

I. OVERVIEW

The second meeting of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's (SAIC) Anti-Racism Committee (ARC), Curriculum and Resource Share Subcommittee, was held on Wednesday, December 2, 2020 online from 12:30–2:00 p.m.

A. ATTENDING

Sally Alatalo, professor; Rebekah Champ, assistant dean of student affairs for academic advising; Olivia Gude, professor (co-chair); Paul Jackson, associate dean of undergraduate studies; Dwayne Moser, associate dean of graduate studies; Jacob Ristau, associate professor, adjunct; Shawn Smith, interim dean of faculty and vice president of academic affairs (co-chair); Alan Strathmann, assistant professor, adjunct; Kirin Wachter-Greene, assistant professor; Jeff Ward, special assistant for executive communications (notetaker).

B. VISITING

Jefferson Pinder, director of diversity, equity, and inclusion for academic affairs (ARC co-chair)

C. AGENDA

- Prioritizing ideas

II. PRIORITIZING IDEAS

Building on the ideas generated at their prior meeting—which included building a resources toolkit for anti-racism and diversity in the curriculum, faculty mentorship models, and adopting a common reading—subcommittee members identified two ideas for further development this semester: drafting a working definition of anti-racism; and considering a diversity course requirement. At the end of the meeting, members broke into two groups to further develop these ideas into potential recommendations in advance of the next meeting. Their conversation is summarized below:

A. WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTI-RACISM

Members in this group would draft a working definition of anti-racism, particularly in terms of the curriculum. They would draw on existing definitions in their work and consider measurability, in terms of both learning outcomes and student self-evaluation.

B. REQUIRING DIVERSITY COURSEWORK

Members in this group would determine what a curricular requirement for diversity coursework might look like in SAIC's curriculum. As a new idea, most discussion centered on this initiative. Salient points included:

- A diversity coursework requirement could work like the off-campus study requirement insofar as it could apply to a wide range of courses and experiences (e.g., study trips, classes in North Lawndale, fieldwork classes,

classes working with incarcerated people, internships), allowing many existing requirements, including art history, liberal arts, and studio courses, to satisfy a diversity coursework requirement. This strategy may minimize the siloing of diversity courses to one area of study, and it would be relatively easy to adopt (not removing existing degree requirement) and administrate (many options or students and academic advisors).

- Tying a diversity course requirement to an existing spine course, e.g. Sophomore Studio, might overburden already requirement-heavy courses; however, diversifying readings and assignments shared across class sections may be an additional way to include anti-racism and diversity in the curriculum.
- Course requirements are an effective tool for building enrollment and curriculum for, in this instance, diversity courses.
- A “diversity” course might mean an anti-racist course, a course that decenters whiteness, a global comparative art history course, or a course on post-colonialism, among other things. Further development of this proposal should clarify what kinds of courses would satisfy a new requirement.
- As a tenant of anti-racist scholarship, an anti-racist course might need to include a shift in pedagogy towards more horizontal classroom structures, increasing the need for faculty mentorship.
- While a diversity course requirement at the graduate level could be satisfied through art history or studio courses, it would not address grad projects and the need for anti-racist mentorship and training for faculty advising grad students.