**ROMS Faculty Meeting**

**October 11, 2023**

1. **Trey Anthony (ROMS PhD student, Trustee of Workers Union at UNC)**

* Recruitment among graduate students and housekeepers
* NC Collective Bargaining Ban: State is legally prohibited from negotiating a contract with the Union, which puts real obstacles to their work
* Graduate students peer institutions (like Michigan) are unionized and have regular COLAs
* Cost of living in Orange County is $3200 per month. Graduate students are paid $20,000 per year
* Working on grad student Bill of Rights- standardized guidelines for each department. Not all departments have contracts for students to sign, while ROMS does. In many departments (sciences), graduate students work well over 20 hours per week.
* Current points of focus: strengthen the healthcare plan (plan offered to students is not sufficient for all); accessibility questions; water quality concerns; urge UNC to reconsider spending priorities
* Asking for solidarity from the faculty. Protests at the UNC Board of Trustees meetings. Other protests announced via social media.
* Solidarity membership: $5 per month; can also donate

1. **Graduate student recruitment and admissions cycle (Bruno Estigarribia)**

* Find the best possible pool of applicants from the very beginning
* Supreme Court decision on affirmative action: race and ethnicity cannot be considered at any point. Much confusion exists at the Provost level. University Council advice: we can no longer consider race or ethnicity at any stage of the admissions process. You cannot discriminate favorably or unfavorably solely on the basis of race or ethnic identification. The Department can pursue other kinds of diversity goals (socio-economic, geographic), but not as proxy for race or ethnicity. If an applicant offers examples of ethnicity, racial identity, you may discuss them in the admissions process only insofar as they are connected to other evaluation criteria that do not operate as a proxy for race. After all admissions processes are completed, race and ethnicity data can be used to understand post hoc the composition of the admitted class. These data will be blinded to anyone involved in the admissions process. Rubrics for fellowships are being reworked. If any Department has questions, they should go to the University Council.
* To reiterate, this only has to do with the admissions process. There can be diversity initiatives for students once they are admitted.
* Funding model: Before October 20, the way in which we solicit graduate student funding will be amended. Graduate faculty will be consulted at a later point. Nothing is bonding beyond the next admissions cycle.

1. **University Research Week (Chloe Hill)**

* October 23-26: University Research Week. There will be an info session for undergraduates interested in doing research projects in the Department. If you have students who have done this, please consider them to present on October 25, 5:00 pm, Toy Lounge
* Having representation from the different languages would be ideal

1. **Fundraising for DEI Initiatives (Sean Matharoo and Ellen Welch)**

* Asking for help who may be willing to fund DEI initiatives in our department
* Some of the DEI Committee’s initiatives need some funding
* Give UNC Day in March. We are looking for a challenge matcher. Former students, for example. If you have a name, please share with Sean and Ellen, who will share the name with the Foundation.

1. **Chair Search Process**

* October 12: Notification message from Senior Associate Dean
* October 16-November 3: Qualtric survey to collect nominations
* November 27-December 8: Faculty one-on-one meetings with SAD. These are important meetings
* Goal is to have the new Chair identified by early Spring

1. **Quick Announcements**

* Faculty Development funds (Shavon Carey-Hicks): application is on the Intranet / Financial Matters / Faculty Funding & Travel Requests
* Open Enrollment (Shavon Carey-Hicks): October 9-October 27. Two enrollment portals: State portal (health insurance) and UNC benefits portal (everything else). Some increases in dental plans
* Maymester (Hélène de Fays): no submissions so far
* Day of the Dead display (Sean Matharoo): if you have any objects to donate for the display case, please consider donating in the main office