

Baruch College School of Public Affairs

Diversity Strategic Plan

Vision Statement

Baruch College's School of Public Affairs (SPA), located at the heart of one of the greatest global cities on earth, is a place where students, staff, and faculty have the opportunity to work and to learn shoulder-to-shoulder with people from dramatically different racial, national and cultural backgrounds. It is vital that we capitalize on this unique mix of people to develop habits of inclusion, and a capacity to understand, learn from, and empathize with diverse others. Learning to value, appreciate, and actively seek out diversity will enhance our students' and faculty's careers and lives. We believe that SPA should lead by example with regard to the practices and policies that will help New York City's public institutions serve the needs of all the city's people. New York City's diversity has long been a bellwether of the nation's future, thus SPA should strive to set an example not only for the city, but for the nation.

To fulfill this vision, we need to "walk the walk." We are committed to recruiting and hiring, faculty and staff from under-represented minority groups, especially African-Americans and Hispanics, to ensure that the faculty and staff represent the diversity of the city we serve. We are committed to enacting policies that will make it more likely that we will retain quality faculty even if they are "academic outsiders," as member of underrepresented minorities frequently are. And we strive to ensure the structural integration of under-represented minorities at all levels of our school, and the presence of people from these groups in visible leadership roles.

We must strive to foster a climate that is welcoming to people with diverse racial, ethnic, socio-economic, cultural and religious backgrounds; a climate that embraces individuals of all ages, genders, sexual orientations, and political perspectives; and we must ensure that individuals who are differently abled feel included and respected. We must celebrate the ways that our curriculum already addresses issues of diversity, strive to make sure that it continues to be enriched with fresh diversity-related topics, and that it is ever more inclusive of the perspectives of underrepresented groups.

We will pursue these goals through a number of general strategies, and also through strategies aimed specifically at the goals of improved recruitment and retention of historically under-represented minorities, and the ongoing maintenance of a climate that welcomes and embraces diversity. By pursuing these goals and strategies, we hope to create an environment

where people from all backgrounds and with different outlooks can freely and frankly share ideas and knowledge, and voice sometimes conflicting perspectives as we all work together to create a better college, city, nation and world.

General Strategies to Improve Diversity

Five key elements are necessary in order to implement and sustain positive diversity change in the workplace: Leadership, Research & Measurement, Education, Cultural Audit and Alignment of Management Systems, and Follow-up.

Leadership

Leaders promoting positive diversity change must have a comprehensive understanding of why diversity efforts are even more critical to both public and nonprofit organizational effectiveness and impact in the 21st century and how such efforts can be translated into practice and policy

Research & Measurement

A comprehensive school-wide assessment should be conducted. This includes the collection of baseline data in order to benchmark where the school currently stands with regard to diversity representation throughout all levels of the school and all ranks of the faculty.

Education

A clear and comprehensive education strategy includes raising the level of awareness about diversity efforts that already are underway. The entire SPA community should be allowed to weigh in on the process. In this context, either in-house expertise or outside experts can be helpful (e.g., the College's Chief Diversity Officer). Training programs and regular committee and faculty meetings can be effective tools for raising the level of awareness regarding these matters, and places to discuss and refine our diversity strategies.

Cultural Audit and Alignment of Management Systems

Working with the Offices of the Provost, Human Resources, and Diversity, Compliance, and Equity Initiatives, a complete audit of how recruitment, orientation, performance evaluation, promotion, training and development are done is necessary to weed out any unintentional forms of bias.

Follow-up

The final step in the process involves following-up on the diversity efforts discussed above. This includes both holding ourselves accountable for making sure diversity efforts are moving in the right direction and using inducements when necessary (the "carrot and stick" approach). The goal is to ensure continuous improvement. Without accountability, new initiatives often fail to gain traction.

A *Standing Committee on Diversity* will be established to oversee the above-mentioned functions and realize the goals of the vision statement. The Diversity Committee will have five members each serving for two years one of whom should be a member of the Personnel and

Budget Committee (P&B). The election should take place at the faculty meeting when other committee elections take place and occur after the election of P&B, so that a member of P&B may be elected to the Diversity Committee. The Diversity Committee will elect a chair from its membership at its first yearly meeting. That first meeting will be organized by the outgoing chair.

The Diversity Committee will perform the following functions: In consultation with the Dean and the Faculty Development Coordinator (FDC), the Diversity Committee will compile and present a report to the faculty of SPA once per year, at a faculty meeting. The report will include, but is not limited to, the topics of recruitment, retention, and climate. The report will summarize present conditions, recognize positive efforts, and make recommendations. In the process of drafting the report, the Diversity Committee will consult with search committee chairs, the Dean, and the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO), in order to gather data on the characteristics of the available pool of candidates, the pool of candidates interviewed, and offers made. It may also interview the associate dean or other administrators who have hired adjuncts. The Diversity Committee will be informed of all cases of tenure and promotion at the proper time in the process, and of all faculty departures. A member of the Diversity Committee may conduct exit interviews of departing faculty under normal circumstances. The Diversity Committee may also conduct surveys of students and faculty, review syllabi, and advise the curriculum committee with regard to diversity in the curriculum. Finally, the committee will maintain a list of programs and organizations that serve diverse students of all kinds, and help to develop further programs to serve the needs of such students.

Strategies to Improve Recruitment of Diverse Faculty, Staff, and Students

Every hiring committee will have at least one “Diversity Advocate.” The Diversity Advocate will function as a normal member of the hiring committee with regard to voice and vote, but will be charged to advise the committee on ways that diversity may legally be pursued at all phases of the search. In most cases, the Diversity Advocate will be one and the same as the “Equity Advocate” provided for at the college level, and thus will also confer with the college’s CDO. To make sure that the Diversity Advocate can do an effective job in searches that focus on different academic disciplines, there should be at least one Diversity Advocate from each academic discipline represented at SPA.

The Diversity Committee, in consultation with the dean and the FDC, will develop and continually update a Diverse Hiring Brief that will contain current advice on how legally to pursue the goal of faculty diversity when conducting faculty searches. All committee members functioning as Diversity Advocates will make themselves thoroughly familiar with the contents of the most current version of the Diverse Hiring Brief. The Diverse Hiring Brief will contain information how and where searches should be advertised, on how to write job descriptions that will be likely to interest members of underrepresented minorities, on outreach to “minority” caucuses within disciplinary organizations and directors of graduate programs,

language that chairs can use in discussing the issue of diversity with committees, and other such material. The Diversity Committee will develop workshops for hiring chairs and Diversity Advocates to go over the material in the Diverse Hiring Brief.

The Dean will advocate for a pool of money to be set aside within the College to augment the salaries and improve working conditions of potential faculty members from underrepresented minorities so that offers to them can be competitive with those they would receive from other universities.

The Dean will advocate for additional hiring authority so that talented candidates brought in for interviews might be hired in addition to candidates hired to fill advertised positions.

The Dean will seek outside donors who might be willing to augment the salaries and enhance the working conditions of certain categories of newly hired diverse persons at SPA. The Diversity Committee will provide assistance and recommendations to support this task.

The Dean will seek ways, both inside and outside CUNY, to facilitate partner hires, to ease faculty relocation and housing issues, and to make it more likely that diverse persons will choose to accept positions at SPA. The Diversity Committee will aid these efforts however possible.

The Dean, Associate Dean and other administrators responsible for hiring adjunct faculty and filling staff and administrative positions will make every effort to see that underrepresented minorities are represented strongly in those positions. Underrepresented minorities should have as strong a presence in senior positions as in junior positions.

A member of the Diversity Committee will seek appointment to NASPAA's Diversity and Social Equity Committee and work to create the equivalent of the PhD Project (<http://www.phdproject.org/>) that exists for the business community, and on other programs and initiatives that would help to bring diverse faculty to SPA.

The Diversity Committee, in consultation with the Dean, the Director of Admissions, and the chair of the Admissions Committee, will seek strategies to encourage underrepresented minority groups to apply for admission to SPA and support members of these groups after they enroll.

Strategies to Improve Retention of Diverse Faculty and Staff

One member of the Diversity Committee should sit on P&B and serve as a Diversity Advocate. The Diversity Advocate will be a normal P&B member with regard to voice and vote, but will be charged with providing the P&B with a diversity perspective.

The Diversity Committee should facilitate introductions and discussions between junior faculty members and senior faculty members who have similar research interests or who serve on the

Personnel and Budget Committee. It will also advise on and review any mentorship and orientation programs enacted by the school.

The Diversity Committee should work to find ways to ensure that adjunct faculty feel fully included and appreciated at SPA.

The Diversity Committee will recognize and encourage efforts, such as staff retreat, to make the administrative staff feel valued and included in the life of the school.

As mentioned above, under normal circumstances the Diversity Committee will conduct exit interviews of all departing full time faculty members, regardless of background, in an effort to discover factors that might have increased the chances that they could have been retained. This process should be coordinated with any college-level exit interviews that may be conducted.

Strategies to Promote a Climate Welcoming of Diversity for Students, Faculty and Staff at SPA

Working with the Ackerman Chair and SPA Administration, the Diversity Committee will help to organize lectures, forums, discussions, debates and other events concerning diversity issues. It will also promote the attendance of such events, both those sponsored by the school, college, and university, and those sponsored by outside organizations.

The Diversity Committee should work with SPA Administration to create programs that enrich the academic life experience of these diverse students. Some of these programs might be pursued in collaboration with student organizations that serve students of diversity. Such programs might include a regular meeting with coffee to sit and discuss current event in national and city politics with anyone not familiar with the American political system (and also anyone else who wants to join in), and trips to various cultural events and sites around New York City.

The Diversity Committee will maintain a list of campus organizations that are organized to serve people of diversity and facilitate the participation of SPA students and faculty in them.

The Diversity Committee should work with SPA Administration and SPA Tech to create a “Diversity at SPA” webpage with a link to the SPA homepage. The webpage will feature information about diversity-centered events, programs, and initiatives. It should be updated regularly by members of the Diversity Committee.

Members of the Diversity Committee will work with students to draft resolutions that promote the well-being of diverse students and get them passed by student legislative bodies and endorsed by the faculties of Baruch’s three schools.

Members of the Diversity Committee will work with SPA faculty, staff, and administration to draft resolutions concerning diversity issues and get them passed by the Faculty Senate.

The Diversity Committee, working with curriculum committee, will encourage the development of diversity-centered curriculum at SPA. It may do so by means of faculty forums and workshops where faculty can share syllabi and teaching ideas. Some sessions of Faculty Seminar should be devoted to sharing ideas about inclusive pedagogy. The Diversity Committee will post a list of diversity-related classes on the “Diversity at SPA” webpage.

The Diversity Committee will work with SPA Administration and the Office of Diversity, Compliance, and Equity Initiatives to ensure that students, faculty, and staff know how to report diversity-related issues—including instances of discrimination and harassment.

While we recognize the importance of promoting academic excellence, we should also recognize that excellence might be more difficult to achieve for those who have been underserved by their previous education or who are English language learners. Such persons are disproportionately persons of diversity. The Diversity Committee should work with the rest of the faculty and administrations at SPA to help to identify obstacles to academic excellence encountered by disadvantaged students and English language learners and provide support and guidance in overcoming those obstacles.