December 10, 2020

Dean Richmond,

The Advisory Council on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion recently reviewed demographic information about students and faculty collected by the College of Music and provided to the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). During the review, we considered questions of what the data showed, but also what was missing. In the discussion, the Council found that the demographic information collected only the binary “male” and “female” options in reference to gender identity and did not collect data relating to sexual orientation.

To acknowledge LGBTQ+ persons in the College of Music, the Council proposes we collect data by following recommendations outlined by the University of Maryland Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Equity Center. We further ask that you advocate for the collection of this data with both UNT and NASM on behalf of our LGBTQ+ students.

The Council recommends that data be collected in a manner that maintains participant anonymity, gives respondents the opportunity to opt-out in part or whole and provides spaces to write-in other options. Collection of student, faculty, and staff information should occur through an initial survey of the current CoM community and then ongoing in a manner that allows either the University or College to maintain accurate data as populations change. This could be at an appropriate application stage for students or onboarding for employees.

In accordance with these guidelines, the College should provide the following options:

1. Male
2. Female
3. Nonbinary
4. Not listed, please specify ______
5. Prefer not to say
Then, further qualify if the individual is:
1. Cisgender
2. Transgender
3. Gender Non-Conforming
4. Not listed, please specify_______
5. Prefer not to say

Similarly, regarding sexual orientation, the following options would be provided:
1. Heterosexual – Straight
2. Pansexual – Bisexual
3. Homosexual – Gay, Lesbian
4. Not listed, please specify_______
5. Prefer not to say

This demographic information is inherently sensitive in nature when applied to individuals. It should be emphasized wherever possible that this data be published in the aggregate, and those few university personnel that have access to individual records receive training appropriate toward handling this information.

By acknowledging the existence of the LGBTQ+ community in collecting demographic information for the University and NASM, the Council hopes to establish a clearer image of the diverse population within the College of Music, reflect the authentic lived experiences of everyone in its community and strengthen and clarify the mission of both the University and College of Music to serve their populations and the music profession.

Respectfully submitted,

Raymond Rowell, Christopher Walker
Co-Chairs, College of Music Advisory Council on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion