

DBC

Do Better Cornell

dobettercornell.com

Faculty Senate Presentation
26 Aug 2020

What is Do Better Cornell?

A collective of Cornell students and alumni who released demands to the university on June 12th, 2020.

- Follows the murder of George Floyd, inappropriate actions from Cornell community members, and an inadequate response from the university.
- Demands include actions surrounding police, financial security of students, and several institutional changes to the university.
 - Built upon and recognize demands from BSU in 2015 and 2017 and Julia Feliz in 2019.
 - Viewable [here](#) and [here](#) (dobettercornell.com).

Demands Concerning the Faculty Senate

Universal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Learning

Mandatory coursework for students and programming for faculty.

Student Involvement in Faculty Appointments

Involvement of student leaders in the search committee and hiring process for new faculty members.

Creation of an Anti-Racism Institute

Centralized effort at Cornell to educate its campus and community about the horrors of white supremacy and political education.

Universal DEI Learning – Students

Existing models at Cornell and peer institutions can provide curriculum guidance:

CALS: Completion of a course satisfying the Human Diversity requirement.

Wellesley: Universal one-unit multicultural coursework requirement.

UPitt: Required “Anti-Black Racism” course for all incoming freshmen.

Cornell can join institutional leaders by establishing universal anti-racism coursework. Examining diversity from a broad perspective is the first step, but digging deeper is necessary to create an enduring culture of anti-racism.

Universal DEI Learning – Faculty

There are many resources for faculty to have conversations surrounding diversity and anti-racism ([workshops](#)).

These resources will not have a guaranteed impact unless there is ongoing education and conversation led by faculty.

- Are these workshops being utilized and reaching their target audiences?
- How is Cornell currently upholding DEI standards across all faculty?
- Creation of a permanent requirement for tenure-track faculty to demonstrate meaningful commitment and contribution to DEI at Cornell.

Student Involvement in Faculty Appointments

Involvement of student leaders in the search committee and hiring process for new faculty members.

This process is decentralized by department and lacks universal and enforceable search committee standards and expectations (best practices).

- Including undergraduate students in search committees will make heard a diverse set of voices with unique perspectives on potential hires.
- Cornell must introduce a mechanism to enforce best practices to hold departments accountable for meeting diversity standards.

Creation of an Anti-Racism Institute

A university-backed institute will centralize these anti-racism efforts and allow faculty, staff, and students to work more collaboratively on this effort. There are ongoing initiatives doing this work, e.g.

At Cornell

- [Engaged Cornell](#)
- [Rural Humanities](#)
- [Intergroup Dialogue Project](#)
- [Skills for Success](#)
- [Center for the Study of Inequality](#)

At Other Universities

- [American University](#)
- [Boston University](#)
- [Claremont Graduate University](#)

Support from the Faculty Senate will help prompt administrative action and make Cornell the first in the Ivy League to have a center dedicated to anti-racism.

Questions?

Thank you.