TO: Members of the Ad Hoc Equity & Justice Committee (formerly Equity & Inclusion Committee)

DATE: November 23, 2020

RE: Revised Charge to the Committee

Thank you for your work on the committee thus far, and for your thoughtful suggestions for revising the committee’s charge in light of what you have learned. Based on your recommendations, I have revised the charge, which appears below. I am also happy to adopt the new committee name you have proposed.

Below are the five elements of the Equity & Justice Committee’s new charge:

1. **Analyze existing quantitative and qualitative data collected in previous surveys of all department constituents (undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff), internal and external reviews, Departmental Meeting and Policy Committee meeting minutes, and Graduate Office data on admissions, recruitment, funding, and assignments to identify known concerns related to equity and inclusion.** The analysis of existing quantitative and qualitative data will be used to guide and inform priorities for the 2020-2021 academic year, specifically policy recommendations regarding concerns that are appropriately addressed locally and those better addressed with relevant campus partners.

2. **Identify initiatives and decisions that the department has already agreed to but has yet to implement.** In particular, please review discussions at Departmental Meetings over the past several years.

3. **Develop recommendations for concrete steps that the department can take to improve climate, with priority given in the 2020-2021 academic year to concerns about anti-Blackness in department climate, procedures, and interactions.** Please consider both steps to address immediate concerns and those that can build a more responsive and active relationship between the department’s leadership and students, faculty, and staff. Specific tasks include:
   a. Based on your analysis of elements 1 and 2 above, identify a small subset of concerns about anti-Blackness in the department that will be addressed in the 2020-2021 academic year.
   b. Develop a draft grievance policy to be presented at a Departmental Meeting for discussion. The grievance policy should be informed by other BSOS departmental grievance policies and examples from sociology departments at peer institutions. Please actively engage with department constituents throughout the process of developing the policy by sharing drafts for feedback, holding Zoom “town halls” and office hours as appropriate, and providing opportunities for individuals to share anonymous feedback about concerns, reservations, and other issues.
c. Develop and schedule interactive workshops to be offered in spring 2021 that will provide an opportunity for the department to share information and engage in dialogue about one or two of the issues identified by graduate students as their top priorities for climate concerns related to anti-Blackness.

d. Develop a list of concrete recommendations that address topics raised in the above workshops. For example, if a workshop is held on developing an anti-racist course syllabus, you could prepare a list of concrete steps faculty could voluntarily take to revise existing syllabi and inform future syllabi.

e. Identify appropriate metrics that will allow the department to evaluate progress on addressing racial disparities in admissions, recruitment, funding, assignments, research opportunities, and mentoring.

f. Working with the Graduate and Undergraduate Offices and the chair, develop recommendations for exit interviews that can be offered to all department constituents to surface concerns about equity and inclusion.

g. By the end of fall 2021, develop a Google form or other tool that department constituents can use to share thoughts, concerns, reservations, and ideas about equity and inclusion in the department generally, as well as the committee’s efforts to address those concerns.

4. Consider and develop any additional recommendations on actions beyond the scope of this charge that the committee feels are relevant and within its general purview, to be presented to the department by the May Departmental Meeting.

5. Consider and develop recommendations on the future of the Equity & Justice Committee, to be presented to the department by the May Departmental Meeting. In particular, consider whether it should be codified as a standing departmental committee that focuses on equity and inclusion issues. Please also consider any additional recommendations on other adjustments to the department’s administrative and/or governance structure that may be valuable.

Thank you all for your service on the committee and your commitment to advancing the goals equity and inclusion in our department.

Sincerely,

Jeff Lucas
Professor and Chair