

Progress Report on Racial Equity and Justice

Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, Johns Hopkins University

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After the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent demonstrations in June 2020, 48 undergraduate students from the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering (ChemBE) sent faculty an email asking for five broad actions to improve inclusion and equity for Black members of our community, including reporting progress and engaging our community in discussions of anti-racism. Also in June 2020, the ChemBE Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) drafted a [statement in support of Black Lives Matter](#) that included a list of 13 suggested actions to more fully realize a diverse and inclusive community. Since that time, CDI and faculty and leadership have begun work to address these important issues.

This Progress Report shares briefly shares our journey toward racial justice by detailing our priorities and the steps we have taken over the past year.

Following the actions recommended by the CDI, this progress report covers issues ranging from inclusivity in decision-making and recruiting to community outreach, anti-racism training, accountability for our diversity action plan, and cultivation of an inclusive environment that nurtures well-being for all. In **Table 1**, we list multiple items within each category that directly correspond to actions recommended by the CDI's BLM statement. We have summarized the status of each goal in the department, and we have identified the responsible party for leading each goal. Our objectives with this report are two-fold: to provide accountability for our antiracism work and to invite the full community to join us in our efforts. **Table 2** contains items from the CDI BLM statement that are outside of the direct control of the ChemBE department.

This report has been developed over the course of the past academic year. The CDI originally promised a "scorecard" to track our efforts in racial equity and justice, and they drafted it in September. We realized this important work required broader discussion among the faculty and staff, so CDI solicited input. The faculty discussed CDI's scorecard in multiple modalities over the course of the whole academic year. Drafts were circulated by email starting in October. The list was discussed at faculty meetings in October, February, and April, with the CDI joining the faculty's February meeting to invite questions and concerns. Each time, feedback from faculty was incorporated in the list, including line-by-line feedback requested after the April meeting. All of this socialization was done with guidance by Amy Murphy from JHU's Talent Management and Organizational Development group, who is helping us work more collaboratively as a department.

The CDI also shared the draft with ChemBE staff. Kourtney Roussey spearheaded staff engagement by sharing the list at a staff meeting and collecting feedback to incorporate. We received feedback from WSE's Marketing and Communications (MarCom) group on the original draft in October. On several occasions, Jeff Gray and Paulette Clancy shared the draft with several people in the dean's office including Darlene Saporu, the assistant dean for diversity and

inclusion. CDI incorporated the dean's office and MarCom feedback. In May, we realized that the department should take ownership of this list and develop it fully into a "Progress Report." Paulette Clancy, Sakul Ratanalert, Kourtney Roussey, and Jeffrey Gray met to discuss each item line-by-line with all the feedback from all parties to provide the final status summaries and assign responsible parties.

While we have made several positive steps this past year, achieving our goals will require more time, sustained efforts, continued awareness, and a focus on improving outcomes. Our work to nurture an inclusive and equitable culture must continue over the coming years. It will necessarily address intersectionality of identities, impacting marginalized groups such as women; Asians, Asian-Americans, and Pacific Islanders; people with LGBTQ+ identities; and people with disabilities. However, we will maintain our focus on race and the unique challenges around racism in our country and in Baltimore. In the next year, we will use this report as a basis to develop an updated Diversity Action Plan for the Department.

We welcome community feedback on this Progress Report and on our antiracism work broadly. We invite any interested students, staff, postdocs, faculty, and alumni to join us in this important work by becoming part of the CDI or other ChemBE committees engaging these issues. Please reach out anytime to Paulette Clancy, department head (pclancy3@jhu.edu), or Jeffrey Gray, the departmental diversity champion (jgray@jhu.edu). People are also invited to drop into the open discussion hours that CDI holds during the school year (typically posted on the ChemBE website's [CDI page](#)). Darlene Saporu, the WSE assistant dean for diversity and inclusion, also can relay concerns to the department anonymously.

There are many people that contributed to this report. We thank the members of the ChemBE Committee on Diversity and Inclusion for their work to create and develop the early versions of this report as a "scorecard" or "checklist," and for iterating drafts with faculty and staff. Darlene Saporu helped write portions of this report and provided critical feedback. Lisa Ercolano and Mary Kay LeMay were crucial in crafting our communications.



Table 1: Checklist of action items in racial equity and justice.

Category	Goal & comments	Status	Responsible party
Accountability	Create a checklist.	Complete	CDI drafts and delivers to Head (Paulette Clancy) and Diversity Champion (DC, Jeff Gray)
	Renew our departmental diversity action plan (DAP) to include immediate and 5-year goals with an accountability structure.	The departmental diversity champion(s) will draft this plan with input from the CDI and department head and Darlene. By the end of September, a draft will circulate to the faculty and other parties with the goal of finalizing a plan by the end of the fall semester.	DC with Head. Input from CDI. Reviewed by assistant dean of diversity and inclusion (ADDI, Darlene Saporu), then reviewed by Faculty and Dean of WSE (Ed Schlesinger).
Inclusivity in decisions	Include Black people and people of color in all conversations and decisions regarding any relevant initiatives.	A person of color was included on the faculty search committee this year. POC were also represented on CDI and GSLC.	Head and each leader in various roles
	Add Black and Indigenous (BIPOC) and non-Black people of color (NBPOC) to our departmental advisory council.	Department has recruited two Black alumni and two additional women who joined the Council in May 2021. Additional outreach and recruiting is in progress.	Head and WSE
	Grow diversity of CDI by including more undergraduate, graduate, staff and faculty	We added several undergraduates, staff members, and a postdoctoral scholar to the CDI.	CDI and Head
	Annually poll community to identify barriers to diversity and suggestions to improve	Seeking professional support for this task.	ask ADDI

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Department Recruiting	Reaffirm the commitment of the department to, and create urgency around, increased recruitment of underrepresented minority faculty.	Our 2020-2021 faculty search implemented all best-practices for diverse recruiting, including extensive personal networking, use of criteria and bias minimization methods. The finalists included multiple candidates from historically underrepresented groups. Offers have been made including to one person from an underrepresented racial/ethnic group.	Head and the search committee, especially the search chair and the search diversity advocate and the ADDI
	Reaffirm the commitment of the department to, and create urgency around, increased recruitment of underrepresented minority graduate students.	In AY21, the DGA attended Explore Hopkins, a program designed to provide students from underrepresented backgrounds an opportunity to learn more about our doctoral programs. DGA sent ~ 90 emails to students encouraging them to apply to our department for a PhD. In addition, with the support of the Head, the DGA secured scholarships from the Dean's office for top URM PhD applicants. These efforts resulted in a high number of URM applicants accepting our PhD offer. Next year, the DGA will leverage connections JHU has made with HBCU and MSI partner institutions through the \$150M STEM PhD initiative from the Bloomberg Philanthropies.	Director of Graduate Admissions (DGA, Efi Kokkoli) and Director of Masters Admissions (DMA, Chao Wang)
	Reaffirm the commitment of the department to, and create urgency around, increased recruitment of underrepresented minority postdoctoral scholars.	Department will re-energize a postdoctoral advancement committee to considering postdoc-specific career programming.	Head and a postdoc advancement committee. Head to ask for volunteers to be leaders and create a charge letter to specify work to be done.
	Reaffirm the commitment of the department to, and create urgency around, increased recruitment of underrepresented undergraduate students. <i>Note: undergraduate recruitment is handled by the Provost's office. In recent years, the Bloomberg gift has significantly shifted undergraduate demographics.</i>	The enrolled undergraduate population is now 6% Black, 19% Hispanic, 8% Non-Hispanic multiracial, 28% Asian, 25% White, and 13% non-resident alien. Additionally, ChemBE reached gender parity in the undergraduate population this year.	Provost

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Anti-racism training	Schedule anti-racism training for the entire faculty and staff.	ChemBE Department can focus on raising faculty awareness. WSE and Provost's office may offer expert anti-racism workshops soon. Faculty will be encouraged to attend at least one DEI-related event each semester. Starting in AY22, DEI contributions will be included in faculty and staff annual reviews.	Provost, HR, WSE. CDI can offer some programming of their choice.
	Schedule anti-racism training for incoming graduate students during the August ChemBE orientation.	ChemBE will ask the WSE and Provost's office to provide training and resources.	WSE Vice Dean and Assoc Dean of Graduate Education/Affairs (Sri Sarma and Christine Kavanagh)
	Institute mandatory anti-racism and inclusion training for TAs.	ChemBE will ask the WSE and Provost's office to provide training and resources. CDI has provided faculty with sample material to include in course syllabi to promote an inclusive classroom.	WSE Vice Dean and Assoc Dean of Graduate Education/Affairs (Sri Sarma and Christine Kavanagh)
Outreach	Integrate community outreach into our core curriculum.	In coordination with CUE2, ChemBE is re-evaluating the undergraduate curriculum and considering community outreach opportunities, such as lead detection and removal.	Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS, Lilian Lam Josephson). Product design instructors (David Gracias, Marc Donohue).
	Promote outreach and volunteer opportunities to undergraduates and graduate students.	Department will ask AIChE and GSLC to partner with the academic support staff (Brett Weinstein) to help promote opportunities.	GSLC, AIChE, academic support staff (Brett Weinstein). Potential CDI involvement.

Category	Goal & comments	Status	Responsible party
Black Recognition	Increase the representation of BIPOC and NBPOC in the departmental seminar series.	This year, our eight seminar speakers included three women and two people from racial/ethnic groups underrepresented in STEM; the latter both gave named lectures. Faculty have been asked to nominate people from historically underrepresented groups for seminars. For AY22, the CDI nominated candidates to speak on inclusion in STEM.	Seminar Chairs Stavroula Sofou (AY21) and Sangmoo Jeong (AY22)
	Commission research to document our department's history with people of color, including notable firsts, achievements, and ongoing struggles. Share the history publicly.	Prof. Gray is mentoring three rising juniors who drafted a proposal to collect oral histories this summer from notable alums, in partnership with Kim Willis (WSE), Nathan Connolly (History), Alison Seyler (Library) and Bill Leslie (History of Science)	DC and Head
	Create an annual award to publicly recognize a student who contributes to diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, or justice. Consider naming it after the first African American BS graduate from Hopkins: Frederick I. Scott, Jr. '50, a chemical engineer.	We will establish awards for undergraduates, graduate students, and postdocs in AY22.	DC and CDI staff (Kourtney Roussey). Coordinate with WSE and JHU Committee on Naming

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Environment and Wellbeing	Craft an environment with more social awareness, empathy, and emotional intelligence from all members.	This work requires long-term faculty development. Department head to work with Amy Murphy, CDI, and the Diversity Champion to break this down into action items for AY22 and beyond.	Head, DC, Kourtney Roussey to break this up over the coming year.
	Organize a series of discussions on social justice across the community	One professor (Marc Donohue) organized a reading group to discuss <i>How to Be an Anti-Racist</i> (Kendi) in summer. CDI arranged a viewing and discussion of Ana DuVernay's film <i>13th</i> in November, and the AIChE student group partnered with the Office of Life Design to organize two alumni panels on race and gender in the ChE workplace in Spring.	
	Add inclusive artwork in Maryland/Croft Hall. Put up pictures of our diverse community at work in ChemBE research and other activities.	We are seeking JHU ChemBE pioneers through the History Project to showcase in our workspaces, and we will post current pictures of our community in action.	Head and communications staff person (to be hired).
	Emphasize the importance of sensitivity to those who have difficulty working at this time by hosting mentoring and sensitivity training for faculty. This training should especially ask faculty to focus on the wellbeing of their students.	At the graduate program retreat in May, the faculty outlined new checkpoints in our annual review process (details forthcoming).	DGS. Partner with ADGPA and VPGA (Kavanagh, Kass)

Abbreviations used:

ADDI, assistant dean of diversity and inclusion
ADGPA, associate dean for graduate and post-doctoral affairs
AIChE, American Institute of Chemical Engineers (student chapter)
CDI, Committee on Diversity & Inclusion
DC, departmental diversity champion
DGA, director of graduate admissions
DMA, director of masters admissions
GSLC, Graduate Student Liaison Council
HR, Human Resources
VPGA, vice provost for graduate affairs
WSE, Whiting School of Engineering

Table 2: Items from the ChemBE CDI BLM statement that are outside of the direct control of the ChemBE department. These items from the CDI's BLM statement list still affect our ability to attract and retain talent and present an inclusive climate. We reaffirm our commitment to these goals and will continue to work to influence these decisions.

Category	Responsible Unit	Goal & comments
Policing	President	<p>Reject the proposal for a private police force, and end employment of off-duty police officers.</p> <p><i>Last June, the president's office declared a <u>two-year "pause"</u> on the establishment of a police force. The president's office has also created a <u>fund for community-based safety programs</u>. We are encouraged by these moves, and we encourage the president to cancel all plans for an armed police force.</i></p>
Standardized Testing	Provost and Dean	<p>Remove standardized testing requirements, such as the GRE, ACT, and SAT, for application and admission into our academic programs.</p> <p><i>Reporting GRE scores contributes to USNWR rankings, and in past years, the Dean has been reluctant to remove the GRE requirement for WSE departments. He is looking for solutions.</i></p> <p><i>Undergraduate admissions are handled by the Provost's Office.</i></p>