

SMTD Peer Support Network for Inclusive Teaching



Faculty Communities for Inclusive Teaching, 2018

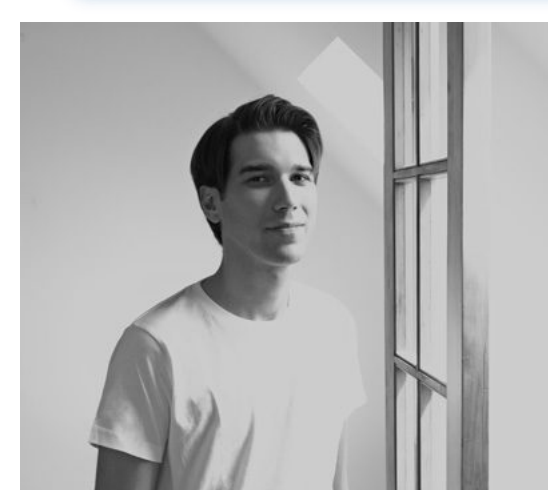
Michael Gurevich, Christianne Myers (School of Music, Theatre & Dance)

Project Overview

The SMTD 'Faculty Forum on Inclusive Teaching' had 3 goals:

1. Identify faculty needs and concerns specific to our various disciplines;
2. Read and discuss relevant research;
3. Create an outline for a faculty peer support program for inclusive teaching

Participants



Anil Çamcı
Perf. Arts
Technology



Michael Gurevich
Perf. Arts
Technology



Amy Porter
Winds &
Percussion



Mark Clague
Musicology



Christianne Myers
Theatre &
Drama



Catherine Walker
Musical
Theatre



Joseph Gascho
Organ



Tiffany Ng
Organ

Key Insights / New Questions

- Departmental 'silos' in SMTD have created barriers to peer engagement with teaching. With no viable one-size-fits-all approach, we've opted for no approach.
- The way we think about and talk about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in SMTD is out of step with our approach to meritocracy.
- In Warikoo's terms, we probably talk in terms of *diversity* or *power analysis* frames, but in reality we often operate in terms of a *colour-blind frame*.
- How do we approach "professional preparation" for industries that can be ruthless and antiquated when it comes to diversity and inclusion? For example:
 - How should faculty talk about potentially sensitive aspects of body image with students (weight, skin tone, physical appearances) that are materially important to their future careers?
 - Many professional orchestras use "blind auditions". Should we operate the same way?
 - How do we deal with physical touch between faculty/students? Or occasions where students might be in compromising situations, like fitting rooms?
- Teaching about "whiteness" as an approach for white faculty to address historical inequities in our discipline, and to acknowledge our own identities.
- Diverse areas/disciplines within the school have radically different styles and modes of teaching, and with correspondingly diverse needs when it comes to peer support.

Artifacts

"For many of us, it was a wake up call in examining privilege and agency. In my own creative practice as a teacher and designer, we are moving forward with a discipline-specific working group to develop language and policies to foster a more inclusive climate in the costume shop, our production fittings, and in our dressing rooms...policies that will impact more than 200 students in our main stage performances each year." — Christianne Myers

"It was exciting to see how seemingly disparate teaching practices from the different units in the school can inform one another on how to create a more inclusive environment in the classroom." — Anil Çamcı

"I was able to see, read, and listen to perspectives within an academy that is often misunderstood because of misrepresentation or only thinking in one way... Looking outside our classical music silos and casting a light on the possibilities of greater understanding of other teachings through listening and watching others teach opens the minds of the students, and in no way inhibits the advancement of the primary Professor. Inclusive teaching is shared ideas across platforms of expressions. There can't be once way to teach a bird to fly, or a flutist to sing." — Amy Porter

Resources

- Warikoo (2016). *The Diversity Bargain*. U of Chicago Press.
- Chesler & Young (2007). Faculty Members' Social Identities and Classroom Authority. *New Directions for Teaching & Learning*.
- Laura Smith et al. (2017). White Professors Teaching About Racism: Challenges and Rewards. *The Counseling Psychologist*.
- Jill Cosh (1998). Peer Observation in Higher Education: A Reflective Approach. *Innovations in Education and Training International*.

Next Steps

Voluntary SMTD Faculty Peer Support network launching in Fall 2018.

Faculty will form pairs or small groups and provide mutual assistance and support to achieve inclusive teaching goals.

Activities will be up to the faculty, as appropriate for their teaching activities. May include: classroom observation, video review, syllabus review, rehearsal observation.