

Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation 2022-23 Action Planning

TRHT Preamble

The Sinsinawa Dominican sisters built what is now Dominican University in accord with the four pillars of their lives: prayer, study, community, and service. Dedicated to caring and truth, Dominican University fosters learning through study, self-reflection, dialogue, encounter, and discernment. We affirm the human dignity of each person and uphold a deep commitment to the common good. Our mission – to prepare students to pursue truth, give service, and participate in the creation of a more just and humane world – calls us to stand in solidarity with those who resist social inequality and racial injustice and to dismantle the false belief in a hierarchy of human value, a belief that has been a harmful part of our history, institutions, systems of government, and social norms.

TRHT Vision

The Dominican Community will resist white supremacy and challenge racist ideas, policies, and practices without rancor or recrimination. Through dynamic and ongoing partnerships with the communities we serve, Dominican will empower students, faculty, staff, and members of our communities to eliminate racial and ethnic bias and heal from their harmful, long-lasting effects.

TRHT Mission

The Dominican TRHT Campus Center is a hub for innovative programs and effective coalitions that empower students, staff, and faculty to eliminate racial inequities on our campus and in our communities. TRHT will promote a greater understanding of the global history of racial oppression, take action to eliminate its effects, and strive to transform the world.

GOALS

1. **Goal: Build agreement on the purpose and value of Rx Racial Healing circles as a methodology to address the harmful impacts of racism on our campus.**

Action steps:

- design a website
- develop a University wide communication structure
- host listening sessions to discover how people are using circles currently
- guide how circles are being used on campus (CV symposium, BCTLE sessions)
- seek buy-in from cabinet level leadership
- seek to incorporate this methodology with the strategic plan

Definition: we define Rx Racial Healing Circles as an experiential process by which, through story-telling and deep listening, we can embrace our common humanity, learn to see ourselves in one another, and approach difficult issues and needed policy changes through the lens of empathy and compassion.

Purpose: The purpose of an Rx Racial Healing Circle is to dismantle the false belief in a hierarchy of human value by:

- providing opportunities to engage with perceived others for the purpose of building trust and deepening relationships.
- enabling self-reflection and acknowledgment of one's previously unquestioned assumptions and biases.
- fostering positive learning and working environments.
- elevating and deepening connection to one another's humanity.

2. Goal: To increase a sense of belonging for BIPOC faculty, staff, and students at Dominican University.

Action steps:

- build and sustain BIPOC Affinity Groups through intentional collaboration with the Center for Cultural Liberation.
- design a page on the ODEI website where people can sign up to become a part of an affinity group
- work with the CCL to identify individuals to steward groups

Purpose: The purpose of BIPOC Affinity groups are to cultivate inclusivity for BIPOC students, staff, and faculty by:

- providing safe spaces where listening, openness, and confidentiality are valued.
- empowering students, faculty, and staff to express concerns and needs unique to their shared identity.
- fostering a sense of belonging through the opportunity to build relationships and community.

3. Goal: To identify and raise awareness of how white supremacy culture operates at Dominican University and work towards disrupting it.

Action steps:

- sustain and expand white accountability groups
- design a page on the ODEI website under program offerings where people can learn about the groups and sign up
- develop a University wide communication structure to encourage broader participation
- evaluate the assessment tool from this past year to inform best practice moving forward
- present on the methodology at University events (CV symposium, BCTLE sessions)

List of Characteristics that show up in our organizations (Tema Okun):

- Perfectionism
- Sense of Urgency
- Defensiveness
- Quantity over Quality
- Worship of the Written Word
- Only One Right Way
- Paternalism
- Either/or Thinking
- Power Hoarding/Fear of Open Conflict
- Individualism
- I'm the Only One
- Progress is Bigger, More
- Objectivity
- Right to Comfort

Definition of white accountability groups: White accountability groups utilize a methodology that encourages people who identify as white and/or have white skin privilege, explore how to recognize whiteness and white privilege, identify and interrupt internalized dominance, and collectively develop strategies for liberation and change.

Purpose: The purpose of white accountability is to improve campus climate by:

- Learning to recognize and shift unproductive white cultural dynamics in the organization to create a more inclusive, racially just organizational climate and culture.
- Implementing a system of development and accountability to ensure accelerated progress towards becoming a racially inclusive, anti-racist organization.

- Creating racially inclusive, high-performing teams and work climates where all are respected, valued, feel a sense of belonging, able to contribute to their full potential
- Using a Race Lens to analyze all current policies, programs, practices and services and revise, as needed, to eliminate negative differential impact on People of Color and create racial equity and inclusion

4. Goal: To promote a sense of safety and belonging for BIPOC students traveling into River Forest in order to attend Dominican University.

Action Steps:

- uphold the River Forest Village Resolution, which seeks to challenge racial injustice, promote healing, and address systemic and social injustice
- continue to serve on the River Forest DEI committee & show up for initiatives promoting equity in the village
- continue to invite River Forest community members to serve on the TRHT stakeholders group
- continue to collaborate with village leaders on programming, ie. Juneteenth & Pride

5. Goal: To build mutual trust and reciprocity between Dominican University and the community members who live within the Proviso Township.

Action Steps:

- Sustain viable partnerships by showing up to events/happenings within the Proviso Township
- Continue to fund interns to serve at non-for-profit organizations already established throughout the Proviso Township
- Continue to fund the Safe Summer Fellowship serving youth in the Proviso Township
- Seek funding for the TRHT Racial Justice Fellowship program, intended for faculty, staff and students committed to advancing the mission of TRHT.

BIG NEEDS for this year:

Website Design & Management
 Marketing & Communications Infrastructure
 Branding