Columbia College Chicago Strategic Planning Roundtable:
Diversity and Inclusion
Monday, December 1, 2014
3:00 – 4:30 pm
Conaway Center, 1104 S. Wabash

Moderators: Onye Ozuzu, Jeff Schiff, Diana Vallera

Q1. What would demonstrate a strong commitment to Diversity and Inclusion at Columbia College Chicago, and why should it be our collective goal?

Madeline Burrell (Trustee):
Hello everyone, I am Madeline Burrell, a board member and first time attendant to this forum. And I think this question is paramount in what we are all about and what kind of institution we want to be. The thing that would most demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion and why should it be our collective goal, is that number one, it is good citizenship aspiration, but also a very wise business choice, in terms of competing in the academic arena where resources and challenges around enrollment and retention are paramount. We have an opportunity because of who we are and the time that we are in. It is something that can make us a unique and important institution in terms of walking the walk as well as talking the talk in terms of diversity and inclusion. That’s the short answer.

Cecilia O’Reilly (Associate Professor, Theatre):
We need to have more faculty, numbers is what I’m talking about, representing our various groups of diverse students. For example, the Theatre Department has zero Latino or Latina teachers.

Prexy Nesbitt (Part-time Faculty, Humanities, History & Social Sciences):
I can’t remember the man’s name, you all could help me, who was one of the founders of this institution, his building is the corner building. What is that one? Alexandroff, Mike Alexandroff. I go back to Mike’s days and I was then working for the African National Congress of South Africa and I went to Mike and said, “Mike, I’d like a donation.” He didn’t hesitate a minute. He turned around and he handed me a check in 1971 for $1,000. That was a hell of a contribution. I look around this room right now and I am looking for other black males in this room. And I know my brother is here sitting next to me, I see a couple people of color, brothers of color over there, but I think it’s really sad in the middle of a commemoration of the events of Ferguson, the incarceration level of black males in this country, black females growing levels, that no only do we not have representative enough groups especially on the faculty level, but I don’t think we have a program in places like 26th and California. Which are places that we ought to be in bringing our pedagogy and our, our analysis and our information and our commitment. Let’s get out there in the city. And I think its scandalous as well that we could have had the things that have happened in the last year in terms of the Palestinian community, and vamping down on a course that has to do with a situation that’s as parallel to Ferguson as we can find in this country at this point. And finishing up, because I don’t want to bore my colleagues here, finishing up I think there is one other thing that I have to say. I’ve been around this institution now about twenty years. I think it is very irresponsible of us to not deal with the levels of tension and polarization within our community on issues of race, class, gender and sexual orientation. We desperately need to have serious training and collective training and orientation programs done by an outside source, for the faculty, for the administration, for the students, so that we don’t ever have to face the prospect of seeing a very serious racial confrontation at this institution.
Raquel Monroe (Assoc. Professor, Dance):
To name an organization that I think would be great to consider to employ in all of the departments on all levels is the People’s Institution for Survival. We did the Undoing Racism Workshop and it was incredible in terms of giving our entire department language to use so that we are all on the same page when we are addressing our students. So that is an organization that we should highly consider and invest our finances in to do training. In the Undoing Racism training, you learn about undoing all other kinds of “isms” as well.

Unnamed Student Worker, Dance:
Last week I was talking to my boss, a while woman, about Ferguson. And, she said to me, as a white person, I learned in my training that I am inherently racist. I said, “What?? You learned that before you worked here?? That’s incredible.” When I go in the Dance Department, I feel so welcome and I feel so comfortable and I don’t feel like I’ll be harmed. I am a film major. And while we are in the film building, and we know that the film department has issues, I’d like to direct our attention to this wall here that they just put up that has giant white men on it. It makes me uncomfortable.

Alicia Berg (Vice President, Campus Environment):
Not that I’m excited to do this, but it was my office that hired a grad that did this wall. I don’t want anyone to think that it was the Film & Video Department that did that. It was created by a street artist named Don’t Fret. He was, I think, a photography major. He is kind of big in the city. We didn’t tell him what to do or what not to do.

Q2. Should diversity and inclusion be considered when creating or revising major and minor curricula? If so, how?

Taylor Williams (student):
Well, one of the first issues that I see here in regards to diversity and curriculum is that there is not anything that focuses specifically on people with disabilities. I would really like a class that just focuses on the accomplishments of disabled people. Not only that, but there is pretty much zero ways for people with disabilities to connect on campus. There is not student groups as far as I know, or social groups as far as services for students with disabilities office goes. We’re one of the few groups on campus where there is just like, there is no outlet. There are spaces that I feel comfortable as someone with a disability, like, the Sex Out Loud group, or Common Ground, but really, I want groups that are just for this minority. Also, I have issues in the Music Department with regards of representation of people who aren’t white men. When I took Music History, I learned about one woman, and the rest of the semester was completely devoted to white men. We spent two weeks just on Wolfgang Mozart’s contributions and we didn’t even talk about his sister’s contributions, Nannerl Mozart, who is just as talented and wrote just as many pieces and was just as important to that musical era but her name wasn’t even brought up. It was really. It just feels like there is so much that happens in the course of multiple thousands of years of Music that isn’t being done by white men that should have been talked about, but wasn’t. And my other issues regarding diversity here is definitely size issues. I think it’s also important to include not just teaching faculty, but any faculty that is working for Columbia. I had issues when I went to the Health Center to get a physical for my study abroad program, where my nurse practitioner looked at my weight on the chart and said, “wow, you really weigh that much? You don’t look nearly as fat as you actually are.” And when I tried to get this taken care of with somebody, her boss told me I should have taken it as a compliment and basically shamed me for getting into it. And said, “well, we have to bring up your weight and make it apparent that you’re unhealthy and she was just concerned that because you’re fat, you would be physically unfit to leave the country.” And that is
pretty much all that happened. And no matter who I went to, this issue was not addressed and this person had no consequences. So it is just frustrating that things like that are acceptable at a school that prides itself on its diversity.

**Monica Hairston O’Connell (Executive Director, Center for Black Music Research):**
As someone whose own area of research is jazz, race and gender, I am always torn because there are different ways of approaching the issue of diversity. On the one hand, you can kind of do this inclusion game that can go on and on and on in certain ways. How do we include this woman, and that woman, and that woman in the mainstream narrative? Maybe instead of looking at the issues with the narrative itself. So one of the things that I would like to see in terms of how we think about diversity and inclusion in our curriculum is, how do we develop the critical, analytical abilities for our students? How do we make sure that even if we are studying Mozart, how do we look at the canon and how do we understand the ways that mainstream narratives get promoted and understood? And how do they then support issues and structures of power? Having said that, just to take the Music Department as an example because that is one thing that I know, we also do have to figure, it does end up being about numbers and we have to figure out ways to, um, create streams for students to understand the works of art that they are interested in and that are speaking to their practices on their own terms. And it is impossible to do that when most of the courses that they have are, you know, western art music. So how do we make sure that there are, flexible streams available but also to make sure that students come out being able to analyze the power structures.

**Gigi Posejpal (Director, International Student Affairs):**
First of all, I just want to say thank you for having these discussions. I think coming together as a collective is something very therapeutic and definitely long overdue. I would also, when we start looking at diversity and inclusion, look at all these different areas and all these different cultures that are represented here. We are looking at a lot of things using just our western culture lens, and I think with the, as we stretch further across the oceans and across the globe and inviting many other people, many other cultures on our campus, that we also need to be more open and aware, of the contributions that many cultures have been making to our world. And I think if we are going to be educating global citizens, we need to understand what that means, and define it and act responsibly across all areas and departments that we have here.

**Brian Martin, Cultural Studies Student:**
My heart is beating a little fast, so pardon me, y’all, if I can’t say everything that I want to say. I wanted to say that, you said something Taylor about not talking about it in silos. My point is, if we are going to address these things it shouldn’t just be limited to faculty and curriculum we should expand this conversation about how we can insert diversity and inclusion and cultural competency training or anti-oppression training which, if we don’t know what that means that it’s a problem in this room. Every single spot on this college. Every single person that interacts with this college or is coming out of this college or is being paid by this college should have that sort of training. As far as curricula, I think it is important to realize that fact that the canon or that we are currently teaching, the one that is white men and the one that isn’t diverse or inclusive, I think it is not because our teachers are strictly doing this because they want to oppress us by adding just white men into the curriculum but because they are were taught in a systematic way. Right? So for us to be involved in diversity it involves our curricula changing. So that the folks that go through this school, folks like me who want to go into education, are given the tools in a very explicit way, the was that we’re paying for, in a way to go our into our culture and say, this is what our country really looks like and this is the voice of the people who have been marginalized for the past hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years.
Q3. What impact do teaching methodologies have on diversity and inclusion, and how should this commitment be reflected in our teaching?

Raquel Monroe:
I would say that I was trained at a research one and really the type of pedagogy or ways in which I was taught to teach really reflects teaching graduate students which really is not appropriate for teaching undergraduates, which we all know. I have to promote CITE. I think the ways in which they talk about pedagogy and work to train teachers to address students with all different kinds of acquisition to learning has really revolutionized my teaching and the way I approach the classroom -- to consider social media or not. To figure out how to make – I know in my class and in many other classes we have participation points – but not every student is going to speak. But how is it that I, and to assume that every student should speak is implementing a certain type of cultural assumption that I no longer feel appropriate doing but it is definitely how I was trained. So, I appreciate CITE for helping me to learn how to undo the ways in which I was taught, and to think about being learner centered, and to approach the students where they are and to check in with them and to be flexible with assignments, be flexible in all those ways that I was never given – but I also didn’t need it. Some folks do.

Lance Taylor Cox (student):
I am going to do a little bit of a social experiment right now. If you are employed by the college, like, we pay you to be here right now, can you raise your hand? Awesome. Keep your hand raised, please. So if you had a moment free on Tuesday of last week, keep your hand raised. Awesome. Like, literally five minutes. Now, put your hand down if none of that time was spent at City Hall. So if you spent a moment of your day last Tuesday at City Hall, I want to know about it. Awesome. So I want to honor the emotional vulnerability of being there. So what happened at City Hall last Tuesday was a demonstration about Ferguson. Cool. Led by youth. What I want to talk about is the moment before you enter the classroom. That moment before – are you listening? Are you listening to students? Are you listening to youth? Are you listening to them teach you about their experiences? It looks like maybe five people in this room are. And that really hurts me, because, I...

(Interrupted by Cecilia O’Reilly briefly)
What I am trying to express is that there are youth here and in many places in this City that are really doing valuable work and I find that it’s not valued at this institution. That’s all I have to say. And all I ask is that we value that more. And why I say that is the youth that go here don’t feel valued here. So what are we going to learn when we don’t feel respected in the classroom?

Eric May (Assoc. Professor, Creative Writing):
I graduated from here in 1975 and I’ve been teaching here for about 30 years. The Columbia that I remember as a student was, for its time, very diverse. And the pedagogy that I came up in, not just in my Creative Writing classes or Film classes, but in my Photography classes and my Radio classes – were wide open, and were respectful of who I was as an African American and as a person. I think one of the things that would really help, is, somehow to work into departmental structures, opportunities for faculty to talk to each other about pedagogy, or talk to each other about the latest initiative or this or that, but have time to sit down and talk to each other about pedagogy. What do you do during the first week of the semester to make sure that everybody is engaged? Because as Mark Kelly has pointed out a number of times, the student may drop out at week eight, but sometimes it is because you didn’t do something in week one or two. How do you do certain things in the classroom? How do you do a lot of the things that people are asking for? There are faculty here that do this. The idea that the faculty here are not being diverse or not engaging with their students is simply not true. But, a lot of times within
departments, structured ways in which the collective wisdom of the veteran faculty can be transmitted to those faculty who are coming in. And it won’t happen by itself without a structure there to do it. And it won’t happen unless word comes from on high that this is something that you ought to be doing, and the Provost of the President or the dean asking what kind of faculty discussions are you having about teaching and about pedagogy? And I understand that the business model for many colleges is that – somebody shows up, you’re given a class list – here are your classes, here’s the syllabus, you’re on your own. And, one of the things that would help would be to get the kind of wisdom that we have in a structure that would allow this to happen on a regular basis. Not catch as catch can, or if this department decides to do it. Until we do this, it will always be catch as catch can. We have to have a structured approach so that pedagogy is something that teachers get to talk about. There have been reports and stories that this is something that doesn’t happen enough in American education in both grade schools and colleges there is simply not enough opportunities for faculty to sit down and talk about how to teach.

**Steven Corey (Chair, Humanities, History & Social Sciences):**
One of the most amazing things to me about the diversity at Columbia College is how we’re missing a huge component of diversity, and that’s intergenerational diversity. And I think Lance’s comments and the discussion that ensued really as an important point here. The institution that I came from had a very large number of non-traditional students in terms of age. And I think that is also something that is glaringly absent except perhaps in the front of the classroom. We need to think about ways for the larger Chicago community to bring in people who are also of different generations as well. And that kind of diversity leads to what Lance has to say about youth. I think we need to think about a much larger view of what a student should be here at Columbia College Chicago.

**Q4. How can CCC foster and sustain diverse and inclusive student, faculty, administrative, and support staff recruitment and hiring?**

**Clement, International student:**
Talking about support staff. Recently my dad had a change in job. He had a lower paycheck so I had to get out of the dorms. So I went to residence life, tried to get out of a contract and I had to pay $3000. I agreed because it is a contract. And then I am hearing things from my American friends that they had gotten out of the contract with the same exact reason that I had had. I didn’t want to jump to conclusions so I went down to ask the support staff at residence life. I said, this person had the same reason as me and got out of a contract. Is this an international student thing? The person behind the counter said, I can’t answer that. I asked again and she wouldn’t answer. Some of my classmates have said, can’t you see? It’s obvious. I’m not jumping to conclusions I’m just saying that this is what I’m experiencing and as an international student, it is a pattern I am seeing.

**Dawn Renee Jones (Assistant to the Chair, Theatre):**
What is here for them? When you think in terms of recruiting, fostering, sustaining diversity and an inclusive student body. What is here for them? When they get there, what do we have of interest to them?

**Taylor Williams:**
Going from my experiences in the Music Department. I have had issues where we will be assigned a song, and it will give you two different lines of lyrics, one with male pronouns and one with female pronouns. I chose to sing the one with female pronouns because if I am going to sing a love song, that is
who I want to sing it to. Then, I have gotten reprimanded for not doing the right one. I was told that you just gave your person a sex change. When no, that was intentional. So that something you can gain, by being more open-minded as a faculty member at this school is – you could be opened up to so many different kinds of love. So many expressions. So much more intensity with your queer students specifically being allowed to sing the pronouns of the people that they want to be singing to. Is going to improve their performance monumentally in the first place. So I feel that including that diversity is an immediate way for faculty members to gain something. Its not just about what can we get as a prize for working at this school but what can we get from really taking an interest in our students and really opening ourselves up to all that they can be.

Sage Morgan-Hubbard (Academic Partnership Coordinator, Dance):
I want to go off of thinking about intergenerational connections as well as interpositionality connections. I think that we have a lot of great human resources here, there are artists and activists and all different levels. There need to be more places where staff and part-time faculty and students and senior faculty members are all together and able to have these conversations. I know as an undergrad during 911, having an advisor who was a staff member who was part of a CCAP type program really helped a student like me because he was really involved in engagement. And I think there are some faculty and staff members who are opening up their houses and providing resources to have those conversations but not necessarily are institutionally supported. I think there are small mini-grants that could support those kinds of conversations and peer advising programs. I know that One Tribe is a wonderful program but its not enough. I would like to see that in many different levels. Maybe in departments as well as throughout the institution. I was a minority peer counselor. There was a women’s peer counseling program. A lot of our students our hungry – each one teach one – to share their own knowledge bases but also be supported financially as students in that work and in their knowledge. Work Study. As a community we can help each other. We don’t have enough work study positions and this is a wonderful way that we can engage students in every single department and across departments. There is many different ideas as well as orientation. I know that many campuses have mandatory diversity training within an orientation space. And that’s when people are so excited and meeting each other and you can really form those community friendships that they’ll have throughout their entire tenure at Columbia.

Ramona Gupta (Coordinator, Multicultural Affairs):
There has been a lot of talk on the, well, there hasn’t been much talk at all on the forums in my opinion, but I know that within the diversity and inclusion forum there has been talk about, cluster hiring for faculty, setting up mentorship programs, that kind of thing. What always seems to be left out of the conversation is staff. As a staff person who works at the college, I honestly don’t feel that I have mentors here. I don’t feel that there is a lot of support in terms of developing the programming that I am doing, my own professional development, and that’s a problem. Because, when you asked the question about why are people coming here, I don’t think you meant it in a negative way but I took it in a negative way when I listened to that question because I thought, gosh, I am here for my students. I am here because my students do amazing work and I want to support them, which is why I am always harping on can we please center the conversation on student voices. But honestly, there is no support for the staff that are here. And I imagine the same thing is happening for a lot of the faculty. So, when we are enticing people to come to this college we do need to have support systems in place for them to grow as professionals so that we can best serve the students that we’re here to serve.

Q5. How can we best educate and train the CCC community to embrace and enact inclusion and diversity?
Trina Hogg (Asst. Professor, Humanities, History & Social Sciences):
I teach in African history, so I primarily teach classes that apply to the Black World Studies Minor, which is a minor right now that is woefully under declared by students, and, of course that’s not students faculty. I think part of what I’ve found and I’ll preface this by saying I’ve only been here for one year, is that I don’t often have the opportunity to talk to other faculty who teach classes that could be applied to the Black World Studies Minor. I’m sure that this is applicable also to the Gender Studies Minor, the Latin American Studies Minor, but I’ll speak to what I know. So, even at this forum alone, I’m surrounded by faculty I’ve never met who teach classes that apply to the Black World Studies Minor which has become something that is very important to me. So, in thinking big, I would like to see, is a Center. A Black World Studies Center, where I am cross-listed as a faculty member both in HHSS and this imaginary Black World Studies Center, where everyday I can have conversations with other faculty that teach, you know, that teach Jazz, or that teach African Dance or that teach all of these classes that I’m probably overlapping with in my introduction to Black World Studies Course and we could share with each other. So, in terms of big thoughts, I’d like to see a Center formed about Black World Studies because it’s important.

Victoria Shannon (Part-time Faculty, Humanities, History & Social Sciences):
I’ve had something to say on every topic, but I think there are people who think that I’ve already said too much, so I’ll refrain. In this question I think it’s the word train that is bothering me. We’re not a dog kennel where we are going to train us to embrace and enact inclusion and diversity. I think that it needs to be done not only on a service level for student services, but also I think we need a curriculum advisor. And I do think that we need to talk to each other which is hard to do in the culture of fear that we have been living in here at the college for the last few years. People scared to death of losing their jobs and being escorted out of the building. Teachers, older teachers as a rule, losing sections of classes that they created in many cases. I have been here 24 years and for half of that time I have fought tooth and nail for the LGBT students at this college. I have created curriculum, I have worked with people to offer them services, and it’s just frustrating now to see what I perceive and many others perceive as a step back because we’re short changing the students. We’re not a typical college with ten percent. This is Columbia College. We have artists in this school. We are a hell of a lot more than ten percent. I think that we need to interact more with the community. The LGBT community in the City of Chicago. There are many organizations that would absolutely love to be invited to campus. The center on Halsted, the Broadway Youth Center, all of these places that provide services to our students and to people who would like to be our students but many of whom are homeless and don’t have the resources to attend the college. So I just hope that things change and that we can get back to where we were a few years ago where we did actually talk with each other, we shared ideas, we had meetings, we respected each other. I miss that the most. Thank you.

Kayla Katz (student):
I would really like to see a diversity course being part of the core curriculum that you have to take. I took Juliet’s class, Women and US History, kind of just by chance, and that class has really changed my entire outlook on life. And if I didn’t just take that, as something that I was just interested in learning about and not something that was part of the curriculum, my life would be totally different. So I would like to know that when I advise other people and talk highly of Columbia to know that they would have the same opportunity to take those classes. And knowing that they are being cut back and not being put more info focus as part of the core curriculum, is kind of really disappointing.
Bill Guschwan (Lecturer, Interactive Arts & Media):
I teach programming. One of the interesting things about programming is they study engineering solutions to social problems, right, cause to make software, you have to work together. And so, one of the big things in the movement for software engineering is the inclusion of mindfulness or self-awareness or sort of consciousness and working from that angle. And so I think my suggestion would be to best educate would be to create mindfulness of our students which I teach, for example in my senior course, a book called conscious business. And in addition I wanted to reflect upon the gentleman in the back’s comments about teachers, and that teachers should be training in mindfulness as well in order to understand their own prejudices in the classroom.

Raquel Monroe:
To think big, I know at one of the last forums, Eliza Nichols mentioned having year round education that would allow for faculty and students to at least elect what semester they would teach so we would be open for the whole entire year. I am bringing this up because it seems like – I know, I am one who likes to go away in the summer as well, but I teach summer school. It seems like there is missed opportunities. Even doing these forums. I was thinking too bad we’re not going these in the summer when faculty really think broad because we don’t have students in front of us and the same types of commitments, and we think about our jobs differently. But what I want to say, summer seems like a missed opportunity. Maybe there should be some type of diversity fellow or diversity institute that happens in the summertime that brings together faculty, that brings together students that are interested in it. It could be anywhere from a 2 to 6 week model that really addresses all of the issues around diversity and inclusion that we’re talking about, in a very deep way that is integrated into the curriculum that is supported by the institution with funding. Students could apply for scholarships as well but when they are taking classes, if we had a year round program, their financial aid could go towards that as well. Faculty that teach in this institute would probably have a course release or something for the rest of the either fall or spring or both. But to do something, and it could attract people from the community and perhaps people internationally and around the country. I think folks flock to Chicago in the summertime. We have a whole different type of orientation to things in he summertime. It is a missed opportunity and we would really be able to dive in and focus. It would trickle out throughout the rest of the semester because students would be in it and faculty and staff. And there could be folks from all over. So its just something to think about ways to make it a part of the institution. Because I agree, we are missing an opportunity because we are inherently a diverse community in a way that other institutions are not. And I don’t think that we do the amount of broad thinking that we are really capable of because of the ways in which we are unfortunately siloed. And I think having some type of summer institute would be a way to address this.

Scott (student in Business and Entrepreneurship):
This first thing I want to say is that in that department and specifically in the major Marketing, I see a severe lack of any critical analysis of that curriculum and it is often viewed as this evil entity that perpetuates all these kinds of bad things like racism and sexism and all that stuff and yet there is no conversation about how we as the future of that institution can stop those kinds of things. I have only had one class where we talk about the moral agency of us as media creators. That’s a problem. The conversations that we’re having about it are really frustrating because I feel like I’m the only one. I’ve taught myself about oppression and all these things that we’re talking about with diversity but my classmates are not a part of the conversation and I second her notion of some sort of required training for students entering this institution so that they can be part of that conversation because it’s not happening.
Q6. What resources do you imagine the college as a whole, and/or your department, program, unit, etc. would need to implement a sustainable diversity and inclusion strategy?

Michelle Cockerham (Theatre and Business student):
One of the things that I am hearing a lot. Diversity is not something that you can just put into a curriculum. It is something that you are a part of. It is something that you inherently start to develop over time. I understand that as a college you need structure and that this is a strategic goal that you are trying to accomplish, however, as a junior and thinking about when I was a junior in high school, I didn’t come to Columbia for structure. If I had wanted that I could have stayed and gone to Georgetown University and stayed at home or I could have gone to DePaul University. I don’t know how many times I’ve had assignments where, these are the small requirements and on that point, do whatever you want. That’s what I miss from this college that I feel has been depleting a lot lately is that idea of getting to do what you want. That’s what we should be doing as artists. I understand that you need the classes that talk about diversity. I actually only became a gay rights activist because of the classes here and I have only been able to continue my missionary work because of these classes. That doesn’t mean that every other student has had the opportunity that I have had. Making it a requirement in the different departments is important. And honestly, because I’m a theatre student, I don’t know what is going on in these other classes. I don’t know what is going on with the film students. I am sometimes shocked at what I am hearing. I wish there was a way that I could hear my other students. Have more things like this, and not because of a bunch of petitions that were signed over the Internet. I understand that you do need structure, but I am an artist.

Prexy Nesbitt, Part-time Faculty Member, Humanities, History & Social Sciences:
The thought occurs to me. What do we mean by diversity? What do we mean? What are we talking about? Are we talking about class diversity? Are we talking about racial diversity? Are we talking about sexual orientation diversity? What do we mean by diversity? In a city that is the most racially residentially segregated city probably in the world are we talking about working to end that in this city? What do we mean by diversity? Secondly, community. What do we mean by community? I have to say, it makes me laugh a little bit. We have departments where people don’t even speak to one another. They don’t even say hello! And yet we’re talking about community? Community is about knowing something and caring something for other people. Routinely. Regularly. But I think that that’s something we’ve really got to work on in this institution. We’re not exceptional. This is America, after all, in the Ferguson era. So we’re not exceptional in the conceal and carry era. But if we want to be greatness, to really stand for something great, we’ve got to seriously take these things up and engage them in a serious manner that becomes part of our fiber and our being. Our values in every way. And I don’t think there is any real, serious institutional commitment to that and maybe it’s because the college I came from, Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, it was a matter of life and death. We lost people who went south to do civil rights work and died. That’s serious. We’ve got a serious situation in this city. And so the last thing I’d like to say is, I think we need to contextualize ourselves, not in these big old buildings that we got, but in this city. And in the issues that people are fighting daily trying to contend with in this city. That’s how we will develop a living pedagogy.

Juan (student):
I think that some of the resources that coming from, myself as an inner city kid I came from a high school on the north side. It was in a north side good area but our arts program was barely a music department. Barely like an art class. I knew looking into Columbia that I wanted to take classes in film and do their summer program. Fact of the matter is, you know, it was really really expensive, the summer institute. At that point, I was like, what do I do? I came to Columbia. I didn’t have as much film
knowledge as everyone else but, I think if you want to include diversity, you know, cater to the students from inner city high schools in Chicago, you know? A lot of them don’t provide as many art programs as we do here. If we have to pay $3000 to come take a film class or take a dance class, why can’t we do some work and include them? If we want to get them to come to the college. I know I would definitely and other students from high school, would take advantage of that. I know on 26th street there is a program called Yocali, they provide film classes for free. They get people from all over to come and teach. If Columbia really wants to get people from Chicago and students from really inner city to come to the college, why not offer a program where they can come do some summer classes. It doesn’t have to be a whole thing but you know to even interact with it. I know before I came to Columbia, I didn’t know exactly what film was. I didn’t know how to do editing. I didn’t even have mac computers in my high school. Until I came here and interacted with all of that, that’s when I actually saw that. Some resources that would be great would be provide some summer programs for kids that are in the Chicago area from inner city high schools. A lot of them don’t even have art programs at this point anymore. Interact with your community.

Elizabeth Stewart (Part-time Faculty, Humanities, History & Social Sciences):
When I think about Columbia I think about students on the sidewalk, smoking. That was my first exposure to Columbia College, that how community is formed by students gathering outside buildings and getting to know one another over cigarettes. Why is that? I have a sense that there really isn’t a sense of what it means to belong to community. That somehow we are failing students at the entry level. So they come to college and the only way of bonding or feeling inclusion is to stand outside buildings and smoke. I think we need to begin at the very bottom. What does it mean to be a Columbia student? What does it mean to be in this institution? Are we an arts school? Are we a business school? What kind of a school are we and how can people be welcomed? If we really find a way of forming – I really want to use the word formation and not training -- if we can form students and faculty to be part of community then we won’t have to look at quotas, or programs, or centers. We will be a community that is unified by our common mission as educators as students to be Columbia. What are we as an institution, and how inclusive are we going to be? That for me is reaching beyond where we are in present tense.

Paul Teruel (Community Partnership Director, Center for Community Arts Partnerships):
I want to address a couple of things. In order to be a more diverse and inclusive College we really have to be intentional about that. It starts with how we market our college and how we hire for our college. Where are we looking for our future faculty and our staff? How are we reaching out and communicating to the potential new people who are coming in to teach and work at this College but also to our student base as well. I do want to thank the gentleman who just spoke, Juan. Yocali is one of our partners at CCAP. At the Center we have over 40 community organizations we partner with closely, and diversity is just one of the criteria we look at when we are looking at our partners. Chicago is many things. I can go on and on about Chicago being a beautiful city, about Chicago being a segregated city, and everything in between. But we’re looking at our partners in a geographic sense, we’re looking at our partners in a diverse sense. We’re trying to be an effective partner with the college in terms of bringing these organizations who service the LGBTQ population, the disabled population, and different cultural groups as well. I do also want to talk about one specific program run by a gentleman by the name of, part-time faculty member name Darrel Satcher. He started, with others, a group called the barber shop. The barber shop is a beautiful, beautiful entity at Columbia, and it is really intended for students and men of color. It is kind of a support group where students and faculty and staff come together. And each meeting is always centered around a theme. A very topical theme that Daryl puts out there. There was also a barber shop. You will have your hair cut there if you want. And there is food. But it is a beautiful
example of how a faculty member is reaching out and working with students and faculty members across campus to help acclimate students to this great place called Columbia College. I think it also leads to students staying at the college as well. This project has now spun off. He’s created a play and he’s hired students here at the college to act in the play. And he’s presenting the play at high schools around Chicago. This is definitely taking root and is speaks to diversity and inclusiveness.

Q7. What supplemental activities, programs, student experiences, pathways, etc. do you imagine your department, program, unit, etc. would need to support a sustainable diversity and inclusion strategy?

Erin McCarthy (Assoc. Professor, Humanities, History & Social Sciences):
I think that our greatest challenge, we could argue, is enrollment. That a lot of these questions that we are bringing up today are made all the more difficult because we have lost so many students, which ripples into needing fewer faculty, etc., etc. and I think that feeling of retrenchment can lead to greater fear, uncertainty and some of the issues about building community or weakening that. So I would say it’s something that I’ve really been trying to do myself this year. I think we all need to see ourselves as recruiters for Columbia College if you believe in this institution, which I do. And I came here because if its diversity and inclusion and I could not do what I do in most colleges. And so, I think we all have to see ourselves as reaching out and promoting and attracting. So in hiring, that earlier question, yes, I want to attract faculty here, but when I sit on search committees I also want to hear why they want to be at Columbia. I hope that they’ve done their homework and that they show why they want to be here. Out in the community, I became a tweeter because of Columbia College. I was at the Chicago History Museum. Terry Hemmert was talking there and she spoke so eloquently about teaching and loving to teach at Columbia College, so that was my inaugural tweet. She was at the Mavis Staples concert. She talked about Columbia College because we gave Mavis an honorary degree. And then just yesterday, walking seeing the Marshall Fields windows with my family. We were walking down, sorry, ah Macy’s Washington, and we were admiring these small little windows that were beautifully displayed. And my husband points out, those were done by Columbia College students. So I think we really all, in this era where we have seen declining enrollment, if we want to better address many of the issues brought today that we all try to become recruiters and kind of go out on our mission to bring more people to Columbia College, whether it be faculty, administration, staff and students most of all because that’s why we’re all here.

Lance Taylor Cox:
I think the one thing fundamentally that this institution lacks is a culture of showing up. And by that I mean this institution has to show up for students, right? ‘Cause we show up for your classes. We’re there. We pay for them, so we’re there. But the faculty need to show up for us. And I mean, show up in our lives. The moment before you enter the classroom and the moment after, right? So I want to think about what happens when faculty imagine students as people? And not as consumers and not as this empty vessel to dump your knowledge into which, I’m not accusing anyone of doing that. I’m saying that’s what we need to avoid. And I want to speak for my statements right now and model something I think we should all be modeling, I have not felt shown up for my maybe 5 or 6 people at this institution. We have, what, a thousand faculty members? Maybe more than that? I don’t know the exact number, but we have 9,000 students, right? I know that number. So, all I’m saying is, I want folks to show up. And not because they think it makes them look good, or that it’s flashy to do so, but because students are valuable people in this world, right? And I would hope that you think that because you’re teaching us. And if you don’t then I don’t know what you’re doing, but what I’m saying is, that that is important and it is the culture that we need to create here, and its not here yet.
Sage Morgan-Hubbard:
Continuing with student voice. I really want to echo – I think it is something that has been said before, but, having student-centered initiatives with faculty members of things that a group of students are very interested in, like, student independent, group independent learning projects or studies. Whatever label you want to call it. That’s say, such as Ferguson, right? If there is a group of students and I think there are a lot of students that are activated and engaged around current events and they come to a faculty member. It could be a part-time faculty member, it could also be a staff who has qualifications to teach that class in conversation with the students and then have every department have space in the curriculum where they could implement those classes and they’d already be enrolled enough because the students would sign up and engage that. I think that’s another way to really feel present and validated. I think one of the things that our department at the Dance Center is doing is conversations with the chair. Of just like, going out into the hallway and having conversation and, over lunchtime, where people get to know each other. Faculty and students. I think there is many informal and formalized ways that we can create community.

J.J. (senior student):
Mics make me nervous. What I’m thinking about stretches far back to something someone said earlier. Something I’m really afraid of with this strategic planning process, which is really exciting, but something that kind of scares me is, um, looking at diversity like if it’s like a destination. Like, okay, I’ve arrived there. I’ve taken the class, check, I’ve got it. I’ve gotten my allied badge, or I’ve checked my privilege. Or I’ve done this, or I’ve done that like whatever. I’m cool now, so like, I can’t say things to you that are offensive, like, Brian, I’m a One Tribe Scholar. I don’t say bad things. I’m really afraid of us getting to that place because I’m interacting with a lot of those people right now who say, “but what do you mean that was offensive? I’m a teacher. What are you talking about?” So I would hope that as we continue to have these conversations that we can remain in a place where we’re um. I really love the language that the CiTE uses about practicing diversity. I’m not even going to try and speak for them about what that means, I think Soo La is here somewhere. So I wanted to praise that language. Something else, that I’m afraid of – well, not that I’m afraid of, but I don’t have to much interest in the creation of the, a bunch of these diversity courses or whatever. I’m not saying that what’s there needs to go away or anything like that. But I think about the, um, let’s say you have this course. Whatever it is. Let’s say you get to a point where you actually require X amount of people, it fulfills some requirement so now it’s attractive to people. I’m thinking about the 29 whatever seats there are. And then the 9,000 students who did not get that class. Right? How do we create a culture where these, where the things that are important to us are not just kind of plopped on to, “Hey faculty, teach this to these people. Dump this on them.” Like how do we, how do all of our programs, all of our activities, all of our staff – how do we get to this place where you’re always engaging these issues and these subjects and the onus is not placed on some faculty member and some class where you just kind of checkmark, “yeah, I took that. I got that. I’m done.” That really worries me or scares me, I don’t know. I don’t know exactly how to articulate that. Um, that said, I don’t think that these issues need to be, I don’t think that we just say it doesn’t happen outside of the classroom. It’s both. Like, Culture, Race and Media. I think there was a guy here who took that course or is taking it now. I’m in that class, I have that class tonight. Great course, but they’re like, they’re really behind on a lot of this, um, content, but they’re still getting, I think it’s about 250 students each semester together thinking about privilege and the media that they create, media literacy, it goes on and on, it’s a really um, it’s the only class I know of that engages these subjects. And then it’s kind of, you get to the end, and you do this final project that says, how have you changed and become this awesome, diverse, accepting, loving person who is going to create media that’s just like, super awesome now, right? Like, checkmark. And I’m like, what? What? No. It makes me uncomfortable. And so, I really
like, I’m a big proponent of first-year students, right? As soon as you get here you’re like this cup. There’s so much potential there. There’s so much influence that can be had. Like, how do we tap into that? How do we use first-year seminar. How do we use orientation, new student programs, to sort of get these conversations going really early if that makes any sense. I think that’s it.

Q8 skipped due to time constraints

Q9: A robust and sustainable diversity and inclusion strategy cannot exist in any institution without ongoing attention and accountability. How shall we manage that at CCC?

Eric May:
Well one of the ways – these are a lot of good questions that we’ve had here today. All of these questions faculty should be having at the program and department level. And asking ourselves at the program and department level: “How are we doing this? What can we do more of?” We have a wide divergent amount of programs and departments here, and I do get concerned sometimes about a one-size fits all approach to issues, because what might be the best strategy in one program might not work in terms of the departmental structure or scheduling for another. But to have, to say this is what we’re going to talk about, and in terms of the accountability, well, okay, if the provost says, or if we still have deans, if the provost says, “How is this happening in your area?” And the dean says to the chairs, “How is this happening in your area?” And this needs to be something that is put on the schedule, so again, faculty are given the time to sit down and have these conversations, and that includes the part-time faculty. And yeah, they should be paid for attending these meetings. But you can also have things like student forums, where you can start to put issues before and have these kinds of conversations and have them happening at the program level. These will be excellent questions and things to address in a department or program or at a student forum, where you’d have faculty there, you’d have the chair there and having these conversations. And not to approach it as diversity as pitting one side against the other. Because that’s not going to work. And certainly I understand the importance of diversity. Yes, Ralph Ellison was important to me, yes, Toni Morrison was important to me in the development of my writing. But I’d hate to think where my writing would be if I had never read Shakespeare. I’d hate to think of where my writing would be if I had never read James Jones. So, we can’t approach diversity from a turf perspective. This much for us and this much for me, but actually to say, and I’ll end it on this, one way to approach it would be that old saying, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” As a faculty member thinking, “How would I want to be treated if I were a student in the classroom?” And yeah, that means taking an imaginative leap and saying, look at all of the students who aren’t you. Whether its by gender or sexual orientation or body size or whatever and say, if I were that person, and looking at my syllabus, “How would I feel about looking at this syllabus and having this classroom experience?” And it’s only when you make that kind of engagement and start to spin yourself around so that you’re looking at the class from the point of view of the person sitting in the student chair that you begin to start to get some idea about, “Oh gee, there’s a hole.” Because none of us are perfect and we all have holes in our bodies of experience. The problem isn’t that you have a hole in your body of experience – the problem is that you don’t recognize it and try to do something about it. But having these kinds of conversations at the program level I think will be very helpful. But the accountability won’t happen if its not made clear to the people doing it that this is what you’re supposed to be doing. And then say, okay, let’s see what kind of results we’re having. And then when students are doing assessments of the courses and their program, that’s one of the questions. You know, “Is this apparent to you? Are you getting this from your classes?” Not as a way of firing anybody, but as a way of, “Okay, are we doing this as well as we should? And maybe we need to talk about that.” Thank you.
Brian (Cultural Studies student):
I am from a heavily underfunded department which devotes its entire curriculum to conversations about oppression and resisting oppression, right? Actually, all of the humanities are underfunded which is why I only get to take two classes in my major every semester but ANYWAY, let’s not talk about that. I want to say that, I don’t think that the questions are actually that good. And that’s because they, they, they, painfully and maybe truthfully infer some behindness on some of the Columbia College community? Like, questions like, “Should diversity and inclusion be considered when creating or revising major and minor curricula?” Are we really at the should point? That makes me a little bit uncomfortable and there are a couple more like that. I’ve heard people saying, “Those should be statements! Absolutely.” Furthermore, I totally support talking about things within departments and having departments be the hub. Not because, like, because these departments have their students, who have their specific needs who have their specific desires that need to be addressed, right? And that’s really great. Unfortunately, I didn’t hear much conversation about, “Oh, we need to have these conversations among our faculty and include maybe students in there.” So one way of creating a robust and sustainable diversity program is inviting students, especially those from marginalized backgrounds, those effected by the things that we’re addressing in diversity courses, I don’t know, have some weight in this college. I heard some comments about Shakespeare. Shakespeare is great, but I got Shakespeare even when I lived in Tijuana, Mexico, when I didn’t even know how to read. So I don’t need Shakespeare to be driven in. Unfortunately we live in a world of harsh, harsh inequality. And by saying that we need to center or that we don’t need to leave Shakespeare, I think that, how many hundreds of years has it been? I still haven’t encountered a Mexican author in all my college years here. And frankly, actually, most of the Mexican people who I meet on the street here in Chicago have not really read Mexican authors because they’re not readily available. But that’s just one person, you know? There are billions and billions of people across this world that are actually probably hundreds of kinds of cultures and backgrounds and races and ethnicities in this college which are not represented inside of our curriculum which we need to put emphasis on. And there was one more thing that really irritated me – JJ do you remember what it was? Oh. Right. There are really great places which address all of these things on this college. We’ve mentioned the CITE which actually teach out of “Teaching to Transgress” by Bell Hooks. And actually have a lot of fellowships, which are great. Which, faculty who have not read that book, I really encourage it. At least google it. And wiki that. It’s really good for you. And, also, things like One Tribe that exist but specifically people like Ramona who are highly devoted within like not very good funded. To making sure that they have constant connection with their students and are addressing these things. And not just making diversity a destination, but like, okay, it’s important. This exists in the city it exists in the world so I should be anti-racist and I should be anti-sexist and I should be anti- these things all the time. Man, there is so much to say so thank you for letting me talk for so long.

Q10. [Open call for other questions that could/should have been asked]

[Staff member, Dance]
Related to the last question, I think that these conversations need to me more student-voice based. And the date and time, I don’t know how you all chose it, but, being that its finals. Being that everything is going on and being that we just came after break, a lot of people have forgotten. I also think that these conversations shouldn’t stop happening because what we think today isn’t necessarily what we’ll think tomorrow. So, I think that to have these forums and these conversations here and then to move forward with what we’ve learned, is kind of a problem, I think that we should continue that.
MaryLou Carroll (Part-time Faculty, Humanities, History & Social Sciences):  
I’d really like to support everything that has been said here, especially student perspectives, of course. I would like to really like to say that I don’t see diversity as something that we need to promote. We just need to stop obstructing it. And the way we stop obstructing it, in my opinion, one way, is we must dismantle hierarchies and let go of our attachment to hierarchies which have been used historically to rationalize and maintain inequality. So once we can talk about hierarchies then maybe we can let go of them. And once we let go of hierarchies, we can allow diversity to just be. Because it just is. We don’t have to promote it. We don’t have to add it to anything. It is just inherent. Look around the room. We have a room full of diversity. So all we have to do in my opinion is stop obstructing it. And one way we can get there is by letting go of our attachment to hierarchies. And inclusion would be a big step in that direction. Thank you.

Charlotte (Cinema student):  
I guess the question that I have is why do we need to learn about women and people of color in classes that are not the general... So why is the only place that I can learn about Madame CJ Walker and Josephine Baker in a Women’s History course. Why did I have to learn that Beethoven was a black man from the Internet. You know, I think we need to integrate these courses together so that you don’t even have to, you know like, they should be part of what we learn in a history course.

Lance Taylor Cox:  
The only question I have is, what is the student experience here and why aren’t we asking that?

[Faculty member, Theatre]:  
A question that we may want to consider, and I’m going to borrow a business term and that’s the cost benefit analysis. What is the lack of inclusion costing us? And what opportunities can we benefit from? And I’d like to see some of the questions as we move forward framed in that context. What is it costing us? And how can we benefit from it.

Kisa, Cultural Studies Student:  
We should be asking, are we willing to invest financially, emotionally and physically and intellectually in diversity? And do we care about the students that are already here? Because I’m tired of my friends dropping out because they feel unappreciated. That, they’re not getting the support they need in any kind of way and that they’re not being represented. And I think that’s important that, are we valuing the staff that is already doing the work? Are we valuing the students and actually listening to the students? And yeah, can we change the date and time of this because its really inconvenient and I’m missing work to be here and I’d like to get paid instead of talking about my life experience.