

Greetings, Winthrop faculty and staff.

This week, The Diversity Council sent out a survey requesting additional inputs on future Diversity Dialogues. To help spread the word, I share their email and the link to the survey below. I also share with you some updates on efforts across Academic Affairs—in each of our colleges—that also demonstrate how we are working collectively to keep the conversations going and setting up frameworks that will help us push beyond conversations to changemaking.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts in the colleges:

College of Arts and Sciences faculty are at the fore-front of designing workshops—in partnership with the Diversity Council—that will advance the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) toolkits of faculty and staff across campus. A new concentration in Social Inequalities was sent to CHE as a program modification taking effect in Fall 2020 for our majors in Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology.

In the first week of July, the College of Business Administration held an initial conversation on strategies to address anti-racist work in the college, with an eye to solutions that can be implemented right away. Members of faculty, staff, and the CBA student advisory council discussed the college mission and vision statements, curriculum, and professional development and training opportunities they can pursue to advance anti-racist efforts.

The College of Education has planned a series of three college-specific town halls for Fall 2020 to address matters relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion in educator preparation communities. The town halls will focus on responses to this summer’s protests, the moral responsibility of educators, and social and emotional health strategies in times of trauma.

The College of Visual and Performing Arts is undergoing a review process focused on de-colonizing the curriculum and holding department-specific conversations on matters relating to inclusion, equity, and the demands of and for diverse representation in both on-campus and wider arts communities.

University College has announced the Common Book for 2020-2021: *The Girl with Seven Names: Escape from North Korea*, by Hyeonseo Lee, portrays a seventeen-year-old girl’s experiences trying to avoid capture by the North Korean regime and reunite with her family during North Korea’s famine in the 1990s. Lee’s account reveals much about the resilience of the human spirit.

The Diversity Council request for survey participation is below:

Dear Campus Community,

The Diversity Council has compiled a list of action items that were gathered from the *Diversity Dialogues: A Conversation on Racism Town Hall* event. These suggestions will be presented to senior leadership for consideration.

We are planning our next program in the series and need your assistance. Please complete a [survey](#) to let us know what topics you would be interested in discussing as we continue to have the difficult conversations in an effort to make Winthrop a more inclusive place to work and learn. The deadline to

complete the [survey](#) is *close of business on Monday, July 20th*. We look forward to receiving your feedback!

Sincerely,
The Diversity Council

Communication from the International Center:

International studies play an important role in bringing cultural diversity to our campus community. You may have read the email sent to faculty and staff earlier today by Jamie Cooper and Leigh Poole, but I wanted to echo what they shared. The Fall 2020 enrollment guidance for students in F1 visas is troubling due to the restrictions it places on institutions and international students as we put contingency plans in place for instructional delivery that are responsive to unfolding rates of spread of COVID-19.

The guidance indicated that if an international student doesn't enroll in in-person instruction in fall 2020 (at minimum one in-person course), they are expected to leave the United States immediately. Additionally, if a college or university moves to 100% online instruction, F1 international students would be expected to return to their home countries or transfer to an institution that offers in-person instruction immediately.

It is important to note that the July 6, 2020 guidance is not final and could change during the coming weeks. However, it has created a troubling amount of concern and uncertainty. Institutionally, we fully support our international student population and seek to provide maximum flexibility for these students during the Fall 2020 semester to support their academic and personal endeavors at Winthrop.

In partnership and collaboration with faculty and staff from across campus, the International Center continues to work with Winthrop's international students in support of their needs. Although there remains a great deal of ambiguity, International Center staff want to thank partners across campus who have been reaching out to international students to provide encouragement and assistance. Please continue to help them in this important work. The students need to know that we want them at Winthrop and that we will continue to support them during these challenging times.

Communication planning:

I know many of you still have questions. We will have a series of communication points coming out soon, from Senior Leadership and Academic Leadership.

For faculty and staff in Academic Affairs, ALC is at work on a playbook to answer your questions on specific process points. What can I say to a student or co-worker who is not wearing a mask? How are we communicating schedule changes to students? How are classrooms being restructured? What if caseloads continue to rise? Rest assured that members of leadership across campus are asking and exploring answers to those questions too. We are working with University Communications and Marketing on development of a Return to Learn website for easy access to these and many other answers as our planning processes continue to unfold.

A special shout-out to our in-house "Space Force" team—comprised of Steve Moseley, Kelly Huber, Wes Love, TJ Hyatt, Tim Druke, and others—who have worked tirelessly to consider the reconfiguration of

our working and instructional spaces in preparation for our phased return to offices and our in-person instructional needs for Fall 2020.

Colleges and departments have made changes resulting in 41% of our courses being offered in-person, 32% hybrid, and 27% online. Simultaneously, our Environmental Health and Safety and Facilities staff modeled changes to the layouts and capacities of our instructional spaces to ensure compliance with physical distancing protocols. TJ has led the effort in making countless adjustments in Banner as a result of these two change processes. Please join me in recognizing her for the magnitude of this work! She continues to think of ways to put solutions in place as we encounter obstacles, such as running out of available classrooms in certain prime-time slots. For faculty who may be impacted, I want to say thank you in advance for your patience and creative problem-solving if one of your courses ends up in a slot where we run out of available classrooms and becomes subject to “the lottery” for preferred prime-time spaces. To continue my WWII references, do your best to KEEP CALM AND COLLABORATE!



I also realize we also need to step up our communications directly to students. I had a good “calibration” meeting with Vice President for Student Affairs Shelia Burkhalter today, so we can align communications and operational plans from the offices of the Dean of Students, Residence Life, and Health and Counseling Services with those from academic college, student service, and department offices, as well as individual faculty and staff in Academic Affairs. We are making progress in this area on many fronts and will have updates for you soon.

I started this section saying we are working on a playbook. I will close by reminding you all that there is no playbook for what we’re all going through right now. That’s one of the reasons we need to “embrace our 180s,” as I said last week, identify places to use entrepreneurial thinking, and continue to breathe deeply (it does help). I will end this week by suggesting that you look at your collaborative style. If we start from a place where we assume our teammates are doing the best they can, we can shift our mindsets from “why isn’t this improving” to “how can I help improve this?” In the words of Rosie the Riveter and the many who have been inspired by her message since, by working and collaborating together, we can do it!

