate to the administration the resources needed to provide these reports.

### *3.2. Diversity Statement Subcommittee*

Coordinator: David Bradley

Subcommittee Members: Chris Brown, Michael Cato, Rachel Pereira, Jose Perillan, Ed Pittman, Steve Rock

This year, the Diversity Statement subcommittee drafted a new Statement on Diversity and Inclusion. Based on the work of last year's Diversity Statement subcommittee, this year's subcommittee began with a review of similar statements from a variety of institutions, along with a study of the history of related language in Vassar's governance documents and communications media. Vassar currently does not have an official diversity statement. Diversity-related language was included in our mission statement prior to a major revision aimed at reducing its length. After that revision, a separate "Statement of and Commitment to Diversity" existed, composed of a collection of quotes from the 1998 version of the mission statement and a report to the president, along with associated commentary. This previous diversity statement was included in the Student Handbook and posted on the College website for several years. However, the statement was removed from the handbook in 2013 and the webpage was not ported over to the new College website. The College along with the larger society have grown and changed tremendously since 1998, and the new diversity statement created by CIE reflects that growth and change.

The subcommittee established two primary goals for the new statement: 1) to define the meaning of diversity and inclusion in the Vassar College context and 2) to serve as a vision for said work on campus. Without a common understanding of diversity and inclusion, it is difficult to assess whether or not efforts across Vassar reflect our commitment to these principles and if sufficient progress is being made. A more concrete articulation of what this work entails will help ensure that members of the College engage in efforts that are appropriate and worthwhile. An official statement also lends legitimacy to Vassar's current diversity and inclusion initiatives.

The subcommittee iteratively drafted the statement with feedback from the larger CIE committee, as well as feedback from the President, the Dean of the College, the Dean of the Faculty, and the president of the Vassar Student Association (VSA). CIE then disseminated a draft of the new statement to faculty, students, staff, and administrators in early March, and set up a dedicated website and phone number to solicit feedback. Members of the subcommittee also met with several groups, including the Chairs and Directors of departments and programs, respectively, the VSA Executive Council, and the Faculty Club. The committee carefully considered the feedback received and incorporated it into a new version of the statement.

CIE decided that writing the statement into the Governance was the best course of action to protect the new statement from suffering the same fate as the previous "Statement of and Commitment to Diversity." In particular, putting the statement in the Governance enables the language to be owned by the College in a meaningful way, differently than including it on an ephemeral webpage or in a handbook that can easily be edited once a year. The section of The Governance (Part 2: Mission Statement, Shared Governance, and Indemnification) was chosen because this part of the Governance contains other guiding principles for the College, which is appropriate since the new statement would become a guiding principle for all diversity and inclusion work on campus.

The adoption of this new statement is only one piece of the work undertaken by CIE and other offices, and it is not meant to supplant any of the initiatives currently underway. After the incorporation of the statement into the Governance, CIE would work alongside other campus offices to implement the new statement in meaningful and useful ways. To help bring the new diversity statement to life, CIE is also drafting a Working Document of High-Impact Diversity and Inclusion Practices, which will detail mechanisms for all members of the College to commit to in order to implement this guiding principle. The high-impact practices document will also include an explicit list of protected classes and other social groups (e.g. race, sex, gender identity and expression) that

contribute to a diverse community. The committee decided to maintain the list of social groups in the high-impact practices document—rather than include them in the diversity statement—so that the list can be updated on a regular basis and remain as inclusive as possible. Additionally, upon adoption of the new statement into the Governance, CIE would work with the Office of Communications to launch a full plan to position the new statement properly in the College’s online and print media.

The final statement endorsed by CIE is given below:

Vassar College is committed to fostering diversity and inclusion as essential components of a welcoming and rich intellectual and cultural environment. Our vision of community is one in which all members are valued and empowered to thrive. It specifically includes the genuine participation of people from historically underrepresented and disadvantaged groups, for we recognize the current and past injustices that have systematically marginalized and excluded members of these groups. We must continue to recognize and address these injustices and the associated privileges afforded to some groups to provide the full potential for open and inclusive intellectual inquiry. Therefore, we respect and embrace the polyphony arising from the perspectives and experiences of all members of our community. We affirm that such diversity and the difficult, but essential, exchanges that accompany it are vital to our educational mission. At Vassar, differences are explored and challenged, while members of the College are expected to engage in these conversations in a mutually constructive manner. We are committed to integrating equity and diversity concerns into our key decision-making processes. Our community members and leaders are expected to develop and implement practices across the campus that create an inclusive community diverse in background and experience, as articulated in the mission of the College.

On April 10, CIE made the motion to the VSA Council to recommend to the Board of Trustees that the statement be incorporated into The Governance in Part 2: Mission Statement, Shared Governance, and Indemnification, and that this section be renamed “Mission Statement, Diversity Statement, Shared Governance, and Indemnification.” The VSA Council voted to approve the motion of recommending this statement to the Board.

On May 11, CIE made the same motion at the last faculty meeting of the year. However, the faculty voted to table the motion for further discussion in the fall. CIE will bring the motion to the faculty floor again in Fall 2016 with the plan to provide the faculty with more contextualization on concepts like intersectionality, overlapping systems of privilege and marginality, systemic racism, and other forms of institutional oppression. Additionally, CIE will clarify the process of adopting a diversity statement, which would likely include modifications to the language by the Board, rendering discussions of particular wording and grammar, such as the ones during the May 11th faculty meeting, less relevant.

#### *Recommendations*

- The President and the Board should review and consider the recommendation for the adoption of a new Statement on Diversity and Inclusion, as approved by the VSA Council.

### ***3.3. Historically Underrepresented Students Subcommittee***

Coordinator: Luis Inoa

CIE Subcommittee Members: Chris Brown, Diane Eshelman, Zachariah Mampilly, Neena McBaer, and Eréndira Rueda.

MEChA Members: In keeping with the principles of a student organization that operates non-hierarchically, MEChA sent different members of the organizing team to the subcommittee meetings. Students felt that this approach would ensure that most of their members could participate in the work of the subcommittee. At least two MEChA students rotated in and out of the subcommittee meetings throughout the year.

Student Independent Research Team: Jessica Cervantes, Stephanie Muñoz, Cristian Perez, Yessenia Pitones, and Giselle Sanchez-Huerta.

What was formerly named the “Transitions Subcommittee” was renamed during the 2015-2016 academic year to expand the work of the subcommittee beyond the needs of first generation and low-income students. The renamed “Historically Underrepresented Students Subcommittee” now also addresses issues pertaining to the needs and experiences of undocumented students.

#### ***3.3.1. Expansion of the Transitions Program***

At the end of the 2014-2015 academic year, the subcommittee recommended the formal expansion of the Transitions Program beyond pre-orientation and first year programming. To that end, the subcommittee worked this year to articulate what that expansion would entail. Where noted, a portion of the award from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation (JKCF) will go towards funding particular proposals.

Modeled after Brown University’s First Generation Center, the subcommittee proposes evolving the Transitions Program to the Transitions Center. This would allow for the Transitions Center to serve as a resource to all first generation, low income, and undocumented students at Vassar and families in the Hudson Valley area. Elements of the program’s expansion that are already underway include the following:

- The Transitions Senior Summit and the Transitions Senior Reception have been added to the series of programs offered to students throughout the year. Both programs are collaborative efforts with the Career Development Office. Approximately \$3000 (\$1500 per program) of the JKCF would be used to support the programs in 2016-2017.
- Transitions Too: This is an expansion of the Transitions program that incorporates Vassar employees (staff, administrators, and faculty) who identify, or have identified, with one or all of the three qualifiers for Transitions students: having grown up in a family with members of mixed legal status (e.g. citizens, legal permanent residents, undocumented), having grown up in a low-income family, and/or being the first generation of college graduates in the family. The goal of the Transitions Too Program is to have Vassar employees identify themselves as part of the Transitions Family and thereby create a broader network of campus members who can identify with the experiences of Transitions students and support students. Approximately \$500 of the JKCF would be used to support this program.
- Transitions Website: A Transitions WordPress site is currently under construction, which will provide a model for the kind of information that the College can provide to first generation and low-income students. The site includes FAQ information regarding admissions to Vassar, as well as other administrative and support services information tailored specifically to first generation and low-income students. The subcommittee plans to complete the WordPress site and make it visible during the 2016-2017 academic year. The subcommittee recommends that the Office of Communications adopt and develop this site as part of the official College website.

- The Transitions Program has also begun participating formally in regional networks for first generation college students. This year, a group of six students attended the 4th Annual First Gen Conference at Williams College in early April. The summit was hosted by Class Action and is held at a different university every year. Our hope is to submit an application to host a First Gen conference in the future.

Future expansion efforts include:

- Utilization of a currently unused room in Josselyn House to create the Transitions' Living Room. The concept of a "Living Room" is inspired by the work of the late June Jordan, whose collection of poetry encourages us to be concerned with the quality of life of people everywhere. We imagine the Living Room to be a space, not unlike the current Campus Life Centers (e.g. ALANA and LGBTQ Centers ) but one whose foundation, by virtue of its name, is based on comfort and conversation. Approximately \$5000 of the JKCF would be used to purchase items like furniture for the space.
- Creation of the HermanX Program ("hermanx" is the gender-neutral form of "hermano/hermana", Spanish for brother or sister), a one-on-one peer-mentoring program that will allow us to expand the Transitions Program to students who were not able to participate in the pre-matriculation program. The HermanX Program will include Fall and Spring retreats to create intentional opportunities for mentors and mentees to connect. Approximately \$7000 (\$3500 per retreat) of the JKCF would be used to support the retreats.
- Creation of the Transitions Advisory Board. The board will consist of two representatives from each graduating class. The representatives will be charged with keeping their cohorts informed about opportunities (e.g. fellowship opportunities) and engaged with activities pertinent to their respective cohorts.

The subcommittee will continue to work on articulating mechanisms that can provide support and resources for the college-to-career transition for historically underrepresented students, which was a recommendation from last year's report.

While it will not be in place for Fall 2016, the subcommittee believes that it is important to incorporate a Faculty Director into the Transitions Center. The Faculty Director would oversee research on first generation, low-income, and mixed residency status students. The Director would also oversee work of the Academic and Internship Resource Student Coordinators. Lastly, the Faculty Director would help faculty who participate in the Transitions pre-matriculation program stay connected to students throughout the year. Part of this work could entail training a group of Transitions students to help conduct interviews with first generation and low-income students. This could be done for independent credit. This kind of work would provide students with invaluable research experience that would improve their eligibility for graduate study and other careers (e.g. interview methods training, experience collecting original empirical data, possibly attending conferences, etc.). This work could also provide Transitions students with the opportunity to be directly involved in the work of CIE and in efforts to shape decision-making on campus related to diversity, inclusion, and equity. The subcommittee will work on developing this idea into a formal recommendation for next year.

### 3.3.2. *DREAMers Website and DREAM Act support*

During the Spring 2016 semester, five MEChA students undertook research on undocumented student access to higher education for independent credit under the supervision of Professor Eréndira Rueda. In collaboration with these students, the subcommittee has begun drafting content for a DREAMers WordPress site that will provide a model for the kind of information the College can provide to undocumented students. The site includes FAQ information regarding admissions to Vassar, as well as other administrative and support services information pertinent to undocumented students. The site includes links to local and regional resources and organizations that can provide support for undocumented students and families. The subcommittee plans to

work on the WordPress site during the 2016-2017 academic year. The subcommittee recommends that the Office of Communications adopt and develop this site as part of the official College website.

Students doing research for independent credit also surveyed student services offices (e.g. CDO, Admissions, JYA, Health Services, International Services) to gain a sense of how well-positioned each office is to welcome and serve undocumented students. Across offices, there was a consensus about the need to have access to funds and high-quality lawyers. Most offices did have some knowledge about working with undocumented students, and have had prior experience working with them, but do not have this information readily available on their websites. Moreover, these offices indicated wanting to be better trained about issues pertaining to undocumented students and expressed a desire to be in consistent contact with the CIE subcommittee in the future in order to build a progressive relationship. CIE will work on developing this training and communication next year.

To help with these efforts, the subcommittee recommends that the College President publicly support the New York State DREAM Act <<http://www.nydreamact.org/>>.

The subcommittee also noted that the current Admissions website FAQ page<sup>1</sup> for prospective students does not clarify if undocumented students are considered as domestic students or international students during the admissions process. The current FAQ information also does not reflect the process that is used to grant financial aid to undocumented students. The subcommittee recommends that the FAQ language on the Admissions website be modified to reflect these processes more accurately. Specifically, the subcommittee recommends that the answer to the question “What is Vassar’s policy on admitting undocumented students?” be changed to language similar to the following:

Vassar College does not classify undocumented or DACAmented students who graduate from a U.S. high school as international students and does not distinguish them from domestic students when reviewing their application. According to College policy, financial need does not affect admission decisions for U.S. citizens or students graduating from a U.S. high school, including undocumented students. The College is committed to meeting the full financial need of admitted undocumented and DACA students.

The Dean of Admission and Financial Aid is in the process of comparing this language to current practices. Therefore, CIE will work with the Admissions Office and the Communications Office to update the website as soon as possible.

### 3.3.3. *Multi-Disciplinary Living Learning Community (MLLC)*

In Fall of 2015, students approached the subcommittee coordinator for support in generating a proposal to pilot a project with Residential Life to reintroduce MLLCs to campus. The pilot MLLC will center on the experiences of first generation, low-income, and undocumented students, and will provide an intimate space where campus members can gather to discuss issues of relevance to these student populations. Residential Life and the CIE subcommittee will continue to work on this project next year.

#### *Recommendations*

- The JKCF funds should be used to support the expansion of the Transitions Program, including the creation of the Transitions’ Living Room, the HermanX Program, and a Transitions Advisory Board, which will allow it to serve as a resource to all first generation, low-income, and undocumented students at Vassar, as well as families in the Hudson Valley Area.

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<sup>1</sup> <[admissions.vassar.edu/apply/answers/](http://admissions.vassar.edu/apply/answers/)>

- The Office of Communications should update the language on-line and in the catalog to accurately reflect the practice for admitting and funding undocumented students.
- The Office of Communications should adopt and develop the DREAMers WordPress site and the Transitions WordPress site as part of the official College website.
- The President should publicly support the New York State DREAM Act <<http://www.nydreamact.org/>>

### ***3.4. International Students Subcommittee***

Coordinator: Andrew Meade

CIE Subcommittee Members: Zachariah Mampilly, Art Rodriguez, and Sam Speers

#### ***3.4.1. Regaining lost diversity among international students***

International student financial aid took a big hit during the 2008 recession. As a group, the international student population saw a reduction in the percentage receiving scholarship funds from 85% to 35%. This drop took Vassar's international student population from the greatest to the least funded as a percentage of the whole. On the one hand, aid to international students is more expensive since federal aid is not available to non-citizens of the United States. On the other hand, the drop in financial aid awards has meant a significant reduction in the geographic diversity of international students, particularly among students from Africa and South America. Vassar remains need-blind for domestic students but not international students. A strategy following the recession was to matriculate an increased number of full-pay international students. This strategy has continued and has resulted in a larger overall population of international students here at Vassar. Since the recovery of the economy, some peer institutions have adopted financial-aid policies that approach the pre-recession balance between international students and domestic students, such that a comparable percentage of each group is aid recipients. The subcommittee put forth a recommendation that Vassar adopt a similar policy last year and continues to advocate that we move in this direction.

This year, the subcommittee focused on how to return to a more geographically diverse international student population. One way to do this is to build the overall pool of international students. An increase in particular to the population of *full-pay* international students could pave the way for us to be able to offer more scholarships for other international students. For example, India and Brazil have been relatively untapped by Vassar resources for full-pay international students. This may be a promising direction since the international student class of 2020 is reported to be the largest international class on record, including the largest population ever of students from India in a Vassar class.

#### ***3.4.2. The needs of non-native speakers of English***

The College's recent focus on access for underrepresented domestic students coupled with the strategy of increasing full-pay internationals during the same period has resulted in a large increase in the number of students who identify either as non-native English speakers or as fully bilingual students. According to Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid there were 153 such students in the Class of 2019 alone: nearly 25% of the class. Spanish and Chinese are the two most common languages, with 38 total languages represented.

A survey was conducted this spring of the international offices, programs, and resources of various liberal arts colleges. Complete responses were tallied from 18 schools. Survey results show that many schools have started to evolve their curriculum to better embrace the changing demographics of their students. Many schools have created sections of their freshman writing seminars that focus on writing skills; others have introduced coursework either during the summer or academic year that provides non-remedial methodologies for building writing skills. It is a strong recommendation of this subcommittee that Vassar follow suit. It is imperative, when enrolling and matriculating an increasingly diverse population of students, to make necessary institutional changes to provide equal access to the curriculum and to the campus for all students. The subcommittee strongly believes that authentically celebrating the addition of these new demographics to our student body requires the intentional evolution our curricular and co-curricular approach.

The work done by the campus-wide climate study subcommittee as they reviewed survey data this year also provides evidence to support this recommendation. The 2014 CIRP Freshman Survey administered to incoming students in August 2014, prior to matriculating at Vassar, indicates that 14% of non-U.S. citizen students

indicated a need for remedial work in English. Another 17% of these students indicated a need for remedial work in reading and 29% indicated a need for remedial work in writing.

Toward this end, the subcommittee recommends that Vassar keep the current theme-based Freshman Writing Seminar (FWS) model, but designate and effectively advertise some sections as focusing on writing mechanics fundamentals. The faculty teaching these sections would receive additional training in ESL-related issues. Additional pedagogical training in this area should be made to the faculty as a whole.

This coming fall, two faculty members are planning to offer FWS courses that focus on writing mechanics fundamentals. The Office of International Services will work with these faculty to monitor and develop these types of courses.

Some of the schools surveyed mentioned anecdotally a fear of stigmatization before introducing changes to their writing curriculum. Similar fears were voiced when Vassar was developing the Transitions program. It should be noted that, in both cases, no stigma has been reported in actual practice.

#### *3.4.3. Vassar survey to determine resources needed for international students*

In the near future, the Office of International Services will conduct a survey of the experience of non-native English speaking students with Vassar's Freshmen Writing Seminar. The Chinese Student Community (CSC) pre-org will translate the survey into Mandarin for the benefit of our students from China. The results of this survey will be used to help guide summer reach-outs and approaches during international orientation.

#### *3.4.4. Funding for International Student Office*

The survey of other liberal arts colleges international student offices revealed that international offices at peer institutions have programming budgets that are 25% or more above that at Vassar. With the exception of having access to the Sophonpanich endowment, which benefits programming around the transition of students from Asia to the US, our international office funding has decreased during a period that has seen a 40% increase in international enrollments.

Vassar has traditionally paid the \$200 SEVIS fee for all new international students. This was a common practice when these fees were first announced. The survey suggests that some of our peers now pay the fee for scholarship students, and others do not pay the fee at all. The subcommittee recommends, as a way to close the gap in funding for the international office, that the College continue to pay the SEVIS fee only for scholarship students. As a way to be as inclusive as possible, students would be offered the ability to apply for a waiver.

#### *Recommendations*

- The College should work toward returning to financial-aid policies that approach the pre-recession balance between international students and domestic students, such that a comparable percentage of each group is financial aid recipients.
- The College should explore the possibility of increasing the number of full-pay international students from previously untapped geographic areas both as a way to diversify the international student population and to offer financial aid support to international students from Latin America and Africa.
- The College should designate some FWS sections as focusing on writing mechanics fundamentals and provide faculty additional training on ESL-related issues
- The College should pay the SEVIS fees only for scholarship program students, and recoup the savings to increase the OIS programming budget to more closely match that of our peer institutions

### 3.5. Social Justice Requirement Subcommittee

Coordinator: Jonathon Kahn

CIE Subcommittee Members: Luis Inoa, Neena McBaer, B. Nathan, and Eréndira Rueda.

Non-CIE Subcommittee Members: Teresa Garrett, Dara Greenwood, Logan Hill, Samantha Hoher, and Candice Lowe-Swift.

During the curricular reform discussion of the faculty meetings last year, the idea of a Social Justice Requirement (SJR) was brought up with sufficient interest from faculty to warrant further exploration. The plan in Spring 2015 was for the Committee on Curricular Policies (CCP) to explore the issue of social justice and the curriculum as a priority in Fall 2015. It was later decided that CIE would form a subcommittee to discuss the issue, with representation from CCP.

The subcommittee met during the Spring 2016 semester to discuss the possibility of creating a first- or second-year required Vassar course on social justice. The subcommittee wrestled with the concept of social justice, thinking about what it is and how to define it. Our consensus is that social justice is nearly impossible to define, but it is precisely that instability that makes it such a rich site of inquiry. As the subcommittee sees it, the justification for the course is that Vassar College should be a place where contestations about the variability of social justice might thrive. Thriving means having a campus-wide conversation about these issues. It is important to the subcommittee that the SJR not be thought of as somehow “fixing” students—making them somehow morally improved agents. Instead, the SJR would serve to provide a type of fluency in a vocabulary that is critical to student life on campus, both in and out of the classroom. Information feedback from students suggests that it takes essentially two years from their arrival on campus to become conversant in how to talk about important social and political issues. This suggests that it takes two years before students feel able to join fully in campus conversations. The SJR would function to provide students with early exposure to the language that will enable them to enter into these conversations. The explicit purpose of the course is not to provide students mastery in either this language or the issues themselves. Rather, exposure and basic fluency would be the goals of a social justice requirement at Vassar.

The course we are conceiving would have a common set of faculty and a common curriculum. One possible model is the Art History introductory class where five or more faculty contribute to a once-a-week lecture and then also run weekly discussion sessions. The subcommittee also discussed the possibility of the SJR being a 6-week course.

Over the course of the year, the SJR subcommittee considered the possibility of simply tagging classes as “social justice classes” already taught by faculty. Data show that Vassar teaches a good number of classes that would receive this tag. While the subcommittee thinks that allowing tagged courses to serve as the SJR is undesirable—a single free-standing SJR is necessary, we do think that tagging classes could be a helpful tool for thinking about how to extend the SJR more fully into the curriculum. Mapping the whole curriculum in terms of social justice would give students a potential course for further study. Whether an actual correlate would emerge from this is uncertain.

The hope is that conversation and topics from class would then easily spill out into the dorms and other co- and extra-curricular spaces. The Director of Residential Life imagines being able to build programming around the SJR in the dorms. The subcommittee also envisions a year-long speaker series that would bring voices to campus that address social justice in any number of ways. Finally, the subcommittee is very interested in creating an applied or lived aspect to the class—some sort of work that ties the theoretical work to experience. This could be related to the *Multi-Disciplinary Living Learning Community* described earlier in this report (see Section 3.3.3 above).

The SJR subcommittee coordinator and the CIE co-chairs met with the Dean of the Faculty, as CCP chair, to discuss all of these ideas on the SJR and more. Based on that meeting, and subsequent discussion, the subcommittee proposes that interested faculty develop a plan for piloting an SJR course rather than proposing an untested theoretical model to faculty. The benefits of piloting such a course before bringing it to the faculty for discussion are many, including the ability to a) create a concrete syllabus and pedagogical approach and b) provide data that would allow involved faculty and students to answer questions about how such a course would work, as well as its challenges and its merits. The subcommittee recommends that the Dean of Faculty and CCP form a group of interested faculty to work with CIE starting Fall 2016 to develop an SJR pilot structure to be implemented in Spring 2017 and/or during the 2017/2018 academic year, with a report to the faculty with a concrete SJR proposal to follow.

#### *Recommendations*

- The Dean of Faculty and CCP should form a group of interested faculty to work with CIE starting Fall 2016 to develop an SJR pilot structure to be implemented in Spring 2017 and/or during the 2017/2018 academic year, with a report to the faculty with a concrete SJR proposal to follow.

## 4. Updates on Work from Previous CIE Subcommittees

Some subcommittees from 2014-2015 were not reconstituted this year primarily because CIE members decided that the work in these areas was progressing well or because other topics were designated as a priority. This section provides an update on the work related to these previous subcommittees.

### 4.1. Gender and Sexuality

The following is an update on the recommendations proposed by the Gender and Sexuality Subcommittee at the end of the 2014/2015 academic year.

Recommendations from 2014-2015:

- fund the Queer and Trans People of Color (QTPOC) Resource Allocation Committee through the Dean of the College discretionary budget until an endowed, expendable fund is secured
- provide a one-week residency for Sheltreese McCoy to provide focused trainings and dialogues for students, faculty, staff and administrators that address a variety of issues at the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality in higher education
- offer a workshop on transgender issues in the classroom targeted specifically to faculty
- implement of a web portal that allows students and employees to indicate their chosen first names and pronouns to the college community
- continue support for the efforts of the Gender Neutral Bathroom Working Group to ensure at least one accessible gender neutral bathroom in every academic and administrative building on campus
- expand health insurance to cover transition-related care for students and employees
- provide additional programming focused on notions of masculinity and intimate partner violence.

The Director of the LGBTQ and Women's Centers worked with the Queer and Trans People of Color Resource Allocation Committee to develop a fund for students to support conference and professional development interests. The fund has been initiated with the support of a gift from an alumna interested in furthering the goals of the LGBTQ Center. While the gift-supported grant totaled approximately \$1500 during the spring 2016 semester, sustaining the fund will require either additional gifts/endowments or institutional funding. CIE recommends that the Office of Alumnae/i Affairs and Development work with the new Director of the LGBTQ Center to develop this funding opportunity.

Sheltreese McCoy's one-week residency in November 2015 was made possible through collaborative work in the Campus Life LGBTQ Center, ALANA Center, and many co-sponsors, including the President's Fund. McCoy, president and founder of Change the Field, a Queer People of Color social justice development firm, conducted dialogues and public talks for students, faculty, staff, and administrators that addressed a variety of issues at the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality in higher education.

The Registrar's Office and Computing and Information Systems (CIS) are in conversation about the implementation of a web portal that allows students and employees to indicate their chosen first names and pronouns to the college community. CIE recommends that this work continue in 2016-2017.

Work continued with the Gender Neutral Bathroom Working Group, a committee of administrators, students and the Director of the LGBTQ and Women's Center. A major accomplishment for the working group was the creation of a pdf map of gender neutral bathroom locations linked from the LGBTQ Center webpage. Additional work is needed to ensure that there are an equitable and accessible number of gender neutral bathrooms in all campus buildings. There are still several buildings that have not been addressed according to

the agreement put forth by the Working Group. CIE recommends that the DoSPAR office follow up on implementing this work.

With the departure of the subcommittee chair in January 2016, the incoming Campus Life Director of LGBTQ and Gender Resources (to begin work on July 1, 2016), will provide leadership in working with various administrative offices, committees such as CIE, faculty and others to advance work and policies to support LGBTQ and non-binary individuals within the Vassar community, and will hopefully follow up on the other 2014-2015 recommendations listed above.

#### *2016 Recommendations*

- The Office of Alumnae/i Affairs and Development work with the new Director of the LGBTQ Center to develop long-term funding for the Queer and Trans People of Color Resource Allocation Committee.
- The Registrar's Office and Computing and Information Systems (CIS) should continue the work of implementing a web portal that allows students and employees to indicate their chosen first names and pronouns to the college community.
- The DoSPAR should follow up on implementing the work Gender Neutral Bathroom Working Group to ensure that there are an equitable and accessible number of gender neutral bathrooms in all campus buildings.

## ***4.2. Financial Aid and Transfers***

The following is an update on the work of last year's Financial Aid and Transfers Subcommittee.

Recommendations from 2014-2015

- modify the admissions and financial aid processes for undocumented students and the creation of staff and information resources to support undocumented Vassar students
- provide better and more widespread support for the Exploring Transfer Program
- reduce out-of-pocket expenses for low-income students
- eliminate the spring transfer option.

The Offices of Admission and Financial Aid have begun to review undocumented and DACA students separately from international students. Therefore, these students are not competing for the same financial aid support as international students, since the amount of financial aid Vassar has available for international students is limited. The Dean of Admission and Financial Aid is serving as the office resource for any prospective undocumented student who is applying to Vassar.

The Dean of Admission and Financial Aid has worked with the Exploring Transfer (ET) staff to better understand how we can support ET students through the admission process. He has attended an information session with ET students to share with them information about our process. He will continue to work with the ET program to provide support to ET students thinking about applying to Vassar.

The goal of reducing out-of-pocket expenses for low-income students is an ongoing discussion. However, the Dean of Admission and Financial Aid is interested in creating a task force to better understand how we can support low-income students as they make the transition to Vassar. He will seek the support from the President to create such a committee.

The spring transfer option has not been eliminated at this time. In part, this is because we receive ET students applying through the spring option. The Dean of Admission and Financial Aid plans to discuss this issue with the President to determine if we can phase the program out for the fall 2018 admission cycle.

### ***4.3. Faculty Development***

The following is an update on the work of last year's Faculty Development Subcommittee.

Recommendations from 2014-2015:

- provide on-going, year-round faculty development workshops that builds on the work of the 2015 Dean's Faculty Retreat
- provide an intensive one-to-two-day Pedagogy in Action workshop at the end of August 2015

This year, the Dean of the Faculty Office worked to support ongoing faculty development in relation to inclusive pedagogies. Peter Antelyes, faculty director of teaching development, devoted most of the monthly "Talking About Teaching" sessions to various aspects of inclusive pedagogy. At the final session in April, attendees discussed the "Toolkit of Inclusive Pedagogy" that faculty members put together at the Spring 2015 Faculty Retreat. This discussion was intended partly as a prelude to editing and expanding the document, as well as making it available to those outside of Vassar online, electronically, or in print.

This year's Faculty Retreat, held on May 13, 2016 followed up on last year's event and the "Talking About Teaching" sessions. Titled "Inclusive Teaching Today," the Retreat was led by Marcia Chatelain, Associate Professor of African American History at Georgetown University and a well-known scholar and practitioner of inclusive pedagogy. The Retreat Planning Group, which included members of CIE, worked with Dr. Chatelain in an effort to ensure that the event addressed diversity and inclusion along a number of dimensions, including, but not limited to, race and ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, and physical and mental/emotional abilities.

Partly as a result of the efforts of the CIE, the Retreat Planning Group, and the Dean of the Faculty Office, Vassar is increasingly looked to for national leadership in the realm of inclusive pedagogy. At the June meeting of the Annapolis Group, Dean of the Faculty Jon Chenette's description of the 2015 Faculty Retreat generated much interest, as well as requests for materials from the event. The Dean also presented Vassar's work in this area in a panel presentation and discussion at the annual meeting of the Association of American Colleges and Universities in January 2016. Presently, the Dean of the Faculty Office and the Grants Office are preparing a proposal to the Mellon Foundation for a major grant that would enable the College to expand and institutionalize our campus training and programming in the areas of inclusive teaching and inclusive learning environments. We envision the possibility of a virtual (or perhaps physical) Vassar Center for Inclusive Pedagogy, leveraging the expertise of Vassar's faculty to build our capacity for inclusive teaching, while also facilitating collaborations in inclusive teaching strategies and techniques with faculty members from other institutions. (This Center could be envisioned in relation to the Center put forth by the Campus Diversity Structure Committee, as described in Section 5.1 below).

## 5. Additional Work

### 5.1. *Campus Diversity Structures*

In response to the campus climate crises of 2014, President Hill convened the Campus Diversity Structures (CDS) committee in the spring of 2016 to review and evaluate Vassar College's diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and structures. The charge of the committee was to present President Hill, and the larger community, with a set of recommendations regarding how Vassar should develop, evolve, and strengthen institutional practices to achieve heterogeneity, develop equity, and support the infrastructure for inclusivity. The committee included several CIE members, including the most recent past chair and one of the current co-chairs.

Many of the recommendations from the CDS committee are related to and in harmony with the recommendations in the present CIE report. If the CDS-recommended structures and programs are adopted, there would be additional coordination with the new structures. The full report of the CDS committee can be found in the publicly available report; below is a summary of the committee's recommendations.

“[The CDS committee] recognized that the College needs to thoroughly connect, integrate, and rethink some aspects of the current administrative offices and roles that are currently devoted to diversity, equity, and inclusion issues to ensure better institutional support, communication, and collaboration across the campus. We recommend that Vassar College expand and strengthen its infrastructure for diversity, equity, and inclusion work by:

- Replacing the current Committee on Inclusion and Excellence (CIE) with a new dual, collaborative structure composed of two groups, the Committee on Diversity & Inclusion and the President's Council on Diversity & Inclusion;
- Creating a Center for Decolonial Research and Practice;
- Increasing support and commitment to hiring and retaining a diverse faculty and supporting the related intellectual work and community engagement.

The recommendations represent a general consensus of the group rather than the unanimous agreement of everyone on each point. This is not surprising, given the difficulty of issues raised by the topic at hand. Nevertheless, our recommendations are a fair representation of our work and discussions. We recommend that the current administration seriously consider this report, evaluate its feasibility, and implement all or some parts of the recommendations as soon as possible. We feel that these recommendations should not be postponed until the new President has been hired. Since the initial statement by President Hill and Bill Plapinger was made in 2014 this report is time-sensitive and should be considered and acted upon with urgency...

In addition to these new structures, some of us also thought that serious reform of the administrative offices dealing with diversity and inclusion will be required to adequately address campus climate concerns. However, without additional information, time, and resources, we could not develop a sufficient reform model. Therefore, these members recommend that the College's senior officers evaluate these administrative offices and reform as necessary and possible.”

#### *Recommendations*

- The current Administration should seriously consider the report put forth by the Campus Diversity Structures committee, evaluate its feasibility, and implement all or some parts of the recommendations as soon as possible. We feel that these recommendations should not be postponed until the new President has been hired. Since the initial statement on campus climate issues by President Hill and Bill Plapinger was made in 2014 this report is time-sensitive and should be considered and acted upon with urgency.

## 5.2. Diversity + Inclusion Conversation Café

In February 2016, CIE hosted the Diversity and Inclusion Conversation Café as a part of Campus Life and Diversity's All College Days. The goal of this event was to bring various Vassar community members together to discuss diversity and inclusion work on campus, and to participate in articulating priorities for the future of this work. The event structure was based on the World Cafe model, with attendees collaboratively engaging in small groups through guided conversations to provide generative feedback on the work under the purview of CIE. The event focused on questions of diversity and inclusion related to the following areas:

- Access to Benefits, Resources, and Financial Aid
- Vassar-Poughkeepsie Relationships
- Dialogue and Collaboration Across Difference
- Infrastructure
- Learning at Vassar
- Safety and Well-Being

Over 60 students, faculty, staff, and administrators attended the event. The small group discussions resulted in a list of possible solutions to address the challenges facing Vassar in the areas listed above. Each participant was given 9 votes to divide amongst the solutions to identify which ones they felt should be prioritized by the College.

### 5.2.1. Conversation Café Results

This section provides descriptions of the work that has been, or will be, undertaken by CIE and various offices on campus to address the solutions that were identified during the Conversation Café. The number of votes that each solution received is given parenthetically. As explained during the Café, solutions that had significant overlap have been combined since the solutions were generated by different groups that may have had similar ideas. The solutions are color coded below as follows:

- **Current CIE initiative (Red)**
- **Current initiative of another office/group (Purple)**
- **Planned initiative of another office/group (Blue)**

#### 5.2.1.1. Access to Benefits, Resources, and Financial Aid

- **Update the Navigating Vassar document and increase transparency of opportunities for student funding (22):** Members of CIE lent their support to the Students Class Issues Alliance (SCIA) during the Spring 2016 semester as SCIA updated the 2010 version of the *Navigating Vassar* document. Once updated, CIE recommends that the Dean of Studies Office work to include the document in the materials that are handed out during the pre-major advising process. (The Dean of Studies indicated that they had no budget to support printing this document, so CIE recommends that the College work with the Dean to identify appropriate funding). CIE also recommends that the Office of Communications make this document available on the Vassar website.
- **Make modifications to student employment opportunities (12):** CIE does not have details on what modifications are being requested. Any issues pertaining to student employment (e.g. opportunities, time commitment, wages) are handled by the Student Employment Task Force. CIE recommends that the Student Employment Task Force conducts a survey of students that particularly addresses questions that pertain to diversity, inclusion, and equity.
- **Create an office area for Transitions that can, among other things, provide advice and referrals related to finances (3):** CIE and the Office of Residential Life are working on creating a "Transitions Living Room" for first generation, low income, and undocumented student populations on campus.

- **Provide better access to transportation for off-campus needs (1):** The VSA submitted a proposal to the Dean of the College in November 2015 with a specific request that the College help students when they require off-campus transportation to access health services (e.g. trips to off-campus health appointments, pharmacies for prescription refills). CIE does not know the status of this proposal; however, we recommend that VSA and Dean continue to work together to provide adequate transportation options for students. The Navigating Vassar documented also provides information on transportation options.

#### 5.2.1.2. Vassar-Poughkeepsie Relationships

- **Provide orientation activities that include City of Poughkeepsie walking tours (26):** The current Dean of Freshmen, Susan Zlotnick, is looking into adding City of Poughkeepsie (not Arlington) activities to the New Student Orientation. CIE recommends that the new Dean of Freshmen continue to develop these opportunities. A portion of the Transitions Pre-Orientation program involves a tour of the City of Poughkeepsie.
- **Extend campus resources to the local community, including to undocumented students (13):** The Historically Underrepresented Students subcommittee of CIE is currently working to establish what kinds of resources and training are necessary on campus in order to serve undocumented Vassar students, as well as undocumented students in the local community. Additionally, the Vassar Transitions Program has been expanded to serve students who are first generation to college, low-income, and/or undocumented.
- **Foster engagement with local religious communities (2):** The Office of Religious and Spiritual Life connects individual students and student religious groups with local religious communities, and frequently works with the local interfaith council to support programming like Interfaith Story Circle.
- **Foster relationships between students and non-faculty staff (2):** The Office of International Services organizes the international host program, which includes faculty, administrators, staff, as well as members of the Poughkeepsie community. Campus Life and Diversity holds four Conversation Dinners a year on critical campus topics, inviting students, faculty, administrators and staff. The topics for 2015-16 included socioeconomic class at Vassar, globalization, ending violence and a retrospective look at campus issues.

#### 5.2.1.3. Dialogue and Collaboration Across Difference

- **Provide frequent campus wide conversations/town halls (34):** The Residential Life Taskforce is currently working to develop a proposal for intentional living communities that could provide a cadre of trained students and staff prepared to lead conversations about specific topics and issues. CIE may also look into the option of hosting more frequent campus-wide conversations.
- **Provide an oral history of buildings from different perspectives, such as Africana Studies, ALANA Center, Urban Studies (2):** The ALANA Center is working with the house advisor from Main to bring back an alum from the Main 1990 takeover period. This will most likely happen in the Fall.
- **Offer other fun events (2):** The Office of International Services (OIS) hosts two big events, Kaleidoscope in the fall and an International Dance Festival in the spring, which seek to bring together students, non-students, and members of the Poughkeepsie community to explore aspects of culture. The OIS also organizes the Around the World series, which creates the space to experience and dialogue across cultural difference. These events happen four times a year, with each one focusing on a geographical region. The events aim to draw students from different countries, as well as students who are interested in visiting, or who have visited, or who are simply interested in learning more about those regions. ALANA FEST also took place on April 30th. This is a time on the quad where different cultures are represented through food, dance, and activity.
- **Engage with the diverse Poughkeepsie community (2):** The RSL and Campus Life offices generally engage the Poughkeepsie community through a range of initiatives, already noted above, including the

array of religious and spiritual institutions in the Hudson Valley and the Frances Fergusson Good Neighbors Partnerships.

- **Provide additional training/skill building (1):** The director of the ALANA Center can provide individualized and specialized trainings for faculty, administrators, and students. A number of such trainings have taken place this year, for example, the ALANA Center has worked with Campus Security, House Teams, and individual meetings with faculty.

#### 5.2.1.4. Infrastructure

- **Revisit organizational chart of the College and create strategic plan for diversity and publicize it (64):** The Campus Diversity Structures committee, which includes several CIE members, has made recommendations to the President for changes to the College's diversity leadership and collaboration structure. The hope is that some or all of these recommendations will be implemented in the near future, which should address this concern, at least in part.
- **Create a special block of time (~90 minutes) each week that is reserved for college- directed activities. This time could be used to create a value-driven cultural shift to incorporate community-wide dialogue and other positive traditions (13):** CIE recommends that the Dean of Faculty and Dean of the College explore this possibility. There are several other institutions that have a similar structure, which could be used as a reference.

#### 5.2.1.5. Learning at Vassar

- **Create a social justice requirement (37):** The Social Justice Requirement (SJR) Subcommittee of CIE has been meeting this year to discuss what an SJR would entail (e.g. intent, purpose, content, pedagogy, structure, credit, etc.) and has recommended that a pilot course be developed before proposing a model to the faculty for discussion.
- **Inventory what expertise people have and tap into broader expertise on diversity and inclusion (29):** The Campus Diversity Structures committee, which includes several CIE members, has made recommendations to the President for changes to the College's diversity leadership and collaboration structure. The hope is that some or all of these recommendations will be implemented in the near future, which should address this concern, at least in part.
- **Continue to develop support programs like SI (Supplemental Instruction) and Transitions (28):** A new director of the Quantitative Reasoning Center has been hired and will begin work on August 1st. They will continue to support SI. The Historically Underrepresented Students Subcommittee of CIE is currently developing a proposal to expand the Transitions program to a Transitions Center, which includes more programming across all four years, opportunities for students to remain involved with the program from freshman to senior year, and the inclusion of more faculty, staff, and administrators who identify with the Transitions Family.

#### 5.2.1.6. Safety and Well-being

- **Offer workshops for faculty, administrators, and staff for continuing professional development on issues of identity, diversity, etc. (12):** These efforts are on-going in a variety of areas on campus, such as Dean of Faculty's Office, the LTRC, the Talking About Teaching series, Pedagogy in Action workshops, etc.
- **Find a way to include security and staff in these types of dialogues (7):** The Director of the ALANA Center met twice this year with Security and presented trainings and workshops. It is difficult to engage staff in all-campus discussions due to scheduling conflicts and bargaining unit regulations. However, CIE is in discussions with Human Resources regarding this issue.
- **Increase student access to off-campus resources (transportation, doctors, mental health) (5):** The VSA submitted a proposal to Dean of the College in November 2015 with a specific request that the College help students when they require off-campus transportation to access health services (e.g. trips to off-

campus health appointments, pharmacies for prescription refills). CIE does not know the status of this proposal; however, we recommend that VSA and Dean continue to work together to provide adequate transportation options for students. The Navigating Vassar document also provides information on transportation options.

### 5.2.2. *Conversation Café Participant Feedback*

CIE conducted a survey of participants to elicit feedback on the event. Seventeen individuals provided feedback for the event: students (9), administrators (5), and faculty (3).

Most individuals (58.8%) indicated they were “Quite Comfortable” discussing and asking questions at the event and 29.4% indicated they were “Moderately Comfortable”. A similar distribution was seen in response to the question asking how individuals felt about the time given by moderators for discussion: 52.9% indicated that “About the right amount of time” had been provided, while 35.3% selected the response “Slightly too little time”. For the question, “How well-structured was this event?” 47.1% selected “Extremely well-structured” and 35.3% felt the event was “Quite well-structured”. For the question, “How likely would you be to attend a future Diversity + Inclusion Conversation Cafe?” the majority (47.1%) indicated they were “Extremely likely” to attend again and 41.2% indicated they were “Quite likely”. Regarding how likely the participant was to recommend the event to a friend or colleague, 52.9% indicated they were “Quite likely” and 29.4% stated they were “Extremely likely”. Overall, satisfaction levels were moderately high, with 64.7% selecting “Somewhat satisfied” and 23.5% selecting “Extremely satisfied”.

The qualitative feedback highlighted different participant areas of interest. For things that participants liked best about the event, many answers converged around expressing appreciation for the highly organized nature of the event. It “kept the dialogue going” as one person expressed, and everyone was consistently given tasks that kept levels of engagement and inclusion high. Individuals were also happy to have the opportunity to collaborate with constituents across campus with whom they don’t typically engage.

Suggestions for things that could have been improved brought up largely logistical matters: difficulty in consolidating tables to compensate for low turn-out, poor hearing in the Villard room, and a learning curve in following the World Café model. Other areas of feedback included a desire to have a student-only discussion space, and more discussion on current events (e.g. BDS). A desire for higher turnout of staff and particularly students was strongly expressed. Other comments were enthusiastic and positive; many providing congratulations and thanks to those who worked on the event, as well as excitement for what comes next out of the event’s efforts. A desire to continue the conversations and work that goes into solving the problems discussed during the event was also expressed, perhaps with the engagement of more than just the student-body.

### *Recommendations*

- The Dean of Studies and Dean of Freshmen should include the Navigating Vassar document in the materials that are handed out during the pre-major advising process. The College should work with the Deans to identify appropriate funding for the printing of this document.
- The Office of Communications should make the Navigating Vassar document available on the Vassar website in multiple places (e.g. under financial aid information and on the Transitions website once that is incorporated into the College’s website).
- The Student Employment Task Force should conduct a survey of students that particularly addresses questions that pertain to diversity, inclusion, and equity.
- The Dean of Freshmen should add City of Poughkeepsie (not Arlington) activities to the New Student Orientation.
- The VSA and the Dean of the College should continue to work together to develop initiatives to help students when they require off-campus transportation to access health services.

- The Dean of Faculty and Dean of the College explore the possibility of creating a special block of time (~90 minutes) each week that is reserved for college-wide activities. This time could be used to create a value-driven cultural shift to incorporate community-wide dialogue and other positive traditions.

### ***5.3. Faculty Diversity / Recruitment + Retention***

The co-chairs of CIE met on various occasions with the Dean of the Faculty, the Director of Human Resources, the Assistant Director of Employment, the Director of Title IX and Equal Opportunity, and the Faculty Affirmative Action Officer to discuss the College's current and future efforts in faculty recruitment and retention, specifically with regard to diversity and inclusion efforts.

In careful consultation with the Director of Title IX and Equal Opportunity and the Faculty Affirmative Action Officer, CIE recommends the following work in this area.

#### *Develop a Vassar Handbook for Faculty Searches*

This handbook would place all of the information regarding faculty searches in one place and would be available to all faculty (physical copies and online at the DoF website). It would demystify hiring practices by making this information available to all faculty members and off-campus entities at any time. It would create more informed search committees and ensure greater consistency in recruitment and hiring across departments and programs. It would send a stronger and more consistent message about the importance of diversity in faculty searches and would help in holding search committees more accountable and lead to a more diverse pool of faculty.

The handbook would include a statement on faculty diversity; a discussion of the merits and reasons for increasing faculty diversity that draws from scholarship in this area; a step-by-step overview of the search process from requesting positions (tenure-track lines, visiting, adjunct) through appointment/negotiation; the explanation of policies, expectations and best practices for recruiting a diverse pool of faculty; and forms for various stages of the search process.

CIE plans to form a Faculty Diversity / Recruitment and Retention subcommittee next year to work with the Faculty Affirmative Action Officer to develop this handbook.

#### *Modify the Search Committee Composition*

The Dean of Faculty should require the search committee chairs to ensure that search committees have diverse representation (rank, gender, race, ethnicity, etc.). The Dean of Faculty, in consultation with the Chair or Director, should also appoint a non-voting "equity advocate" to each search committee. This is current practice at institutions such as the University of Chicago, Clarke, Columbia, Johns Hopkins, Hamilton College, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Ohio State, and Skidmore, among others. In some cases, this role is filled by a member of the department or program conducting the search; in other cases, this member comes from outside the department or program. This *trained* faculty member's task would help to ensure:

- that the search committee/department undertakes extensive efforts to diversify the candidate pool;
- that efforts are made to identify and consider all candidates;
- that the search committee/department is aware of implicit bias and makes efforts to reduce it
- that the search committee/department does not exclude candidates because of implicit bias

The faculty "equity advocate" would receive compensation for their work to ensure that faculty with experience in diversity and inclusion issues are not unduly burdened by this additional work, which is often the case. The planned CIE subcommittee on Faculty Diversity / Recruitment and Retention will also work with the Faculty Affirmative Action Officer on developing the "equity advocate" position and process.

#### *Strengthen the Language of the College's Statement on Diversity for All Job Ads*

The diversity and affirmative action language in Vassar's current job ad should be updated. It should be mandatory for ALL faculty job ads (including temporary positions) and no ads should be allowed to shorten or omit this language unless it is expressly prohibited by the advertising body. Proposed updated job ad language:

Vassar College is an affirmative action and equal opportunity employer with a strong commitment to increasing the diversity of the campus community and the curriculum, and to promoting an environment of equality, inclusion and respect for difference. Candidates who can contribute to that goal are encouraged to identify their strengths and experiences in this area. Applicants who have demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion are particularly encouraged to apply as are individuals who have memberships in one or more of the following groups whose underrepresentation in the American professoriate has been severe and longstanding, including, but not limited to: Native American Indians/Alaska Natives, Black/African Americans, Mexican American/Chicanas/Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, Asian American/Native Pacific Islanders (Hawaiian/Polynesian/ Micronesian), people with disabilities, first-generation college students, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer and transgender individuals.

The DoF office should immediately require that all job ads adopt this language.

#### *Increase Training for Departments/Programs, Search Committees, and FASC*

All participants in the faculty search process should receive specific training on diversity. This training should include topics such as: the importance of diversity to the College's mission, the necessary outreach efforts to diversify the candidate pool, the expectations for documenting affirmative action and diversity measures, the stages of the search process (including documentation and approval), reducing implicit bias, and interviewing (on-line, off-campus, and on-campus). The DoF office and the Faculty Affirmative Action Officer should develop this training and implement it in the near future.

#### *Increase the Distribution of Job Ads*

The distribution of faculty search job ads should be increased to promote further diversity in the faculty recruitment pool. The Dean of Faculty's office should also pay for up to two additional listings (beyond the current allotment) in minority-serving job advertisement sites, such as Latina/o Studies Association, Association of Asian American Studies, Association of Black Sociologists, etc. These sites would be suggested by the department/program. [Note: the Dean of Faculty office has agreed to investigate the estimated costs of additional postings this summer.] The DoF office should begin offering these additional listings in the Fall of 2016.

#### *Increase the Number of Approval Stations in the Faculty Search Process*

Current faculty searches include some points in the process where the DoF or Faculty Affirmative Action Officer must provide additional approval before the search can continue. These approval stations should be formalized and increased. The approval stations should include the following:

- **TT/Job Proposals:** The final proposal for a tenure-track position should include a self-assessment of the department/program's current diversity (i.e., diversity of department/program's faculty, diversity of curriculum, etc.), demonstrate an awareness of the discipline's own engagement with issues of diversity (key research topics, journals, etc.), and provide a statement on how this position (the teaching and research interests noted) could contribute to the College's mission on diversity. The proposal should also provide an initial plan for ensuring a broad pool of candidates, including a plan to incorporate an "equity advocate". A similar approach should also be pursued for full-time visiting and lecturer appointments.
- **Prior to Conducting Any Skype/Conference Interviews:** shortly after the stated date on which the review of applications will begin, the chair of the search committee should submit a report on the diversity

efforts that were undertaken and its short list of candidates for interviews at this stage. Before granting approval to proceed, the DoF and AA officer should approve that sufficient efforts were undertaken to attract a diverse pool of applicants and that the short list of candidates for Skype interviews, etc. represents this diversity.

- Prior to On-Campus Visits: The DoF and AA officer should approve that the final list of candidates is sufficiently excellent and diverse and that the search committee fairly weighed the diversity of the candidates that they interviewed at an earlier stage.
- Job Offer: as currently practiced, the final decision to make an offer to a particular candidate must obtain the approval of the DoF.

The DoF and the Faculty Director of Affirmative Action should develop and formalize these approval stations and implement them in the near future.

### *Recommendations*

- The Dean of the Faculty should adopt the following faculty hiring practices
  - develop a Vassar handbook for faculty searches
  - modify the search committee composition, including the addition of an equity advocate
  - strengthen the language of the college's statement on diversity for all job ads
  - increase training for departments/programs, search committees, and FASC
  - increase the distribution of job ads
  - increase the number of approval stations in the faculty search process

#### *5.4. Israel-Palestine Conflict / Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction (BDS) Movement*

In November an ad-hoc group of administrators and faculty began meeting in response to issues surrounding an Israel-Palestine/BDS Movement on campus. President Hill convened a Proactive Response Group (PRG) whose central goals include ensuring that student well-being is centered, communicating across offices and departments to avoid silos, considering the multiplicity of constituencies (internal and external) involved, and promoting dialogue wherever possible to minimize conflicts and tensions. Although PRG was convened to consider proactive measures for addressing issues relating to Israel-Palestine and the BDS campaign at Vassar, the group acknowledged that intersecting issues of race, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, gender, sexual identity and broader campus climate factors needed to be grounded in the group's work. In view of this context and that at least seven of its members, including the Chair, Ed Pittman, are also CIE members, a February meeting with CIE Co-Chairs was held to explore collaborations. To improve communication and connections, it was agreed that PRG would provide updates at CIE meetings in order to keep lines of communication open. We also discussed how the two committees could jointly advise, for example, the President's Fund for Dialogue and Engagement Across Difference on an agenda of speakers and workshops that address a range of campus climate issues relating to equity and inclusion. This collaboration will continue into the next academic year.

## List of Committee Members

### *CIE Co-Chairs, Spring 2016-present*

Bradley, David - Associate Professor of Physics

Rueda, Eréndira - Associate Professor of Sociology

### *Chair of CIE through Fall 2015*

Mampilly, Zachariah - Associate Professor of Political Science

### *Members*

Brown, Christopher - VSA VP for Student Life

Cato, Michael - Chief Information Officer

Chaplin, Kerry - Director of Jewish Student Life

Grab, Kelly - Title IX Investigator

Honore, Christie - Student

Inoa, Luis - Director of Residential Life

Kahn, Jonathon - Associate Professor of Religion

Lotto, Ben - Dean of Studies

McBaer, Neena - VSA member

Meade, Andrew - Director of International Services

Nathan, B. - Director of Campus Life, ALANA Center

Pereira, Rachel - Director of Equal Opportunity and Title IX

Perillan, Jose - Assistant Professor of Physics and STS

Pittman, Edward '82 - Associate Dean of the College, Campus Life and Diversity

Rock, Steve - Associate Dean of Faculty

Rodriguez, Art - Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid

Speers, Sam - Director of Religious and Spiritual Life

Zlotnick, Susan - Dean of Freshmen

## Appendix A: Full Set of CIE Recommendations

### *Campus-Wide Climate Study Subcommittee Recommendations*

- OIR should provide the following data to CIE this summer:
  - senior survey data disaggregated by measures such as race/ethnicity, SES, gender, and first generation status;
  - data pertinent to campus climate issues from HERI, Senior Survey, and CHAS.
  - data for Pell Grant recipients extending further back than 2012;
  - data for faculty demographic characteristics extending further back than 2012.
- The President and the Dean of Faculty should identify key faculty and staff to engage in the analysis of these data during the 2016-2017 academic year. The synthesis of these data should be made a priority of OIR.
- OIR should work with CIE to establish which offices on campus can benefit from regular monitoring reports on institutional data relevant to the mission and tasks of those offices.
- OIR should consider the feasibility of producing regular monitoring reports for interested campus offices and communicate to the administration the resources needed to provide these reports.

### *Diversity Statement Subcommittee Recommendations*

- The President and the Board should review and consider the recommendation for the adoption of a new Statement on Diversity and Inclusion, as approved by the VSA Council.

### *Historically Underrepresented Students Subcommittee Recommendations*

- The JKCF funds should be used to support the expansion of the Transitions Program, including the creation of the Transitions' Living Room, the HermanX Program, and a Transitions Advisory Board, which will allow it to serve as a resource to all first generation, low-income, and undocumented students at Vassar, as well as families in the Hudson Valley Area.
- The Office of Communications should update the language on-line and in the catalog to accurately reflect the practice for admitting and funding undocumented students.
- The Office of Communications should adopt and develop the DREAMers WordPress site and the Transitions WordPress site as part of the official College website.
- The President should publicly support the New York State DREAM Act <<http://www.nydreamact.org/>>

### *International Students Subcommittee Recommendations*

- The College should work toward returning to financial-aid policies that approach the pre-recession balance between international students and domestic students, such that a comparable percentage of each group is financial aid recipients.
- The College should explore the possibility of increasing the number of full-pay international students from previously untapped geographic areas both as a way to diversify the international student population and to offer financial aid support to international students from Latin America and Africa.
- The College should designate some FWS sections as focusing on writing mechanics fundamentals and provide faculty additional training on ESL-related issues
- The College should pay the SEVIS fees only for scholarship program students, and recoup the savings to increase the OIS programming budget to more closely match that of our peer institutions

### *Social Justice Requirement Subcommittee Recommendations*

- The Dean of Faculty and CCP should form a group of interested faculty to work with CIE starting Fall 2016 to develop an SJR pilot structure to be implemented in Spring 2017 and/or during the 2017/2018 academic year, with a report to the faculty with a concrete SJR proposal to follow

### *Gender and Sexuality Recommendations*

- The Office of Alumnae/i Affairs and Development work with the new Director of the LGBTQ Center to develop long-term funding for the Queer and Trans People of Color Resource Allocation Committee.
- The Registrar's Office and Computing and Information Systems (CIS) should continue the work of implementing a web portal that allows students and employees to indicate their chosen first names and pronouns to the college community.
- The DoSPAR should follow up on implementing the work Gender Neutral Bathroom Working Group to ensure that there are an equitable and accessible number of gender neutral bathrooms in all campus buildings.

### *Campus Diversity Structures Recommendations*

- The current **Administration** should seriously consider the report put forth by the Campus Diversity Structures committee, evaluate its feasibility, and implement all or some parts of the recommendations as soon as possible. We feel that these recommendations should not be postponed until the new President has been hired. Since the initial statement on campus climate issues by President Hill and Bill Plapinger was made in 2014 this report is time-sensitive and should be considered and acted upon with urgency.

### *CIE Conversation Café Recommendations*

- The Dean of Studies and Dean of Freshmen should include the Navigating Vassar document in the materials that are handed out during the pre-major advising process. The College should work with the Deans to identify appropriate funding for the printing of this document.
- The Office of Communications should make the Navigating Vassar document available on the Vassar website.
- The Student Employment Task Force should conduct a survey of students that particularly addresses questions that pertain to diversity, inclusion, and equity.
- The Dean of Freshmen should add City of Poughkeepsie (not Arlington) activities to the New Student Orientation.
- The VSA and the Dean of the College should continue to work together to develop initiatives to help students when they require off-campus transportation to access health services.
- The Dean of Faculty and Dean of the College explore the possibility of creating a special block of time (~90 minutes) each week that is reserved for college-wide activities. This time could be used to create a value-driven cultural shift to incorporate community-wide dialogue and other positive traditions.

### *Faculty Diversity/Recruitment + Retention Recommendations*

- The Dean of the Faculty should adopt the following faculty hiring practices
  - develop a Vassar handbook for faculty searches
  - modify the search committee composition, including the addition of an equity advocate
  - strengthen the language of the college's statement on diversity for all job ads

- increase training for departments/programs, search committees, and FASC
- increase the distribution of job ads
- increase the number of approval stations in the faculty search process

## Appendix B: Campus Climate Data Trends and Questions

This Appendix contains a summary of data trends and questions that emerged in the institutional data provided by OIR. At the beginning of the spring 2016 term, 1-2 subcommittee members were assigned to six data areas: Admissions, Enrollment, Financial Aid, Retention and Graduation rates, Faculty Profiles, and Employee Profiles. Data teams met independently during the semester and reviewed various data provided by OIR. What follows is a summary of key trends noted by subcommittee members for particular measures, as well as some of the questions that emerged about the data and the trends.

Applicant, admission and enrollment data suggest that since 2008 more students of color are applying to the college, changing the applicant pool. While admission rates are higher for students of color than for white students, the enrollment rates for students of color are dramatically lower than for white students. (These trends are reflected across institutions nationally.) Despite a moderate increase post 2008, the enrollment rate for students of color is almost half as much as for white students. This suggests the College is losing these admitted students to other options, but it is unclear what kinds of factors are shaping these outcomes.

The 2014 CIRP Freshman Survey data suggest that students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds had different reasons for choosing Vassar:

- 89% of African American students and 76% of Hispanic students noted that financial aid offers were "very important" in their reasons for choosing to attend Vassar, compared to 41% of White students and 58% of Asian American students.
- Very low proportions of students in any racial/ethnic category indicated that they chose Vassar because they couldn't afford their first choice (17% of African American students, 10% of Asian American students, 6% of Hispanic students, and 3% of White students).

OIR has indicated that admissions does ask admitted students who decline to attend Vassar why they did so and has agreed to make that information available, although the caveat is that this survey has a very low response rate.

Enrollment data disaggregated by racial/ethnic background indicate that over a ten year period, enrollments for African American students remain just below 5%, although enrollments peaked in certain years and decline in more recent years. The data also reflect steady increases in the proportion of Asian American students (from 9.2% to 11.2%), Latinx students (6% to 11.2%), and foreign citizens/international students (5.4% to 7.4%) over the last decade.

Financial aid data indicate that the proportion of Pell Grant Recipients has increased over the last ten years, from 7% of entering freshmen during the 2006/07 academic year, to 22% of entering freshmen in 2015/16. The proportion of Pell Grant recipients in the entering freshman class peaked at 27% during the 2010/11 academic year.

A similar trend appears among all students, with 8% of all students in the 2006/07 academic year receiving Pell Grants to 23% of all students in 2015/16 receiving Pell Grants. It is worth noting that the majority of Pell Grant recipients in every cohort are White, but in every cohort, students of color are more likely to be Pell Grant recipients than are White students. The same is true for the student population as a whole.

- The 2014 CIRP Freshman Survey data suggest that African American students (14%) and Hispanic American students (15%) are more likely than White (7%) and Asian students (8%) to express "major" concerns about being able to finance a college education. First generation students (13%) are more likely than students whose parents have a college degree (8%) to express "major" concern over financing a college education as well. [Major concern = "not sure I will have enough funds to complete college"]

- What can the COFHE Senior Survey in particular (but also perhaps CHAS Campus Climate Survey and the National Survey of Student Engagement?) tell us about the kinds of financial stressors that students face, and their effects on achievement and persistence, over the course of their four years at Vassar?

Data on retention and graduation rates indicate that graduation rates remain the highest for Asian American and White students over the ten year period (over 90% in the majority of years) and remain lower for African American students (between 77% and 95%, but over 90% in most years) and lowest for Latinx students (between 72% and 94%, but mostly in the 81-88% range).

- What can the COFHE Senior Survey, CHAS Campus Climate Survey, and the National Survey of Student Engagement tell us about the academic and social experiences of students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds that might shed light on the lower graduation rates for African American and Latinx students?

We were not given data over a ten year period for Pell Grant recipients but from 2012-2014 the data indicate an increase in the graduation rates for Pell Grant recipients. In 2012, the graduation rate for Pell Grant recipients was 84.3% and in 2014 it was 92.9%. While the 2012 graduation rate for Pell Grant recipients was a bit lower than the graduation rate for students not receiving financial aid (84.3% vs 92.1%, respectively), by 2014 the graduation rate for Pell Grant recipients is slightly higher than the graduation rate for students not receiving financial aid (92.9% vs. 92.2%, respectively).

Faculty profile data did not provide a sense of how the faculty demographic has changed over the past decade. The data do indicate that in 2014/15, just over 70% of full-time faculty (all ranks) were White in comparison to 6% Latinx, 9% Asian American, and 6% Black. Disaggregated data for full-time tenured faculty and full-time tenure track faculty suggest a different demographic make-up, with larger proportions of White faculty among those who are tenured, but higher proportions of faculty of color among those who are tenure-track. Among the full-time tenured faculty in 2014/15, 79% are White, 5% are Latinx, 9% are Asian American, and 6% are Black. Among full-time tenure track faculty, 49% are White, 16% are Latinx, 16% are Asian American, and 8% are Black.

- Data we were given only go back as far as 2012/13 so it's not clear how much of a difference there is in the college's current faculty demographic in contrast to ten years ago, or how these figures have fluctuated over the years.
- Is it possible to see data that would give us a sense of longer standing trends in the college's efforts to diversify the faculty population?
- Having that data would help guide our approach to looking at HERI Faculty Survey data, which provides information on levels of faculty satisfaction with many aspects of teaching, professorship, college life, as well as information about stress levels, perceptions and experiences with general campus climate, and perceptions related to student and faculty diversity, among other things.
- Is it possible to access additional data about faculty demographic characteristics? For example: class background (i.e. what proportion of our faculty grew up in low income families?), first generation status (i.e. what proportion of faculty come from families where parents did not have a college degree?), and immigration background (e.g. what proportion of faculty grew up in immigrant families?). This kind of demographic data would serve the interests of expanding the Transitions Program into a Transitions Center, by giving historically underrepresented students an indication that there are faculty on campus who may share key background experiences.
  - If this data is not already collected somehow (e.g. Dean of Faculty?), this is the kind of additional data that could be asked in a future campus climate survey.

## Appendix C: CIE Conversation Café Results

This Appendix contains the raw data collected from the Conversation Cafe held on February 24, 2016. The number of votes that participants assigned to each solution is given parenthetically.

### *Access to Benefits, Resources, Financial Aid*

- Transparency in opportunities for student funding (19)
- Increase student employment opportunities & revisit the time commitment. Work more hours as class year goes up, but class workload goes up with each year too. (12)
- Office area for Transitions/First Year to provide or assist with providing services for finances for freshmen (3)
- Update Navigating Vassar Doc (1)
- Access to transportation increases (1)
- Better communication on campus about what is available or when new information changes (1)

### *Vassar-Poughkeepsie Relationship*

- Orientation include city of Poughkeepsie and not just Arlington for walking tours (26)
- Extending campus resources to community (i.e. for undocumented students) (13)
- History of Poughkeepsie class/lesson (11)
- Admissions counselors going into city of Poughkeepsie classes (6)
- Fostering engagement with local religious communities (2)
- Fostering relationships between students and non-faculty staff (2)
- Creating space for equitable relationships rather than those of service (1)
- Learn what Marist or CIA does
- Faculty and staff housing in City of Poughkeepsie
- Within Vassar facilitating feelings of being welcome rather than intruding, to community members (i.e. racial profiling)

### *Dialogue & Collaboration Across Difference*

- Frequent campus wide conversations/town halls (34)
- Make conversations more accessible by coordinating with professors, etc. (18)
- Post-lecture discussion—public setting for after lectures, groups discuss, and depending on ideas get funding to create action after lecture (15)
- Associate conversations with actions (7)
- Oral history of buildings from different perspectives, especially Africana studies, ALANA Center, urban studies (2)
- Central locations for email lists for campus conversations (2)
- Fun events (2)
- Engaging with diverse POK community (2)
- Training/skill building (1)
- Diversity requirement
- Different styles of discussion needed (e.g. facilitated, student-led, affinity groups, diverse group)

### *Infrastructure*

- Revisit org charge of the college and is there a more seamless structure for accessing help? Include strategic plan for diversity and publicize it (64)
- Weekly college speaker series with food (reserved time slot) (23)
- Regular community service to take Vassar into community (9)
- “college time” 90 min reserved every week for college directed activity (7)
- Value driven cultural shift community wide dialog and top down initiative (creating positive traditions) (4)

- Co-location of campus life and diversity resources—possibly center? More opportunities for social interaction, physical space for gathering (2)
- Make every building ADA accessible (1)
- Increased emphasis on class issues and hidden cost

#### *Learning at Vassar*

- Inventory what expertise people have and tap into broader/untapped expertise on diversity and inclusion (29)
- Continue to develop support programs like SI, transitions (28)
- Social justice requirement- intent and purpose (24)
- Make the social justice requirement required, but not graded (11)
- Creating “danger zone” for learning (5)
- Course must connect historical context with current issues (2)
- Discussion-based course
- How would course be designated as meeting SJR?
- Other opportunities outside of traditional curriculum/course
- Find ways to include skills/experience of staff in above

#### *Safety & Well-being*

- Workshops for faculty/admin/staff continuing professional development for issues of identity, diversity, etc. (12)
- Find a way to include security and staff in these types of dialogues (7)
- Increased access to off-campus resources (transportation and services themselves—doctors and mental health) (5)
- More employees in student services (5)
- Resources for student-led training of employees—work study or honorarium
- Add live-in partners to emergency notification system (1)
- Find a more structured ways to continue alcohol/drug education like in the party class Peer support/dialogue facilitation for self-care
- Greater awareness of safety and security programs (1)