

## **Proposal to Revise UMBC Faculty Review Policies to Recognize and Reward Faculty Contributions to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)**

The proposal to revise Faculty Review Policies outlined below addresses the recommendation on documenting invisible labor in the June 2021 [Faculty Caregiving Advisory Committee Listening Sessions and Survey Report](#), prepared by Dr. Orienne Smith and Jess Myers, Director of the Women's Center, and the policy recommendation regarding DEI in faculty review policies put forward by the Policy and Procedures Work Group of the Inclusion Council, Co-Chaired by Dr. Carole McCann and Melody Wright, President, Non-Exempt Staff Senate.

The Faculty Caregiving Advisory Committee and the Inclusion Council were formed in 2020-2021 to address different yet overlapping concerns within our campus community. The work of the Faculty Caregiving Advisory Committee focused on providing post-Covid 19 support for faculty caregivers whose research, teaching, and service had been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The work of the Inclusion Council centered upon advising the newly created Office of Equity and Inclusion on issues under their purview and recommending actions UMBC should take to identify and redress continuing inequities on campus.

The UMBC Strategic Plan identifies the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty as crucial to the continued success of our diverse student body, recognizing that students benefit greatly from engaging with faculty with who share their culture and identity. The value of that engagement hinges on the work performed by women and faculty of color to create positive learning environments for our diverse students. However, faculty review policies have not been updated to recognize and reward the work that faculty do to advance diversity, equity and inclusion. As a consequence, much of that work remains invisible in faculty reviews. This omission impacts our ability to retain our faculty of color and women and our ability to deliver on our pledge in UMBC's vision statement to foster an "inclusive culture" and "advance knowledge, economic prosperity, and social justice by welcoming and inspiring inquisitive minds from all backgrounds."

The Faculty Caregiving Advisory Committee recommended, among other things, the documentation and accounting for invisible labor, including emotional labor, provided to students during this crisis by faculty. Particular attention should be directed to the ways in which faculty of color navigated additional emotional labor throughout the past year in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder, the surge of protests against structural racism and police brutality, and the increase of anti-Asian rhetoric and violence to support students and the greater campus community.

## **Background and Rationale for Recognition and Reward of DEI Work in Faculty Reviews**

In recent years, UMBC adopted a requirement that as part of their application dossier all candidates for full-time faculty positions submit a statement of commitment to and experience with diversity, equity, and inclusion. This requirement was a vital step in strengthening equitable practices in faculty hiring. However, it has not been followed up by valuing of diversity, equity and inclusion work as part of faculty reviews. Specifically, UMBC faculty review policies do not explicitly recognize and reward DEI activities among the criteria for the evaluation of teaching, research, or service. Thus, faculty are not evaluated on their contributions to DEI after their initial hiring. At the same time, DEI work in research, teaching and service within the university falls more heavily on members of underrepresented communities, yet neither the value nor the weight of this work is recognized by the faculty review policies. The lack of recognition and reward for DEI contributions in faculty review policies has the potential to undermine efforts to create an inclusive community for faculty, staff, and students.

The conditions of the pandemic exacerbated this issue and brought to the fore the urgent need to support our faculty engaged in DEI work. As the Faculty Caregiving Advisory Committee Report notes, this is a gendered and raced issue. In an article entitled [“Keeping Covid-19 from Sidelining Equity.”](#) the authors note that “[w]ithout engaged interventions, higher education will most likely become less diverse and inclusive, given the pressure the pandemic is placing on women and faculty of color.” It is imperative to rethink university practices and processes in order to mitigate the gendered and racial inequalities that were intensified and aggravated during lockdown and continued remote work.

These issues are not unique to UMBC. They have been discussed widely within the academy. Moreover, we recognize that conversations about diversity, equity and inclusion are taking place across the UMBC campus. In light of these conversations and of the recommendations of the Inclusion Council, we propose a faculty working group to 1) investigate further how USM and peer institutions have instituted DEI recognition in their academic review policies; and 2) recommend model language for UMBC faculty review policies appropriate to the UMBC context. We are fortunate that a number of peer institutions provide strong models for policy language recognizing DEI work in faculty reviews. Below are some examples.

### **Examples of DEI Recognition at Peer Institutions**

Examples of policy language for **Overall** criteria that recognizes and rewards DEI contributions include:

**Stony Brook:** "Contributions to enriching the life of the University by correcting discrimination and encouraging diversity – as demonstrated by teaching, University service, or scholarship concerning women and minorities. Besides reports from professionals within a field, colleagues, and students, a candidate's effectiveness may be assessed by accepting a diverse range of publications and modes of service that address the contributions, interests and special needs of minorities or women and promote efforts to achieve equal opportunity." (p. 4)

**The University of California System Policy,** "The University of California is committed to excellence and equity in every facet of its mission. Contributions in all areas of faculty achievement that promote equal opportunity and diversity should be given due recognition in the academic personnel process, and they should be evaluated and credited in the same way as other faculty achievements. These contributions to diversity and equal opportunity can take a variety of forms including efforts to advance equitable access to education, public service that addresses the needs of California's diverse population, or research in a scholar's area of expertise that highlights inequalities. Mentoring and advising of students and faculty members, particularly from underrepresented and underserved populations, should be given due recognition in the teaching or service categories of the academic personnel process. (p. 2)

Example of policy language for **Research** that recognizes and rewards DEI contributions include

**UC Santa Cruz:** [in "Research and Other Creative Work"] "Research contributions to understanding the barriers facing women and minorities in academic disciplines, for example:

- Studying patterns of participation and advancement of women and minorities in fields where they are under-represented
- Studying socio-cultural issues confronting under-represented students in college preparation curricula
- Evaluating programs, curricula, and teaching strategies designed to enhance participation of under-represented students in higher education

Research interests that will contribute to diversity and equal opportunity, for example, research that addresses:

- Race, ethnicity, gender, multiculturalism, and inclusion
- Health disparities, educational access and achievement, political engagement, economic justice, social mobility, civil and human rights
- Questions of interest to communities historically excluded by higher education

- Artistic expression and cultural production that reflects culturally diverse communities or voices not well represented in the arts and humanities.” (p. 4)

Examples of policy language for **Teaching** that recognizes and rewards DEI contributions include:

**New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT):** “Documentation of success in creating an innovative, diversity-friendly and student-centered learning environment should include summaries of classroom evaluations by students and peers over the last several years, descriptions of new courses and activities developed, course or laboratory notes and/or manuals prepared, teaching related publications, and other pertinent material reflecting a commitment to diversity and to innovation in education.” (p. 2)

**University of California System Policy:** includes in list of evidence of teaching effectiveness “development of particularly effective strategies for the educational advancement of students in various under-represented groups” and including techniques that meet the needs of students from groups that are under-represented in the field of instruction” (p. 7)

**UCSC:** “Contributions to pedagogies addressing different learning styles, for example:

- Designing courses or curricula that meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students
- Developing effective teaching strategies for the educational advancement of students from under-represented groups

Experience teaching students who are under-represented, for example:

- Teaching at a minority-serving institution
- Record of success advising women and minority graduate students
- Experience teaching students with disabilities” (p. 4)

Examples of policy language for **Service** include

**UC Santa Cruz:** lists under consideration for “Professional Activity,” evidence of achievement and leadership in areas “including those that specifically address the professional advancement of individuals in under-represented groups in the candidate’s field. It also lists under consideration for “University and Public Service” ““contributions furthering diversity and equal opportunity within the University through participation in such activities as recruitment, retention, and mentoring of scholars and students.” (p.3)

**The New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT)** calls for “a pattern of increasing levels of leadership” and “a pattern of sustained levels of leadership”

that demonstrates “the support of diversity goals” in the criteria for promotion to the ranks of Associate and Professor, respectively. (pp. 3-4)

**After careful review of our existing procedures and policies and those of our peer institutions and USM, the following changes are proposed:**

1. The Faculty Handbook section 6.2, “UMBC Criteria for Faculty Appointment and Promotion,” should include a statement that UMBC is committed to creating an inclusive culture; that faculty engage in a variety of activities critical to student success and the advancement of knowledge that are often unrecognized as valuable aspects of faculty contributions in the three traditional categories of faculty review; and that this work should be recognized and rewarded in faculty review processes. Language should be added to include forms of DEI work to the criteria for promotion in all three categories -- research, teaching and service --, drawing on policy models from our peer institutions.
2. The Faculty Handbook section 6.3.4.1, “Report of Department Chair,” should be amended to include a sentence requiring the Chair to affirm that the review process recognized work presented in the candidate’s dossier that contributes to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the areas of research, teaching and service.
3. The Faculty Handbook section 6.10, “Departmental Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure,” which has not been reviewed and updated since 2008, should be moved up to 6.4, coming after 6.3, “UMBC Promotion and Tenure Procedures,” edited to align with recent changes elsewhere in the policy, and include these revisions:
  - a. A preamble that reminds departments that they must create and periodically review guidelines for promotion and tenure that encourage and reward work that aligns with our mission and values, including community engagement, interdisciplinarity and inclusive excellence.
  - b. The inclusion of a directive in the categories of “Teaching” and “Service” for departments to describe the documentation of teaching and service that falls outside of committee work and/or representation at university functions. This service includes formal and informal mentorship of students, junior faculty, peer colleagues, and other activities that would otherwise be invisible.
  - c. The revisions to departmental P&T policies will be reviewed and approved at the college level and by the Provost’s office.

The relevant documents can be accessed [here](#).