SILS Taskforce on Diversity

Purpose: In order to build upon and enhance the diverse and open culture of SILS, this taskforce will sustain diversity efforts on a student level by embedding duties into an existing position within each student organization (ILSSA, AMLISSL, Doctoral Students, ISSUE, SCALA, ASIS&T, SCOSAA, SLA, CheckedOut). These representatives will support faculty and students in the development of diversity-related programming, educational content, recruitment efforts, and raise the level of discourse and awareness around diversity-related topics.

Introduction

Presently, the only officially-mandated group to promote diversity within SILS is the SILS Diversity Committee, which is limited to a single student representative from each degree program. Masters and undergraduate students have voiced a desire to address cultural heterogeneity, in terms of both curriculum content and SILS faculty, staff and student body demographics. Based on the enthusiastic response to the SILS Diversity Initiative and preliminary gathering of informal data, there is a clear need for a collective, sustained effort towards moving diversity into the mainstream culture of the School.

Equity and pluralism is not accomplished through a one-shot event, nor isolated in nature. As underrepresented populations grow in the United States, professionals in every field need to learn how to work with their increasingly diverse colleagues and clients. To this extent, students should have additional opportunities to learn and grow as professionals in terms of experience with and exposure to diversity, no matter their specialty or professional interests.

Implementation

Each student organization will incorporate diversity taskforce duties into the responsibilities of a single officer. The officer chosen is at the discretion of the organization at the beginning of each term.

Responsibilities
While this task force shall be chaired by a student representative in the SILS Diversity Committee, the task force will act both cooperatively and independently of the committee.

As a liaison between the SILS Diversity Committee and the student body, the primary role will be to seek out and coordinate diversity related programming, events and volunteer opportunities related to the interests of the individual student organizations, much like other student organizations. Its secondary role will be to assist the SILS Diversity Committee in coordination and implementation of events and outreach.

Diversity Taskforce members will also be encouraged, but not required, to acquire the SILS Diversity Advocate certification through UNC’s Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs Diversity Education Team. At least one member should be certified and be able to report on broader campus events and issues.

At the conclusion of the three year Taskforce, representatives will present a set of recommendations and strategies to the SILS Diversity Committee for the continued development and support of diversity work in SILS.