

College of the Arts (COTA) Strategic Plan

(Updated 3/31/22)

Executive Summary

This document details the Strategic Plan for Kennesaw State University's College of the Arts in relation to our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts. Information about our mission and values at the university and college level as they relate to DEI efforts are outlined. A five-part strategic plan covers areas of focus for College of the Arts, including Hiring/Training initiatives, Guest artist/scholar programs, and the facilitation of support networks for this valuable work. This report links our strategic effort to the university at large by providing connections to the KSU R2 roadmap, the COTA R2 roadmap, and the Division of Diverse & Inclusive Excellence E3 Action Plan.

Intro/Overview

This document outlines the Strategic Plan in relation to DEI initiatives for Kennesaw State University's College of the Arts. Examples of student-centered approaches to serve a diverse spectrum of backgrounds and talents can be found throughout this report in articulation with KSU's mission:

“At Kennesaw State, we serve as a powerful example of the impact a student-centered, research-driven university education can deliver. We help students succeed through exploration, collaboration, and rigor, uniting a diverse spectrum of backgrounds and talents. At KSU, students become the individuals who people want as colleagues and leaders”

In addition, this document puts focus on the work environment for faculty/staff, and the learning environment for students, highlighting novel educational experiences and training opportunities for our entire COTA network as inspired by the DDIE mission:

“The Division of Inclusive Excellence and Diversity at Kennesaw State University seeks to foster an inclusive learning and work environment that promotes an understanding of, and appreciation for, difference through initiatives, programs, services, and training”

College of the Arts: Context

The College of the Arts enthusiastically embraces the opportunity to partner with Division of Diverse & Inclusive Excellence in examining and improving our strategic plan. As artists, we recognize the crucial role our mediums play in reaching across barriers and communicating our shared humanity to audiences of all kinds. As educators, we are committed to bringing visionary, inclusive content and experiences to our student body. As a community we work to create a welcoming environment that celebrates diversity and works to bridge gaps in our understanding through DEI support and training. Diversity & Inclusion is top on the list of our values within COTA1. Our commitment to engagement and community are crucial to the fostering of a strong and interwoven relationship between COTA and DEI efforts.

1. https://arts.kennesaw.edu/about/who_we_are.php.

COTA's work towards common DEI goals are supported by our COTA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion committee with the mission to support “the cultivation of learning communities that actively listens and intentionally responds to the needs of the current generation of students, faculty, and staff” and strives to be “adaptable and ready to implement initiatives through shared governance, training, programming, research, and events”. Our strongest asset within COTA is our willingness to creatively embrace positive change. As a community of art-makers we understand the importance of self-examination in order to improve. The arts have always been a place that welcomes people from all walks of life, therefore diversity and inclusion efforts fit naturally with who we are. COTA as a whole is ready, willing, and excited to take on new methods and approaches to embrace DEI efforts and make shifts in our work environment, hiring, curriculum, programming, and strategic plans where necessary. We recognize that a

more diverse, inclusive and equitable workplace and educational space benefits each of us, and look forward to our continued partnership with KSU and DDIE to support these important initiatives.

COTA DEI Strategic Plan Report

1. DEI Training for Hiring Managers and Search Committees

- a. COTA R2: 6A Effectively engage students, faculty and staff in DEI dialogue
COTA R2: 6B Develop DEI programming, support networks and trainings for students, faculty, and staff.
- b. KSU R2: Build a strong and sustainable infrastructure to support research
- c. E3 Action 3: Develop strategic campus training and education agenda

In Fall 2021 COTA has hosted 5 Inclusive Hiring Search Committee Trainings in collaboration with DDIE. 39 COTA Faculty/Staff attended those training sessions, including full participation from our unit Chairs and our Dean.

Timeline: Fall 2021, 5 trainings were offered. Spring 2021, we will add an additional training if required. Yearly options to complete this training beginning in Fall 2022.

Resource Needs: Dr. Johniqua Williams has put in the time/effort to create and offer these sessions.

Success Metrics: 90% participation from search committee members.
100% participation from COTA Chairs and Dean.

Chairs should report their level of departmental participation by the closing of the academic year.

2. Advertise Faculty Searches in Publications that Target Underrepresented Groups

- a. COTA R2: 6A Effectively engage students, faculty, and staff in DEI dialogue
COTA R2: 6B Develop DEI programming, support networks and trainings for students, faculty, and staff.
- b. KSU R2: Build a strong and sustainable infrastructure to support research
- c. E3 Action 4: Facilitate strategic DEI plans in each college and division

“Workforces that contain a wide range of sociocultural identities show better performance and have greater innovation”

K.W.Phillips, “How Diversity Works,” *Scientific American* 311, no.4 (2014): 42-47, doi:10.1038/scientificamerican1014-42

COTA has invested in a new publication package in order to support our goal of reaching a wider group of potential faculty and staff. In addition to the discipline specific websites we currently use, we are adding AA Graystone Workplace Diversity Package which includes the following publications: *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*, *Workplace Diversity*, Diversity Connect, Out & Equal, LGBT Connect, Disability Connect, and Veterans Connect. Additionally,

these searches will be advertised on Diversity.com. It is our belief that one of the many benefits of a diverse faculty is a diverse and robust research profile for COTA.

Timeline: Fall 2021 and ongoing thereafter for all job searches. We will utilize these more diverse venues for job posting advertisements here forward.

Resource Needs: Creating inclusive job descriptions for open positions in coordination with Chairs and Dean. Disseminating job postings effectively. (This initiative will be funded by academic affairs from here forward)

Success Metric: Successful advertisement of job postings in the new, wider network of job listing websites. Perhaps there is a way to analyze the increase in internet traffic from these sites to our job listings.

3. General DEI Training for COTA Faculty, Staff and Students

- a. COTA R2: 6A Effectively engage students, faculty, and staff in DEI dialogue
COTA R2: 6B Develop DEI programming, support networks and trainings for students, faculty, and staff.
- b. KSU R2: Provide enhanced and unique educational experiences
KSU R2: Build a strong and sustainable infrastructure to support research
- c. E3 Action 3: Develop strategic campus training and education agenda.

“What does it take to catalyze dialogue, to help bring about this process in which people are better able to think together, to co-create new insights and perspectives and ideas and metaphors and possibilities?”

Gordon, R. D. (2006). Communication, Dialogue, and Transformation. *Human Communication*, 9(1), pp. 17-30.

The COTA student advisory council in coordination with the office of the Dean and DDIE have coordinated two virtual trainings which will be open and available to all COTA students, occurring February 15/16, 2022. In Spring of 2021 we will be pursuing general DEI training available to all faculty and staff. It is our belief that a shared language around diversity, equity, and inclusion will lead to meaningful dialogue.

Timeline: Student Trainings planned for February, Spring 2022. We have the goal of providing this as a yearly option for students starting in 2022-2023 year. Faculty/Staff trainings are currently in development with hopes to offer an option for COTA wide Faculty/Staff trainings yearly beginning in Spring 2022.

Resource Needs: Dr. Johniqua Williams time/effort to create these trainings. Participation from student body as coordinated between DDIE, Student Advisory Council, and COTA DEI committee. Coordination with Deans and Units to schedule Faculty/Staff training options.

Success Metrics: Participation/Representation from student leaders (this should include representation from the Student Advisory Council, the COTA DEI student reps, and unit

wide RSO Leaders) in each discipline. Creation of an exit survey that shows over 50% satisfaction with the trainings and associated offerings.

4. Support DEI programming through Diverse Voices Mini-Grant Series

- a. COTA R2: 3C: Increase support for student scholarship and creative activity.
COTA R2: 6A Effectively engage students, faculty and staff in DEI dialogue.
COTA R2: 6B Develop DEI programming, support networks and trainings for students, faculty, and staff.
COTA R2: 7B Expand community engagement initiatives.
COTA R2: 7C Expand guest artist residencies.
- b. KSU R2: Implement new development and funding opportunities for faculty and students to collaboratively engage in research
KSU R2: Provide enhanced and unique educational experiences
- c. E3 Action 5: Foster welcoming, inclusive climate throughout campus.

COTA has awarded 30 guest artist/lecturer visits, both virtual and in person, which span across our four units and infuse our curriculum with diverse voices and perspectives. This initiative expands our engagement with the inspiring community of artist-scholars beyond KSU and helps us to build new relationships and connections with guests who we might continue to work with in the future. These novel, educational experiences create an inclusive, exciting environment for our students.

Timeline: These grants are available in Fall 2021 semester through the Dec 1, 2021 deadline. Guest artist/scholars visit throughout the year with the majority visits in Spring semester, 2022. This opportunity is renewed yearly, contingent on funding.

Resource Needs: COTA DEI committee in coordination with the Dean involves time commitment to application and review process.

Success Metrics: Our goal this year was to award 30 grants, and we've reached that goal.

5. Facilitate Support Networks

- a. COTA R2: 6A Effectively engage students, faculty and staff in DEI dialogue
- b. KSU R2: Empower college-level accountability for student success
- c. E3 Action 1: Improve Administrative Efficiency in the DDIE
E3 Action 4: Facilitate strategic DEI Plans in each College & Division

COTA has been focused on facilitating support networks by engaging faculty, staff, and students at the departmental level. Each unit has been encouraged to create a DEI committee within their department to provide valuable insights from the ground up. This helps us ensure our needs are empowered at the college level, and it improves efficiency as we establish a communication chain to best serve our population.

Timeline: Ongoing. We continue to work in our departments to empower college level success as whole, and to define and improve support and communication at all levels.

Resource Needs: Educational support from DDIE in the creation of support networks such as departmental level committees.

Success Metrics: Establishment of communication structures in COTA that serve to promote dialogue between faculty/staff/students at both the departmental, college, and university level. Units will use the steps outlined below and report on the success of the initiative to the Dean at the closing of the 2021 – 2022 academic year.

1. Implementation of a regular rhythm of two-way conversation between the unit DIE representatives and their Chair or Director. This could be once a month or once a semester.
2. Meetings should be Virtual or Face to Face, rather than just an email check in.
3. Units will determine a method for collecting information from the students, staff, and faculty they represent. This could be in the form of a town hall meeting, focus group, private drop box, survey, etc.
4. Units will determine how to share DEI information most efficiently with the faculty, staff, students they represent. This could be in weekly unit emails, on a designated website or bulletin board, shared during planned meetings such as DFC, etc.
5. Unit representatives should collaborate to determine the structure that works best for their population and put that agreed upon structure into writing and practice.

BUDGET

	Expenditure Amount	Associated Goal	Associated Initiative	Estimated Expenditure Date
	\$8,000.00	30 – 32 guest artists through mini grant program	Goal 4. Support DEI programming through Diverse Voices Mini-Grant Series	Grants Awarded on Dec 1, 2021.
	\$2,000.00	Unit support. Each of the 4 units propose use of \$500 towards their departmental initiative.	Dependent on each unit's use of the funds.	Grants Awarded on March 15, 2022; to be used by July 1.
Total Plan Budget	\$10,000.00			

Organizational Chart for DEI Initiatives within COTA

COTA DEAN

(COTA Dean works in coordination with Division of Diverse & Inclusive Excellence, as well as the Diversity Liaison)

Harrison Long

DIVISION OF DIVERSE & INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

(DDIE works with college level Diversity Liaisons and Deans/Chairs)

Dr. Sonia Toson

COTA DIVERSITY LIAISON

(Diversity Liaison for COTA reports to COTA Dean, and to Dr. Sonia Toson from Division of Diverse & Inclusive Excellence)

Andrea Knowlton

COTA DEI COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

(Chair and Vice Chair meet regularly and report to the Dean of COTA)

Andrea Knowlton (Chair)	Todd Wedge (Vice Chair)	Trevor Carrier (Secretary)
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COTA DEI COMMITTEE

(COTA DEI Representatives report to their Chair, and deliver information from their individual unit, the committee as a whole report to the COTA Dean)

TPS Representatives:	Dance Representatives	SOAAD Representatives	BSOM Representatives
Summer Jack Trevor Carrier	Andrea Knowlton Margot Harris	Kristine Hwang Kim Jennifer Gerdis	Todd Wedge Matt Southern

DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL COMMITTEES OR WORKING GROUPS

(Unit level committees report to their Chair, and articulate with the COTA DEI representatives)

Theatre Performance Studies	Department of Dance	School of Art & Design	Bailey School of Music
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<p>In Fall 2020, TPS founded Committee for Anti-Racism and Equity (TPS-CARE)</p> <p>Committee Chair: Charles Parrot Curriculum Lead: Margaret Pendergrass Community Lead: Jim Davis Production Lead: Tom Fish</p>	<p>In Fall 2021, DoD created the Department of Dance DEI committee. It will be added to the bylaws in hopes for approval in 2022 – 2023.</p> <p>Committee Chair: Sean Nguyen-Hilton Vice Chair: Billy Hawkains, III</p>	<p>In Fall 2021, SOAD has had conversations between COTA DEI representatives and the chair.</p>	<p>In Fall 2021, BSOM began the initial work to create BSOM Inclusive Excellence Committee in the future.</p>
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