

October 4, 2022

Dear Scranton Community:

Now that everyone has settled into the academic year, we want to communicate some exciting progress that the university has made to create a more inclusive campus for our students, faculty, and staff. It is with great pride that we welcomed our most diverse class in the history of the University this Fall semester, with our largest percentage of historically underrepresented students.

## **Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month**

The University is actively engaged in the nation's celebration of Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month, with special programs and events scheduled throughout campus. Faculty, staff, and students are all encouraged to attend. For more information, please visit the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion [Events Calendar](#).

## **Academic Programs**

Many academic departments include DEI-related classes, modules and learning programs to their agendas. Some highlights follow. The Education Department offers a series of courses that address work with students with disabilities, English language learners, and people of diverse cultural backgrounds. The STEM and the Education Department are teaming up to support future science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) high school teachers in high-need school districts. Dr. Gerard Dumancas, Associate Professor of Chemistry, received a \$1,158 million National Science Foundation-funded Noyce Scholars grant to assist with this effort.

Neuroscience added a module on Neuroscience of racism/bias in NEUR111 Reading Science Literature, which is a required seminar taken in the spring semester of first year, and added historical data from various neuroscientists into their neuroscience courses. Biology's faculty include course topics such as the genetic control of skin color and the chromosomal bases for gender and gender identity into classes.

Criminal Justice and Sociology offer courses for students to better understand diversity. The *Race and Ethnic Relations* course recently added more online educational resources from underrepresented scholars, including women and people of color, and the intersections between the marginalized social groups. The Department also reviewed its curriculum for its coverage of racial justice issues.

If we did not include your department's work, we strongly encourage you to share your information with us to be added to the next update.

## **Black Studies Concentration**

The Black Studies Concentration is poised to be added to the Fall 2023 catalog. Drs. Melissa Anyiwo, Anthony Betancourt and Nicole Hoskins are in the process of finalizing courses to propose to the curriculum committee.

## **Slattery Center for the Ignatian Humanities**

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**Thrive**

As a result of the commitment to improve the collegiate experiences and outcomes of first-  
led by Shannon Murphy-Fennie, Scranton was selected to join the national 2022-23 First-gen

Several faculty, administrators, staff, and students also presented on various topics including, but not limited to:  
and Response, Building DEI Partnerships for Student Learning Inside and Outside the Classroom, Navigating DEI in the Classroom, Faculty Insights, Race and Ethnicity Awareness Training and Safe Zoon Training.

### **Orientation**

The Cultural Center's staff again facilitated sessions for all incoming students that focused on community, belonging, University expectations, and diversity and inclusion. They educated the students on microaggressions in every Summer Orientation session.

### **ROCK**

The Cultural Centers sponsored the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Royals of Color Kickoff, an early arrival program for new students of color. ROCK provides an opportunity for students to come to campus the Thursday prior to first-year move in to connect with peers, upper-division mentors, and campus and local resources. This provided a foundation to support social network development, community-building, and campus and local-area connections. Twenty new students up from nine last year and eighteen upper-division students participated in the program and built lasting connections over the two-day event.

### **Donning of the Stole Ceremony**

In May, the Multicultural Center sponsored the Donning of the Stole Ceremony that honored the personal and academic achievements of 71 graduates of color as part of Commencement Weekend. Each graduate was invited to choose one of five cultural stoles aligned with their identity to wear with their Commencement regalia, and were celebrated by family, friends, faculty, staff, and administrators.

### **PILLAR Program**

This is the third year the Partners in Learning, Leadership, and Reflection (PILLAR) is being offered at the University. PILLAR is a pedagogical partnership program that pairs students with faculty to create, support, and enhance inclusive learning environments that encourage and value all learners at the University of Scranton. The PILLAR program empowers students to create inclusive classrooms that support diverse student experiences and learning needs by sharing their expertise as students with faculty members. For more information, contact [jennifer.whittaker@scranton.edu](mailto:jennifer.whittaker@scranton.edu).

### **Suggested Faculty, Staff and Students Training Through Vector Solutions**

In September, the Office of Equity and Diversity, in collaboration with the Offices of Student Life, Human Resources, and the Provost, provided a list of suggested on-line trainings, including Clarifying Consent for students, Conflict Management: Staff to Staff, and Student Mental Health: Awareness, Intervention and Referral. The goal of this collaboration is to send out suggested trainings on DEI-related topics once a semester.

### **GWU**

Í explores the aspirational journey to fulfill our national ideals through the lens of Scranton, Pennsylvania, an iconic American city that has

## Web Accessibility

The federal Department of Justice Civil Rights Division issued Guidance on Web Accessibility to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act. OED met with administrators from CTLE, Information Technology, Marketing Communications, Student Life, and others to discuss compliance work that needed to be completed as related to accessibility. A committee is in the process of being created to assist with achieving compliance that will be led by Liz Garcia.

## DEI Book Club

The Offices of the Provost, Human Resources, and Equity and Diversity are pleased to initiate an environment, the club book will match the first- Pulitzer Prize-winning the New York Times best-selling author, Annette Gordon-Reed is our first book. The book club is designed to create a space for thoughtful dialogue. To attend the luncheon, please ~~Register here~~ ~~Seating is limited~~. The book club meeting will be held **Wednesday, Oct. 5 at 12:00p.m. in DeNaples 405.**

## DEI Lunch and Learns

The Office of Equity and Diversity is now in its fourth year of the DEI Lunch and Learn Series. This year, we will have guest speakers discuss suc  
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the [OED Events](#) or [EDI website](#) frequently for updates.

accessible and welcoming to everyone.

Sincerely,

Michelle Maldonado, Ph.D.  
Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Elizabeth M. Garcia, J.D.  
Special Assistant to the President,  
Executive Director for the Office of Equity and Diversity, and  
Title IX Coordinator