

Recommendations to Enhance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at SEGL

SEGL Alumni Committee for Anti-Racism

Chaired by Manavi Sinha F'19 and Nora Estrada F'19

Fall 2020

Explanatory note:

At the request of SEGL's Head of School, Noah Bopp, in the summer of 2020 Nora Estrada and Manavi Sinha (both graduates of Fall 2019) gathered SEGL graduates in a committee to discuss and offer recommendations to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion at SEGL. The SEGL Alumni Committee for Anti-Racism is a majority BIPOC committee and includes alumni from across the SEGL community. While the SEGL Alumni Committee for Anti-Racism does not consider SEGL to be a racially hostile environment (in fact, many committee members believe that SEGL has done a commendable job in promoting a safe, diverse, and racially conscious residential and academic environment), these proposals seek to enhance and further perfect SEGL's approach to active anti-racism in accordance with the school's mission statement and values.

Our Process

The SEGL Alumni Committee for Anti-Racism worked in conjunction with SEGL's founder and head of school Noah Bopp to determine the feasibility and efficacy of our proposals. We also worked with SEGL's Academic Dean and English teacher Christian Starling to make changes to the English curriculum which are not included in the final proposals, as they are not under the jurisdiction of the SEGL Board of Trustees.

Thank you to our members...

Kendall Greene

Kahdeem Cohens

Nathalie Mitchell

Miles Weddle

Riann Dhakar

Mary Imevbore

Kennedy Anderson

Noah Lee

Mia Felt

Muniyat Choudhury

Carlos Hernandez

Nicolas Tumaneng

Rosie Juma

Tanisha Reddy

Ishika Kothari

Niharika Bhavsar

Azé Williams

1. SEGL should incorporate discussions on race and racism into the Ethics and Leadership curriculum.

- a. SEGL should implement an opening case study explicitly focused on race as a part of the Ethics and Leadership curriculum; such a case study should occur in the beginning of the semester so as to foster a focus on race for the rest of the semester.
 - i. This case study would focus on specific policy issues surrounding institutional racism, with one example being mass incarceration.
- b. Conversations surrounding certain existing case studies should be explicitly tied to race. For example, as a part of a case study on environmental policy, discussions may focus on environmental racism or the disproportionate effects of climate change on low-income communities. Nearly all case studies focused on domestic issues can be tied to race, and should be treated as such.

2. SEGL should continue to prioritize the racial diversity of the faculty.

- a. SEGL's current policy in regards to hiring new faculty members is to prioritize recruiting applicants of color. SEGL should continue to adhere to this policy.
- b. Ideally, the diversity of the faculty of SEGL should be representative of the diversity of the student body so as to ensure that all students feel supported and understood in residential and academic spaces. When hiring, SEGL should take into consideration the demographics of the standing faculty and consider which groups or identities may be underrepresented.
- c. SEGL can further increase the racial diversity of the faculty without directly hiring new teachers by taking on Student Advisors, who in the past have been SEGL alumni living in the D.C. area.

3. SEGL should continue to prioritize a racially diverse student body.

- a. SEGL should ensure that the racial diversity of each semester nearly represents the racial diversity of the United States. This does not mean that each semester's demographics must numerically reflect the country's statistical diversity, but rather that a plurality of racially diverse perspectives accounting for the experiences of the American people should be found within the student body.

4. SEGL should designate more time within the curriculum to discuss race by shortening the Arabic and Mandarin curriculum.

- a. Rather than six weeks each of Arabic and Mandarin, the curriculum should accommodate only three weeks of each language. The remaining six weeks of hourly blocks on Thursday will be utilized for students to discuss the connections between their curriculum and race. This will increase discussions of race while still fulfilling the purpose of Arabic and Mandarin classes to expose students to potentially new languages.
- b. The 12:00 PM Thursday block is an important time for the SEGL faculty to meet and discuss without the responsibility of supervising students. To preserve this period of time for the faculty, these discussions on race can be supervised by Student Advisors.

5. One of SEGL's main priorities should be to further students' understanding of, connection to, and immersion in the city of Washington, D.C.

- a. One Ethics and Leadership case study should pertain to a policy issue specific to Washington, D.C., a city that presents a wide variety of case studies related to race. Gaining a deeper understanding of and connection to the city of Washington, D.C. can model for students how to be more aware of issues within their own communities.
- b. Saturday Academies should adhere to their original intent, which is to help students further explore and understand Washington, D.C.

6. The SEGL Board of Trustees should reflect the racial diversity of the SEGL community.

- a. As of Fall 2020, only two out of eleven members of the SEGL Board of Trustees are people of color. Out of those two, both members are Black. A plurality of experience is necessary for the Board to adequately account for the needs of SEGL's community.
- b. When bringing on new members to the SEGL Board of Trustees, SEGL should take into consideration the demographics of the standing Board of Trustees and consider which racial groups or identities may be underrepresented.

Signed:

SEGL Alumni Committee for Anti-Racism

Manavi Sinha

Nora Estrada

Niharika Bhavsar

Nicolas Tumaneng

Carlos Hernandez

Noah Lee

Mia Felt

Riaan Dhankhar

Tanisha Reddy

Ishikaa Kothari

Kennedy Anderson

Rosie Juma

Muniyat Choudhury

Nathalie Mitchell

Kendall Greene

Azé Williams

Further Inquiry

If you have any further questions for the SEGL Alumni Committee for Anti-Racism or the committee's final proposals, please do not hesitate to reach out. You may contact Manavi Sinha at manavisinha1@gmail.com and Nora Estrada at nora.t.estrada@gmail.com.