

PAM Community Survey June 2020: Brief Report

PAM Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Working Group

On June 10, PAM reached out to all members of the department to affirm and extend messages from Human Ecology and University leadership condemning recent acts of racial violence, and to open a conversation about what we can do as a department to address systemic racism and support our community. As a first step, all members of the PAM community (staff, faculty, undergraduate, PhD, and MHA students) were surveyed to learn more about their perceptions, experiences, and suggestions for improving racial diversity, equity and inclusion in the department. Survey responses were received from 50 participants who were asked to respond to the following open-ended questions:

- When do you feel most included in the life of the department, and when have you felt excluded?
- How might we increase inclusivity and address implicit and explicit racism in PAM and beyond?
- What concrete actions should members of our community take right now and into the future?

Anonymized responses to these questions were coded inductively to identify common themes. The following is a summary of general themes that appeared most frequently in student, faculty, and staff responses. Note that responses from PhD and MHA students were combined given the limited number of Sloan respondents. Further, because most faculty/staff respondents either skipped the inclusion/exclusion questions or talked about other forms of inclusion/exclusion that were not directly related to race or ethnicity, the summary focuses on their suggestions for next steps.

Comments related to inclusion/exclusion. The most common reasons *PhD and MHA students* reported feeling included or excluded from department life were related to participation in the faculty hiring and promotion process, the graduate admissions process, and the selection of and meetings with seminar and conference speakers. Another source of inclusion or exclusion was related to graduate students' participation in informal and formal department meetings and events. Graduate students' experiences of insensitivity and microaggressions also contributed to feelings of inclusion or exclusion in the department.

The most common reason *PAM undergraduates* reported feeling included or excluded from department life were related to the diversity/lack of diversity among undergraduate students in the PAM major and the PAM faculty; the size, format, or composition of their classes; their interactions with faculty outside of class (e.g., TA/RA opportunities and office hours); opportunities for PAM undergraduate students (e.g., RA/TA positions and awards); and experiences of insensitivity, bias, and microaggressions.

Suggestions and actions. The most common suggestions or actions mentioned by *PhD and MHA students* for increasing inclusivity and addressing implicit or explicit racism included: diversifying the PAM faculty, staff, students, and speakers; participating in trainings for faculty,

students, and staff; supporting new initiatives related to racial diversity, equity and inclusion; reporting metrics to gauge progress in PAM; increasing transparency about the selection of graduate students for fellowships, awards/grants, and other opportunities; increasing transparency about faculty recruitment; creating easier opportunities to report or provide feedback about experiences and concerns related to implicit or explicit racism; and modifying the core MHA curriculum and/or classes to address these important issues.

The most frequent suggestions from *undergraduate students* included: diversifying the faculty and students in major; diversifying course content (examples, speakers, readings, alumni speakers); modifying core classes and requirements; and supporting faculty trainings.

The most common suggestions from *staff* included: offering trainings for faculty, students, and staff; sustained support for diversity, equity, inclusion; and offering more opportunities for dialogue and discussions around these issues.

Finally, the most frequent suggestions from *faculty* were related to offering training and better support for faculty around racial diversity, equity and inclusion; and modifying course content and syllabi to address these issues.

These general take-aways from the survey provide important insights into the climate of racial diversity, equity and inclusion in PAM and ways to move forward. Specific suggestions from these take-aways are being considered by a working group of students, staff, faculty, and department leadership charged with developing concrete steps and metrics of progress for improving racial diversity, equity, and inclusion in PAM. We thank you for your participation.