



College of Communication DEI-Related Actions - Spring Quarter 2023

Goal 1: Inclusive College Climate.

Create a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable college community for faculty and staff

- The DEI Committee of the College revised and updated the College's [DEI Action Plan](#)
- Along with the Visiting Artist Series of CDM, the College of Communication co-sponsored a [discussion](#) with Dr. Robin R. Means Coleman (Vice President & Associate Provost for Diversity and Inclusion at Northwestern University) about the documentary *Horror Noire: A History of Black Horror*, after the screening of the film. **Prof. Luisela Alvaray** moderated the discussion.
- **Prof. Paul Booth** organized the Pop Culture Conference, which featured three diverse keynote speakers.
- As faculty advisor to Good Day DePaul, **Rick Brown's** primary contributions come through news coverage at Good Day DePaul. Brown and the GDP staff are committed to doing stories about issues that impact members of minority groups. Recent stories include an analysis of how DePaul is doing in terms of meeting the needs of minority students, as well as several stories related to issues surrounding migration.
- Associate Professor **Sydney Dillard** oversaw a year-long social media campaign through the PRAD Graduate program that celebrated diverse trailblazers in PR and Advertising for Black History Month, Women's History Month, Jewish American History Month, and Asian American Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders History Month. We plan to expand to include additional diverse groups in the upcoming year.
- Continuing in the project of achieving health equity while building relationships between the DePaul community and the Chicago community at large, **Prof. Elissa Foster**, continued in her role as the Co-Chair of the DePaul-Sinai Advisory Committee, charged with building relationships and guiding shared activities that advance health equity in Chicago. Three significant activities this year are (1) our participation in DePaul's Innovation Day presenting research on the impact of community health workers, (2) a series of writing workshops designed and delivered by DePaul faculty to community health workers (whose racial diversity matches that of the neighborhoods in which they work), and (3) the upcoming Population Health Institute, which advances participants' clinical and research knowledge and skills related to promoting health at the level of communities.
- Working to create a more inclusive and equitable community at DePaul, Instructor **Amy Merrick and Prof. Robin Hoecker** worked with student Cam Rodriguez to get their story published in 14 East about DePaul's history in the 20th century of blackface performances

and policies that discouraged Black students from enrolling, titled "[The Long Shadow of White Supremacy at DePaul.](#)" As Cam's advisor, Hoecker guided Cam through the research process. As faculty advisor to the magazine, Merrick invested about 50 hours into the project. Two 14 East Magazine student editors and two student fact-checkers also worked on preparing the piece for publication. The story was recognized by President Manuel at DePaul's reconciliation ceremony, where Cam received a Shared Coin from Manuel for upholding the university's mission. [Learn more about Rodriguez's reporting process](#), and the writeup in [DePaul Newsline](#).

- **Dean Lexa Murphy** continues to offer her "Caffeine with the Dean" every week—a virtual tea/coffee space to address ideas, questions, or concerns.

Goal 2. Support For Students.

Recruiting, Retaining, and supporting a more diverse student community

- Instructor **Nina Abnee's** students published an episode of the podcast [Adventures in PRAD](#) about racial justice in the NFL. Adventures in PRAD is a student created podcast that covers PRAD issues.
- Prof. **Dan Azzaro** continues to encourage students to apply to the [BLAC Internship program](#), a full-time summer advertising internships for students of color.
- **Prof. Jay Baglia** taught the grad course "Health Disparities, Communication, and Culture," which is DEI-centered. Students consider a variety of health conditions, pain, community-based approaches to alleviating health disparities, how nurses and physicians are trained (and looking at both implicit and explicit bias), and structural approaches to health literacy. Included among those who are considered at risk due to health disparities and implicit bias are African Americans, LatinX, LGBTQ+, and persons with disabilities. The course looks specifically at American medical culture.
- **Prof. Paul Booth** hosted a weekly event which featured multicultural and inclusive student/DePaul organizations (the Sweets, Treats, and Deets event).
- **Prof. Paul Booth** taught sessions of his "Virtual Reality and Empathy" lecture to 8th graders and high schoolers from Chicago through the [After School Matters](#) program. These sessions involved young people from diverse backgrounds (many of whom weren't planning on going to college), and focused on discussions around cross-cultural understanding.
- **Prof. Booth** worked with Enrollment Management to discuss recruitment and enrollment and how to increase applications of diverse populations.
- **Prof. Booth** organized the Voices of Communication event, which featured diverse student speakers from different programs in the college.
- In his role as Associate Dean of Student Engagement, **Prof. Booth** facilitated funding for 6 NAHJ students to attend a national conference in Miami.



- **Prof. Tim Cole** conducted thorough research to find materials on nonbinary gender identification and relational communication for his courses. This will be helpful for next year when covering such topics in class.
- Instructor **Ron Culp**'s leadership class along with Instructor **Nina Abnee**'s Personal Branding/Career strategies class co-sponsored a panel on Women in Leadership with five senior level women in PR and Advertising in Chicago.
- In HTHC 526 Social Construction of Health and Illness, **Prof. Foster** focused on identifying silences and marginalizing discourse in public media; however, this quarter she welcomed three students who were specifically using the course toward their Certificate in Latinx Media. The students focused their original research projects on the representation of Latinx identity and culture in the media. Two of these students—Rebecca Medina and Sweta Shah—presented their research on media representations of Latina mental health during the spring quarter Research Showcase that Paul Booth organized.
- In her CMNS 315 Health Communication course, **Prof. Elissa Foster** evolved even further in the direction of enhancing students' critical perspectives on race, gender, sexuality, and socioeconomic status. The students identified and discussed current changes (proposed and enacted) to legislation designed to marginalize and deny people access to necessary health care; including, reproductive services, gender-affirming and mental health care, and (in Florida) any care for people with whom a practitioner "disagrees" with respect to "lifestyle."
- Led by **Prof. Dusty Goltz**, the college co-hosted the queer joy performance hour with the Women's Center, with students and faculty performing positive performances about joy in queer lives.
- Faculty members **Dusty Goltz, Adriane Stoner, and Kristen Pengelly** of the Communication Studies program brought in Raechel Anne Jolie (author and alum) to talk about their award-winning memoir, *Rust Belt Femme*, which explores issues of gender, class and queerness. In a presentation and conversation with graduate student Ava O'Malley, Raechel spoke to an audience of nearly 40 people about the power of memoir, the dangers of parachute journalism, and their journey since graduating from DePaul.
- Instructor **Sandra Guy Kolina** invites leaders of DePaul's student chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists and National Association of Hispanic Journalists to speak to her class so that it's easier for interested students to join those groups. She also offers long lists of diverse journalism leaders of many cultures from which the students choose to watch (as video interviews) or read (as authors or subjects of books related to journalism). The lists include Black, Latinx and Indigenous cultures, as well as one of Chicago's first women sports reporters, who is Caucasian, and seminal books such as Betty Friedan's "The Feminine Mystique." Guy Kolina also brings in a diverse guest speakers who represent local television, online, investigative and other media.
- **Prof. Kendra Knight** Incorporated additional research and resources on intersections of class, race, and gender in the CMNS 343: Work/Family Communication course.



- In her CMNS 396 course, **Prof. Knight** supervised Senior Capstone projects on DEI relevant topics that included organizational burnout in female-documented occupations, un(der)paid internship labor among aspiring sports communication professionals, intergenerational communication among Desi (South Asian) residents in Chicagoland, mental load of sexual assault prevention rituals among emerging adult women, and gender disparities and occupational segregation in textile and garment labor.
- **Prof. Daniel Makagon** re-structured the course CMNS 205 Communication, Culture, and Community, which he offered in the Winter 2023. The course focused on a community-based learning project where students made multi-media projects that primarily focused on DePaul's Council of the Elders. This group is attached to the Egan Office and a large majority of the Council members who were interviewed enacted a commitment to hearing from diverse voices. About 85 percent of the interview projects were focused on Council members of color (many women).
- Journalism instructor **Judith McCray** organized a screening of the documentary *The Janes* and moderated a panel with several of the original Janes who were featured in the film. A great experience for our students. The screening and discussion were open to the public, but particularly benefited Judith's social justice reporting class.
- **Instructor Kristen Pengelly**, and student employee Ella Miller, committed to livening up the Munroe office space through holiday-themed decorations in the reception area. We consulted with Diane Dardón, Director of Religious Diversity and Pastoral Care, and the university's interfaith calendar, to spread the allotted budget in an equitable manner.
- Instructor **Kristen Pengelly** assigned readings on white supremacy culture in organizations in her ORGC 251 (organizational communication) class, including a chapter from Austin Channing Brown's book "I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness" and Tema Okun's list of characteristics.
(<https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/characteristics.html>)
- Associate Director for Graduate Student Advising and Student Services **Karin Winters**, along with **Liz Serbien** (Coordinator in TRiO), held an information session for TRiO prospective graduate students in Health communication. This differs from typical info sessions in that they targeted a special population that may have different questions and needs.

Goal 3. Professional Development and Support.

Promoting and supporting inclusive teaching, scholarship, and professional development for faculty and staff.

- The Course Resources Diversification Program continues funding materials to diversify the content of the courses in the college.
- **Prof. Kelly Chu** conducted a webinar for APIDA Heritage Month for DePaul Alumni on May 31. 'Perspectives on Racial Justice: Addressing Consumer Engagement in Social Media in the

Asian Community’ addressed the role of consumer engagement in social media with a particular focus on WeChat in China. The discussion included the influence of two personality traits—sense of belonging and need for self-enhancement—on consumer engagement and how they lead to electronic word-of-mouth intention. The important role of influencer marketing in the Asian community will be covered as well.

- **Instructor Ron Culp** refined his December Intersession course, *Diverse Voices: Profiles in Leadership*, that focuses helping PR and advertising students understand the business-critical importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The course receives high teaching evaluation scores and positive written feedback from students. It is believed to be one of the few such courses in U.S. PR/Advertising programs. The course is also being adapted at other universities, including University of Florida.
- **Instructor Kirsten D’Aurelio** and **Prof. Leah Bryant** presented a DEI-focused workshop at the Teaching & Learning Conference on practical strategies and tools from inclusive classrooms. They discussed the application of five classroom tools: transparent pedagogy, equity audits, apology models, discussion interruption techniques, and layering representation into existing course materials.
- **Prof. Elissa Foster** participated in the year-long Vincentian Pedagogy Project as a representative from the College of Communication. The group’s task was to articulate teaching practices that reflect Vincentian values; particularly, inclusion of diverse perspectives and support for the student as a whole person, critical reflexivity around power relations in the classroom and in society, and “deep learning” activities that address the quality of relationships and experience.
- **Prof. Foster** also participated in a professional development opportunity through the Chronicle of Higher Education called “Helping Students to Navigate the Hidden Curriculum,” which discussed how to best support first generation students *beyond* the typical focus on academic preparedness.
- Throughout this year, a team of interested faculty, **Elissa Foster, Jay Baglia, Kendra Knight, Kate Cooper, Kristen Pengelly**, and research assistant **Stephanie Graur** designed and offered a 2-credit workshop titled “Communication Fundamentals for College Success,” funded through a DePaul Scholarship of Teaching and Learning grant. The workshop was offered in winter and spring terms, with a parallel research project incorporated to assess the effectiveness of the course as an intervention into various challenges of post-pandemic learning and teaching—low levels of executive function, student burnout and other mental and physical health challenges, relationship-building and social support, etc. Preliminary results were presented at the Central States Communication Association pre-conference and the DePaul Teaching and Learning conference this spring.
- **Prof. Dusty Goltz** spent most of the quarter designing a new performance class for the fall called “Me and My Future” which uses queer theory and critical literature to interrogate hegemonic scripts of future, and imagine alternative models for future building, pulling from queer, feminist, Marxist, and critical race theory.



- **Prof. Kendra Knight** collaborated with faculty Jay Baglia, **Elissa Foster, Kristen Pengelly, Kate Cooper, and grad assistant Step Grau** to present a session at the DePaul Teaching & Learning Conference on a curricular executive functioning intervention to redress barriers to higher education learning and success.
- **Prof. Knight** accepted a service commitment to the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender (OSCLG), to recognize and promote outstanding feminist scholarship.
- **Instructor Adriane Stoner** attended the National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in Higher Education (NCORE) in New Orleans. She presented on “Decolonizing Disciplinary Stewardship” (a collaborative project she is working on with a colleague from Claremont Graduate University). Abstract: *Using a systems and transdisciplinary analysis of doctoral training, we unpack and examine embedded concepts of graduate education as artifacts of colonial origin. Through this approach, we can collectively scan the normative processes, customs and pathways for the echoes of legacy systems that have marginalized, oppressed and silenced learning and knowledge production among non-dominant groups in graduate training.*
- **Prof. Matt Ragas** continued to work with diverse small businesses as the class clients in his PR and Advertising Entrepreneurs (PRAD 373). In this year's edition of his course, his students worked with Pleasant House Pub and Royal Pies, a family-owned small business based in the Pilsen neighborhood, on the southwest side of Chicago. In addition, he has continued to focus on spotlighting guest speakers in this course that come from diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- **Prof. Matt Ragas** led the call, review, and approval of a diverse third slate of candidates for the Young Professionals Advisory Board in the College of Communication. The slate of rising young leaders with backgrounds from across the College's program areas was approved by Dean Lexa Murphy and Dean's Advisory Council chair Marty Wilke and onboard in May 2023. The YAB is a group of young communication professionals who are passionate about serving the DePaul community, developing the next generation of communication professionals, and collaborating with the College of Communication to fulfill its mission and goals for its students.