

Department of Family and Community Medicine

**Office of Identity, Inclusion and
Collective Conscience
I2C2**

**2021 Listening Sessions:
Report of Findings**

Dr. Brandi Shah, Director

Shyla K. Fields, Program Manager

Note from the Director

As Director of the Office of Identity, Inclusion and Collective Conscience (I2C2), I am excited to move forward with developing and implementing programming, resources, supports and opportunities for all members of our department community to engage in getting to know one another and to contribute to cultivating an inclusive, anti-oppressive environment that honors the rich, complex identities and diversity we all bring. Because of this diversity of identity, thought, and experience, it is inherently challenging and often uncomfortable to do this individual and collective work with intention, humility, bravery, and fidelity. By inviting our colleagues to join listening sessions, we intended to invite everyone's voice to understand better what goals, circumstances, past experiences, fears, reservations, hopes, and vision should guide us as we move forward with this work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'B' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

What is a listening session?

A listening session is similar to a focus group, a type of facilitated discussion with a group of people, aimed at collecting information about their beliefs, thoughts and experiences. Participants in a listening session are asked to talk generally about what they know, think, and sometimes answer specific questions about a topic. Generally, the goal is to understand the opportunities and challenges surrounding a topic as community members perceive them.

Listening Session Methods

Time: Sessions occurred between November 2020 and March 2021. Each session lasted 60-80 minutes.

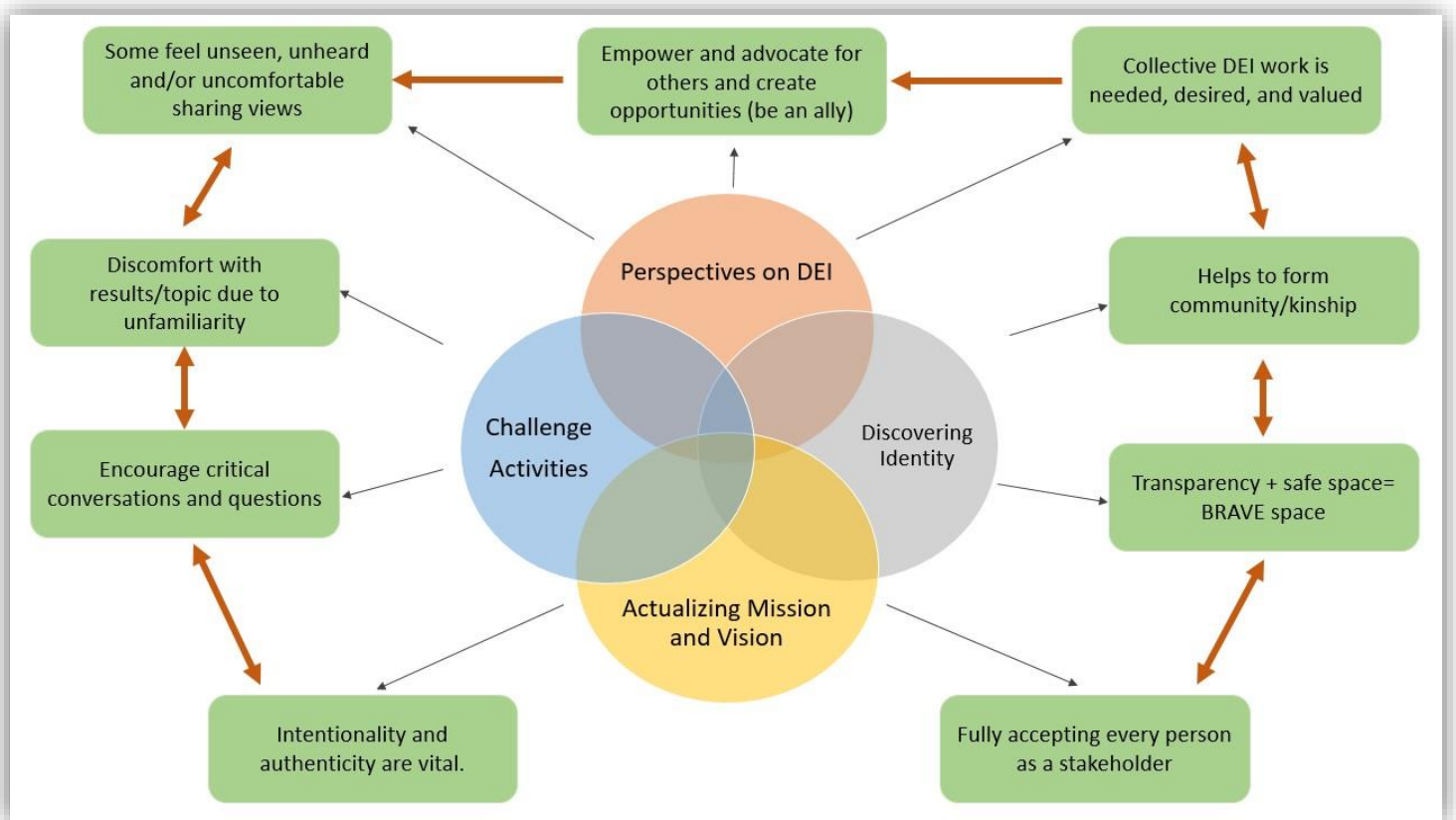
Participants: Every member of the department was invited to take part in a listening session; participation was **not** mandatory, and everyone was made aware that their perspective/feedback on DEI priorities and processes could be obtained in other ways (written, one-on-one meeting with I2C2 personnel or another facilitator). Participants were grouped together into smaller groups based on work associates that included faculty/clinical providers, administrative staff, clinical staff (Highlands and Hoover), CU2RE interdisciplinary team, and CU2RE medical student unit. Participants were encouraged to give additional feedback post-session, which some individuals did.

- **Agenda:**

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Invisible Identity icebreaker
- 3) Centering/ground rules
 - a. Speak freely within comfort zone to cultivate a brave space.
 - b. Every person's voice is a contribution to our collective work.
 - c. Okay to gently call out in order to call in for everyone's inclusion.
 - d. Participation has no bearing on employment. It is meant to help us grow as individuals and as a department community.
 - e. Confidentiality is expected.
- 4) Open, facilitated dialogue about identity, inclusion, collective conscience.
 - a. Clarify language/translate to more common terms/concepts (diversity, equity, inclusion)
 - b. Experiential perspectives
 - c. Discussion tools: Project Implicit, info gram
 - d. Visions and hopes for approaching this work in refreshing, necessary, more meaningful ways.
- 5) Review and reflect on content and purpose of mission and vision statements
- 6) Collective Conscience Bubble, role of community-building
- 7) Summarize planned/ongoing I2C2 activities, wrap-up.

Dominant Themes

Visualized below are the dominant themes analyzed and summarized from all listening sessions. The overlapping circles represent the interrelated topic areas covered in the listening sessions. The gray arrows project to the specific narrative themes that reflect consensus among and across groups. The dark orange arrows show natural relationships between the themes that can inform how the department moves forward with its DEI practice and strategy.



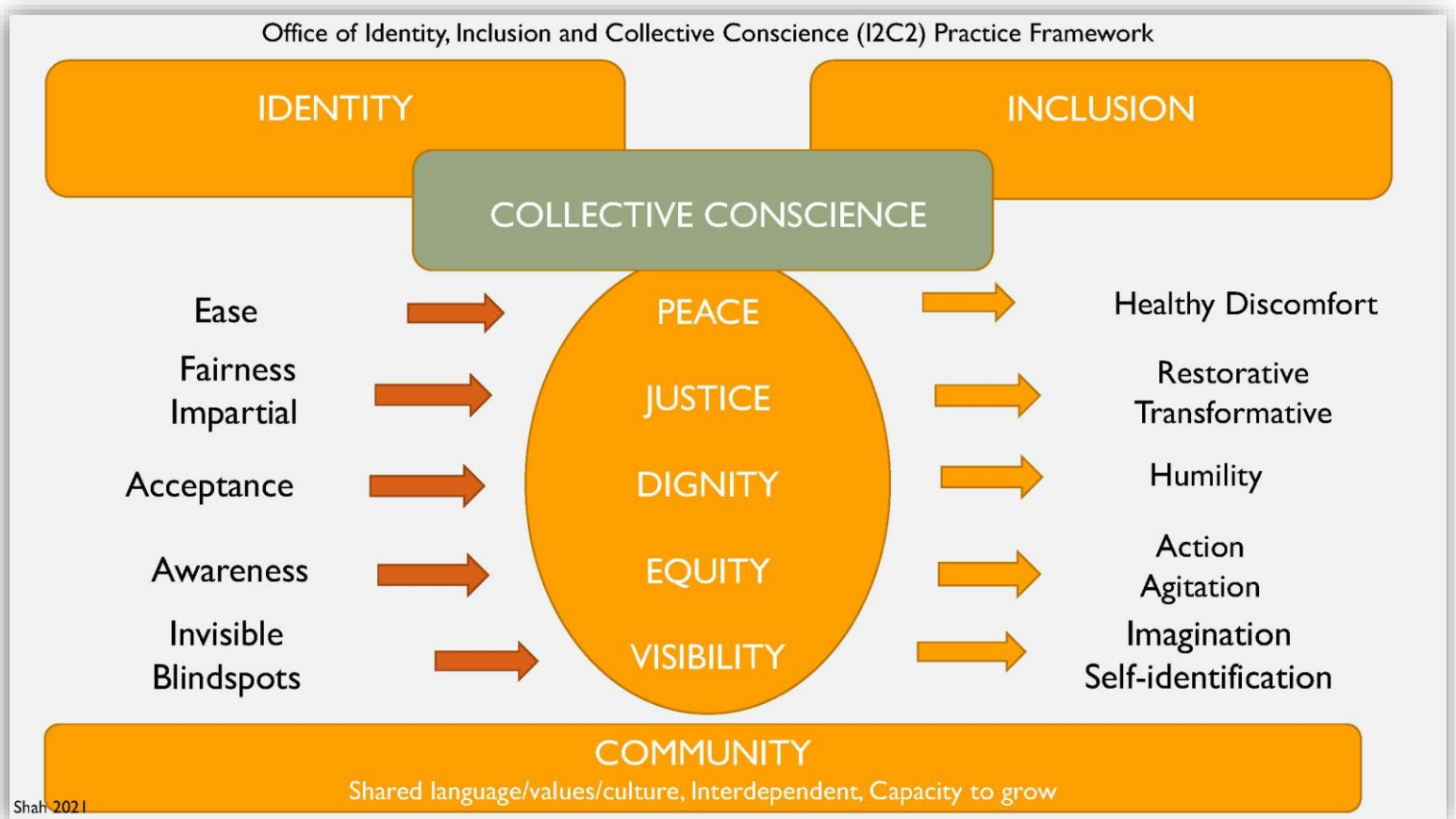
Key Observations and Recommendations

Key Observations	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most community members desire and see value in action-oriented DEI activities. • Vital members of the department did not feel comfortable sharing their views in the work setting either by explicitly saying so or remaining off camera. 	<p>DEI programing needs to be engaging and action oriented, and adaptable to diverse team members needs and comfort.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtually everyone enjoyed sharing and learning about unseen aspects of their identities. 	<p>Ample activities should be provided to increase opportunities for team members to interact and know each other in new ways.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People critically engaged with non-mandatory challenge activities that helped to guide discussions in some sessions. • People had varying levels of familiarity and comfort with the activities and results. 	<p>These activities are important, and people should receive more background information and understanding to optimize their use.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The working I2C2 mission and vision statements resonated with those who had the chance to review them during the session. 	<p>We will continue to develop the statements to affirm and achieve the department’s collective goals.</p>

Strategy and Next Steps

We will continue to follow the guiding anti-oppression framework shown below. The strategy incorporates many of the key themes articulated in the listening sessions, particularly community-building, authenticity and inclusion. In addition to ongoing community-building activities like book club, grand rounds and follow up listening sessions if desired, the core engagement activity will be planning and executing anti-oppression individualized development plans (AO-IDP) to help everyone learn, grow and contribute to our departmental DEI climate. Of course, we will continue to invite and empower everyone’s voice to help us move forward with these activities and others with creativity, transparency, humility and fidelity.

Thank you for all that you have contributed thus far.



<https://www.uab.edu/medicine/familymedicine/about/office-of-identity-inclusion-and-collective-conscience>