

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE Annual Assessment Diversity Report 2011

Reporting Unit: College of Architecture

Reporting Date: Fall 2011

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Since September 2011 the College of Architecture (COA) has created a new position at the College Executive Leadership level to lead the diversity effort. The position is named "Coordinator for Climate, Equity, Accountability and Outreach." The new coordinator has created the first Diversity Council in the College (CA-DC). It is composed by faculty, students, and staff and led by the coordinator. It was created in consultation with the College Dean and all four Department Heads. These consultations were considered key for two reasons: first, to ensure that all faculty in the Diversity Council had the support from their units; and second, to be sure they had enough time availability to support and lead the diversity effort initiatives. As such, each department has one senior faculty representative in the COA-DC. Student's representation was chosen to ensure the highest possible impact in overall students: there is one representative for undergraduate and one for graduate students; finally, there are two representatives from staff. It needs to be mentioned that while the original intent of the Council was to play a "consulting role" with the Coordinator, the members volunteered to have an active leading role and the efforts of the College are reflecting an enthusiastic work group. Finally, it also needs to be mentioned that the COA Dean has made clear his open support for diversity efforts in the College; the active backing of the initiatives of the Council is key in the success of current initiative.

1) Engaging the Data

The COA had, in Fall 2011, a total enrolment of 1855 students. From these, 76% are undergraduate (1,378), and 26% (477) are graduates (master, professional, and doctoral degrees). Further, during the 2010-2011 academic year the COA has awarded 480 degrees, 337 (70%) for undergraduates and 143 (30%) for graduate degrees (136 master and 9 doctoral degrees).

The COA total degree count average, for the last five years, is 69% male and 31% female. While these are average percentage, there are clear differences within the COA. The highest inequality in degree count by gender is observed at the undergraduate level; the COA total undergraduate degree count average is 72% male and 28% female. Numbers at the graduate level are still unequal but less pronounced: the COA total graduate degree count average is 61% male and 39% female. Finally, at the doctoral level is the only area in which the COA fairs more equal than the university as a whole: the COA total doctoral degree count average is 58% male and 42% female.

There are sharp differences among academic programs within the COA. At the undergraduate level, the program that fairs better in gender terms is Landscape Architecture (LAND) with a total degree count average of 61% male and 39% female. The program that has more room for improvement is Building Construction (COSC) as its total degree count average is 90% male and 10% female, with little variation in the last five years. At the graduate level, the program that shows more equality in gender is the Master of Architecture (MARCH) with an average of 50% male and 50% female over the last five years. The other programs that shows encouraging numbers is Urban & Regional Planning (URPL) with a total degree count that averages 59% male and 41% female showing strong improvement during the past five academic years. On the contrary, the least equal in gender terms is Construction Management (COMG) as the total degree count average is 68% male and 32% female, although some improvement is observed over the past five academic years. The other program that needs more improvement is Land Development (LDEV) with total degree count average of 80% male and 20% female, with little variation during the past five academic years.

In terms of ethnicity, the COA total degree count average is 69% White, 2% Black, 10% Hispanic, 16% International, and 3% Asian. These numbers vary depending on the academic level: the COA total undergraduate degree count average is 82% White, 1% Black, 11% Hispanic, 1% International, and 3% Asian. The COA total graduate degree count average is 42% White, 2% Black, 6% Hispanic, 47% International, and 2% Asian. Finally, the COA total doctoral degree count average is 23% White, 0% Black, 5% Hispanic, 66% International, and 6% Asian. Major efforts are being developed to transform these numbers to achieve a more racially diversified student body in the COA (as explained below).

There are 113 faculty members in the College of Architecture at all rank levels; in the last five years these faculty have been 67% male and 33% female; the gap between men and women is high at the Full Professor level where about 85% are male (15% female); among Associate and Assistant Professors figures are less unequal with 63% male and 37% women; higher differences arise at the instructor level where almost all are men in the last five years (but only out of 3). Finally the category that is more evenly distributed is lectures where about 57 are men and 42 are female.

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In terms of ethnicity, the majority of the faculty is white (73%); Full Professors in the COA are 90% white, with only one African American and one Hispanic; at the Associate level, the percentage of whites has decreased dramatically in the last years: from 85% in 2008 to 59% in 2011; however, there are no blacks and there are only two Hispanics in this category; the decrease on whites comes mainly from Asian / international faculty. The Assistant Professor rank shows the most diversity in ethnicity: 52% are Whites and 15% are Hispanics; there are still no Blacks; the Asian/international group represent 33% at this level. What is interesting is the ethnic composition of instructors and lecturers: all (3) instructors are whites and the 24 lecturers are also mainly white (83%) with only 1 Hispanic and 1 black. Much effort is needed to both recruit and retain racially diversified faculty.

Finally, at the staff level, data is quite different. From the total COA 128 staff members, 77% are women; in terms of ethnicity whites are the largest group (44%) closely followed by Hispanics (43%). There are only 2 African American and 2 Native American staff members. Note that these numbers include the Colonias Program (managed by the Center for Housing and Urban Development (CHUD)).

2) Recent Efforts

There have been a variety of programs and scholarships addressing recruitment and retention among students both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. These efforts have been promoted both at the College and the Departmental levels. Specifically, some of the scholarships that have been allocated during the last year include Lechner, Regent Scholars, Diversity Scholarship (Visualization Department), Camp ARCH (offered to students from Texas border communities with predominantly Hispanic population), Construction Industry Advisory Council (CIAC) Scholarships (Construction Science Department) and College Diversity Funds (by academic programs). This has resulted on of efforts in recruiting and maintaining minority representation in all programs.

The Dean's office has a Departmental approach on funding distribution, allowing each department to internally define ways to spend funding designates specifically to optimize diversity enhancement efforts. Some departments gave few larger scholarships and others opted for giving smaller amounts but serving more students. Each department is promoting different activities and programs addressing diversity enhancement. For example, the COSC industry relations coordinator organized a "College Night" for high school students in predominantly Hispanic school districts. This was done in conjunction with the Hispanic Contractors Association of San Antonio and students and faculty of the COSC were involved.

Further, the COA has promoted activities addressing the needs of specific minority groups. For example, it organized a series of activities supporting the Regent Scholars in the COA; these include special orientation series, social gatherings, and designated coordination support to ensure new and continuing undergraduates in this group optimize their graduation and success rates. Some of the examples of recruitment efforts in the COA; for example, the Department of Visualization actively pursued student recruitment efforts along the Texas border region through connections with the Center for Housing and Urban Development and with the help of our industry partners; they also begun making contacts with Title I schools through the Texas Art Educators Association. Both efforts targeted middle school through high school age students who would otherwise not be likely attend Texas A&M University.

The Department of Construction Science obtained a \$100,00 grant from the National Housing Endowment to work with Prairie View A&M to develop a model of cooperation and improvement of its two academic programs and to share faculty and other activities.

On top of these departmental efforts, the COA has supported travel funding and a diverse range of activities for the Diversity Council's graduate representative (Ed Tarlton). Mr. Tarlton visited several cities with high concentrations of minority's population in an effort to increase recruitment both to our College and to Texas A&M. Specifically, recruitment visits and presentations included Mississippi Valley State University, Alcorn State University, Tougaloo College, Jackson State University, North Carolina A&T University, University of Southern California, Atlanta University (Graduate Fair and the 19th. Annual National *McNair* Research Conference) and Graduate Fair, Delevan Wisconsin. Additionally, the DC's representative made several presentations to recruit undergraduate students from targeted groups; for example, the summer Research Scholars Program-Men of Diversity Group, the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Guide Right Program, the Southwestern Black Student Leadership Conference (in Bryan/College Station). Further, high school campuses were visited and a presentation was prepared specifically to these audiences. The title of the presentation was "Undergraduate & Graduate School: Positioning yourself for acceptance, funding, and expectations after admission!;" this was presented at Pebblebrook High School, Mableton, GA, Frederick Douglass High School and Wooton High School, Atlanta, GA, and at the Education Forum in Atlanta, GA, and at Wootong High School, Gaithersburg, MD. Another presentation prepared was "Financing 'Your' Graduate Education;" this was presented at the 2nd Annual McNair Scholars Retreat, in Bloomfield College, NJ. These efforts, let by the Diversity Council's students representative have been coordinated with TAMU recruitment offices of graduate and undergraduate students.

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3) Future Efforts

Efforts are planned to continue the process of diversifying the recruitment of students. Current coordination with TAMU recruitment units are to be strengthened. The COA-DC is working on making recruitment efforts (as described above) a more permanent activity in our College and to consolidate and expand current initiatives

In terms of retention, efforts are to be focused on climate and enhancement of the climate in the COA. Several activities are being planned to address the improvement of the College climate (see #6). One of the proposals being discussed at the COA-DC is the establishment of a Diversity Certificate: Initial discussions have started with the Department of Multicultural Services. The coordination with the four Department Heads is being done, with support from the COA Dean and the executive leadership team. Further discussion is underway. Faculty from the Landscape and Urban Planning department has initially supported this initiative; the COA will now prepare an agreement with the Multicultural Department and the initial pilot will be led by the LAUP undergraduate programs of landscape architecture and Urban and Regional Planning. Both programs are leading the way, and other departments should follow based on the success of this initiative..

The COA is also exploring some new initiatives: to partner with school districts with concentration of minority populations to maximize recruitment efforts. For example, there are plans to partner with Brownsville ISD, an area with more than 90% Hispanic population, to support their newly created magnet school and to increase recruitment efforts in cities with high Hispanic populations. An initial visit has been done and coordination efforts are being done. An idea that is on the exploratory phase is the partnering with community colleges with high percentage of minorities to ensure higher number of applicants from these groups as well as to improve the quality of these applications. The Diversity Council is searching for the best possible community college that can partner with the COA to ensure both high quality education and a diversified population. Further, current initiatives by the Department of Visualization and Construction Science will continue and will be supported also by the COA. The Diversity Council plans on consolidating plans from all departments in an effort to better coordinate recruitment efforts to maximize current recruitment results.

4) Advisory Groups

The College of Architecture has a total of six academic / industry advisory groups both for the college and four departments. Further, some of the five research and outreach centers have an advisory external council. There has been an explicit effort in all cases to involve a diverse group of individuals from the industry as well as alumni or accomplished professionals in allied areas in order to reflect better current global trends. For example, in the last year there have been some changes in the COA advisory council adding 4 women and 1 African American members; equally in the Master of Urban Planning Advisory Board, there is an explicit effort to ensure that every new vacancy be filled with individuals from underrepresented groups; other example is the Health Industry Advisory Council, with members representing different genders and ethnicities; another example is the Facility Management Industry Advisory Council; it has 6 women, 2 of whom are Hispanic and three men are Hispanic. In all cases the head of the academic and professional unit has made diversification of the external council a priority. Future efforts will continue and should be incorporated as a on-going effort.

5) Organizational Climate

The COA has not distributed a climate survey. The COA diversity coordinator has requested data from VP for diversity and from the DOF for faculty climate data and the Student's Affairs Office for student's data. The COA-DC is in the process of analyzing this data and evaluating the need (or not) of creating our own data. Initially, the first group that is being analyzed is students. It has been observed that the most critical area to focus is undergraduate students, and that is going to be the emphasis for this coming year. Next, faculty and staff will be the focus. The emphasis has been established on focusing more on the most vulnerable groups, those who are more underrepresented in the COA.

6) Other Efforts

The newly created Diversity Council has met every other week during Fall 2011 to start a new and comprehensive approach on diversity enhancement in the COA. The discussions have been long and wide; three speakers have been invited to help the council on defining its goals as well as the relevant policies and activities to ensure a successful diversity plan; one presenter came from the Office of the VP of Diversity, one from the Department of Multicultural Services, and the third one was Dr. Patricia Larke, an expert on Diversity from an scholarship perspective. Members of the COA DC have also attended the presentations organized by different TAMU units on diversity.

Discussion on the direction of the diversity plan will continue, and although a long-term plan has not been produced yet, the Diversity Council decided to start with some effective and short term high impact initiatives. These early tasks have started while

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a more comprehensive and inclusive long term plan is better discussed. However, the Council considered that it cannot just wait until the plan is finished to start promoting new initiatives in areas that are “too” obviously needed.

As such, in order to make an initial high impact action, and to raise awareness on the importance of diversity in our College, the COA-DC decided to name 2012-2013 as the **Year of Diversity in the College of Architecture**. This event is being organized in collaboration with the Executive leadership of the COA and student organizations. Various events will take place during 2012-2013, acknowledging the important role diversity plays in the disciplines represented by our college. These activities will include design charrettes, lectures, workshops, and diversity awareness events. Nevertheless, activities preparing the Year of Diversity have already started.

As part of this campaign, a definition of diversity has been shared in all information generated by the Diversity council: *Diversity is meant to encompass the full spectrum of characteristics of our community including ethnic background, religious beliefs, age, political beliefs, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, physical ability, and gender. A diverse college is one that embraces the richness of this variety and provides an environment in which each individual is respected and celebrated.*

As part of this preparation the COA-DC organized a competition among students in our college to create a graphic design/graphic identity that will visually represent the COA vision of diversity. This is an area in which a College of Architecture should have expertise and we took advantage of this fact; the objective was to combine the creativity promoted in this college as part of the disciplines requirements with the diversity theme as presented by the Council. This is both an academic and outreach action. The competition opened on October 24th and closed on November 25th and was opened to all students in the COA. We measured the success of the competition by the number of entries in the competition: a total of 44 entries from our college were received which included the graphics and also statements explaining individual approaches to diversity as viewed in each entry. . All entries have been displayed in the Wright Gallery in the COA.

Parallel to this competition, a second initiative started during the Fall 2011; this is called the COA “Howdy” campaign. Led by the Department of Visualization within the Diversity Council, this campaign consists on showing photos of current students to showcase the MANY FACES that are already part of our College. Extensive discussions among COA-DC council members about how to frame the photos resulted on better and more comprehensive understanding of the need to continue a discussion to create a long-term plan for the COA diversity initiatives. A total of 19 photos were displayed in the Wright Gallery and are having an impact as students, faculty, and staff are becoming more aware of the realities of our College. These photos that aim at representing the current reality of the college are also on display on the electronic screens on the first and second floor of the Langford Architecture Center. The photos are randomly displayed every day to raise awareness of the actual diversity of current students in the college. This effort was led and supported originally by the COA-DC, and has also been backed by the Dean. he objective is to include more students, and add faculty and staff.

To recognize the active student participation and to start the activities of the Diversity Council, a reception was done on December 1st. in the College of Architecture where the winner of the graphic design competition was announced. One winner and two runner-ups were selected. About 100 people including students, faculty, and staff attended the ceremony and the Dean of the College expressed publicly his commitment to diversity and his support to the initiatives of the Diversity Council.

Another activity being planned in the COA-DC is to have a series of workshops tailored to the different constituents of our college. Workshops are to be done at all levels: students (both graduate and undergraduate), faculty, staff AND administration. In conjunction with the Dean of the COA, the objective is to generate awareness about the need to enhance and celebrate diversity and to search for ways to ensure current efforts are not ending at the end of the “year of diversity” but that are permanent and become part of the core functions of the college. The workshops should be done in collaboration of the Diversity Council and the academic departments and research centers.

Further, an initial effort has been done to connect the COA-DC activities with the Former Women Students Network as the current president is a distinguished alumni of the College of Architecture. This organization is expected to be an active participant of the COA diversity activities and more specifically of the Year of Diversity.

Summarizing, the planning of the Diversity Council is being thought and processed at a at different levels, incorporating academic issues with engagement (service) activities and involving all constituents: current and former students, faculty and staff. : In this way, academically, the immediate objective is to incorporate diversity in the curricula (like the diversity certificate, but not limited to this);in terms of faculty incentives, the COA-DC is also discussing ways to recognize diversity efforts on the faculty and how to reward new initiatives; equally on ways to reward staff that work on diversity enhancement initiatives.

Finally the DC is planning on having information (preferably interactive) on the COA website and update COA kiosks to publicize the new initiatives and activities