EEOC Annual Report 2016-2017
Pawan Dhingra and Natalie Masuoka, co-chairs.

For 2016-2017, EEOC decided to take stock of the diversity initiatives taking place on campus and their relationship to EEOC. Put simply, there was a large number of new working groups and committees attending to diversity from a host of perspectives, making it confusing as to what EEOC’s position was relative to them and the campus. Under the leadership of then CDO Mark Brimhall-Vargas, the campus had taken steps towards addressing various needs, but the growth of attention was not accompanied by a clearly stated vision or organizational chart. EEOC needed to take stock of its place for an additional reason. In the past, EEOC has spent considerable time on initiatives at the request of other offices, including the CDO (see the 2015-2016 committee report). We would produce reports or make recommendations that we were proud of. But, it seemed that little came of them often times. We were left wondering how EEOC can play a key role on campus.

We made a conscious effort this year not to immediately take on new projects but instead to decide how EEOC should evolve. Our first meeting served as a mini-retreat in a sense, for we used it to reflect on our purpose relative to the campus. The consensus was EEOC should represent the viewpoints of faculty on diversity and equality needs for AS&E, with input from administrative staff and students. Many organizations and offices attend to the student experience. EEOC will not duplicate their efforts but will support them as it can. Of primary concern for EEOC will be campus-wide issues that involve faculty, including the campus climate, faculty hiring/retention, and curriculum. We aim to be proactive rather than only reactive, although we realize that often issues come up and we will be in a reactive mode. In addition to our other duties of administrating the Multicultural Service Award and staffing the Diversity Fund committee, we have the capacity to take on one major issue per academic year.

It was during the fall that CDO Brimhall-Vargas announced his resignation. We decided that our main focus would be to work with President Monaco and Provost Harris to strengthen the CDO position. Members of EEOC met with CDO Brimhall-Vargas to learn his views on diversity, his position, and EEOC. It was from that meeting that we decided that the co-chairs of EEOC should meet with President Monaco and Provost Harris to consider how the position can be better resourced in order to affect change. For instance, one suggestion from EEOC was to have the position report directly to President Monaco. Via email exchanges with President Monaco, he explained to co-chair Dhingra that such a move was not possible and why. Still, we decided to meet in person. EEOC members met in advance that in-person meeting to discuss how to support the CDO position best.

Masuoka and Dhingra’s in-person meeting with President Monaco and Provost Harris, in December 2016, was productive in better understanding how the CDO position is structured, the concerns EEOC sees with its past formulation, and how EEOC can partner with Ballou in selecting the next CDO.
EEOC met again in February to debrief from that meeting and decide next steps in how to support the hiring of the new CDO. We decided to meet with the Interim CDO, Professor Ellen Pinderhughes, in order to share with her our views on the CDO position and get her perspective on diversity needs in general at Tufts. We met with Professor Pinderhughes in April, per her schedule. It was a helpful conversation for all involved. It gave Professor Pinderhughes useful background on the CDO position and also informed us about how the CDO search is moving forward and what are the priorities around diversity on campus.

For next year, EEOC decided that it should focus on bringing someone from the SMFA onto the committee; establish better communication with OEO (Jill Zelmer is an ex-officio member of the committee but does not attend, which is not uncommon for ex-officio members); start a relationship with the newly established Faculty Senate in order to achieve goals; meet with the new CDO, once appointed, and generally be a space that advocates for and to faculty around issues of diversity.

EEOC administered the Multicultural Service Awards. They were given to Reverend McGonigle, Senior Lecturer Tendulkar, and Professor Lowe.

The 2017-2018 co-chairs of EEOC will be Senior Lecturer Daniel McCusker, who is a long-time member of the committee and a former co-chair, and Associate Professor Kamran Rastegar.