

Strategic Plan for Inclusion, Diversity, Belonging, and Equity

Spring, 2020

NYU Tandon School of Engineering

Inclusion@Tandon Committee

In Fall 2019, Dean Jelena Kovačević convened Inclusion@Tandon, a committee comprised of faculty, administrators, staff, and students, to coordinate existing diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts at the Tandon School and to develop an overall strategic plan to enhance, expand, and support these efforts. The plan is a living document and will be regularly reviewed and revised to reflect input from community stakeholders and to reflect progress in achieving strategic goals outlined below.

The NYU Tandon School of Engineering is committed to supporting and enhancing **inclusion, diversity, belonging, and equity** (IDBE) among students, faculty, and staff, in the service of excellence. This means supporting within our community:

- the creation of environments (learning, social, collegial, professional) in which any individual or group can feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued; involving diverse groups when community norms are being set and ensuring diverse groups are helping set these norms: *inclusion*.
- the range of human differences, including (but not limited to) race and ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, language, national origin, (dis)ability status, religious commitments, age, political views, and learning and cognitive style; a range of perspectives, identities, policies, interests, backgrounds and experiences: *diversity*.
- the creation and maintaining of a cultural, institutional, and social climate based on mutual respect and shared values: *belonging*.
- fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all members of our community; identifying and eliminating barriers to equal participation; understanding the differing talents and strengths of Tandon's diverse stakeholders and providing unique resources for the community to thrive: *equity*.

Diverse, inclusive, and equitable environments are not tangential or incidental to excellence, but rather are *constitutive* of it. Such environments invite and foster a wider range of experience, knowledge, and perspectives, which in turn fosters a more successful, creative, and innovative institution, as well as teams or groups within that institution, an understanding reflected in NYU's University-wide diversity statement:

diversity, equity, and inclusion . . . are . . . not only important to cherish for their own sake, but because they are also vital for advancing knowledge, sparking innovation, and creating sustainable communities. They should be indispensable elements of an NYU education on all of our campuses. A diverse population encounters and appreciates all perspectives of an issue with a wealth of different approaches to confront it. The result is a higher quality of debate, and a more excellent and advanced academic enterprise.

At the NYU Tandon School of Engineering, we see inclusion, diversity, belonging, and equity as organizational and service imperatives, and we are committed to building a School environment that supports a diverse, vibrant, creative community of problem-solvers, innovators, inventors, designers, and artists.

To support, enhance, and extend existing IDBE initiatives at Tandon, we are recommending actions to support four strategic foci:

1. *IDBE Leadership, Training, and Development*
2. *Outreach, Access, Recruitment, and Retention*
3. *Strategic Innovation and Sustainable Growth*
4. *Communication with Stakeholders*

Strategic Focus #1 - IDBE Leadership, Training, and Development

1. Compose and publish School IDBE policy statement, to include

- a. Community standards for speech and behaviors to combat bias
- b. A description of the ongoing education and training programs for all stakeholders to help them understand and uphold these community standards
- c. A clear description of School process for responding to infringements on these community standards
- d. Links to Individual academic department IDBE policy statements

2. Tie IDBE to Training, Performance, and Compensation

- a. Establish and mandate Cultural Competency Training (skills building; personal growth) for students, faculty, and staff
- b. Offer IDBE Orientations for incoming students, faculty and staff
- c. Link IDBE-related activities to performance reviews, merit increase, tenure and promotion process for faculty and staff
- d. Enhance and expand search committee trainings, including those focused on increasing diversity in more senior level positions
- e. Offer training for Tenure and Promotions committees at department and School levels to mitigate implicit bias.
- f. Offer regular IDBE training for MS and PhD admissions committees in all departments
- g. Develop and publish process for a direct and immediate response to student complaints related to violations of our IDBE community standards and develop a comprehensive policy statement for handling these incidents

3. Establish programs and policies supportive of Union staff.

- a. Establish policies to become intentional about growth & development
- b. Add the new shop steward to the I@T Committee Susan Hermon
- c. Establish mentoring, professional pathways and promotional programs

4. Establish Opportunities and Training for URM faculty and staff to take leadership roles at the departmental and School level.

Strategic Focus #2 - Outreach, Access, Recruitment, and Retention

1. Seek Funding for Endowment for the Center for K-12 STEM Education to focus on high level outreach, increased opportunities, and access to Tandon/STEM for URM K-12 students

- a. Increase staffing for STEM high-level and sustained outreach
- b. Expand K-12 Programming
- c. Expand K-12 Educational Resources

2. Commit to recruit, admit, retain, and support more under-represented minority (URM) students [Undergraduate, Masters, Doctoral, and Postdoctoral]

- a. Establish dedicated scholarships and fellowships for URM students
- b. Increase faculty participation in URM graduate student recruitment to include direct recruitment of graduate students from individual departments and faculty members in HBCUs and HIS's and CUNY colleges.
- c. Graduate admissions committees in departments develop holistic admissions rubric (for example, one that does not rely on GRE scores) to ensure a diverse applicant pool
- d. Waive GRE requirement for domestic applicants to graduate programs.
- e. Increase enrollment of domestic graduate students
- f. Offer Tandon undergraduate URM students through the BLMT subcommittee to pay for their GRE exam and a chance to take the GRE at testing site at NYU Tandon
- g. Develop articulation agreements with HBCUs and CUNY's (2-year)
- h. Explore 3-2 and BS/MS Programs with HBCUs and CUNYs
- i. Learn from HBCU's about recruitment and enrollment of students
- j. Expand direct recruiting/information sessions at HBCUs and CUNY's
- k. Increase funding for GEM Fellows, develop GEM database, increase communications to departments about GEM Program
- l. Develop a GEM-like program for Post-Doctorates
- m. Address Climate/Cultural Problems
 - i. Financial incentives for recruiting URM PhD students,
 - ii. Safety net for PhD students with family issues/ maternity leave;
 - iii. Policies protecting students who go on leave or other issues including visa, funding
- n. Apply to become an [NSF REU](#) (Research Experience for Undergraduates) and [NSF RET](#) (Research Experience for Teachers) site.
- o. Create dedicated receptions for URM students with alumni
- p. Establish URM student orientations on how to conference
- q. Identify additional funding for URM student experiences by working with Development
- r. Include [IDBE-related questions](#) for student course evaluation forms: Include IDBE statement in all course syllabi
- s. Review syllabi and curricula to ensure diversity at departmental level
- t. Establish incentives for departments to increase diversity in URM student recruitment (eg, increased fellowship funding)

3. Establish policies and procedures to attract and retain URM faculty

- a. Establish Opportunity Hiring Lines for URM faculty.
- b. Hold a Faculty First Look career-advancement program for URM faculty and postdocs entering the job market.
- c. Revise Faculty Search Guidelines to include:

- i. A diverse search committee within each department
- ii. Metrics to assess diversity of candidate pool
- iii. A departmental hiring rubric for eliminating unconscious bias, programmed into every Interfolio search. (See sample [faculty candidate rubric](#)).
- iv. Maintenance of distribution lists to document where job ads are sent
- v. Asking all faculty in departments conducting searches to do hiring outreach on their mailing lists and social media.
- vi. Review of completed search processes by Department chairs and search committees to ensure departments are hiring from the most diverse applicant pool possible.
- vii. Requiring both teaching and diversity statements in application materials
- d. Develop and use assessment rubrics for Tenure and Promotion committees at department and school levels to mitigate bias.
- e. Establish more diversity among Department Chairs
- f. Avoid low-status committee assignments for URM faculty
- g. Establish incentives for departments to increasing URM faculty

Strategic Focus #3 - Strategic Innovation and Sustainable Growth

1. Create an IDBE Infrastructure:

- a. Appoint an IDBE Associate Dean to coordinate and implement IDBE action items
- b. Create a standing IDBE committee (inclusive of new IDBE Associate Dean, staff, students and faculty) to help coordinate and implement action items
- c. Designate an IDBE coordinator (a faculty member who will receive appropriate released time) in each academic department to coordinate with IDBE associate dean, serve on IDBE standing committee, and support individual departmental IDBE efforts (such as recruiting, admitting, and retaining URM students; recruiting, hiring, and retaining URM faculty)
- d. Appoint School ombudsperson
- e. Obtain and publish additional data on an ongoing basis:
 - i. Conduct pay equity studies for staff and faculty, publish results and actions taken in response.
 - ii. Conduct regular Tandon climate surveys, publish results and actions taken in response
 - iii. Establish regular student listening sessions, publish results and actions taken in response

2. Establish Work Life Balance Policies

- a. Establish policies around family leave, etc. for graduate and undergraduate students and advocate for such policies at the NYU Central level.
- b. Establish funding for faculty and graduate students to take children and child care providers to conferences
- c. Engage with and create programs for families of NYU students, faculty, and staff

3. Allocate resources from the Tandon fundraising campaigns to IDBE

Strategic Focus #4 – Communication with Stakeholders

1. Create an Inclusion@Tandon webpage featured on Tandon's website.

- a. Publish IDBE Plan and regularly update to reflect progress toward meeting of goals
- b. Publish School and departmental IDBE policy statements, including action items and resulting actions, and commitment to long term investment in IDBE training.
- c. Publish Results of IDBE surveys and resultant actions
- d. Publish information about any other IDBE-related initiatives and work, including research and curriculum.
- e. Maintain IDBE resource list and links to IDBE trainings