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Diversity
Equity
and
Inclusion

at the
University of Texas at Austin

NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
of SCHOLARS

TURING

Comprehensive Restructuring

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at
the University of Texas Austin

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A report by the

NATIONAL
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of SCHOLARS

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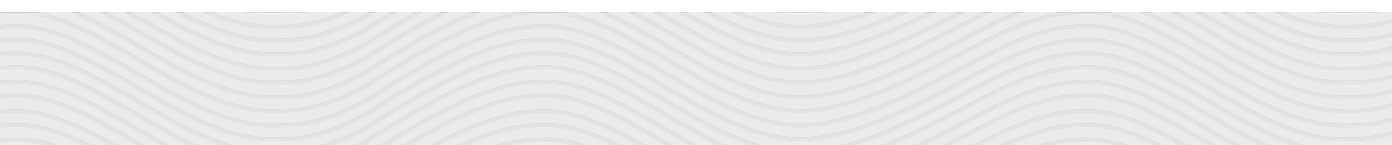
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Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Introduction | 6 |
| Key Takeaways | 8 |
| Ideological Inflection | 10 |
| Curriculum and Training | 14 |
| Faculty Recruitment and Evaluation | 17 |
| A Bureaucratic Cathedral | 20 |
| Conclusion | 22 |

Introduction

In 2016, student activists at the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) issued a letter to the university’s administrators, calling for sweeping changes to university policy in the name of social justice. The letter began:

Amidst growing pressure from university student organizations and campus-wide coalitions around the country led by Black students, universities like Missouri and Yale have become the focal point for student organizing and mobilization pushing for comprehensive restructuring of academic policies to address the institutionalized racism that Black students are facing. We, representatives of the Black community here at UT, want to bring the conversation regarding the failure of universities across the country, including our own, in addressing the needs and grievances of students of color.¹

Those students called for a total overhaul. UT Austin has acquiesced, issuing multiple plans to embed “diversity, equity, and inclusion” (DEI) into the fabric of the university.

In 2018, in response to the students’ call to action, UT Austin published its “University Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.”² By the next year, it published a series of progress updates on all the facets of the plan, showing how the university had restructured everything from curriculum to faculty training to university recruitment policies. Already, the plan marked a considerable institutional overhaul, infusing the vague priorities of DEI into the mission of the university. The update notes, for example, that the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost had instructed every college and school to create a committee on diversity and inclusion, to embed these priorities at every level of the university’s administration.

But this was only the beginning. In June 2020, students issued another list of demands, and the university’s president was quick to respond with yet another

1 “Background,” Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://diversity.utexas.edu/actionplan/background/>.

2 “Background,” Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, The University of Texas at Austin.

series of promises.³ As a result, UT Austin published its “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity,” and then a new thirty-seven-page diversity action plan titled “You Belong Here.”⁴

In other words, UT Austin has created and implemented a long series of institutional policies in pursuit of the often-vague, often-politicized goals of DEI. These policies influence vast areas of university life. They come in multiple levels of administration: committees in each college and school, a university-wide diversity action plan, a plan for faculty diversity and inclusion, and now a second university-wide diversity action plan. The “comprehensive restructuring” is well under way.

This report provides a survey of the resulting policies. We have compiled and examined the university’s DEI plans, its progress updates, and all of the publicly accessible DEI plans and updates published by the university’s various colleges and schools. In what follows, we highlight the most consequential policies enacted in the name of DEI, expounding on their implications when necessary.

Throughout our analysis, we have found an entrenched bureaucracy with an ever-expanding ideological agenda.

3 “UT Diversity Initiatives Will Redefine Campus Symbolism and Will Recruit, Support and Retain Top Talent,” *UT News*, July 23, 2020, <https://news.utexas.edu/2020/07/13/ut-diversity-initiatives-will-redefine-campus-symbolism-and-will-recruit-support-and-retain-top-talent/>.

4 “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity,” Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://utexas.app.box.com/s/g74ax-pkxbneupxotfcbvtrpqxil7vhv8>; “You Belong Here: Our Plan for an Equitable and Inclusive Campus Strategic Direction 2022–2025,” The University of Texas at Austin, May 2022, <https://utexas.app.box.com/s/07gro61mcobe0gkpa0jp9gnfrlzwmzb>.

Key Takeaways

UT Austin’s DEI initiatives espouse a clear ideological agenda. Consistently, the initiatives amplify controversial claims about race, gender, oppression, and privilege. Under the banner of DEI, the university has trained faculty and students in “critical race theory,” promoted the thinking of Ibram X. Kendi and Robin DiAngelo, and implemented curricula laden with the watchwords of identity politics, such as “microaggressions,” “systemic racism,” and “intersectionality.”

The initiatives call for a vast overhaul of curriculum and instruction, guided by an ideologically charged notion of equity. The Dell Medical School has adopted a long list of health equity competencies; many colleges and schools have created new DEI-themed courses, such as “Equity in STEM,” or required DEI materials; and the university has created various layers of DEI training for students and faculty alike.

The initiatives make a commitment to DEI an effective job requirement for faculty members. The “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity” mandates that each college and school develop mechanisms for evaluating faculty contributions to DEI. The Cockrell School of Engineering revised its promotion and tenure guidelines “to explicitly consider efforts related to DEI in the context of all three of research, teaching, and service.” The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs now incorporates “dimensions of DEI into peer observations.” This marks a huge shift in the basic priorities of the university, tying employment to political goals.

The initiatives create and feed a large bureaucracy devoted to advancing the vague goals of DEI throughout the university. The “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity” promises to create “a diversity officer position in the dean’s office of each [college and school] responsible for faculty diversity.”⁵ The “You Belong Here” plan notes that “Every college, school and unit has appointed a Diversity Officer to lead initiatives tailored to the needs of their students, staff and faculty.”⁶ The initiatives also call for various new DEI committees that effectively ensure that the cause will remain a perpetual priority for the university.

5 “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity,” Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://utexas.app.box.com/s/g74axp-khbneupxotfcbvtrpqxil7vhv8>.

6 “You Belong Here: Our Plan for an Equitable and Inclusive Campus Strategic Direction 2022–2025,” The

Ideological Inflection

UT Austin’s DEI initiatives display a consistent ideological orientation. To many, the term “diversity, equity, and inclusion” might sound like a benign commitment to fairness—DEI offices often encourage this perception, couching their work in bureaucratic language that obscures any substantive or controversial elements. This creates the impression that no reasonable person would disagree with the edicts of a DEI office.

The DEI initiatives at UT Austin, however, frequently espouse controversial political and social views, whether through mandatory training sessions, book groups and administrator-endorsed reading lists, or curriculum guidelines. Consistently, these initiatives prove to amplify, spread, and inculcate controversial claims about race, gender, oppression, and privilege.

Various university-sanctioned DEI training sessions embrace and disseminate highly contested political concepts. The university’s Council on Racial and Ethnic Equity and Diversity (CREED), for example, trained faculty and students in “critical race theory.” Other training sessions encouraged participants to identify “microaggressions,” “implicit bias,” “systemic racism,” and so-called “anti-racism.”

UT Austin DEI Measures, Ideological Inflection

| DEI Plan/Update/Page | Notable Measures |
|--|--|
| University Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, Progress Updates, University Leadership ⁷ | The Council on Racial and Ethnic Equity and Diversity (CREED) reported the following efforts had been carried out by fall 2017: faculty candidates were asked to provide a diversity statement which documents their experiences increasing diversity and inclusion; workshops for faculty, staff, and students were held on critical race theory, implicit bias, and importance of diversity. |

University of Texas at Austin, May 2022, <https://utexas.app.box.com/s/07gro61mcobe0gkpae0jp9gnfrlzw-mzb>.

7 “University Leadership,” Progress Updates, Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://diversity.utexas.edu/actionplan/progress-updates/university-leadership/>.

UT Austin DEI Measures, Ideological Inflection

| DEI Plan/Update/Page | Notable Measures |
|---|--|
| University Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, Progress Updates, Campus Climate and Culture ⁸ | Beginning in Fall 2018, it was a requirement for all FIGs [First-Year Interest Groups] to spend time in their weekly 50-minute FIG seminar discussing diversity & inclusion content (whether through Words Matter, Bias Busting, or other). As a result, the Fall 2018 Words Matter survey results include 655 responses representing approximately 85 FIG classes. ... 95% agreed or strongly agreed that increasing awareness of micro-aggressions benefits the entire UT community. |
| School of Information, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Report ⁹ | Increase awareness of systemic racism and ways to engage in dismantling it. The D&I committee holds events regularly and will seek additional opportunities to host events and speakers in the areas of anti-racism and information studies, either in-person or remotely. The D&I committee has funding from the Mary R. Boyvey Chair for Excellence to promote events of this nature. |

Already, concepts such as “critical race theory,” “microaggressions,” and so-called “anti-racism” connote a set of highly politicized ideas, especially given the most common interpretation of these terms. Putting aside these concepts’ merits, many would argue that these are not appropriate subjects for administrator-led training sessions.

Such training will inevitably address highly contested topics and espouse highly contested claims. Some UT administrators openly embrace the most radical purveyors of these concepts—most notably, Ibram X. Kendi and Robin DiAngelo. The associate dean for health equity at the Dell Medical School, for example, recommends both Kendi’s “How to be an Antiracist” and DiAngelo’s “White Fragility.”

UT Austin DEI Measures, Ideological Inflection

| DEI Plan/Update/Page | Notable Measures |
|---|--|
| Dell Medical School, Health (In)Equity: A List of Recommendations ¹⁰ | Racism contributes to health inequity. As the associate dean for health equity at Dell Med, I recommend these resources for anyone interested in learning more about racism and its effects: “How To Be an Antiracist,” a book by Ibram X. Kendi, Ph.D. “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,” an essay by Peggy McIntosh, Ph.D. “White Fragility,” Robin DiAngelo, Ph.D. The New York Times recently published an article on DiAngelo and anti-racism training. “I Am Not Your Negro,” a documentary based on James Baldwin’s unfinished manuscript, “Remember This House.” |

8 “Campus Climate and Culture,” Progress Updates, Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://diversity.utexas.edu/actionplan/progress-updates/campus-climate-and-culture/>.

9 “University of Texas iSchool D&I Committee Report 2020-2021,” School of Information, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/iSchool%20DI%20Committee%20Report%202020-2021.pdf>.

10 Jewel Mullen, “Understanding Health In/Equity: A List of Recommendations,” Dell Medical School, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://dellmed.utexas.edu/blog/understanding-health-in-equity-a-list-of-recommendations>.

UT Austin DEI Measures, Ideological Inflection

DEI Plan/Update/Page

Notable Measures

School of Nursing, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Report¹¹

For the second straight year, Danica Sumpter facilitated a Faculty/Staff book club. We finished reading “So You Want to Talk About Race” by Ijeoma Oluo in fall of 2018 and then read to “White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism” by Robin DiAngelo in the spring of 2019.

The Dell Medical School provides what is perhaps the most striking example of this ideological agenda pushed forward under the banner of DEI. The medical school’s undergraduate curriculum focuses on “core competencies,” designed to inculcate certain “knowledge, skills, behaviors and attitudes.”¹² In the summer of 2021, the school added an additional competency: “Health Equity.”

The health equity competency, described in detail on the Dell Medical School’s website, dictates that students master a long list of DEI-related concepts and skills. Students should understand, for example, “how the socialization of dominant cultural norms, beliefs and values and application of public policy create ... health inequities among defined populations.” They should “recognize how interpersonal power differentials manifest in actions that perpetuate health inequities” and understand “the role intersectional identity plays in health inequities.” They should also be ready to “intervene” in order to support those “experiencing barriers to equitable care including identity-based discrimination, bias and microaggressions.”

¹¹ “Report to Faculty Organization,” College of Nursing, The University of Texas at Austin, 2019, https://nursing.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/2019_Annual_Report_DL_Committee.pdf.

¹² “Core Competencies,” Dell Medical School, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://dellmed.utexas.edu/education/academics/undergraduate-medical-education/leading-edge-curriculum/core-competencies>.

Dell Medical School, Selected Health Equity Competencies¹³

Demonstrate an understanding of the root causes of health inequities including how the socialization of dominant cultural norms, beliefs and values and application of public policy create these health inequities among defined populations.

Examine how the socialization of identities, including race as a social rather than genetic construct, shape group experiences, create affordances and limitations and inform health behavior and utilization of health care.

Gain awareness of personal conscious and unconscious bias and recognize how interpersonal power differentials manifest in actions that perpetuate health inequities.

Examine how the intersectionality of one's own multiple identities such as race, ethnicity, language, sex, sexual orientation, gender, age, ability, culture, socioeconomic status, geographic location and immigration status influence one's thoughts and actions.

Demonstrate a commitment to continued growth and understanding of the ways in which interpersonal, institutional and societal interactions impede health equity.

Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of community-based participatory research in order to gain insight into community preferences, expertise and health needs.

Intervene to end or pre-empt practice barriers such as lack of access to language interpretation services to support others experiencing barriers to equitable care including identity-based discrimination, bias and micro-aggressions.

Advocate for inclusive interpersonal, institutional and societal practices and procedures through application of understanding the role intersectional identity plays in health inequities.

At UT Austin, the term “DEI” does not imply a neutral set of ideas, over which no reasonable person could disagree. Rather, it connotes a set of controversial and even radical political and social views. UT Austin’s DEI programming espouses a fixation on race and narrow demographic identity as paramount features of life, and it embraces the watchwords of identity politics—microaggression, intersectionality, unconscious bias, and so on.

This is significant because DEI now represents an increasingly consequential component of university life at UT Austin. As the Dell Medical School illustrates, the imperatives of DEI have already made a lasting mark on one of the most basic functions of the university: the curriculum.

¹³ “Core Competencies,” Dell Medical School, The University of Texas at Austin.

Curriculum and Training

UT Austin’s DEI initiatives have also left a lasting mark on teaching throughout the university. This has happened, first of all, through curricular reform. Colleges and schools throughout the university have eagerly changed their curricula to incorporate the themes of diversity, equity, and inclusion. At the same time, the university has taken steps to ensure ongoing instruction in these themes outside the formal curriculum, through training sessions that constitute a sort of secondary curriculum.

In response to DEI mandates, UT Austin’s colleges and schools have not only created new DEI courses, but many have also promised to infuse the themes of DEI into all of its courses. The Dell Medical School adopted its expansive DEI competencies. The College of Natural Sciences, meanwhile, has promised a course on “equity in STEM.” The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs (LBJ School) has promised to create a core DEI course in its Master of Global Policy Studies program and to infuse those themes throughout its entire curriculum.

UT Austin DEI Measures, Curriculum

| DEI Plan/Update/Page | Notable Measures |
|---|--|
| Dell Medical School, Health Equity Strategic Map ¹⁴ | Integrate Health Equity Into Medical Education |
| College of Fine Arts, Diversity Strategic Plan ¹⁵ | All departments have established internal working groups, intersecting with the Fine Arts Diversity Council, to review and establish guidelines and principles for diversity and inclusion within core academic curriculum and creative programming. |
| College of Natural Sciences, Strategic Plan, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging ¹⁶ | Offer a new <i>Equity in STEM</i> Signature Course beginning in the 23-24 academic year. |

14 “Health Equity Strategic Map,” Dell Medical School, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://utexas.app.box.com/s/jzw0kzd4xieclsqjtc5oli3ofuwquqt>.

15 “Fine Arts Diversity Strategic Plan,” College of Fine Arts, The University of Texas Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://web.archive.org/web/20220302080951/https://finearts.utexas.edu/fine-arts-diversity-strategic-plan>.

16 “Equity, Inclusion and Belonging,” College of Natural Sciences, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://cns.utexas.edu/deans-office/strategic-plan/ensuring-community-belonging/equity-inclusion-and-belonging>.

UT Austin DEI Measures, Curriculum

| DEI Plan/Update/Page | Notable Measures |
|---|--|
| College of Natural Sciences, Strategic Plan, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging ¹⁷ | [A]cknowledge the inequitable history in our disciplines and on our campus, including through modules in our curriculum and clear statements of our diversity, equity and inclusion values and displays on campus that provide more context about historic injustices at UT and beyond. |
| LBJ School, Dean’s Commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Curriculum ¹⁸ | The LBJ School leadership is committed to a reformulation of curriculum that reflects and addresses how diversity affects domestic and global policy. The LBJ School will work with both students and faculty governance to see the successful implementation of the proposed MPaff core PD as well as the creation and ultimate implementation of a core DEI MGPS course. |
| LBJ School, Dean’s Commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Curriculum ¹⁹ | Mainstreaming DEI issues in curriculum must not be limited to core courses. The LBJ School will be providing tools and resources to faculty members to diversify their syllabi. |

The DEI initiatives also call for various required training sessions, some for students and even more for faculty. The “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity” calls for new training resources that “promote equitable and inclusive faculty student interactions.” The School of Information has called for mandatory training “in anti-racist pedagogy” for all faculty and teaching assistants. The university also required its First-Year Interest Groups (FIGs)—groups designed to help new students adjust to university life—to spend a certain portion of their meetings discussing DEI content.

UT Austin DEI Measures, Training

| DEI Plan/Update/Page | Notable Measures |
|---|---|
| Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity ²⁰ | <p>Design and implement resources and training for all tenured, tenure track, and non-tenure track faculty members on inclusive student interactions. This process has already begun with the formation of the UT Access, Equity, and Inclusion Institute, a three- year (2019-2022) pilot collaboration between the Vice Provost for Diversity unit and the LGBTQ Studies Program that seeks to improve faculty practices that lead to enhanced access, equity, and inclusion with regard to students.</p> <p>Create resources and trainings for faculty that promote equitable and inclusive faculty student interactions.</p> <p>Create a mechanism by which students can identify faculty who have undertaken such training when they select their courses.</p> |
| University Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, Progress Updates, Staff ²¹ | Offer diversity and implicit bias professional development for staff at the director level and above and increase training sessions on staff recruitment and hiring. |

17 “Equity, Inclusion and Belonging,” College of Natural Sciences, The University of Texas at Austin.
 18 “Curriculum,” Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://lbj.utexas.edu/dei-curriculum>.
 19 “Curriculum,” Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin.
 20 “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity,” Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, The University of Texas at Austin.
 21 “Staff,” Progress Updates, Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, The University of Texas at

UT Austin DEI Measures, Training

| DEI Plan/Update/Page | Notable Measures |
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| Cockrell School of Engineering, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Annual Report, 2021-2022 ²² | Train everyone involved in admissions and hiring about biases, including racism and sexism, and develop procedures that explicitly mitigate the disparate and negative impacts of these biases on hiring and admissions. |
| School of Information, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Report ²³ | Mandatory training in anti-racist pedagogy and cultural competency for all TAs and faculty. The D&I committee will work with other units at UT to identify training resources and host iSchool training session(s) focusing on more inclusive classroom strategies. |
| McCombs School of Business, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan ²⁴ | Train all persons involved in admissions, hiring, and career management about biases, and develop procedures that mitigate the negative impacts of potential biases on hiring and admissions. Develop and deliver programming around quarterly DEI focus topics for the entire McCombs School (students, faculty, and staff). |

Thus, UT Austin now advances DEI not only through the formal curriculum but also by way of a growing co-curriculum, dictated in large part by university administrators.

Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://diversity.utexas.edu/actionplan/progress-updates/staff/>.

22 “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Annual Report 2021-2022,” Cockrell School of Engineering, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, https://cockrell.utexas.edu/images/pdfs/DEI_Annual_Report_2021-2022-updated.pdf.

23 “University of Texas iSchool D&I Committee Report 2020-2021,” School of Information, The University of Texas at Austin.

24 “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan,” McCombs School of Business, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://www.mcombs.utexas.edu/media/mcombs-website/content-assets/documents/dei/McCombs-DEI-Plan-2022Feb22.pdf>.

Faculty Recruitment and Evaluation

UT Austin’s diversity initiatives make contributions to DEI an effective job requirement for faculty members.

Throughout the university, diversity statement requirements for hiring have become standard. The “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity” requires job applicants to expound upon their past and planned contributions to DEI, and the LBJ School requires a devoted diversity statement from all job candidates. That requirement extends to promotion and tenure. The faculty DEI plan advocates evaluating contributions to DEI “for considerations of merit and promotion,” the Cockrell School of Engineering revised its promotion and tenure guidelines “to explicitly consider efforts related to DEI in the context of all three of research, teaching, and service,” and the LBJ School now incorporates “dimensions of DEI into peer observations.”

In other words, increasingly, faculty at UT Austin must demonstrate an enthusiastic and sustained commitment to DEI in order to maintain good standing.

UT Austin DEI Measures, Evaluation

| DEI Plan/Update/Page | Notable Measures |
|---|---|
| Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity ²⁵ | Each CS [college and school] will develop mechanisms for evaluating faculty contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion in their units for considerations of merit and promotion |
| Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity ²⁶ | Deans should consult with diversity officers before creating dean’s letters for promotion. The Vice Provost for Diversity will provide advice to the President during the proceedings of the presidential promotion committee. They will be asked to join the discussion, along with deans, when an expert assessment of contributions to diversity and inclusion is needed. |

25 “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity,” Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, The University of Texas at Austin.
 26 “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity,” Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, The University of Texas at Austin.

UT Austin DEI Measures, Evaluation

| DEI Plan/Update/Page | Notable Measures |
|--|--|
| Cockrell School of Engineering, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Annual Report, 2021-2022 ²⁷ | In Summer 2021, we revised the Cockrell School guidelines for promotion and tenure and for comprehensive periodic review to explicitly consider efforts related to DEI in the context of all three of research, teaching, and service. We also encouraged the individual department (and their individual faculty) to include this information in their required annual reports. |
| College of Natural Sciences, Strategic Plan, Transparency ²⁸ | Introduce strategies for advancing DEI through faculty annual reviews/ staff performance evaluations. Improve constancy, clarity and connections to practice with contributions-to-diversity statements. |
| LBJ School, Dean’s Commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Composition ²⁹ | Including diversity statement from all candidates Establishing diversity as a key criterion of approved cluster hire searches. |
| LBJ School, Dean’s Commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Curriculum ³⁰ | Incorporating dimensions of DEI into peer observations of teaching are currently in progress. |
| McCombs School of Business, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan ³¹ | Develop strategies and policies to value and recognize DEI service by faculty and staff. |

Such requirements leave faculty exposed to viewpoint discrimination, and they make it much more costly and difficult to raise concerns about DEI policies. After all, if a professor’s career advancement depends on promoting DEI, he will have a natural incentive not to criticize DEI policies. Moreover, DEI requirements for hiring, promotion, and tenure signal a degradation of basic academic standards, since they reward work that has little or nothing to do with a professor’s academic discipline. In this way, UT Austin’s DEI initiatives illustrate how the very mission of the university has drifted away from the pursuit of truth and toward the pursuit of an idiosyncratic vision of social justice.

DEI has become a guiding principle throughout the hiring process, one which is now valued on par with teaching and research. The “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity” mandates that faculty job candidates explain their contributions to DEI in their applications, that all hiring committee members must undergo “diverse hiring training,” and that administrators have the authority to monitor applicant pools for diversity.

27 “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Annual Report 2021-2022,” Cockrell School of Engineering, The University of Texas at Austin.

28 “Transparency,” College of Natural Sciences, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://cns.utexas.edu/deans-office/strategic-plan/ensuring-community-belonging/transparency>.

29 “Composition,” Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://ljb.utexas.edu/dei-composition>.

30 “Curriculum,” Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin.

31 “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan,” McCombs School of Business, The University of Texas at Austin.

UT Austin DEI Measures, Recruitment

| DEI Plan/Update/Page | Notable Measures |
|--|---|
| Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity ³² | <p>Each CS must have a diversity officer whose responsibilities include oversight of faculty diversity, equity, and inclusivity.</p> <p>Each diversity officer is responsible for collaborating with the Provost's Office in leading Search Committee trainings and training the trainers in their respective CSs.</p> |
| Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity ³³ | <p>Applicants should address any past contributions pertaining to diversity, equity, and inclusivity, as well as any plans for future contributions, in their application materials. Deans may choose to have their CSs, or to allow individual departments, to seek this information in the form of a separate statement, to be evaluated after screening candidates for qualifications related to their academic specialty.</p> |
| Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity ³⁴ | <p>CS leadership (e.g., dean or CS diversity officer) will monitor the pool of applicants for each faculty position for diversity as the search proceeds and may require expansion of searches when such pools are not sufficiently diverse.</p> <p>CSs will include applicant experience or demonstrated skill in promoting or achieving diversity, equity, and inclusivity in teaching, service, or research, as a desired skill set.</p> |
| Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity ³⁵ | <p>Provide training on evaluation of demonstrated skill in promoting or achieving diversity, equity, and inclusivity in teaching, service, or research within applicant portfolios.</p> <p>All members of faculty search committees must participate in diverse hiring training.</p> |
| University Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, Progress Updates, Faculty ³⁶ | <p>The provost is working with each dean on strategic hiring priorities for faculty recruitment, including plans to develop more diverse faculty candidate pools.</p> |
| LBJ School, Dean's Commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Composition ³⁷ | <p>Conducting diversity training for all search committee members.</p> <p>Monitoring the pool of applicants by LBJ dean and/or CDO.</p> |

This, again, marks a huge shift in priorities. In selecting the very personnel who constitute the university, UT Austin makes clear that the pursuit of social justice is paramount.

32 "Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity," Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, The University of Texas at Austin.

33 "Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity," Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, The University of Texas at Austin.

34 "Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity," Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, The University of Texas at Austin.

35 "Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity," Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, The University of Texas at Austin.

36 "Faculty," Progress Updates, Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://diversity.utexas.edu/actionplan/progress-updates/faculty/>.

37 "Composition," Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin.

A Bureaucratic Cathedral

In August 2020, the Dell Medical School published an article on the school’s “Health Equity Strategic Map,” the plan that codified the school’s DEI programming. “Jewel Mullen is in the business of cathedral-building,” the article begins. “That’s how she describes the work she was hired to do as Dell Medical School’s associate dean for health equity, a position she has held since 2018.”³⁸

Mullen’s description is apt, and the Dell Medical School is not alone in creating large and long-lasting institutional structures devoted to DEI. Rather, the DEI initiatives at UT Austin will likely prove to be self-perpetuating, serving to ensure their own growth through the creation of a large bureaucratic apparatus. Already, the university and its various colleges and schools have promised new diversity officers, new DEI committees, and a commitment to continually updating existing DEI plans.

UT Austin DEI Measures, Bureaucracy

| DEI Plan/Update/Page | Notable Measures |
|---|---|
| Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity ³⁹ | <p>Create a diversity officer position in the dean’s office of each CS responsible for faculty diversity. This position will be responsible for the coordination of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts for tenured, tenure track, and non-tenure track faculty in each CS.</p> <p>Every chair will have begun to implement best practices in diversity, equity, and inclusion in their unit.</p> |
| Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity ⁴⁰ | <p>Conduct an analysis that includes an audit of leadership and committee membership at the CS and departmental levels and a description of procedures for how the tenured, tenure track, and non-tenure track faculty filling those roles are selected. This analysis will seek to identify disparities in service and governance assignments (too much service/ too little leadership). Action plans will be developed to address any findings of improper disparities.</p> |

38 “Understanding Health In/Equity: A List of Recommendations,” Jewel Mullen, The University of Texas at Austin Dell Medical School, January 6, 2023, <https://dellmed.utexas.edu/blog/understanding-health-in-equity-a-list-of-recommendations>.

39 “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity,” Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, The University of Texas at Austin.

40 “Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity,” Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, The University of Texas at Austin.

UT Austin DEI Measures, Bureaucracy

| DEI Plan/Update/Page | Notable Measures |
|---|--|
| University Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, Progress Updates, University Leadership ⁴¹ | In fall 2016, the Office of the Provost instructed each college and school to create a Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) committee to develop a list of college-level recommendations regarding three major themes listed below. Committees were to take into consideration faculty, undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and staff. |
| You Belong Here ⁴² | Each CSU [college, school, and unit] should appoint a formal leader to lead diversity efforts for graduate students. |
| McCombs School of Business, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan ⁴³ | Commit to continuous improvement in McCombs School DEI efforts to update the DEI plan periodically. |
| College of Pharmacy, DEAI Committee Sponsored Projects ⁴⁴ | The DEAI Committee of the College of Pharmacy works to create and maintain a learning, research, and work environment (both physical and social) that promotes and values diversity of people, beliefs and ideas. |

Many critics of DEI in higher education point out the self-perpetuating nature of the enterprise. Any bureaucracy tasked with resolving the university community’s grievances will have a natural incentive to find problems where none exist. Microaggressions, after all, can provide endless occasion for interventions from DEI officers. By hiring scores of these officers, and by mandating new DEI committees and ever-updating DEI plans, UT Austin has ensured that the project of diversity, equity, and inclusion will continue in perpetuity.

41 “University Leadership,” Progress Updates, Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, The University of Texas at Austin.
 42 “You Belong Here: Our Plan for an Equitable and Inclusive Campus Strategic Direction 2022–2025,” The University of Texas at Austin.
 43 “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan,” McCombs School of Business, The University of Texas at Austin.
 44 “Outreach: DEAI Committee Sponsored Projects,” College of Pharmacy, The University of Texas at Austin, accessed January 6, 2023, <https://pharmacy.utexas.edu/about/equity-diversity/outreach>.

Conclusion

Student activists at UT Austin demanded a “comprehensive restructuring of academic policies.” Through its DEI initiatives, the university has delivered on that demand. From the highest level of administration to the university’s many colleges and schools, a new regime of DEI policies has come into being. These policies espouse a specific set of contentious political views, dictate a new curriculum, and embed the principles of DEI into the fabric of the university. For those concerned about the future of higher education, the rolling revolution at UT Austin cannot be ignored.