

# Education Action Team

# INCLUSION

# ACTION

# One-Year Update

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# Inclusion in Action Working Group Definition

## Education/Learning

This action theme is about promoting a growth mindset and attitude of life-long learning regarding equity, inclusion and diversity.





**A key strength of Smith is the level of enthusiasm and dedication that members of the college community feel about the educational mission of the institution.**

- Clear desire for **more learning opportunities** that **break down barriers** between students, staff and faculty
- Clear desire for **capacity-building opportunities** that help **improve sensitivity to inequities**, while also instilling the **ability to communicate** about difficult issues and **collaborate** for positive change





# Hypothesis

Offering opportunities for people to connect as human beings--face to face, with whole and varied identities--in low-stakes, brave spaces may facilitate education and understanding.





# Experiment

## Three Surveys

- **What Do Staff Wish Students and Faculty Knew?**
  - **What Do Students Wish Professors Knew?**
  - **What Do Professors Wish Students Knew?**



# How many responded?



**42**  
staff

**27**  
Students

**34**  
Faculty



## What I Wish Students and Faculty at Smith Knew

Following successful surveys of and conversations about what students wish professors knew and what professors wish students knew, the members of the Education Action Team invite staff to answer the following questions. We hope to learn more about your experiences with equity-and-inclusion teaching and learning opportunities on campus but not necessarily in the classroom.

Your answers are anonymous, though you can choose to identify yourself below. Please answer by 3/9 to be included in the Education Action Team's preliminary report, which will be shared at the Inclusion in Action One-Year Update on 3/30. We will sponsor an event to discuss our findings more fully at a later date.

## Sample Staff Data

As a member of the staff, what do you wish students and faculty could know about you?

“I'd also like them to know that it is not always easy to be part of the low end of the hierarchy on campus.”

“I'd like faculty and students to know I care about the work I do here.”



## Sample Staff Data

As a member of the staff, what do you wish students and faculty could know about you?

“I wish faculty could see how many brilliant, talented, knowledgeable educators are hidden in plain view among the staff. I wish they could see them as valuable resources and potential collaborators, from whom faculty can learn and vice versa.”

## Sample Staff Data

Please describe a context in which you've learned something significant about equity and inclusion. This may or may not be in the classroom.

“I've learned a lot about equity when I have been able to participate in conversations that include a cross section of faculty/staff/students from at Smith...Participating in the Community Building Book Club last spring where we discussed "So You Want to Talk About Race" was pivotal for me.”



## Sample Staff Data

Please describe a context in which you've learned something significant about equity and inclusion. This may or may not be in the classroom.

“After growing up in a very white and inherently racist community, I worked in restaurants with a lot of immigrants and people of color. We worked side-by-side, making decisions together while focusing on doing our individual part to make the restaurant better.”

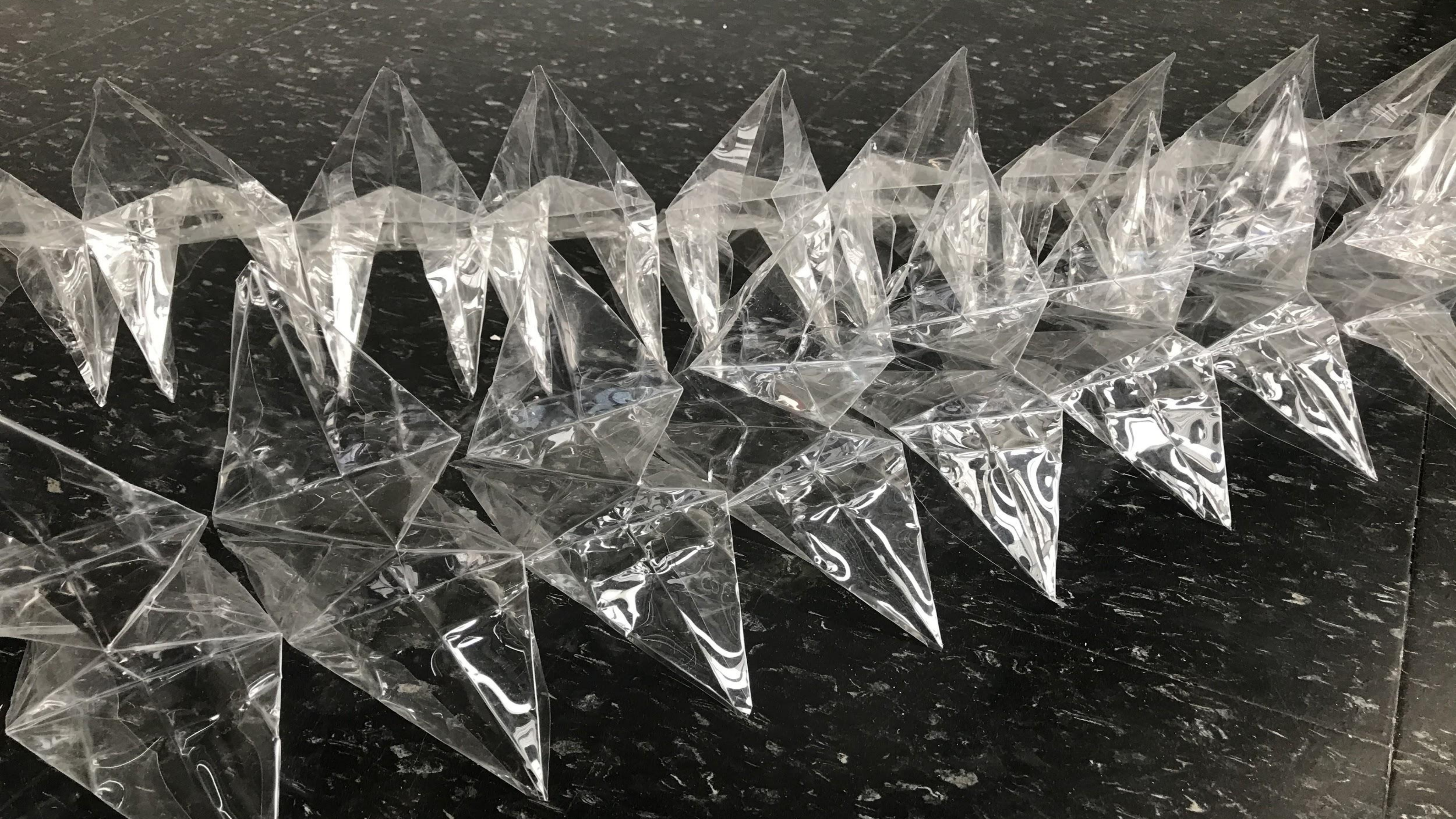
## Sample Staff Data

Please identify a context in which you have taught about equity and inclusion.

“I have a non-visible physical disability, and I've had a lot of conversations about accessibility on campus.”

“A coworker expressed frustration that she couldn't get "they/them" pronouns to work in her brain. We talked through why some people use them, how to get used to it grammatically, and the importance of practice, trying to change, and forgiveness for mistakes.”







# Student Survey and Sample Data

## What do students wish their professors knew?

“I have a hearing loss and I need subtitles and for you to ask students to speak up when they talk quietly.”

“Depression is real.”

“My pronouns (they/them) aren't frivolous; they represent the culmination of years of confusion, frustration, and finally, self-acceptance.”



# Faculty Survey and Sample Data

## What do professors wish their students knew?

“I wish that they understood: what it means to be contingent faculty; that Smith treats its contingent faculty better than many other institutions; nevertheless, being contingent exacts a significant psychological burden.”

“I am doing my best and I too am juggling many competing tasks/responsibilities.”

“I wish they knew how much I care, and that I'm here to teach them and to help them. I also wish that they knew that sometimes learning can be uncomfortable, but that we're here to guide them through that discomfort.”







# Education Team Findings

Ultimately...

- the staff desire to be treated with human decency (i.e., to be seen as whole people with complex lives and talents),
- the students desire that faculty consider their outside lives, and
- the faculty desire that others know they care

**Staff, students, and faculty all make valuable contributions to equity and inclusion education at Smith, but more opportunities for connection and mutual understanding would enhance our community.**

# Our Recommendations

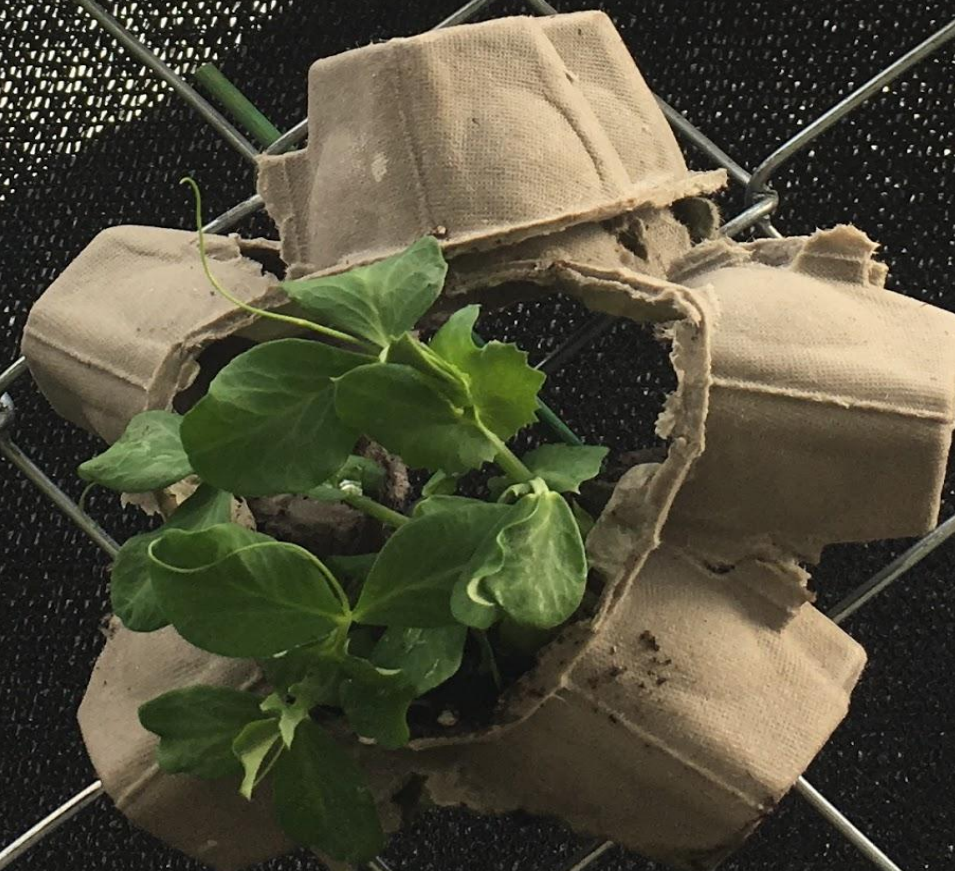
1. Offer **whole-community learning opportunities** about equity and inclusion at least once a year, e.g., an afternoon event in the spring.
2. Elevate **staff contributions**, and recognition of these contributions, to teaching about equity and inclusion.
3. Continue to **map equity and inclusion efforts** across campus.
4. Further **analyze survey** data.
5. Host **staff, student, and faculty conversations** based on survey data collected in spring 2020 (Cromwell Day?) & less formal settings (art museum atrium or on “stoops”). Sample data can be printed onto “playing cards” to seed conversation, with goal to **promote deeper understanding of each other’s contributions** and challenges regarding equity and inclusion.



# Pollinate Hope

An experiment in reusing materials  
that decompose, and the giving of  
pea sprouts that can be eaten.

*Distribution: May 1st 12pm - May 2nd 5pm*





. . . to the students of Lynne Yamamoto who provided the artwork accompanying these slides.

Student work in order of appearance:

Sophie Willard Van Sistine  
Emily Powers  
Benjamin Kleinman-Eddy  
Wells Wells  
Lizzy Dixon  
Angie Gregory

. . . to Minh Ly of Institutional Research for providing expert guidance on our survey design.

. . . to Queen Lanier, who took care of logistics for our team.

# Thank you.

. . . to the staff, students, and faculty who devote so much of themselves to learning and teaching about equity and inclusion.



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