

## University Diversity Council

Tuesday, November 10, 2020

4 – 5:30 p.m. PT

Zoom meeting

### Members Present:

Chalak Richards, Chair (Caruso School of Law)  
Sara Barton (Office of the Chaplain)  
Rebecca Campos (Student Affairs)  
Lila Carlsen (Provost's Office)  
La Shonda Coleman (Student Affairs)  
Tanya Cooper (Caruso School of Law)  
Bryant Crubaugh (Seaver College)  
Jamila Cupid (Seaver College)  
Robert deMayo (Graduate School of Education and Psychology)  
Dawn Emrich (Public Safety)  
Melissa Espinoza (School of Public Policy)  
Alex Forero (Integrated Marketing and Communications)  
Sandra Harrison (Office of Student Accessibility)  
Valerie Nowacki (Graziadio Business School)  
Mark Roosa (Libraries)  
Mark Tribbitt (Graziadio Business School)  
Jazmin Zane (Office of Institutional Effectiveness)  
Michael Shires (School of Public Policy, Proxy)  
Maria Wright (Graduate School of Education and Psychology, Guest)  
Monique Smaby (ex officio)

### Members Absent:

Christian Abad (Seaver College)  
Natalia Escobedo-Molina (Seaver College)  
Nate Ethell (Integrated Marketing and Communications)  
Luisa Blanco Raynal (School of Public Policy)

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Jeannie Gentile (Provost's Office)

Lauren McGrath (Human Resources)

Eric Wilson (Ex-Officio, University Church)

## AGENDA

- I. Call to order
  - A. Chalak Richards called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm
- II. Opening prayer
  - A. La Shona Coleman led the opening prayer.
- III. Welcome new members
  - A. Ms. Richards welcomed the new members and guests to the meeting. Dean Mark Roosa has joined the committee to represent the libraries. Professor Michael Shires will stand in as proxy for Luisa Blanco Raynal for this meeting. Maria Wright, chair of GSEP Diversity Council, observed at the request of Bob deMayo.
- IV. Review and approval of UDC minutes from September 11, 2020 meeting.
  - A. Ms. Coleman moved for approval.
  - B. Mr. deMayo seconded the motion.
  - C. The Council unanimously approved the minutes from the September 11, 2020 meeting.
  - D. **Action Item:** Ms. Richards is looking into the process of sharing the minutes on a public page or upon request. Lila Carlsen will contact provost office and follow up with guidelines for sharing.
    1. **Resolution:** Ms. Carlsen emailed Ms. Richards that minutes are available for all within the Pepperdine community to review. Please direct any interested parties to the following link: [UDC Agendas & Minutes | Pepperdine University](#)
- V. Responses to UDC Statement regarding SPP email campaign.

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- A. Ms. Richards shared an update that diversity leaders were able to speak with President Gash last week about the email campaign sent out from SPP and attributed to Dean Peterson. The President's Office wanted to hear from the Committee how each school has been affected and are responding to this matter. They would like to hear suggestions for next steps to move towards healing.
1. She shared that there have been a variety of responses to both the email campaign and responses to the UDC letter. There have been requests to retract parts of the UDC letter.
- B. Ms. Richards asked to hear from each school how they have been affected and suggestions on how to respond and provide the support that the Community is calling for.
1. Ms. Coleman, would like to note that in responses to the UDC letter, some statements were inaccurately attributed to the UDC. Particularly Ted McAllister's letter notes that the UDC letter asked for the firing of Dean Peterson, which is inaccurate. If there is a UDC response regarding the letter she would like it noted that some attributions of the letter were inaccurately described by responses.
  2. Mr. deMayo gave an update for GSEP and how it is an active issue to the school, raising concern about the climate at Pepperdine. The letter has brought up a lot of hurt to the GSEP community and past experiences of hurt and marginalization beyond this email. Their hope is that the University advances their values of diversity, equality, and inclusion, and the matter is not neglected but taken seriously. He added, President Gash will attend the next GSEP faculty meeting to address this.
  3. Maria Wright, at the request of Mr. DeMayo, added from her perspective on the GSEP diversity council that they felt validated by the UDC letter and the response was aligned with their faculty responses. The school is experiencing push back from some partnerships about being affiliated with Pepperdine and asking what the University's stance is on this issue. Some

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feel there is a lack of accountability. To learn from each other and this experience, GSEP is having open conversation dialogues.

4. Bryant Crubaugh offered a response from the faculty side of Seaver College. He said the temperature is still boiling and more statements are coming. A faculty of color group has been organized. It has been in the works for some time but this incident has been the catalyst to formalize this group. White allies will be signing another letter asking for public statements of accountability and action steps. He added, the desire from the Seaver diversity counsel is to see publicly available actions and conversations. The letters coming will specifically ask for a public discussion of accountability. He noted, students in his classes are still talking about this incident and plan to take action publicly.
5. Rebecca Campos, shared that on 11/11 there is a student organized protest that has been promoted through social media, shared by approximately 400 club members. The protest is called: Acknowledge and support and include marginalized groups. It calls for the firing of Dean Peterson as one of the many calls to action. She also added that the admission department has received questions about the @blackatpepperdine instagram while recruiting.
  - a) Alex Forero added that DPS is aware of the protest and there is a university response to it.
6. Sara Barton added to the chat: a link to a [podcast](#) on which Seaver Students spoke publicly about this incident. The podcast is hosted by the Pepperdine Graphic.
7. Melissa Espinoza shared that the climate at SPP is a sense of frustration. Students want to be able to represent themselves. Dean Peterson would like to respond but is not allowed to by the administration. The school would like to get their thoughts and ideas across, learn, and move forward in healing. It has been a difficult semester for students, staff, and faculty.

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8. Michael Shires noted for SPP that the letters published are not statements by SPP faculty and that there are a range of perspectives around the situation. He feels there has been a sense of attack with the imprecise language used in the responses which attributes racism to the entire SPP community. He has discouraged some of the interchanges because of the amount of pain it is causing. The school would like to move forward toward healing. He highlighted, as leaders in belonging and inclusion we want to set a tone of healing for the University even in the midst of pain and lead the path forward.
9. Mark Tribbet gave an update for the business school, they are feeling a lot of pain and embarrassment from this. Many alumni have reached out feeling embarrassed. He agreed with previous Council members that there is a need for people to see public accountability and understands the difficulty of this being a potential HR issue. He shared the community of the school also has concerns and distrust of the leadership and individuals, particularly in their responses.
10. Valerie Nowacki agreed that there has been lots of embarrassment and pain surrounding this at GSBM. She highlighted that people outside of Pepperdine do not think of it as an SPP view, they think of it as Pepperdine's viewpoint and it hurts the school's image. She noted that alumni have been outraged. Recruiters are also feeling the effects of this and being asked about it. They feel that they are inauthentically representing themselves to prospective students by downplaying this issue.
11. Tanya Cooper shared about CSOL. She shared that the school's diversity council is meeting this week and will discuss how they will respond. Some faculty members are interested in signing a separate letter. Professor Mark Scarberry sent around a letter he drafted to the law school faculty (which was sent to the UDC and is noted in the agenda). She also highlighted the positive diversity and inclusion work CSOL has been working on,

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specifically the Black Women and the Law Summit hosted last week with hundreds of participants. She added, as a SEED leader at the law school, she is disappointed about the email campaign and is encouraging the diversity council to respond.

a) Ms. Richards added that CSOL has received a variety of responses and there is an ongoing conversation about how the school will respond. She has been involved with the faculty appointments committee and prime candidates of color have reached out about it. She has been able to guide people to resources of the diversity work that the school is doing and the diverse perspectives that are represented at the school. The school has heard from alumni, particularly the ones who have joint degrees who are concerned both about the email campaign and about free thought being restricted.

12. Ms. Barton shared that conversations happening at the Chaplain's office have been surrounded by a lot of pain and it is concerning how it has affected the students. She stands by the UDC statement and does not think that we should offer an apology or change it. Mr. Tribbet added that he agrees.

13. Jamila Cupid added from the communications division perspective of Seaver College. As a whole, they have been in support of the UDC letter. There have been viewpoints on both spectrums, a few expressed a call for the resignation of Dean Peterson. Students have expressed anger around the issue. She asked if the senior council to the president has read the statements and what responses have been. She felt some of the responses sound a bit standard and maybe that is why some things are addressed that were not in the UDC letter. She also asked if the UDC is looking to have senior administration do something tangible that signals to students changes are being made.

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- a) Ms. Richards added from the conversation with President Gash her understanding is that the University administration does understand that a separate letter was written by the UDC with specific requests. She did note that other groups have only read the responses to the UDC letter and do not have the understanding of the requests within the letter, thus causing confusion and misattributions to the UDC.
- (1) Ms. Richards wanted to highlight the requests in the UDC letter: The letter asks for a termination of contract with the vendor that created the email campaign. Second, that Dean Peterson and SPP engage in the University with dialogues about anti-racist conversations, trainings, and why or why not people support the 1619 project.
14. Jazmin Zane, highlighted information that OIE has collected from their annual student surveys and metrics. Based on the comments received in the survey, there have been polarized comments that students have not felt safe to share their perspective or view that diversity does not matter. Students feel there is never action taken. She advises there be more engagement and a strong focus on the action coming out of this. She shared that progress can be made by putting in place a formal process for grievances and directions on how to handle grievances.
15. Mark Roosa, shared an update from the library perspective. There is a great deal of concern from faculty and employees. They are supportive of anti-racism and diversity, equity, and inclusion. The libraries have also created a number of digital bookshelves and shared resources from all mediums about anti-racism to raise awareness of these topics. Recently, they took steps to create a DEI plan. They have been making progress on the plan, working to increase diverse points of view in their collections. They have also proposed language for the handbook for rank, term, and

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promotion to include competencies in regard to DEI. In addition, they will introduce multi-cultural fellowships and internships, to provide mentoring opportunities. Exhibitions and programming have also been developed to present diverse representation and sharing marginalized voices. The libraries have been working on reflecting, rethinking their work, and looking for ways to have more impact.

16. Ms. Campos added that the Council does not need to have a response, but if they did, she would like it noted that some facts were misinterpreted. Particularly to note that there was no call to remove anyone from their position.

17. Sandra Harrison responded from the OSA perspective. As they have done intakes from students over the past few weeks, the students of color have referenced heightened anxiety from what has happened in this instance and the anxiety in the country right now. For some students, this has made it hard for them to be in school right now.

C. Ms. Richards asked the Council how they would like to address responding to responses from the letter, specifically:

- Retracting or modifying the initial statement
- A response to the request to apologize to Dean Peterson
- A written response to what has been received

1. Mr. deMayo added that he feels comfortable standing by the UDC letter and supports open conversations. He highlighted that any time the UDC issues statements there will always be some voices that are upset and request a response. He prefers to guard the energy of the UDC and not spend too much time responding. He suggested that the Council keep their focus on the students and furthering the work of the UDC.

- a) Ms. Espinoza asked if there has been a time in the past where the UDC has made a statement similar to this type of instance. Mr. deMayo responded that there has not been a specific event like this

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that the UDC has responded to in the past. They have primarily sent out drafts of diversity mission statements for the University.

2. Ms. Cupid added to the chat that she is strongly against apologizing for or retracting the UDC statement. Ms. Harrison added to the chat that she stands by the statement as well.
3. Ms. Coleman added that she stands with the statement and it is not necessary for the UDC to respond. She would like to see a response from the University. Critiques of the UDC letter took it out of context. She sees the UDC statement as a way to speak to the hurt and the injury of the staff and students.
4. Mr. Shires added that he is concerned about the language used toward SPP as a whole in the UDC letter and Provost's response. He sees it as blanketing the entire school and those affiliated with it. He highlighted that SPP has diverse faculty, staff, and students represented. He suggests that language needs to be carefully considered moving ahead when describing SPP, and to take into consideration how it will impact everyone that has been affiliated with the school over the years.
5. Ms. Richards thanked Mr. Shires for sharing his perspective. She added that it was not a light decision to include SPP in the letter. The reasoning was the email purported to represent SPP as an institution. This issue reveals that there is institutional conversation and dialogue that needs to happen. Her suggestion for next steps would be to help to amplify the other work that the school is doing that counters this narrative. She noted the Council officially sent the statement only to President Gash and Provost Marrs. They did not reach out to the Graphic. In response to the outreach received, she recommends that the Council should focus on sharing actions that are being taken.
6. Ms. Cupid added that the American Project carried out by SPP is an initiative that stands on the school website. Dean Peterson and others have

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worked to amplify this project. She also noted that the website does not have representation of the other side of this viewpoint. Responding to inquiries would be helpful to share that all sides are taken into consideration when work is done.

7. Michael Shires asked if it is the role of the UDC to ensure that each school shows multiple perspectives on all topics presented.

a) Ms. Richards responded that the role of the Council is to speak up for those that are marginalized. She highlighted the importance of how the University is being viewed from the outside. She noted that there have been initiatives to track the articles and research that professors are doing to showcase the diverse projects on the website, as recently as the previous summer when the UDC partnered with the Provost's Office and the deans of each school to update faculty scholarship and represent diverse intellectual viewpoints. She added that if Dean Peterson had personally written an article it would have been a unique perspective but this campaign was meant to represent the school.

(1) Ms. Espinoza responded that Dean Peterson would have liked to have written a personal article but was not allowed to by the University. She added that the school was permitted to have a town hall zoom meeting with students, but were not permitted to have a town hall with alumni, or publish any formal statements. Those who outreached via email were responded to directly by Dean Peterson, but they were not permitted to have an open forum for alumni or the larger pepperdine community other than the statement made at the President's briefing. She asked why there is a delay from the senior administration to make an official statement.

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- (a) **Action Item:** Ms. Richards responded that she will relay the sentiment that SPP believes a statement from senior administration will begin the healing process.
8. Ms. Forero added the following [link](#) in chat. This is the transcription of President Gash's statement at the President's Briefing addressing the issue. On the [main statements page](#) there is a presidential action steps document about the University's next steps in expanding diversity efforts at Pepperdine. This is being included in responses to students and alumni and hopes this is a resource to everyone.
9. Ms. Espinoza responded that she thinks many schools do not think this is enough of a public statement. Mr. Tribbet replied that the business school does not see it as enough of a public statement. Ms. Espinoza noted that in the president's briefing they encouraged dialogue, but SPP is not permitted to plan any conversations. She does not feel that the school is making any steps towards healing yet. Mr. Tribbet responded that we should keep in mind we cannot tell the hurt people when to heal. Ms. Espinoza agreed with Mr. Tribbet but is not sure if anyone is aware of the statements put out by the President's office and would like to see an outlet for people to discuss their thoughts and feelings. She is interested in helping to facilitate those conversations.
- a) **Action Item:** Ms. Richards responded that she can include in the communications with the President's Office that a request for conversations be made. This will give an opportunity for people on all sides to speak and voice their pain.
10. Ms. Coleman, thanked Mr. Shires for his response. She noted that making a blanket statement of SPP can be misunderstood. She added that the process of healing is to see the person that is hurting first. She sees a desire for people to voice their hurt first before we take next steps. If that

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is not done there is a devaluation of a lived experience. She added that the UDC response was not us against them, it was meant to speak truth to the injury. She feels we need to hear from all perspectives to make sure everyone is seen. She asked, how do we demonstrate that everyone is being seen?

11. Ms. Richards, asked the body to vote on issuing a follow up response to the UDC letter as a body. There was a unanimous decision that there will be no official UDC response.

a) **Action Item:** To be considerate of time, Ms. Richards suggested that remaining topics on the agenda be covered via email.

12. Ms. Coleman suggested the response to the outreach should be to have an invitation to a dialogue.

13. Ms. Cooper thanked Mr. Shires and Ms. Espinoza in the chat. She would like to see the UDC host a community-wide open conversation.

a) **Action Item:** Ms. Richards agreed with Ms. Cooper that a University wide forum for a conversation should be suggested as a next step.

b) Ms. Wright added in the chat that GSEP had one and it was very successful.

14. Mr. Shires thanked Ms. Coleman for her response. He thanked the conversation with Council members on Friday, and shared that he gained a lot of knowledge from the call. He hopes the Council can have more conversations in the future.

15. Mr. Crubaugh added that he sees an open conversation as valuable but suggested that it needs to be followed up in a timely manner by action. If not this will create more pain.

D. Ms. Richards asked the Council what actions UDC should recommend.

1. Mr. Crubaugh responded, that action does not look like committees, hiring, or strategic plans. The students do not see that as action.

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2. Mr. deMayo, added that each of the schools has different needs in terms of the actions that need to take place. At GSEP there is a lot of energy around examining the curricula, decolonizing coursework, and promoting anti-racism strategies. They will be looking to the University for resources to support those efforts. He is happy to participate in the forum but does not think there will be large interest from the GSEP community.
  3. Mr. Tribbett would like to see the narrative change to the University addressing that “we” have a problem and to address it by changing curriculum and training for faculty.
    - a) Ms. Zane agreed with Mr. Tribbet that the students feel unheard. She has been seeing in the survey data that students want the space to feel and to be acknowledged.
  4. **Action Item:** Ms. Richards, wrapped up the meeting by restating her notes that she will pass on.
    - a) The Council will suggest an open conversation forum to have all perspectives heard.
    - b) The UDC advises that the administration identify each school’s specific needs, including; curricula, coursework, training, and tangible resources to support.
    - c) Engage the senior administration in the training and acknowledgment.
  5. Ms. Wright added in the chat, to suggest resources for outside facilitators and equipping Non-Black faculty, staff, and students with the tools to facilitate. Black and Brown faculty and staff are very taxed being asked to facilitate and donate time to this healing.
- VI. Ms. Richards closed the meeting in prayer.
- VII. Ms. Richards adjourned the meeting at 5:42 PM.
- VIII. Agenda Items conducted via email:
- A. School and department updates and areas of support

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1. Chaplain's Office (provided by Sara Barton)
  - a) The Office of the Chaplain is working with the Center for Faith and Learning and Religion/Philosophy Division to host Dr. Willie James Jennings from Yale Divinity School to discuss his book, *After Whiteness: An Education in Belonging*. Dr. Jennings will host a two-hour workshop in January and all employees will be invited to participate.
  - b) The Office of the Chaplain is completing a review of our Seaver College programs in light of the themes of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. We are analyzing the themes in relation to student learning outcomes, student comments in forums and social media platforms, and summarizing specific plans moving forward to address any concerns that have been raised by students.
2. Student Affairs
3. Public Safety
4. Office of Student Accessibility
5. University Church
6. Office of Institutional Effectiveness (provided by Jazmin Zane)
  - a) OIE is currently developing an assessment project to examining DEI in more depth and to support the PAAT efforts. Part of the project will include an anonymous university-wide survey (faculty/staff/students) in order to collect consistent metrics across our different sub-populations (we will be administering the HEDS Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey).
  - b) There are two areas in which it would be great to solicit UDC support/feedback:
    - (1) Sending out a pre-notification to their respective schools, encouraging their community (especially faculty/staff) to

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complete the survey (this should go out close to the survey launch in March; OIE can provide email scripts)

(2) Providing OIE with additional questions or outcomes of interest, as we can supplement the survey with customized questions (we would need this by Feb 1).

### 7. Graziadio School of Business (provided by Mark Tribbit)

a) Launch of Graziadio Diversity council in June 2020

b) Closed out profiling of hispanic students, staff, and alumni as part of National Hispanic Heritage Month

c) Launched the Graziadio Diversity Website

<https://bschool.pepperdine.edu/about/diversity/>

d) Completed data collection for Graziadio Diversity Scorecard

### 8. Graduate School of Education and Psychology (provided by Maria Wright)

a) We just had a great event with Dr. Shelly Harrell focusing on Microaggressions. We had over 200 registrants, and 125 attendees (faculty, staff, students, alumni, and representatives from other schools). We have a pretty full spring event schedule ready to go:

(1) January - Dr. Thema Bryant Davis - Generational Trauma within the Black community

(2) February - Dr. Anita Phillips - Faith and Anti-Racism (joint event with CSOL)

(3) March - TBD

(4) April - TBD - Possibly Diversity in Education event with Dr. Kevin Wong (Not confirmed)

(5) May - Dr. Erlanger Turner - Mental Health and the Black Community

b) As for asks, those are still the same as before:

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(1) I believe there is a strong need for outside facilitation of community dialogues and facilitation training for all staff and faculty. Our Black and Brown faculty and staff are tired and it would be great to have other members of our community trained to led those necessary conversations. Also, official training and certification in the areas of implicit bias, serving diverse populations, and cultural sensitivity are critical for members of our community. Resources like training materials, books, speaker fees, honorariums for faculty, and staff donating their time and expertise are needed.

### 9. School of Public Policy (provided by Melissa Espinoza)

- a) Working to finalize the SPP Diversity Committee, approved guiding document/ bylaws and finished our application and outreach process to ensure we have representation from all constituents including – alumni, students, faculty, staff and SPP board members.
- b) Waiting on approval to make SPP Diversity web page updates
- c) Highlight of some Summer/Fall Event:
  - (1) When Policy is Personal - Race and Public Safety
  - (2) The Path Back to School - Best Practices & Special Education
  - (3) Race in Education
  - (4) Women Leading Regional and Local Change in Environmental Policy
  - (5) Law Enforcement and Public Policy
- d) joint devotional or community prayer event in the near future.

### 10. Seaver College (provided by Bryant Crubaugh)

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- a) Launching the Seaver Faculty of Color group and the Seaver Staff of Color Group
- b) Drafting, approving, and releasing our own [statement](#) in response to Dean Peterson's actions (on 10/19)
- c) Reviewing DEI related pedagogical training and participating in a pilot as a follow up/alternative to SEED
- d) Proposing a physical and digital space for historical recognition of past injustice at Pepperdine
- e) Planning and launching staff and faculty antiracist book groups
- f) Discussing access and retention of international students during digital learning
- g) Planning workshops to encourage student learning amidst microaggressions and other related class experiences
- h) Working with the career center to create a resource for finding internships for students of color
- i) Maintaining the Seaver Diversity Calendar and reworking the Seaver diversity website and including a new page for SDC activities

### 11. School of Law (provided by Tanya Cooper)

- a) Released the attached statement from the CSOL Diversity Council yesterday
- b) Updated CSOL Diversity Council [webpage](#)
- c) Hired our first Assistant Dean of Student Life, Diversity, and Belonging, Chalak Richards
- d) Launched our Diversity and Belonging [webpage](#) with our diversity initiatives
- e) Released our [Strategic Plan for Diversity and Belonging](#)
- f) Started our second SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) seminar with 11 participants and 2 facilitators

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- g) Continued our Open Conversation series once a month for our community around divisive topics
- h) Held several events around race, diversity and the law, which are available for viewing [here](#).