

## Texas iSchool D&I Activities 2019-2020

*Our active and committed Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Committee was involved in planning and delivering a number of services for our iSchool community during the 2019-2020 academic year. Some activities did not come to fruition due to the impact of COVID-19 but may well be completed in the future. Megwitch, thank you, to the D&I Committee members for their ideas, conversation, and action. And megwitch, thank you, to Dean Meyer for his support!*

### Committee members

- Harika Bommu (MSIS Student Representative)
- Keisha Brown (iSchool Director of Communications)
- Sam Burns (Committee Co-Chair, iSchool Senior IT manager)
- Julia Davila Coppedge (MSIS Student Representative)
- Maribel Falcon (MSIS Student Representative)
- Joohee Oh (MSIS Student Representative)
- Karen L. Pavelka (Senior Lecturer)
- Ida Rahnamai (Senior Administrative Associate)
- Lorienne Roy (Committee Co-Chair, Professor)
- Abigale Stangl (Post-Doctoral Research Fellow)
- Rachel Van Middlesworth (iSchool Senior administrative associate)
- Bo Xie (Professor)

### Committee Charge

“Dedicated to increasing the iSchool's diversity and creating an inclusive community that welcomes all students, staff, faculty, and friends of the school.”

### Completed Events

(in roughly chronological order)

#### **Training with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office** (16 September)

- We organized a session for iSchool faculty and staff (including doctoral students who are TAs/AIs) to meet with staff members from the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office; Attendees: 23.
- Organized by Bo Xie

#### **Training with the Texas Global Staff on “Working with International Students”** (20 September)

- Attendees: 15.
- Organized by Bo Xie

#### **3rd Annual Accessibility Hackathon** (15 November)

- The D&I Committee held two events this year focused on fostering a culture of access towards an inclusive learning and working environment at the School of Information. At each event, we considered universal design, an approach to the design of products and services to be usable by

the greatest number of people including individuals with disabilities, to stimulate collaboration and to effect changes that will ultimately benefit all at the iSchool.

- Organized by Sam Burns and Jaxsen Day.

#### **Drafting of Land Acknowledgement for iSchool Website (fall 2019)**

- Dr. Roy and Sam Burns worked with staff from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (DDCE) to discuss a first ever UT-wide Land Acknowledgement statement sanctioned by UT leadership. While we were ultimately unable to generate interest, Dr. Roy did write and we will soon be publishing to the iSchool Website our own Land Acknowledgement.
- “We acknowledge that the iSchool sits on indigenous land. The Tonkawa lived in central Texas and the Comanche and Apache moved through this area. Today, various indigenous peoples from all over the globe visit Austin and/or call it home. We are grateful to be able to study and learn on this piece of Turtle Island.”
- Organized by Lorie Roy and Sam Burns

#### **Tacos & Coffee for Students during Fall Finals Week (9 December)**

- Organized by Ida Rahnamai and Maribel Falcon

#### **Co-sponsorship: Monthly Meeting of the ATX Librarians Social Club + Archivists of Central Texas (10 December)**

- Organized by Lorie Roy

#### **Accessibility Luncheon (14 February)**

- Organized by Sam Burns and Jaxsen Day

#### **Kick-off Meeting of iPALS (21 February)**

- iPALS is a mentoring program, cohosted by SASI and the D&I Committee. In this program, international iSchool students and domestic iSchool members (students, staff, or faculty) are paired with each other to do fun activities together outside of the classroom. The goal is to build a greater sense of the international community at the iSchool. Students had plans for additional events but unfortunately these did not happen due to the COVID situation. They are planning to continue this program with SASI next semester.
- Organized by Joohee Oh and Harika Bommu with participation/attendance by other D&I Committee members.

#### **Pedernales Falls Hike & Lunch (22 February)**

- They carpooled over to Pedernales Falls State Park, then went to Jester King for lunch afterwards. The goal of the trip was to build community in the iSchool, and based on the feedback this goal was accomplished. 24 students and 5 staff attended in total.
- Organized by Rachel Van Middlesworth and Carla Criner. Support by other members of the D&I Committee.
- Sample student feedback:
  - “It was so much fun and a needed break from the work-school cycle!”

- “I had a great time exploring nature, eating great food, and bonding with fellow iSchool students and faculty. I look forward to the next event to strengthen our iSchool community!”
- “Thank you so much , not only for the activity organization but also for the guidance, culture communication and friends making!”
- “I wanted to thank you for all of the time, effort, and resources that went into our wonderful trip to Pedernales Falls on Saturday. It was great to get the opportunity to meet staff, faculty, and other students while enjoying the beautiful weather and, later, the delicious pizza at Jester King.”

**Summer 2020:** Loriene Roy and Bo Xie have been assisting students who created the statement on diversity/support for the iSchool. Loriene reviewed and edited documents and provided resources. Loriene and Bo participated in a conference call hosted by Emma Hetrick.

**Note: Dr. Acker also organized the Reading club and Friendsgiving.**

**Note: Loriene also served as the iSchool Minority Liaison Officer. She created weekly messages to students during the fall and spring semesters with links to activities and resources in the iSchool, campus, and community.**

## **Events Not Completed Due to COVID-19**

### **Co-Sponsorship of “Change the Subject” film on changing subject headings**

- Film screening and speaker
- Organizers: Amelia Acker and

### **Co-sponsorship: Monthly Meeting of the ATX Librarians Social Club + Archivists of Central Texas**

- Event to take place as Austin Book Arts Center
- Organizer: Loriene Roy

### **Additional iPals Events**

- Organizers: Joohee Oh and Harika Bommu

### **Live Music Outing**

- Organizers: Loriene Roy and Rachel Van Middlesworth

### **Drag Queen Story Times (at two public library branches)**

- Organizers: Julia Davila Coppedge and Emily Vernon (ALA/TLA Co-Director)

### **Student Diversity Student Paper Award**

- Organizer: Maribel Falcon

### **Additional Training Opportunities**

- We had planned to have an invited speaker talk about Implicit Bias.
- Organizer: Bo Xie

### **Support for Student Conference Attendance and Participation, especially at ED&I events**

- **POC in LIS Summit.** Call for Participation, <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/pocinlis/>. Friday, 24 July, 2020 at Loyola Marymount U (LA). Proposals due by 4/17/2020.
- **American Library Association Annual Conference.** Chicago, 25-30 June (Additional support for our Spectrum Scholars?) ALA.org
- **11th National Conference of African American Librarians.** 5-9 August, Tulsa, OK. <https://www.ncaal.org/>
- **Native American and Indigenous Studies Association.** 7-9 May, Toronto. <https://www.naisa.org/>
- **Haskell Indian Nations University.** Louise Erdrich talk, 11 March 2020

### **Other Ideas**

**Human Library** (Loriene Roy)

**Trading Cards** (Loriene Roy)