

**MESSAGE FROM ARC CO-CHAIRS**

Dear SAIC Community,

On behalf of the Anti-Racism Committee (ARC) and President Elissa Tenny, we are pleased to share with you the following action items designed to make the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) more diverse, equitable, inclusive, and anti-racist. ARC was formed this academic year to take into consideration the many ideas, demands, and calls to action made by members of our community and turn them into actionable recommendations that could be woven throughout our operations. During the fall semester and the beginning of the spring, the nearly 80 faculty, staff, and student members of ARC’s six subcommittees made many recommendations—23 in total—which were subsequently reviewed by ARC and the president. All will be adopted as action items with dedicated funding, fundraising, and resources to bring them to fruition.

This document introduces each action item and shares how they’ll be developed over time, including next steps for further development, endorsement, and implementation among appropriate committees and administrative and shared governance bodies. To help everyone get a handle of the scope of our first round of action items, we’ve expressed these action items in three categories:

**DEFINE** • These action items define how we understand our School to be anti-racist, locate where we aren’t meeting this definition, and redefine, wherever necessary.

**LEARN** • These action items will help us learn to practice anti-racism in the curriculum and support our own continual learning and unlearning throughout the School.

**SUPPORT** • These action items are focused on how we care for one another, expanding our capacity for inclusivity when people join the School community and throughout their tenure at SAIC.

We’ll continue to use these categories in a series of all-School presentations, email newsletters, updates to the website, and, as needed, new iterations of this document. Through these communication tools, we’ll also be sharing updates about ARC’s next steps, which include implementation of these action items, forming new subcommittees to address staff-specific topics and Asian inclusivity, and making additional recommendations. We’ll also amplify some of the anti-racism work happening throughout the School beyond ARC.

As always, please reach out to us directly—or through our ARC email, saicarc@saic.edu—with any questions or concerns.

**Delinda Collier**  
ARC Co-Chair and Interim Dean of Graduate Studies

**Jefferson Pinder**  
ARC Co-Chair and Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Academic Affairs

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## DEFINE

These action items define how we understand our School to be anti-racist, locate where we aren't meeting this definition, and redefine, wherever necessary:

### **Adopt a definition of anti-racist practice for SAIC, and consider also defining diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) for the School.**

It is important to establish a position from which we are working. The proposed definition of anti-racism to be used at SAIC is:

*Anti-racists actively work to eliminate racism and white supremacy by identifying and dismantling external racist structures, practices, and policies as well as the internal racist habits and attitudes we all perpetuate. Anti-racists seek root causes of racism, generate anti-racist actions, and promote racial equity.*

Building on the subcommittee's recommendation, ARC also recommends defining diversity, equity, and inclusion for the School.

**NEXT STEPS:** ARC and President Tenny endorse this definition of anti-racism and will ask the Curriculum Subcommittee to take the lead on defining other relevant terms. Definitions should be shared with faculty senate and student government for concurrence.

### **Acknowledge institutional bias and its effects on Homan Square.**

Those working in North Lawndale have been perpetually frustrated by perceived institutional bias, centering the institutional attention to the downtown campus and relegating Homan Square to a satellite campus. Because this part of our campus is situated in a predominantly Black community and addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion subject matters, there is an uncomfortable collapsing of what message is being sent to those who work, teach, and learn at Homan Square. We propose an institutional audit of our procedures through the lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Some of these practices include:

- Historically (not including the present deans) Homan Square has experienced ambivalence from the dean's office. This ambivalence includes:
  - Rarely or never attending classes or events at Homan Square
  - Disengagement with the curriculum and classes taught at Homan Square
- Chairs have limited interest in Homan Square, and it is manifested through lack of support and understanding for the extra efforts faculty put in to teach at Homan Square.
- Although chairs are invited to critiques and meetings at the tower, they rarely show up.
- Chairs often do not pass on lessons learned or information about Homan Square to the incoming chair.

- Some faculty who come to Homan Square have limited commitments to the community and simply see it as a site to teach and don't address the complexities of teaching in the community.
- There is a low initiative to strategically plan and support enrollment in courses offered at Homan Square.
- We are working outside the canon; we are working with people and issues that are of a particular class, and faculty and students are uncomfortable with this.
- There's difficulty getting the SafeRide van to pick students up from the tower after evening classes. If Homan Square is part of our campus, then it needs to have the full support of our campus.
- The Homan Square Classroom is omitted from the Space Reservation System.
- The Homan Square campus and courses are poorly situated within the wider SAIC community as compared to the Roger Brown House or Ox-Bow.

**NEXT STEPS:** In an effort to lead by example, the Office of the President will continue to host cabinet meetings and retreats at Homan Square, making them a regular fixture of their agenda, and also schedule board events at the North Lawndale site. They will also work with colleagues in other departments to ensure the School's presence in Nichols Tower is part of regular systems and communications and encourage engagement with SAIC at Homan Square throughout shared governance.

**Expand language in search materials and job postings—for both staff and faculty—to help recruit a diverse workforce; this language should also help shape hiring criteria, search processes, and student employment.**

Members of the Law and Hiring Subcommittee will continue their work on language for postings for faculty and staff, looking at how our postings can feature language that can put our interest in diversity at the forefront. We noticed that recent staff postings only highlight the mandatory equal opportunity employer (EOE) phrasing, and we can do more to signal to prospective staff and faculty employees our vision for SAIC. This language should also help shape hiring criteria, search processes, and student employment, infusing an anti-racist approach to all hiring, and support employees' professional development and opportunities for advancement.

The following is an example of this expanded language:

SAIC is committed to employment opportunities that encourage the pursuit of careers in academia by those who have been historically excluded from many aspects of higher education.

The longer "statement of values," included below, is another example of our thinking to date on new hiring language. We would like to further develop this language and work with our colleagues in hiring areas of the School to include in future searches.

## Statement of Values

SAIC is committed to building a diverse workforce and a supportive work environment that puts into action its investment in protecting the lives and livelihoods of Black, Indigenous, and people of color; queer and transgender members of these communities; and those others who are most vulnerable within our society. In its aim to contribute to real and lasting social change, the School recognizes its hiring and retention practices as integral to fostering transformative justice and proposing new forms of accountability not only within our institution and the fields of art and design, but in the city, nation, and global society in which we participate.

SAIC seeks applicants who display courage and aptitude in addressing the ways notions of race have operated historically and continue to systemically impact our society. As an institution, SAIC takes responsibility for developing a thriving culture that functions with the conviction that progressive approaches to justice are the shared responsibility of all those in our employment. Together we work to cultivate a learning environment for our students and communities that recognizes difference, supports diversity in myriad forms, and requires equity in all areas of our operations.

SAIC recognizes that empowerment of a broad range of different abilities, divergent cultural backgrounds, expansive approaches to gender identity and orientation, and interdisciplinary modes of research in every aspect of our work as a leading educational institution is to the benefit of all.

We recognize that our people are our strength, and the diverse talents they bring to our global workforce are directly linked to our success. We are an equal opportunity employer and place a high value on diversity and inclusion at our institution. We do not discriminate on the basis of any protected attribute, including race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital or veteran status, pregnancy or disability, or any other basis protected under applicable law. In accordance with applicable law, we make reasonable accommodations for applicants' and employees' religious practices and beliefs, as well as any mental health or physical disability needs.

**NEXT STEPS:** Individuals working on this project in the Law and Hiring Subcommittee will finish their work before advancing to human resources and the dean's office for implementation.

**Enact the following communications plan to keep everyone informed about the work of ARC, encourage involvement in its activities, and support its progress.**

### Audiences

Campus Community (Primary)	External (Secondary)
Students Faculty Staff Board of Governors	Alums Parents Donors and friends

**Framework**

When sharing updates and information around the School's Anti-Racism Committee and diversity, equity, and inclusion work, it will be important to consider each message around the framework of "problem–process–action." We must acknowledge our mistakes (the "problem"); be transparent about how we're addressing the mistakes and encourage dialogue or feedback from the community (the "action"); and outline specific actions we're taking to become a more anti-racist institution (the "action").

**Communications Goals**

- Ensure we're communicating "problem–process–action" with our messages
- Create and increase awareness of **ARC** and **DEI** work among our campus community and external stakeholders
- Foster a sense of movement toward anti-racism

**What Does the Audience Need to Know?**

- Our vision—what does being an anti-racist institution mean?
- Our commitments and movement toward ARC Action Items—what we are working toward and how it is going?
- What three critical messages do we want all people to know about ARC?
  - ARC and its subcommittees—including faculty, staff, and student members—were formed to promote DEI and anti-racist work throughout all areas of SAIC.
  - They have spent 2020–21 evaluating existing ideas for diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racist action items (including those suggested by the Black Futures collective, Black Student Union, and SAIC solidarity petitions) and making recommendations for short- and long-term action items.
  - ARC will work closely with administrators, shared governance bodies (such as the faculty senate), and student government to dedicate funding and resources to recommendations, bringing meaningful improvement to SAIC.
- What resources are available and how can we access them?

**Message Goals and Tone**

- Acknowledge missteps that have happened and when they happen
- Offer opportunities for community members to be heard
- Communicate measurable goals and processes of ARC initiatives; share regular updates
- Tone should be straightforward with accessible language and concise messaging

**Measurement**

- Participation: website visits to ARC/DEI pages, event attendance, etc.

**Tactics**

- Determine communications cadence
- Draft key messages that can be incorporated into DEI and ARC messages
- Create branding/tagging so anti-racism work can be visually distinguished
- Update intranet and saic.edu
- Identify opportunities to promote an anti-racist culture (e.g., orientation or training opportunities, etc.)

**NEXT STEPS:** The preceding communications plan has been adopted and will continue to inform campus outreach.

**Outline process to revisit School values and mission in academic year 2021–22.**

Parallel to the work of the Anti-Racism Committee and its subcommittees throughout the School, ARC Co-Chairs Delinda Collier and Jefferson Pinder and President Elissa Tenny have been engaging the board of governors with focused conversations about the School’s diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism goals. Through their work, it is clear to Delinda, Jefferson, and Elissa that there is a pervasive commitment at all levels of the institution to DEI and anti-racism. This conviction needs to be better reflected in our values and mission. This semester, they will develop a procedure for a diverse committee, including students, faculty, and staff, to lead a reconsideration, editing, and expansion of the School’s core values (established in 2009–10) and mission (last updated in 2004) next academic year. This reconsideration of values will reflect emerging ARC recommendations and complement long-term planning efforts. Delinda, Jefferson, and Elissa seek ARC’s endorsement of their plan, and they can update the committee at their April and May meetings.

**NEXT STEPS:** ARC co-chairs and the president will continue to outline a procedure for reconsidering the School’s values and mission and vet that plan with ARC, shared governance, and administrative bodies.

**Finalize plans for a space dedicated to students who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color by inviting more students to join our planning discussion.**

Having been charged with considering a space for students who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color, subcommittee members working on this proposal are in agreement that a space that students can use—as a place to meet, a place of refuge, and a place for creating—was a good idea worth pursuing. We had several questions, however, that needed further elaboration before answering. Among these questions were what to name the space; how to manage the facility equitably among several distinct, yet overlapping, student groups; and how to devise programming that could be scaled from a digital space, while the pandemic limits in-person interactions, to a physical space.

To bring resolution to these ongoing considerations, we propose adding additional students, including leaders of affinity groups, to lead decision-making on these remaining details, potentially convening among themselves (i.e., without non-student members) as part of envisioning space needs. Students would be paid for their work on this group. As part of our further deliberation and planning, we’d also reach out to recent alums, key faculty, and colleagues in Computer Resources and Information Technologies (CRIT), Institutional Resources and Facilities Management (IRFM), and Student Affairs to help inform our final recommendation.

**NEXT STEPS:** The Climate and Accountability Subcommittee will continue to pursue a dedicated space plan by engaging a student focus group and working with IRFM staff to identify a physical location on campus.

## LEARN

These action items will help us learn to practice anti-racism in the curriculum and support our own continual learning and unlearning throughout the School.

### **Adopt a diversity course requirement, broadly defined, as an anti-racist practice and to promote diverse curriculum and faculty hiring.**

ARC supports the proposal suggested by two subcommittees to adopt a diversity course requirement; moreover, they suggest this requirement should be broadly defined. A wide understanding of this requirement would draw on a large spectrum of faculty talent (which may include diverse, if not always anti-racist, expertise), represent many kinds of diversity (race, nationality, ability, sexuality, sexual identity, or other aspects of intersectionality) as well as intersectionality, and be fulfilled by many kinds of curricular experiences (like the off-campus requirement, which can be fulfilled by studio and academic courses, study trips, and internships). Even though not all courses will be anti-racist in content, a diverse course requirement is anti-racist in practice and will promote the creation of diverse curriculum and faculty hiring.

**NEXT STEPS:** The Faculty Senate’s Curriculum Committee will be asked to further develop and identify curricular vehicles and scope of diverse content, and advance it via regular curricular approval process, including senate, the dean’s office, and academic steering.

### **Pilot training for department heads and hiring managers with a facilitator this spring.**

Many ARC subcommittees have discussed training during their deliberations, noting that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be most effective for all constituencies. To help focus the ongoing training discussion, Jefferson Pinder, director of diversity, equity, and inclusion for academic affairs, and faculty member Sampada Aranke, a member of ARC, have identified a diversity trainer with experience at Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD) schools that they propose to bring in for a session with academic and administrative department heads and hiring managers—faculty and staff who have significant management responsibility. This experience could help inform further recommendations related to trainings.

**NEXT STEPS:** Funding has been earmarked so that the director of diversity, equity, and inclusion for academic affairs can organize this pilot training.

### **Provide venues and opportunities for the transparent flow of information to encourage community-wide conversation around what it means to be a global, anti-racist community and for the open exchange of ideas, work, and the yet-to-be-imagined.**

Central to anti-racism work is a commitment to empower those most subject to institutional structures to take a leading role in defining and determining how an institution’s participants understand its mission and values and articulate the ways it seeks to embody those values. We propose the following as initial ways of building a framework, both online and in person, for students, staff, and faculty to generate and exchange information and discourse and build cohesion, awareness, and trust throughout the community:

Online forum for intra-School communication: Create a centralized, open online forum where those who study, teach, work, and create at SAIC can pose questions, share new ideas and work, participate in online debates, and discuss areas of concern in a “public square”-style forum. This would be a dynamic place of exchange for individuals,

student leadership (e.g., student groups, student government), shared governance (e.g., faculty senate), and administration to share news and updates, exchange ideas, and build knowledge. This project originated, and is in development, within the climate committee of the faculty senate, so efforts should be coordinated. Still in development, it is yet to be determined what the technological platform will be (e.g., Canvas, website); how to accommodate intra-constituent (peer-to-peer) and inter-constituent exchange; how to allow for anonymity, when desired, yet minimize potential for harassment; or what other models exist that this space could be patterned on. This space would be further developed this academic year, with a proposed launch in fall 2021.

Campus-Wide Theme: Identify a campus-wide theme that could be investigated, in and out of the classroom and studio, for a semester or academic year. The School-wide focus is intended to repair communal ties where they feel broken and foster a sense of belonging; therefore, themes should be generated widely. Specifically, this theme would be determined through input by the students and faculty at large via a process led by representatives from student government, graduate student senate, faculty senate, and the ARC Curriculum Subcommittee. This group would also help this theme be further explored campus-wide by encouraging faculty to utilize the theme in their courses, sponsoring student affinity group-led programs and events, selecting a campus read (similar to a proposal from the ARC Curriculum Subcommittee), generating discussion on the online forum, as well as other avenues they may identify. This theme would be further developed this academic year, with a proposed launch in fall 2021.

Student Town Hall: Host a student-centric town hall, to occur each semester and which other constituents could attend, to share the work of ARC and make room for students to voice opinions to, and ask questions of, those working on ARC and administrators.

All Faculty and Staff Meeting Updates: Dedicate time at every All Faculty and Staff Meeting for clear updates and to answer questions on the work of ARC. Presentations should continue to be organized by ARC co-chairs and may include presentations from other members of ARC and its subcommittees.

Begin with Acknowledgment: The communications subcommittee proposes to discuss and recommend ways that we—both as an institution and as the individuals who make up that institution—can acknowledge the racist history that we have inherited, are a part of, and continue to participate in.

Develop a Collaborative Historical Project Acknowledging the Racist History Specific to SAIC: Task the ARC Curriculum Subcommittee with a course that would research the institutional history of SAIC with an eye towards an anti-racist analysis, and create a living document to be written, designed, and produced by students and faculty in conversation with ARC, finding its home in departments such as Writing; Architecture, Interior Architecture, and Designed Objects; Contemporary Practices; Film, Video, New Media, and Animation; and New Arts Journalism.

**NEXT STEPS:** The initiatives of this action item will be pursued via the following avenues: an online forum, already in development via the senate's climate committee and CRIT, will continue to be explored there; ARC's curriculum subcommittee will be asked to help coordinate campus theme efforts with other constituency representatives; ARC co-chairs and communications subcommittee members will meet with student government to discuss a town hall event; ARC co-chairs and members will continue to present at All Faculty and Staff Meetings as well as host their own series of all-School meetings; the communication plan's "problem-process-action" rubric contains a strategy for acknowledgement; and proposed institutional history class is endorsed by ARC, but needs faculty member(s) and department to further develop the idea, who suggest using the Diversity Infusion Grants (DIG) to encourage faculty engagement with this idea.

**Prioritize anti-racist pedagogy support originally planned for the Teaching and Learning Center.**

Anti-racist pedagogy is important regardless of course content, and faculty need support in these endeavors. The Curriculum Subcommittee suggests identifying elements of the Teaching and Learning Center that can be cultivated now, such as anti-racist pedagogy workshops.

**NEXT STEPS:** Anti-racist pedagogical support and training is already underway under the auspices of the diversity, equity, and inclusion for academic affairs staff. In lieu of a center, the chair of faculty will continue to guide faculty development opportunities and is encouraged to coordinate efforts with DEI for academic affairs.

### **Adopt the practice of an annual School-wide common text, beginning with *Caste* for the 2021–22 academic year.**

ARC endorses adopting the text *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson (specifically the first 150 pages) for the 2021–22 academic year. This text is already under consideration for use among first-year seminar and Contemporary Practices courses. For future years, a strategy that incorporates faculty, staff, and student input should be utilized.

**NEXT STEPS:** Research is being conducted to determine budget needs and timeline so that text can be used in the 2021–22 academic year and sustainably repeated in future years.

### **Design a degree program housed at Homan Square.**

We propose to continue to develop a proposal to establish a program (such as a Master of Arts degree program in Community Engagement or a related contemporary degree) in connection with the Homan Square campus. This degree program will be collaboratively designed by neighborhood members and the SAIC community in order to consciously build a degree that addresses the cost of education, through its structure and duration, and extends the deep knowledge of those teaching and working in multiple areas of community engagement at SAIC. This degree would not be possible without the ongoing collaboration of our North Lawndale partners. In devising this degree as part of an anti-racist agenda, we must be prepared to collaborate with the North Lawndale neighborhood to radically reshape our overall institution at each infrastructural and individual level. The degree will continue the symbiotic relationship that we have formed with our collaborators in North Lawndale.

Partners must benefit from SAIC bringing this degree into the community. These benefits could include:

- Scholarship seats in the degree including nondiscriminatory methods for designating a percentage of Black, Indigenous, and people of color seats reflective of Chicago’s West Side neighborhood demographics;
- Teaching and staff positions for partners;
- Internship sites for students;
- Profiling our partners’ efforts locally, nationally, and globally; and
- Sustained partnerships with other academic institutions and new partnerships (i.e., University of Chicago’s Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture).

The above-mentioned benefits to our North Lawndale partners will serve as a case model for the overall restructuring of SAIC to prepare the institution for a changing landscape for higher education. We have the opportunity to build a degree that addresses the cost of higher education, thoughtful of the time to matriculation and indebtedness that graduates face, all while being a contributing member to the overall financial health of SAIC.

This program will be a hybrid of low residency and intensive residency. The first year will start in the summer preceding the start of the academic year. This beginning class will be held online and ask the students to identify the

communities they work in and develop a common language before the start of school. The fall semester will consist of 12 credits, and classes will be held partially on the downtown SAIC campus. This will be followed by a winter interim study trip to community-based projects throughout the US. The spring semester will be a nine-credit curriculum centered in North Lawndale. The summer semester will either be internships in North Lawndale, or students will return to their home community where they will intern with local arts programming. The final fall semester will be the thesis semester, and the work will be completed with an SAIC faculty online. This degree tries to bookend the students' experience in their home community so that both the community and the student benefit.

**NEXT STEPS:** The in-development program should continue to be evaluated in line with regular shared governance processes for curricular development and long-range planning.

### **Subscribe to Art World Learning, a financial health and online education platform, focused on business and financial health for artists, designers, and cultural producers.**

Students from BLK@SAIC asked the Career and Professional Experience (CAPX) office to help with their transition to life after college, specifically to support their financial wellness. Financial security is important to the current generation of traditional-aged students. Their concern has been exacerbated by the pandemic and current economy. The students' request aligns with the CAPX mission to "build sustainable creative lives," and one of the CAPX focus areas for the year: financial security.

To meet BLK@SAIC students' request, CAPX is developing programming on the topic of financial wellness and inviting Black, Indigenous, and people of color speakers to present. This recommendation also suggests subscribing to a new platform, Art World Learning. The platform includes financial wellness courses specifically for art students and alums. The request for education surrounding financial wellness began last June. Jefferson Pinder surveyed undergraduate and graduate students to find the type of support they needed resulting in CAPX programming on healthcare and taxes. CAPX continues this type of "practical programming" and will host programs on grant writing, financial advising, and freelancing this spring. Art World Learning would take this type of programming to the next level with pre-recorded courses on topics that will support our students' and alums' financial security.

**NEXT STEPS:** Advance proposal to undergraduate division for piloting, likely in a spine course, and evaluate regular use in curriculum.

## SUPPORT

These action items are focused on how we care for one another, expanding our capacity for inclusivity when people join the School community and throughout their tenure at SAIC:

### **Establish mutually beneficial partnerships with Native American and Indigenous people in recognition of SAIC presence on unceded land through meaningful land acknowledgement, commitment of resources, scholarship, and increased community representation.**

A Land Acknowledgement is a variety of texts, a process of study, and a network of actions that address Indigenous dispossession and genocide. It becomes reductive and hollow if not backed up by other ongoing protocols and behaviors. A Land Acknowledgement is not a static text and needs to be addressed as a contextual event, so that different protocols are enacted in different presentations. To build a Land Acknowledgement means building relationships with local Indigenous communities and honoring those who inhabited the land in the past. Acknowledging being on other people's land not only means acknowledging them, but also the institution's complicity in benefiting from their dispossession.

#### THREE-YEAR PLAN

##### Year 1:

- 1) Land acknowledgement
  - a) Commit to ongoing recognition, education, reflection, and action about Native and Indigenous land and communities
  - b) Designate a committee to reach out to the Native American Student Association (NASA) and others in order to re-engage in dialogue promoting awareness of Native and Indigenous peoples' past, present, and ongoing, and their relationship to the land
  - c) Recognize the mishandling and harm caused during the building name change conversation
  - d) Develop a written set of texts for different contexts including orientations, public-facing programs, syllabi, and student and faculty handbooks and commit to an annual re-examination of these acknowledgements as scholarship and ideas change
- 2) Scholarship
  - a) Conduct meaningful assessment of budget and personnel resources allocated to supporting Native and Indigenous study
  - b) Inventory of representation of Native and Indigenous study in course content, description, and curriculum in each department
- 3) Representation
  - a) Conduct assessment of faculty and staff personnel representation

##### Year 2:

- 1) Land acknowledgement
  - a) Develop ongoing non-performative strategies for acknowledging settler colonial presence on Native land
  - b) Leverage support from Native communities and NASA to rename the 280 Building
- 2) Scholarship

- a) Identify areas for rebudgeting to better allocate resources for Native and Indigenous study and scholarships for Indigenous students
- b) Conduct research on the naming of scholarships for Indigenous students

### 3) Representation

- a) Commit to annual assessment of faculty and staff personnel representation
- b) Commit to hiring and increasing Native and Indigenous faculty and staff

### Year 3:

#### 1) Land acknowledgement

- a) Re-engage in conversation surrounding the 280 Building and opportunities for the name

#### 2) Scholarship

- a) Implement scholarships and mentorship opportunities for Native and Indigenous students
- b) Commission expert consultations (i.e., artist exchange/residency/scholar)

#### 3) Commit Resources

- a) Allocate funds to establish an artist exchange program, artist in residency program, or visiting scholar program
- b) Allocate funds to develop and maintain the above proposals

#### 4) Representation

- a) Identify parameters and guidelines for hiring Native and Indigenous faculty and staff
- b) Commit to Native and Indigenous representation in governing bodies

### Land Acknowledgement Used in Contemporary Practices:

We acknowledge that the School of the Art Institute of Chicago is on the traditional homelands of the Council of the Three Fires: The Odawa, Ojibwe and Bodéwadmikiwen (Potawatomi) Nations; as well as other tribes such as the Miami, Ho-Chunk, Sauk and Meskwaki (Fox); the Kiikaapoi (Kickapoo), Peoria, and the Očeti Šakówiŋ (Sioux) Nations. We are grateful for the Indigenous stewardship of this region which we now call home, and we pay our respects to the elders, ancestors, and future ancestors by honoring their guidance. Chicago is also home to one of the largest urban Indigenous communities in the United States, and this land remains an important place for Indigenous peoples. It is our responsibility to acknowledge this historical context and build reciprocal relationships with the tribal nations on whose land we are situated. This land acknowledgement is merely one part of that important ongoing work.

**NEXT STEPS:** In endorsing this long-term process, President Tenny acknowledges mishandling and regrets harm caused when announcing an approach to naming facilities prior to engaging directly with the Native American Student Association's proposal regarding the 280 Building. This important, multi-year plan laid out by members of the Communications Subcommittee will ideally become a new avenue to heal the current impasse and help the School reach a multi-faceted approach to partnerships with Native American and Indigenous people, practices, and scholarship, as they exist both inside and outside the institution. Those ARC members working on this proposal and DEI staff will be asked to help designate the committee for further work, as outlined in Year 1, 1.b.

**Expand potential for diverse hiring among prospective part-time faculty by implementing new part-time faculty recruitment strategies, processes, and support School-wide.**

The current part-time faculty hiring process is siloed among individual departments at the School, and it is difficult to conduct outreach to a broad and diverse candidate pool without a strategic recruitment and search process. In addition, relationship building with potential/future candidates who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color is essential in cultivating diverse candidate pools for part-time teaching opportunities.

A significant challenge is that department chairs are often under pressure to hire a lecturer very quickly due to myriad constraints (such as abrupt departures of current faculty for courses on the schedule with students enrolled). Therefore, we propose a number of new strategies, processes, and supports to help diversify the pool of prospective part-time faculty.

Our hope is that these processes will help to release some of that pressure, allow more time and guidance in hiring decisions so as to avoid implicit bias/affinity bias, and ultimately result in the hiring of more part-time faculty who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color.

Elements of the plan developed in the fall 2020 semester, which we propose to workshop further, finalize, and implement in the spring 2021 semester and beyond, include:

- Determine departmental “clusters” (e.g., Sculpture/Ceramics/Fiber and Material Studies, Art and Technology Studies/Sound/Film, Video, New Media, and Animation, Liberal Arts/Art History, Theory and Criticism/Visual and Critical Studies) and designate a faculty member (full-time or part-time) to serve as a “diversity coordinator” (or other title) for each cluster who would develop relationships with or pipelines for potential external lecturer/adjunct candidates who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color. These candidates would be invited to apply via the open call. Faculty would be compensated and/or, if full-time, this role would count as full service.
- The “diversity coordinators” (or other title) would also cultivate relationships internally with current part-time faculty across departments in order to share expertise with department chairs for potential teaching opportunities in other departments.
- Expand the open call for part-time teaching opportunities (using the language developed by the other subcommittee, adding the Diversity Statement requirement) and intake candidate applications via slideroom.com so that department chairs can easily access all materials with their Slideroom login, which they use to access/review full-time faculty applications.
- Strategically advertise the open call during the summer and winter. Advertising would give us the opportunity to showcase anti-racist recruitment efforts through the language in the search ad.
- Request that department chairs/hiring committees hire from the pool of candidates who have submitted applications via the open call.

Build upon the “Best Practices” guidance with content specifically for hiring part-time faculty (which would be much less time/resource intensive than a full-time faculty search). This would include, for example, guidance for the review/assessment of candidates, an interview process, sample interview questions, the number of people on a hiring committee, etc. This more formalized process will ensure that all candidates are being assessed based on their credentials and application submissions and will help avoid implicit bias in hiring decisions.

**NEXT STEPS:** When ready, members of this subcommittee will advance their proposal to the dean’s office and part-time concerns committee for further development and adoption.

**The Tuition, Equity, and Finance Subcommittee proposed to continue investigating several elements of graduate admissions, specifically:**

- **Consider changes to the appeals process for graduate admissions, specifically:**
  - **Increase the number of Incentive Scholarships assigned by departments**
  - **Consider alternative methods for triggering appeals (e.g., automatic appeal for all non-depositing ranked applicants after a set interval)**
- The requirement that students call Student Financial Services (SFS) to request additional money (to trigger appeal) leads to a less-diverse pool of students eligible for appeals funding.
- The majority of Incentive Scholarships are currently assigned by Admissions on a rolling basis without consultation with departments or graduate coordinators (136 in 2020 vs. 72 assigned by department at the time of acceptance).
- **Consider changes to Incentive Scholarships for graduate admissions, specifically:**
  - **Consider rebranding/renaming it as a scholarship for “up to 48 percent of tuition pending assessment of financial need” (e.g., Governor’s Scholarship)**
  - **Instruct departments not to segregate their scholarship candidates by citizenship and to assign Incentive Scholarships to applicants ranked higher than those assigned the Dean’s Scholarship**
- The incentive scholarship is described as a 20 percent scholarship (whereas the Dean’s Scholarship is described as a 35 percent scholarship), though it offers a higher net tuition reduction for most domestic students (48 percent).
- Almost universally assigned to applicants ranked lower than Dean’s Scholarship recipients
- Commonly reserved for international students
- **Perform more detailed analytics on the graduate admissions Dean's Scholarship and consider restructuring how it is assigned.**
  - The Dean’s Scholarship does not result in any tuition reduction for students exhibiting financial need.
  - It reduces tuition only for students with less financial need (high expected family contribution), which is likely to decrease diversity of the student body.
  - The scholarship may reduce total financial support for recipients due to unconscious bias in the appeals phase. (Students awarded Dean’s Scholarships are less likely to be awarded supplemental scholarships in the 2016–20 data, and lower-ranked students routinely receive more net funding than Dean’s Scholarship recipients after appeals.)

**NEXT STEPS:** The Tuition, Equity, and Finance Subcommittee will continue to work on these proposals, review undergraduate admissions, and make more specific recommendations to ARC.

### **Hire an ombudsperson to support the establishment of the ombudsperson office.**

Establish the role of ombudsperson at SAIC, who will:

- Restoratively mediate conflict between staff and students, faculty and staff, staff and supervisor, faculty and faculty, students and students, staff and staff
- Teach restorative mediation strategies to campus community
- Develop and create resources for conflict mediation for widespread sharing and implementation in campus offices, dialogue, and culture

Considerations:

- Staffing/management and program structure
- Confidentiality vs. privacy
- Positionality and communication with existing structures (i.e., Human Resources, Student Affairs, Title IX)

#### Areas of Expertise/Competency:

- Restorative justice mediation
- Race, gender identity/expression, and sexual orientation
- Accessibility/accommodations
- Social/emotional disorders
- Support around accommodation grievances
- Title IX process
- Be certified through the International Office of Ombuds in order to be considered a confidential advisor.

#### Vital Principles of Ombuds Office:

- Independent
  - Ombuds report to the highest possible level of the organization and operate independently of ordinary line and staff structures. The ombuds reporting relationship is solely for supervision and is for administrative and budgetary purposes only.
- Confidential
  - Ombuds maintain the privacy of the identity of visitors to the office as well as the content of their conversations. With a visitor's permission, the Ombuds office may contact individuals within the institution whose help is necessary to resolve a problem. Ombuds office staff do not testify in formal proceedings.
- Neutral or Impartial
  - Ombuds have no personal interest or stake in and incur no personal gain or loss from the outcome of any disputes. Ombuds avoid situations that may cause or result in conflicts of interest. Ombuds attempt to promote fair processes but do not advocate for individuals on the basis of affiliation or constituency status.
- Informal
  - All members of the college/university community have a right to consult voluntarily with the Ombuds office. The office has no authority to make decisions on behalf of the institution and maintains no official college/university records.

NEXT STEPS: Human Resources will work with Academic Affairs, ARC, and other stakeholders to work toward a job description and other search needs in anticipation of a search in fiscal year 2022, with the successful candidate to begin early in fiscal year 2023 (around fall 2022).

### **Create a graduate student position within Multicultural Affairs to work with affinity (identity-based) student groups and to provide specific support to our groups for students who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color.**

SAIC currently has seen a 50 percent expansion in the number of student-run affinity (identity-based) groups, from nine groups in 2014 to 14 in 2020. Four of these groups focus specifically on students who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color: BLK@SAIC, LATINXS UNIDXS, National Organization of Minority Architecture Students (NOMAS), and Native American Student Association (NASA). A number of studies have identified the benefits students who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color, specifically Black students, receive from engaging in identity-based student

organizations and other co-curricular activities (Flowers, 2004; Baker, 2008; Turrentine, Esposito, Young, and Ostroth, 2012; Kodama and Laylo, 2017).

A number of colleges and universities, such as Columbia University and New York University, focus the advising and support of identity-based student groups within multicultural affairs to provide more targeted and inclusive support. At SAIC, Multicultural Affairs currently employs one full-time director and a number of undergraduate student employees. With the expansion in the number of affinity student groups, along with the additional responsibilities with the Anti-Racism Committee, the director does not have the bandwidth to engage fully with every affinity group. The affinity group graduate advisor will work with the affinity student groups, focusing specifically on Black, Indigenous, and students of color groups and their faculty/staff advisors to provide the students and their student leaders mentorship, support, advocacy and connections to resources.

**NEXT STEPS:** Funds will be allocated for at least one such student worker position to begin in the 2021–22 academic year. This student employee position—or positions—may have some role in the designated Black, Indigenous, and people of color space, as appropriate, in support of student affinity groups.

### **The Tuition, Equity, and Finance Subcommittee proposed a couple of recommendations that relate to the First-Generation Fellows program, specifically:**

- **Expand the First-Generation Fellows program to more than 30 students and create a four-year experience**

In the fall of 2019, SAIC implemented the First-Generation Fellows program (Fellows), a holistic program for incoming low-income, first-generation, first-year students. The Fellows program provides each student guaranteed on-campus student employment, a peer and faculty mentor, programming throughout the year to help students engage with resources on campus, and a scholarship to entice participation in the program.

In the fall of 2019, the program included 30 students, and the fellows represented a more significant number of students who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color as compared to the overall incoming class. Sixty-three percent of the fellows identified as Black, Indigenous, and people of color, with 17 percent identifying as Black and 33 percent identifying as Latinx. The fall to spring retention of our first cohort of the First-Gen Fellows was 97 percent, compared to 88 percent for first-gen students who declined to participate in the program and 93 percent for all students (excluding fellows). Expansion of the program to include more fellows participating and programming to extend four years will likely have a significant impact on students' retention and graduation rates of our first-gen students and, because of the larger number of Fellows who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color, on our Black, Indigenous, and people of color students overall.

Student evaluations of the program indicated success; with 86 percent of participants saying that participation in the Fellows program contributed to their sense of belonging at SAIC; 96 percent indicating that their mentor was helpful in connecting them to resources; and 81 percent indicating that the programming, designed to introduce resources and support on campus, made them more likely to reach out for help if they need it. Qualitatively, students noted the program helped them get to know SAIC's resources: "I would not know half the things I do about SAIC without the Fellows. I learned a lot from my supervisor, from my conversations with [my peer and faculty mentor], and from our workshops about what resources I have access to, which offices do what, what events to go to." Another student talked about how difficult it is to be a first-gen student: "Being a first-gen student is scary, especially coming from across the

country ... It's been super relieving to have this community and makes me feel like I'm on the same level as my peers who may have more resources through their home.”

We are currently working with the Office of Advancement to pursue additional funding sources. Expansion of the program would include:

- Continued engagement (at least through year two) with the faculty mentor
  - Ongoing engagement with CAPX and Alumni Affairs to assist with career preparation, engagement, and success. This includes providing funded internship experiences for interested fellows.
  - Programming for four years to be themed along with the Spine
  - Scholarship available for years three and four (currently only available for year two)
- **Develop an internship stipend fund for an expanded First-Generation Fellows program.**

According to Christine Albright’s article for the National Career Development Association (NCDA), first-generation students often lack the social network that other students with at least one parent with a four-year degree have. Those students lack the connections to internships and other co-curricular experiences that lead to career success after graduation. The SAIC first-gen program provides on-campus work experiences and mentorship in their first year. In order for first-gen students to be prepared and have access to jobs after graduation, they will need to gain internship experience.

**NEXT STEPS:** These proposals align with institutional fundraising priorities targeting first-generation students and paid internships and will be used to augment those development efforts.

### **Implement a faculty mentoring component to the Walter and Shirley Massey Scholars experience, who will serve as both their academic advisor and faculty mentor.**

The First-Generation Fellows program, implemented in 2019, has proven faculty and peer mentorship works to support student success and retention at SAIC. The fall to spring retention of our first cohort of fellows was 97 percent compared to only 88 percent of first-gen students who declined to participate in the program. Fellows in the program highlighted the importance of the peer and faculty mentor positions. One fellow wrote of their faculty mentor: “My mentor did a great job helping me alter my class schedule to ensure I was on a path to learn as much as possible about the career I want to go into.”

SAIC awards the Walter and Shirley Massey Scholarship, a full-tuition scholarship, to five Chicago-area students each year. This scholarship is essential in supporting the most talented students coming from the most financial need to be able to enroll in and graduate from the School. We currently have 23 Massey Scholars registered for the spring 2021 semester; 83 percent identify as Black, Indigenous, and people of color and 65 percent as Black or Latinx. The Massey Faculty Mentor/Advisor position will provide both academic advising and faculty mentoring to the 20+ Massey Scholars for their entire time at SAIC. The mentor will provide personal, academic, and career support to the Massey Scholars and will connect them to existing resources throughout campus.

**NEXT STEPS:** This proposal aligns with institutional fundraising priorities targeting the Walter and Shirley Massey Chicago Scholarship Fund and will be used to augment those development efforts.

*UPDATED, March 25, 2021: This document was updated to correct typographical errors. Additionally, the communication plans framework, introduced on page 4, has been updated to from “problem–process–solution” to “problem–process–action” in response to feedback received during the March 23 all-school meeting that suggested “solution” undercut ongoing commitment to DEI/anti-racism work.*