

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE  
**INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM**  
WORKSHOP  
SUMMARY/FOLLOW-UP

Spring 2021

# PART 1. BREAKOUT ROOMS

## FACULTY STRATEGIES FOR CREATING INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

[here](#) is our community document with full responses.

# 1. Diversify the Narrative

Include course content not just ABOUT or ON marginalized groups, but works BY folks outside of the white, male, CIS-gender cannon.

## YOUR OWN DISCIPLINARY REFLECTIONS

- Think about the big ideas in your field and dominant thinkers of your field. What are their demographic characteristics? What is their gender, race, age, or national origin?
- Are there big ideas or thinkers in your field that are not often taught or cited in research? What is valuable about their work?
- How can you add to your reading lists based on these reflections?
- What impact would this have?

Source: Jessica Kizer, CTL workshop, February 2021

see also University of Minnesota Library's [resource guide](#) on anti-racist research

## 2. Seek Student Feedback, Early & Often

Multiple faculty noted the importance of soliciting feedback from students, beyond end-of-semester evaluations.

Underrepresented students may be reluctant to express questions or concerns openly. Requesting feedback, anonymously or in-person, can lower barriers & create space for students' voices.

feedback can and should be ongoing, occurring at different points in the semester (pre, early, mid, end)

can serve different functions

some examples: pre-semester survey, mid-semester eval, and a quick check-in

be sure to explain how these are used, what faculty will do with them

# 3. Co-create Community Norms/Agreements

Norms/agreements co-created by all classroom participants are key to building a strong classroom community.

Many Pitzer faculty start every semester by generating community norms with students during class time.

Here are some additional outside resources that might be helpful: [National Equity Project](#), [HASTAC](#) (Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory)

## 4. Model Positionality & Authenticity

NOTE: this one may be a bit tricky to navigate, esp. for faculty from identities and communities historically excluded from higher ed.

Acknowledge our positionality early on in the semester

Faculty may wish to reveal our own struggles--for example, a time we feared peer review, critique, or rejection... how current events are affecting us...

Provide space for check-ins each class or at least once a week

## 5. Use Inclusive Language

“Normalizing the use of something as straightforward as pronouns”

(source: breakout room 6)



Share your pronouns; put them on your Zoom and email.

Pass out name/pronoun “tents.” Leave space for students to leave pronouns blank.

Make an effort to pronounce students’ names correctly. (for more, see [NPR Lifekit](#) and [Nameshouts](#))

# 6. Acknowledge and Model Fallibility

What can/should faculty do if we misgender our students, mispronounce their names, or make other mistakes in the classroom?

**A**pologize (without joking or making a scene out of it)

**C**orrect (for example, use the correct pronoun or ask the student to remind you of how to pronounce their name properly)

**T**hank (the student for helping you get it right)

**for example:** If you accidentally use the wrong pronouns when speaking about a student, calmly apologize, correct yourself, and continue speaking. Do this even if they're not around. This will help you to remember to use the right pronoun in the future, will help others to remember, and will communicate your allyship (support) to the LGBTQ2S+ community. There is no need to excessively apologize, justify why you made the mistake, or defend yourself. Doing this only centers your own needs and feelings over those of the misgendered person.

**sources:** [mypronouns.org](https://mypronouns.org), [Carnegie Mellon Center for Teaching Excellence](https://www.carnegie.org/teaching-excellence)

# 7. Acknowledge Impacts of Current Events

The following is an anonymous feedback from a Pitzer student, spring 2021

... It is harmful ...when professors do not make time at least in the beginning of class to acknowledge terrible atrocities and list ...[support] resources for students. For example, the anti-Asian hate crime in Atlanta and even that Pitzer student on the ... football team - not a single teacher said anything or adjusted their class schedule to address these things. When these things go unheard and are silenced in classrooms (even virtual ones) ... the classroom [becomes] an unsafe place. Curriculum and content are important, and so is the well-being of students.

# 8. Connect with Students Outside of Class

Meeting in spaces other than the classroom or during office hours can reduce the power differential and “humanize” faculty-student interactions.

some examples:

- have lunch with students in the dining hall

- attend extracurricular activities featuring and involving your students (exhibitions, plays, games)

- send students a card or small gift (teabags) via post (snail mail)

# 9. Bring Students in on Research Projects

Being invited to work on research signals “... that the prof. valued me enough that they engaged me in other activities” (source: breakout room 8)

*It also helps diversify the narrative!*

Invite as research assistants students who might not have considered such a role (breakout room 5)

Show.. students opportunities that they didn't recognize... (breakout room 1)

...and the potential you see in them that they might not recognize

see also [High Impact Practices and Historically Underrepresented Minority Students](#), Elon University

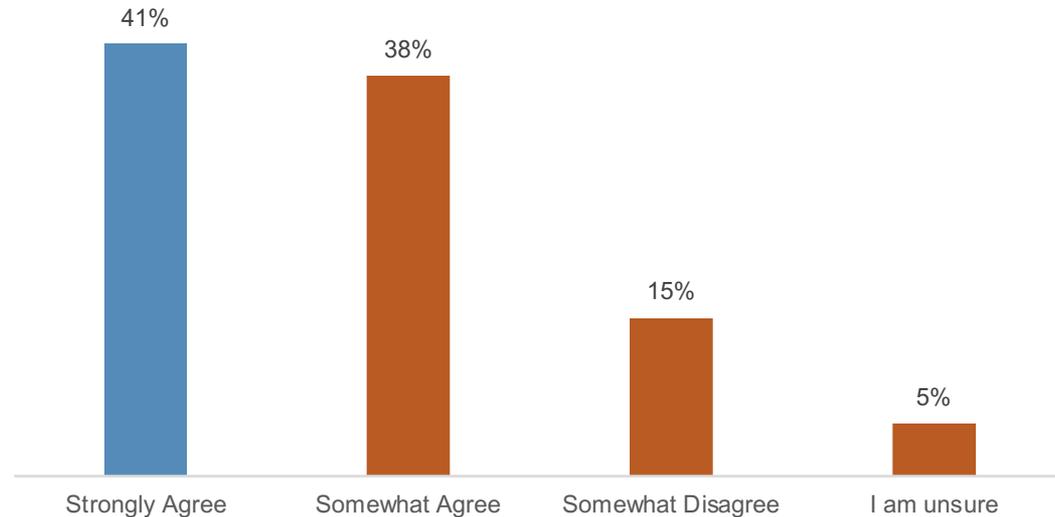
## **PART 2. FACULTY POLL**

“I HAVE THE TOOLS I NEED TO CREATE  
**INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS** FOR ...”

# International Students

Of the 8 groups of under-represented students included in the poll, faculty feel **most confident** in having the tools to create an inclusive space for **international students**.

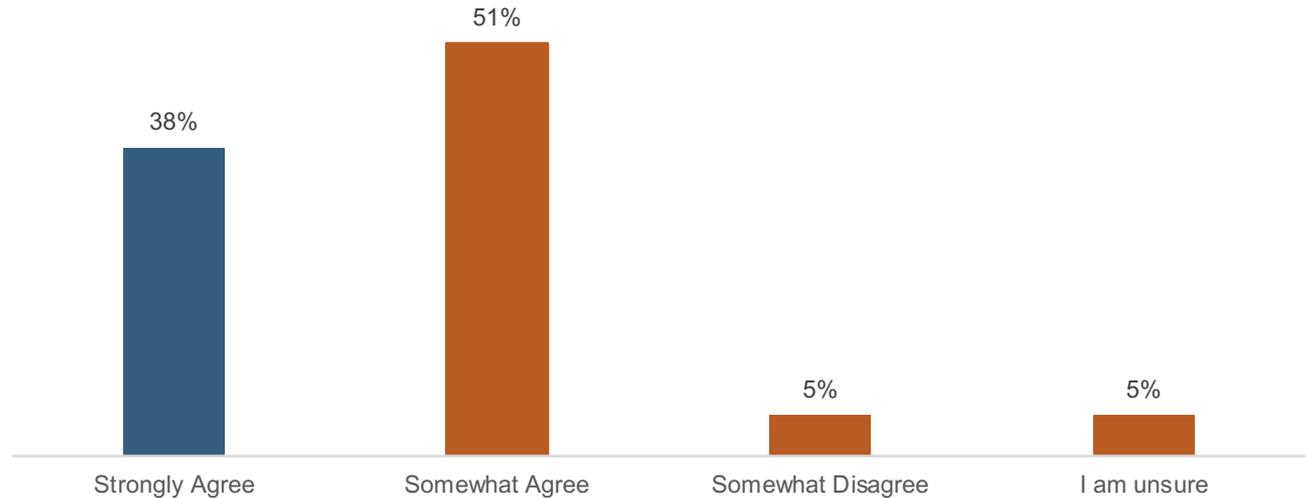
I have the tools I need to make my classes inclusive learning spaces for international students



# First-Generation College Students

Faculty are also **confident** that they have the tools to create an inclusive space for **first-generation college students**.

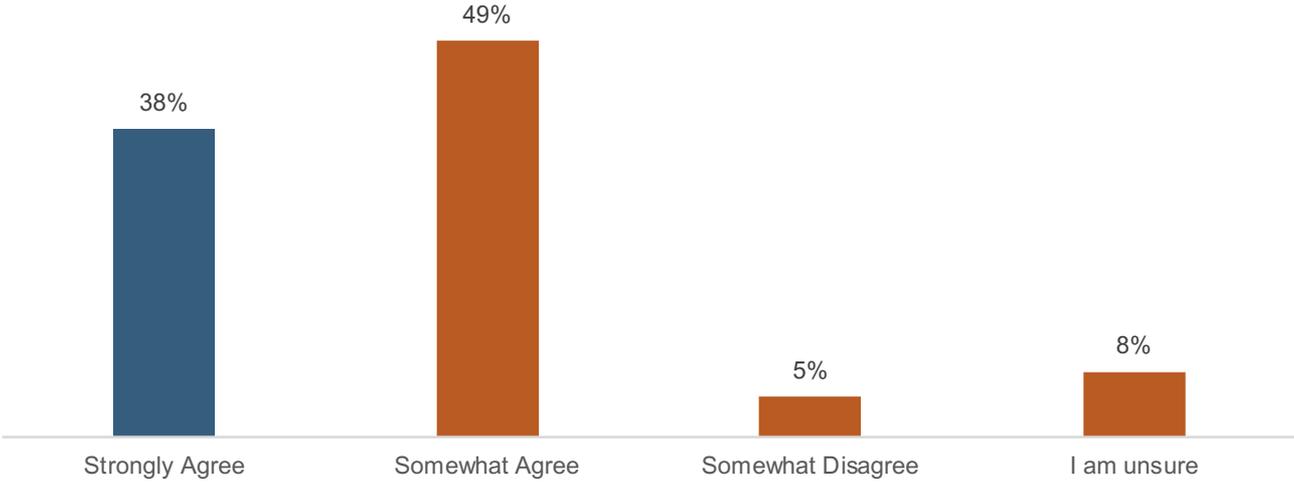
I have the tools I need to make my classes inclusive spaces for first-gen students



# New Resource Students

Similar levels of faculty **confidence** are expressed when it comes to creating an inclusive space for **new resources students**.

I have the tools I need to make my classes inclusive spaces for new resources students

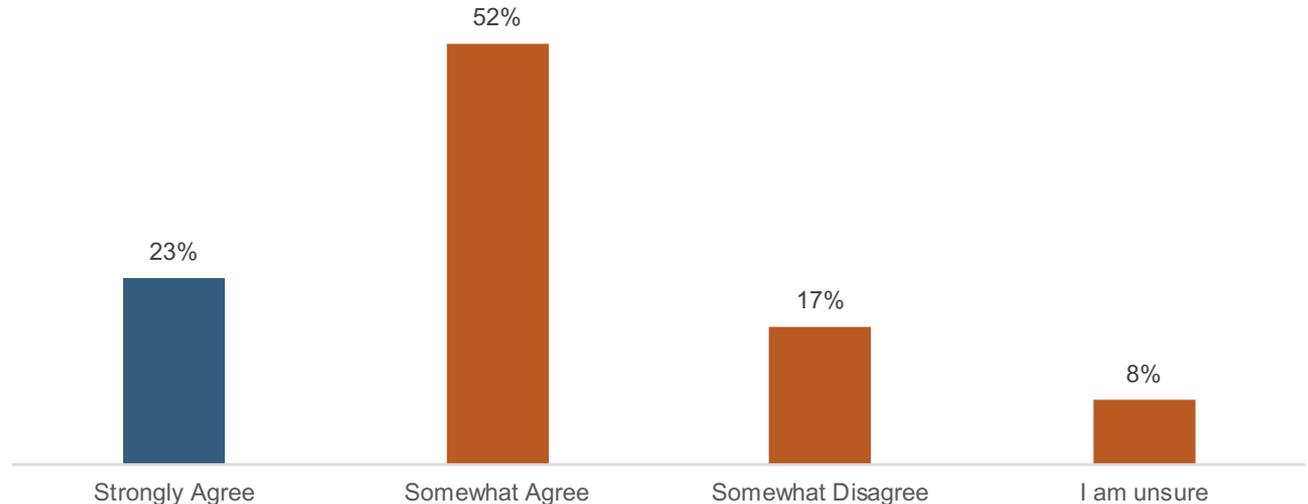


# Students with Disabilities

However, faculty confidence **declines** when it comes to inclusive learning spaces for **students with disabilities**.

Less than 1/4 of those polled strongly agree with this statement.

I have the tools I need to make my classes inclusive learning spaces for students with disabilities

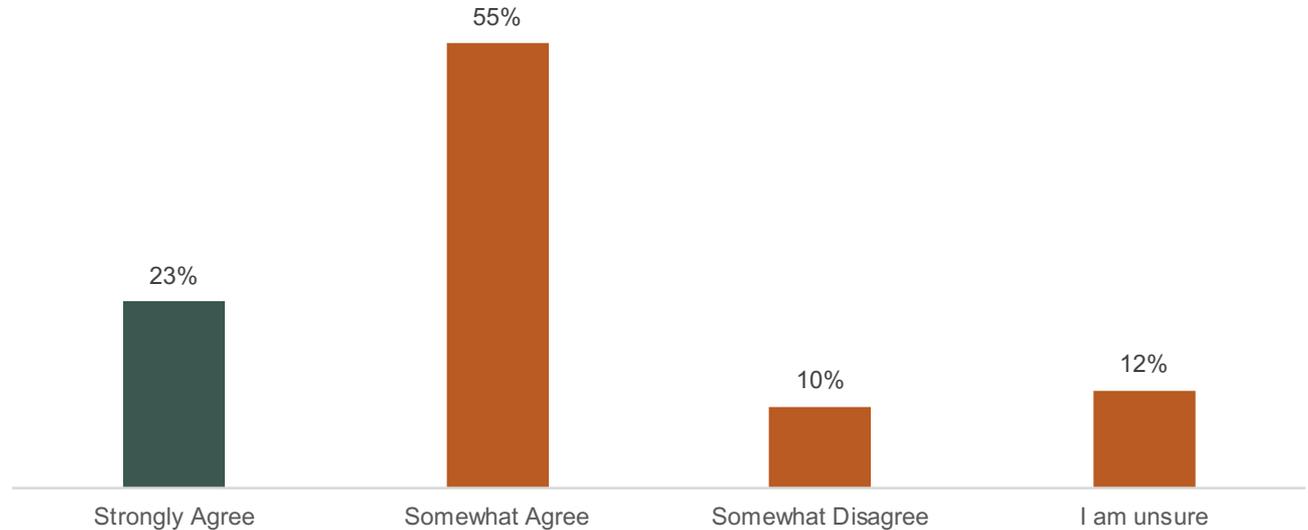


# Queer Students

A similar sentiment emerges re: inclusive spaces for **queer students**.

Again, less than 1/4 of faculty selected strongly agree with this statement.

I have the tools I need to make my classes inclusive learning spaces for queer students

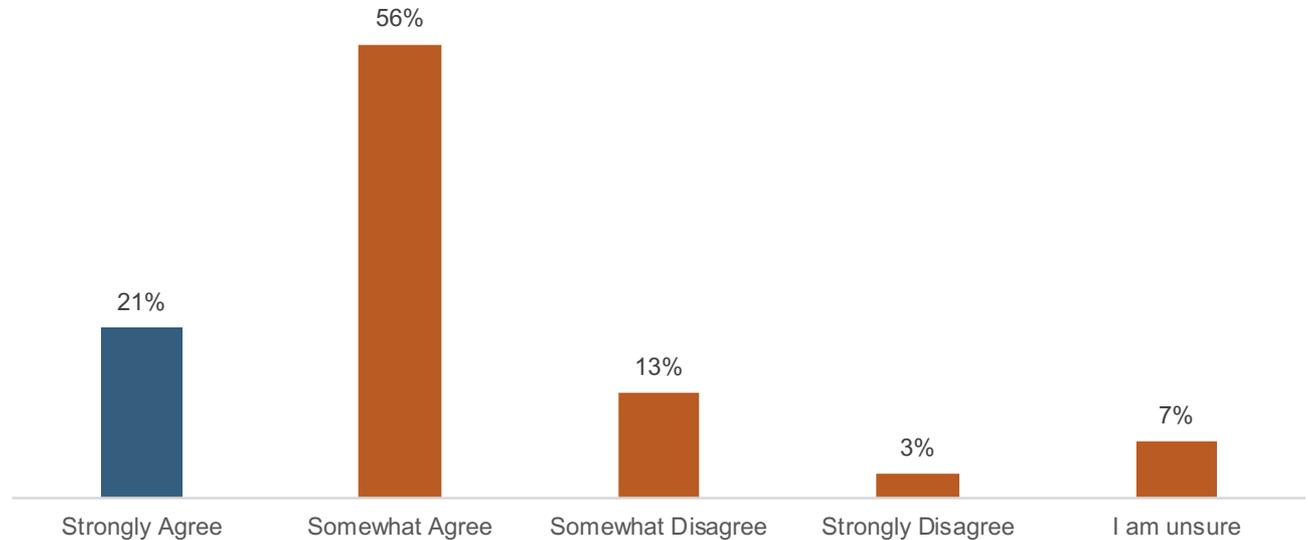


# Students of Color

The pattern of **lowered confidence** extends to classrooms that are inclusive for **students of color**.

Again, less than 1/4 of faculty strongly agree with this statement.

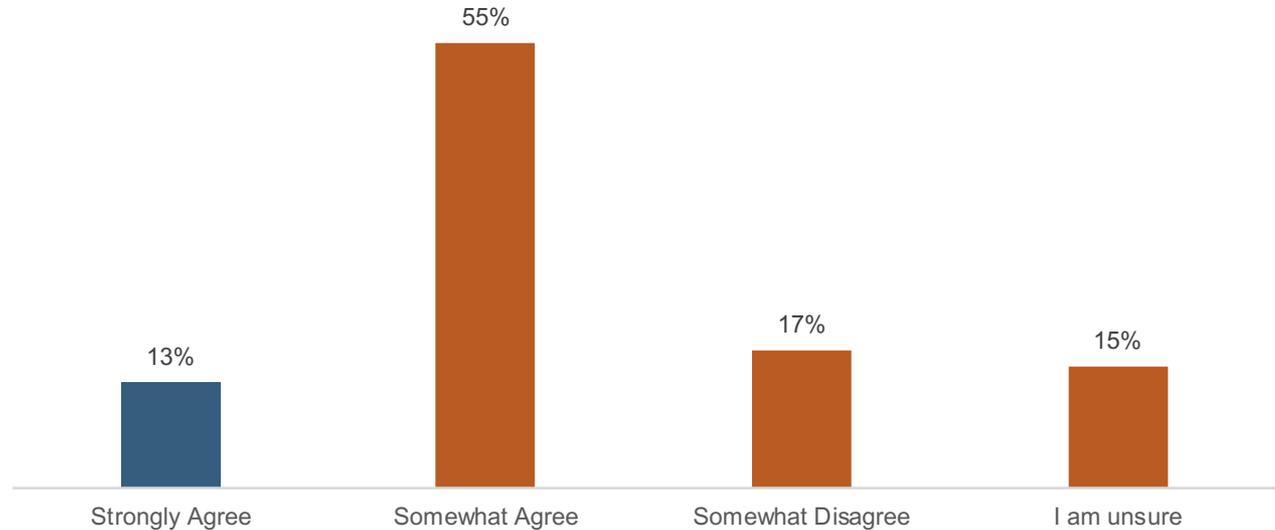
I have the tools I need to make my classes inclusive learning spaces for BIPOC students of color



# Trans and Non-Binary Students

A mere **13%** of faculty strongly agreed that they had the tools to create an inclusive classroom space for **trans and non-binary students**.

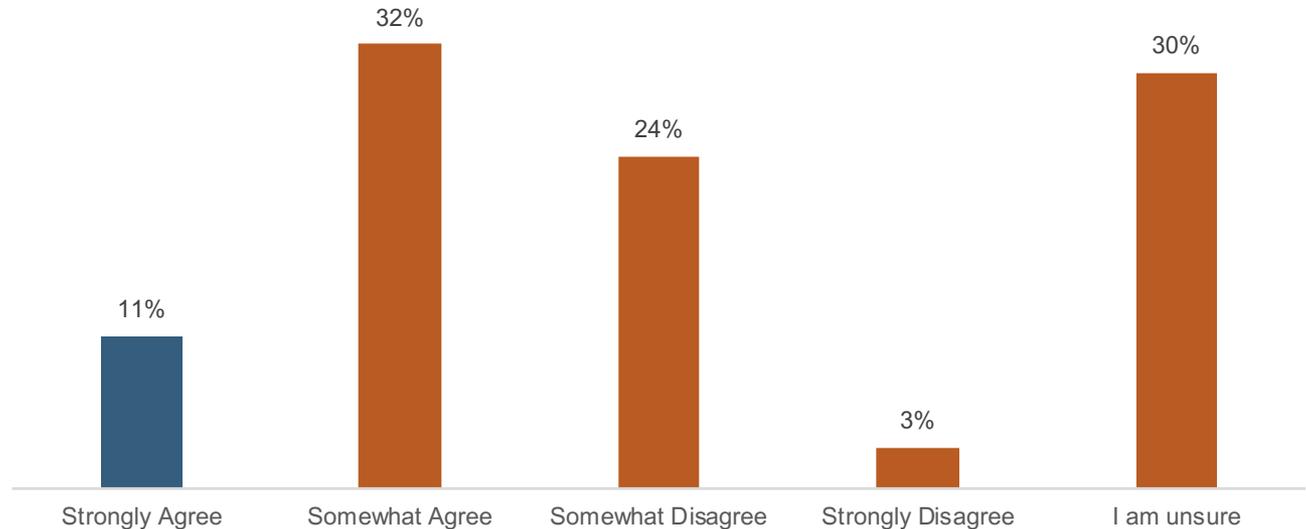
I have the tools I need to make my classes inclusive spaces for trans and non-binary students



# Students who are Neurodivergent

Finally, faculty were **least confident** in their ability to create an inclusive classroom space for students who are **neurodivergent**.

I have the tools I need to make my classes inclusive learning spaces for students who are neurodivergent



# Reconciling the disconnect between what faculty believe and what students say

- To varying degrees, faculty who participated in the workshop generally feel somewhat more confident about having the tools to create an inclusive classroom
- Yet, Pitzer student senior theses projects and demand letters often note that underrepresented students feel excluded in our predominantly White space.
- It may be that the faculty who opted to participate in the workshop are committed to creating this space. Yet, about one-third of the faculty did not attend the workshop.
- How do we as a community create opportunities to work with colleagues who may not be aware that their actions may be creating an alienating environment for underrepresented students?
- How do we as a community continue supporting faculty who are committed to creating an inclusive environment?

## **PART 3. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT**

SOMETHING I NEED/ HOPE/ EXPECT

PITZER TO SUPPORT ME/US IN MY/OUR

PRAXIS TOWARD **GREATER INCLUSIVITY**

**IN TEACHING AND ADVISING**

[here](#) is our community document with full responses.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| more infrastructure [and resources] to assist our most vulnerable community members is key                           | institutional <b>vision</b> and support for the FirstGen program  |
| stronger/clearer communication between faculty and admissions/other offices  | more institutional support for LD/ neurodivergent students  |
| more support for mental health resources (highlighted in one of the readings) and support in OSA                     | attention to the experiences of low-income and students of color in study abroad program                |
| greater investment in identifying and supporting students who are struggling in their first few semesters of college | greater investment in support within the courses where first-year students struggle most and most often |

value, create, and compensate time spent putting available resources into practice, revising / rethinking courses and curricula

foster community among faculty to workshop inclusive strategies and pedagogies

more of these workshops, something ongoing and required. Unfortunately, when it's optional, we are usually just preaching to the choir. We have mandatory sexual harassment training (Because it's the law) so why not DEI?

ongoing training for PZ faculty & staff on inclusivity (there are multi-campus offerings, but ... something focused for Pitzer so that we can build our skills & identify allies on our campus)

trainings and serious work social justice values across the board in all of our programming so that we may be more equitable

training on anti-blackness and racism against people of color  
training on sexual harassment, transphobia and sexism, misogyny

THE DIVERSITY COMMITTEE THANK THE  
FACULTY AND STAFF WHO PARTICIPATED  
IN THE WORKSHOP. THIS ANALYSIS  
WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE  
WITHOUT YOUR ENGAGEMENT AND  
INSIGHTS

Thank you