

2023-2024 Annual Report

Diversity, Equity, And Anti-Racism (DEAR) Council
Tufts University School of Medicine

Dr. Ndidiamaka Amutah-Onukagha (Chair), Alessa Rosa (Co-Chair),
Colleen Hughes (Staff Assistant), and Rudolph Neustadt (Intern)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview	2
Logistics	2-3
Meeting Dates Executive Leadership, Full Council	
Member Roster Full Roster, Returning, and New Members	
Organization of Subcommittees	3-5
Student Climate Subcommittee Leadership & Members, Mission, Vision, Responsibilities/Goals	
Faculty-Staff Subcommittee Leadership & Members, Mission, Vision, Responsibilities/Goals	
Key Initiatives & Events	5-7
Hosting Events and Programming Building Community Through DEI Annual Onboarding Event Race and Racism Event Series Microaggression Trainings: “There’s Nothing Minor About Microaggressions” Frequently Discussed/Promoted Topics and Initiatives at Council-wide Meetings	
Major Successes: DEAR Council Academic Year 2023-2024	7-11
Student Climate Subcommittee Project Connect Increased Student Member Involvement: Student Representatives	
Faculty-Staff Subcommittee Building Community Through DEI Annual Onboarding Event Impact on Curriculum and Students Specific Trainings and Self-directed Learning Experiences General Accomplishments & Participation	
Specific and Individual Recognition Individual Accomplishments General Highlights Identification of Funding for Special Activities	
Next Steps: Academic Year 2024-2025	11-12
Race and Racism Speaker Series Student Climate Subcommittee: Introduce Faculty to Project Connect Faculty/Staff Subcommittee: Subgroups Goals and Work	

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT
Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism (DEAR) Council

OVERVIEW

The Tufts University School of Medicine Graduate Programs DEAR Council continues to make strides in its mission to:

- Ensure compositional diversity among students, faculty, and staff by providing support.
- Foster a climate of inclusion for all and educate on cultural competency.
- Promote understanding of social determinants of health and health inequities within the curriculum.

LOGISTICS

Meeting Dates

Executive Leadership held two more meetings than in the previous academic year to allow increased organization and planning for Council-wide meetings and various events held each month.

Executive Leadership	August 29 th , 2023; September 26 th , 2023; October 31 st , 2023; November 28 th , 2023; January 30 th , 2024; February 27 th , 2024; March 26 th , 2024; May 3 rd , 2024
Full Council	September 5 th , 2022; October 3 rd , 2023; November 7 th , 2023; December 5 th , 2023; January 9 th , 2024; February 6 th , 2024; March 5 th , 2024; April 2 nd , 2024; May 7 th , 2024

Member Roster

This year, we saw an **increase in new membership from the 2022-2023 roster of 17 new members for a total of 42 members in 2023-2024,**

2023-2024 Full Roster (42)	Ndidiyama Amutah-Onukagha (Chair), Alessa Rosa (Co-Chair), Rudolph Neustadt (Intern), Colleen Hughes (Staff Assistant), Jessica Ronan (Previous Staff Assistant), Itohan Aigbekaen, Makayla Andre, John Castellot, Josh Cooper, Frankee Cooper, Laura Corlin, Kim D. Dao, Leighla Degham, Haili Dunbar, Chandi Edmonds, Matthew Hunter Farrell, Muhammad Huzyfa Fazili, Ana Flores-Sierra, Nathaniel Haller, Linda Hudson, Natalie Ingram, Armani Johnson-Crews, Jennifer Kim, Kamilah Lamhaouar, Angela Ting-Ting Lu, Johnathan Nolan, Natalie O’Neal, Ernestina Opoku Twumwaa, Jennifer Parent-Nichols, Ruchi Patel, Melissa Peterson, Kyle Preis, Christine Francis Rigot, Margie
-----------------------------------	--

	Skeer, Donna Urbano, Kenya Velez, Roseanne Washington, Andrea Wei, Terry Williams, Karen Yang, Allison Yantz
Returning (19)	Ndidiamaka Amutah-Onukagha (Chair), Alessa Rosa (Co-Chair), Rudolph Neustadt (Intern), Jessica Ronan (Previous Staff Assistant), Colleen Hughes (Staff Assistant), John Castellot, Josh Cooper, Lauren E. Corlin, Kim D. Dao, Haili Dunbar, Armani Johnson-Crews, Angela Ting-Ting Lu, Natalie O'Neal, Jennifer Parent-Nichols, Ruchi Patel, Margie Skeer, Kenya Velez, Roseanne Washington, Allison Yantz
New (23)	Itohan Aigbekaen, Makayla Andre, Frankee Cooper, Leighla Degham, Chandi Edmonds, Matthew Hunter Farrell, Muhammad Huzyfa Fazili, Ana Flores-Sierra, Nathaniel Haller, Linda Hudson, Natalie Ingram, Jennifer Kim, Kamilah Lamhaouar, Johnathan Nolan, Ernestina Opoku Twumwaa, Melissa Peterson, Kyrle Preis, Christine Francis Rigot, Donna Urbano, Andrea Wei, Terry Williams, Karen Yang, Allison Yantz

ORGANIZATION OF SUBCOMMITTEES

1. **Student Climate Subcommittee**

- **Chair(s):** Alessa Rosa (Chair), Colleen Hughes (Staff Assistant), Rudolph Neustadt (Intern), Jennifer Parent-Nichols (Faculty Rep)
- **Members:** Karen Yang, Johnathan Nolan, Angela Lu, Ruchi Patel, Muhammad Huzyfa Fazili, Ernestina Twumwaa, Leighla Dergham, Kyrle Preis, Christine Francis Rigot, Matthew Hunter Farrell, Itohan Aigbekaen, Natalie Ingram, Makayla Andre, Frankee Cooper, Ana Flores-Sierra, Nathaniel Haller, Kamilah Lamhaouar, Melissa Peterson, Donna Urbano, Kenya Velez, Andrea Wei, Terry Williams
- **Mission:** Promote a diverse and inclusive learning community where students are supported to explore issues of diversity personally and learn from other.
- **Vision:** A safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for every member of our community.
- **Responsibilities/Goals:**
 - 1) Develop partnerships with key stakeholders including the Associate Director for Diversity and Inclusion Education for the Tufts University Health Sciences Campuses as well as Student Senate leadership. Share survey data to assess campus climate and student experiences.
 - 2) If data on climate does not currently exist, generate an annual campus climate survey. In conjunction with the Tufts School of Medicine Graduate Programs Diversity Committee, address issues that surface in the campus climate survey and participate in the development of action plans in response.

- 3) Consider trainings that could be beneficial to the faculty, staff and students of the department to promote cultural competence. Training requests will be communicated to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion Justice & Equity in Practice utilizing the Inclusive Community Feedback and Meeting forms and working with the Associate Director for Diversity and Inclusion Education for the Tufts University Health Science Campuses.
- 4) Make reports on committee progress to Tufts University School of Medicine Graduate Programs DEAR Council.

2. **Faculty/Staff Subcommittee**

- **Leads:** Alessa Rosa (Chair) and Colleen Hughes (Staff Assistant)
- **Members:** Alessa Rosa, John, Castellot, Josh Cooper, Laura Corlin, Kim Dao, Haili Dunbar, Chandi Edmonds, Linda Hudson, Colleen Hughes, Armani Johnson, Jennifer Kim, Natalie O’Neal, Jennifer Parent-Nichols, Jessica Ronan, Margie Skeer, Rosanne Washington, Allison Yantz.
- **Mission:** Create and institutionalize an environment and pedagogy designed to build capacity for faculty, staff, and all members of the TUSM Graduate Programs community to be explicit in identifying critical issues influencing equitable health outcomes, including racism, genderism, homophobia, political, economic, and social determinants of health, in all teaching and learning environments. We aim to assure that all members of the faculty and staff community will have the skills, knowledge, and competencies to create teaching and learning environments reflecting our shared core values of equity, justice, transparency, and anti-racism. Additionally, we strive to create an inclusive environment for faculty and staff, where they can find community and feel heard. We will provide resources and support to ensure that all faculty and staff are empowered to contribute to our mission. We intend to center the student perspective in all our work, as part of their academic experience, as we prepare them to be professionals.
- **Vision:** A sustainable, open, and reflective environment where faculty and staff are prepared to lead by example, confident in their ability to be transparent, fully engaged in the challenging process of addressing inequities brought about by historical legacy of oppression and marginalization across several domains including race/ethnicity, gender, and physical abilities; (students well prepared and equipped to interact and collaborate with a diversity of populations).
- **Responsibilities/Goals:**
 - 1) Gather data (e.g. qualitative and quantitative) from constituent TUSM Graduate Programs groups designed to identify specific areas for of professional development; build upon prior data gathered from the faculty self-assessment (FY 2018) on preparation to teach and interact with students on issues of critical importance (e.g. micro-aggressions, inclusive

teaching practices) and available student data e.g. exit interviews. We will be intentional about including adjunct faculty within both online and on-campus environments.

- 2) Annual review of issues emerging from course evaluations.
- 3) Explore issues/concerns from Student Senate, Office of Student services, Faculty reviews.
- 4) Collaborate with alumni association leadership to ascertain their perceived level of preparedness, post academics, to be effective professionals and leaders around these critical issues.
- 5) Explore expertise and resources both within (e.g. CELT, TUSM Associate Director for EDI, Other Affinity leadership groups) and outside of the university (e.g. Essential Partners).
- 6) Tailor training, specific content, and methodology in alignment with identified needs.
- 7) Identify areas for institutionalization of our core values and expectations of faculty regarding professional development.

KEY INITIATIVES & EVENTS

Hosting Events and Programming

This was an educational and edifying year of events across Tufts University School of Medicine, as we managed both virtual and in-person environments. DEAR Council was able to schedule and revive **two groups** of Project Connect and **eight events** for the hybrid-virtual Race & Racism event series, inviting several speakers and creators to share their unique knowledge, perspectives, and crafts. This year, DEAR Council was also able to provide the DEI Onboarding event for faculty and staff, which became an annual event from its inception in the prior year.

Building Community Through DEI Annual Onboarding Event

This year's iteration of the event took place Friday, February 23, with the goal to introduce new faculty and staff to the DEI work already underway at Tufts and to allow new members to meet one another and connect through small discussions.

Race and Racism Event Series

This year, DEAR Council successfully held the most Race and Racism Speaker Series hybrid events – those with both in-person and remote options available to attendees – since the start of remote programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. We incorporated two recently published book authors into the series and one film maker. Moving forward, we have made an active effort to get a head-start on brainstorming and planning events for the upcoming academic semester/year through Qualtrics surveys, brainstorming additional sources of funding, fostering connections with other Tufts organizations, and maintaining positive relationships with speakers.

The Race & Racism Series was recorded when possible, and highly documented on our website. For the first time, the DEAR Council incorporated student representatives into

an active role in post-event documentation, as compilers of summaries for each event. These summaries along with recordings can be found at: <https://sites.tufts.edu/dear/category/race-racism-speaker-series/>

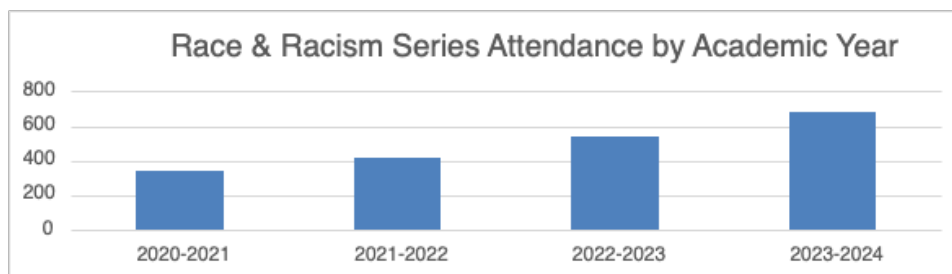
The following events were held remotely unless otherwise specified.

Date	Speaker(s)	Event Title/Topic	Attendee Count
09/22/2023	Panelists: Dr. JoAnna Rorie, Candice Privott	<i>Birthing Justice</i> Film Screening, In-person	50
10/13/2023	Dr. Chase Anderson	"How Minority Stress Affects Mental Health"	97
10/25/2023	Dr. Margie Skeer, Author Lauren Aguirre	"Misconceptions on Addiction" Hybrid	120 (42 in-person)
11/30/2023	Dr. Russell J. Ledet, 15 White Coats	"Representation & Resilience in Medicine"	116
02/05/2024	Maria Smilios	<i>The Black Angels</i> Book signing, Hybrid	41 (28 in-person)
02/27/2024	Panelists: Lisa Mao, Cynthia Yee	<i>A Tale of Three Chinatowns</i> Film Screening	155 (47 in-person) (16 screening in Medford)
03/12/2024	Frank Amaefuna, MPH	"Roots & Reform"	82
04/03/2024	Dr. Kim Cobb	"Advancing Equity & Climate Justice: Unveiling Research and Collaborative Solutions"	20

Speaker Event Recap Highlights from 2023-2024:

The DEAR Council hosted eight events this calendar year.

The Race & Racism Series had its most attendees in the 4 years the DEAR Council has been hosting this series with **681 total attendees**. Year-over-year attendance at Race & Racism events is shown below:



As a continuation from the 2022-2023 school year, the DEAR Council posted recaps and recordings for events on the DEAR Council website for additional reflection and event information accessibility to audiences, post-event:

<https://sites.tufts.edu/dear/category/race-racism-speaker-series/>

Project Connect: Building connections through intimate, small-group meetings

The Student Climate Subcommittee highlighted the desire for more personal connection among online, hybrid, and in-person students. Meetings were held to realize and review materials necessary to successfully execute Project Connect. A training session was held for potential student facilitators, and two groups completed the four-week course.

Frequently Discussed/Promoted Topics and Initiatives at Council-wide Meetings:

- Anti-Racism Council Committee (ARC)
- Tufts Tables
- Office of the Vice Provost for Institutional Inclusive Excellence (OIIE)
- DEIJ retreats, external events, and news stories
- DEIJ (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice) Information at Tufts:
<https://medicine.tufts.edu/about/school-medicine/diversity-equity-inclusion>

MAJOR SUCCESSES: DEAR Council Academic Year 2023-2024

STUDENT CLIMATE SUBCOMITTEE	
Project Connect	<p>The primary purpose of Project Connect is to introduce deeper connection between students. The link between connection and mental health, physical health, and student success is well-documented. Through this 4-week session, students met in groups of three or four and discussed personal experiences, future goals, and individual perspectives. A broad range of topics were covered including, but not limited to, friendships, loneliness, personal goals, culture, self-disclosure, and familial relationships.</p> <p>Students departed from Project Connect feeling a deeper connection to those in their small group, a better social network at Tufts, and enhanced emotional self-reflection. Both groups decided to reconvene outside of scheduled Project Connect times following the end of the program.</p>
Objectives	To build friendship, connection and community though incremental small group conversations.
Student Facilitators	Rudolph Neustadt, Itohan Aigbekaen, Angela Lu
Logistics	Four sessions for each group were held between February 19 th -March 15 th . One group met virtually, the other in-person

<p>Student Participation Student Feedback</p>	<p>7 students</p> <p>Overall, students reported a highly positive experience with the training. They enjoyed the intimacy of the small group, and felt it conducive to sharing experiences.</p> <p>Both groups continued meeting past scheduled end-time in informal capacities.</p>
<p>Increased Student Member Involvement: Student Representatives from all programs</p>	<p>The DEAR Council recruited seven Student Representatives with at least one coming from each of the four active, non-dual-degree Graduate Degree programs: Master of Biomedical Sciences, Master of Public Health, Physician Assistant, and Doctor of Physical Therapy. Their responsibilities included: promotion of DEAR events & initiatives, facilitation of Project Connect, summarizing Race & Racism Series events, and active guidance of the DEAR Council. The following students from their respective programs were chosen or elected (PA program) as Student Representatives from an application process to take on this leadership responsibility in DEAR Council:</p> <p>Johnathan Nolan (MBS), Hunter Farrell (MPH), Huzyfa Fazili (MD/MPH), Kyrle Preis (DPT-Boston), Francis Rigot (DPT-Boston), Leighla Dergham (PA), Ernestina Opoku Twumwaa (PA)</p>

<p>FACULTY/STAFF SUBCOMITTEE</p>	
<p>Building Community Through DEI Annual Onboarding Event</p>	<p>From its inception and initiation last academic year, DEAR Council has made Building Community Through DEI Training an ongoing, annual event. The training is designed to orient, inform, and educate new Faculty/Staff members on the goals, vision, and mission of DEAR Council and to other DEIJ work taking place at Tufts. Specifically, a PowerPoint slide set was created that includes pertinent details regarding the aforementioned information. Then small group activities allowed for community building and discussion.</p> <p>Event outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have participants understand the organization, goals, and resources for DEIJ work at Tufts

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To share TUSM values around creating inclusive spaces for faculty, staff, and students • To provide an opportunity for community building across programs and departments • To have participants build upon the university’s goals and work through their own participation in DEIJ work in and out of the classroom
Participation	7
Feedback	<p>Overall, participants reported an extremely positive experience and asked for more opportunities like this one to build community. We also generally had less attendance due to scheduling conflicts and a lower number of new hires.</p> <p>View The Full Report (ongoing feedback report with cumulative results; 22 respondents)</p>
Impact on Curriculums and Students	<p>DEAR Council Faculty have continued their commitment to the following goals in promoting positive impact on curriculums and students across TUSM Graduate Programs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise curriculum/course content: Changed readings, added content, identified past discipline transgressions, created anti-racism competency, identified ways in which skills learned in course can assist with creating change. 2. Create opportunities in class to discuss current events: Acknowledged and invited discussion at beginning of class, created discussion board options for pre or post class comments. 3. Develop student training responding to racism witnessed in clinical practice.
Specific Trainings and Self-directed Learning Experiences	<p>Let’s Talk About Race: Exploring White Privilege, Radical Healing, AAC&U Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Student Success (DESS), CARE Model Training, Kirwan Institute: Implicit Bias Training Modules (osu.edu), independent reading.</p>
General Accomplishments & Participation	<p>Participation in the Tufts Table planning committee and in the Office of Institutional Inclusive Excellence Strategic Planning Retreat.</p>

SPECIFIC & INDIVIDUAL RECOGNITION	
Individual Accomplishments	<p>Dr. Ndidiamaka Amutah-Onukagha (Chair) continued her success in the Center for Black Maternal Health & Reproductive Justice. For more information, visit the center's website. Dr. Amutah-Onukagha is the recipient of the 2023 Franklin Delano Roosevelt Humanitarian Award from the March of Dimes.</p> <p>Alessa Rosa (Co-Chair) oversaw the student intern and helped with the execution of our Race & Racism Speaker Series alongside Rudy Neustadt. Alessa also continued monitoring DEAR's email mailbox (DEAR@tufts.edu), presented at orientations and maintained DEAR's website (sites.tufts.edu/dear) up to date.</p> <p>Colleen Hughes (Staff Assistant) played an integral role on the executive team by managing budget, scheduling meetings, and assisting with event planning.</p> <p>Rudy Neustadt (Intern) proposal, engaged and oversaw Student Representative members from various graduate programs. Rudy also took the lead in identifying and scheduled all of our speakers for our series.</p>
General Highlights	<p>This year, we observed a decrease in DEAR membership engagement, particularly among our faculty and staff population. This decline has primarily been attributed to shifts in Tufts organizational structures, changes in department leadership, and the overall instability within our Public Health programs. However, even with these tumultuous times, DEAR remained steadfast in its mission and objectives. Throughout the year, we continued to provide space for students, faculty, and staff to deliberate on projects, track campus climate, and offer concrete opportunities for engagement and learning. Despite the challenges, we remained committed to fostering an inclusive environment for all members of our community.</p>
Identification of Funding for Special Activities	<p>Funding for the Race & Racism events came from the following sources/groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tufts University School of Medicine Graduate Programs • Student Activity Fund (x2) • Work-Study

NEXT STEPS: Academic Year 2024-2025

Student Subcommittee

For the upcoming year, our Student Subcommittee has outlined several exciting initiatives and projects to further advance the mission of DEAR within the Tufts community.

1. Collaboration with Student Groups:

- Develop a website contact form for collaboration inquiries.
- Work with MD Student Council and Africana Center on Medford campus.
- Compile a list of student groups/centers for potential partnerships.

2. Understanding Student Interests:

- Conduct surveys and discussions to identify student interests.
- Create extracurricular activities reflecting student passions and their professional goals.
- Host events promoting professional/career identity.

3. Customized Trainings:

- Partner with OIIE to offer tailored trainings for specific programs.
- Provide certificates for resume and application purposes.
- Establish a process for "certification" in leading discussion groups and facilitation.

4. Faculty Engagement:

- Encourage faculty attendance at events for networking and mentorship.
- Integrate DEAR subcommittee groups outside of meetings.
- Foster joint participation in Project Connect groups.

5. Possible Upcoming Events:

- Work with OIIE to bring Isabel Wilkerson to Tufts, with a potential watch party on the Boston campus.

Faculty & Staff Subcommittee

The following ideas for next year aim to create a supportive and inclusive environment for faculty, staff, and students, fostering academic success and well-being while addressing DEI issues and enhancing professional development opportunities.

1. Supporting Student Academic Success & Fostering Inclusion and Excellence:

- Evaluate resources, admissions processes, and support services to better address retention issues in MPH programs.
- Provide baseline skill support for students not historically set up for success.
- Enhance admissions and support services to prevent withdrawals.
- Assess diversity in admissions processes.
- Equip incoming students with necessary tools and expectations.
- Provide additional support, such as tutoring and mentoring.
- Establish mentorship programs for underrepresented populations.
- Offer training on micro-aggressions and DEI issues.

2. Creating Dialogue Spaces:

- Plan events and workshops for discussing DEI-related issues for faculty and staff.
 - Partner with OIIE for resources and facilitation.
- Address DEI backlash through open conversations.
- Explore polarizing topics and how to engage in constructive dialogue.

3. Supporting Mental Health & Accommodations:

- Identify intersection between mental health support and pressures on faculty, staff, and students.
- Provide clearer access to HR resources and support.
- Develop cheat sheets or reference materials for HR resources.
- Partner with HR to streamline accommodation processes.
- Provide wellness resources, including access to neuropsychiatric support.
- Investigate potential of utilizing MD faculty for accommodation requests

4. Collaboration and Professional Development:

- Allocate hours for faculty involvement in school activities.
- Engage with Faculty Senate and explore professional development opportunities
- Consider the adoption of “Upstate Bias Checklist for GUMC Educators: A Checklist for Assessing Bias in Health Professions Education Content”