let's do diversity

Report of the University of Amsterdam Diversity Commission

diversity
commission

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Summary

Between March and September 2016, the Diversity Commission studied diversity at the University of Amsterdam. Recognizing that the challenge to enhance **social justice** at the University requires active engagement with diversity, the Commission approached the topic along two lines: diversity of people and diversity in knowledge.

Diversity of people is concerned with the challenge of having a diverse academic environment, including people with different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, religions, (dis-)abilities, genders, skin colors, sexual preferences, ages, and other characteristics that shape their position in society. We envision a university that strives toward equal opportunities for all, where people are free from discrimination and feel that they belong. To assess this type of diversity, we asked questions such as: What are the gendered and ethnic characteristics of the people who occupy important positions at the University? Which power pyramids are structural, despite the variety in the archipelago of islands that make up the University?

Diversity in knowledge refers to the challenge to broaden academic traditions and mainstream canons which are solely centered on Europe and the US, by adopting other academic perspectives and approaches to teaching and learning. We envision a university community that is conscious of how academic knowledge is influenced by its historical conditions, and of its social and environmental impact. To assess this type of diversity, we asked questions such as: What epistemic frameworks are favored in a particular discipline? Who are the subjects that 'know' and are taken seriously; in other words: who gets to speak in relation to curricula, in the classroom, in textbooks, and on what grounds?

Diversity presents an opportunity to enrich the University community. Diverse and inclusive environments where a diversity of perspectives is valued breed **academic excellence** (*Nature*, 2014). The University will profit from diversity in ideas to advance scientific thinking and reflections on human cultures and material worlds.

The Commission used a variety of methods to study diversity, from the study of the relevant international, national and University-specific reports, to policy papers, studies and other data, as well as a survey, interviews, discussion circles and the taking and analyzing of photographs. Here we make various recommendations aimed to enhance social justice and diversity at the University, which we present under six main goals.

I.   Strong anchoring of 'social justice and diversity'

Scattered across the University of Amsterdam, employees and students actively contribute to the University as a diverse and inclusive environment. There are diversity-

rich courses in which students are invited to compare various perspectives, silent rooms have been realized here and there, and over the years several initiatives aimed to improve the position of women have seen the light. However, most of these initiatives have been incidental, uncoordinated and ad hoc, with the University lacking consistent, agreed upon and well-resourced policies to advance diversity.

Fortunately, our survey shows that there is broad support for a diversity policy, or at least such support could be readily mobilized. A majority of the respondents in our survey would appreciate the University becoming more diverse in terms of backgrounds, cultures, lifestyles and schools of thought (62% of the employees and 67% of the student respondents), and attention to diversity is welcomed by many (61%, respectively 68%). Among those who are seen as members of minority groups, the support is even broader.

Recommendations to anchor social justice and diversity:
- *Make the enhancement of social justice and diversity a central focus point of the University, laid down in a* **Diversity Policy and Action Plan** *with long-term and short-term goals. Diversity:*
  - *Should have central and vocal support at the very top and be anchored in decentralized practices and initiatives.*
  - *Goals are transparent: on both centralized and decentralized levels people are held accountable and follow-up occurs.*
  - *Encourage and protect participation of all members of the University community, students and staff, particularly those who are systematically underrepresented.*
- *Establish a* **Diversity Unit** *as a linchpin responsible for coordination of diversity policies and the implementation and monitoring of the action plan. The Unit should monitor progress toward an inclusive University in numerical terms and research the desirability and implementation of* **quota** *with respect to gender and race/ethnicity if those goals are not met within the period set. The Unit should:*
  - *Directly report to the Executive Board.*
  - *Have decentralized branches, as bottom-up support and ownership contribute to its success.*
  - *Have the means to support bottom-up student and staff initiatives.*
- *Establish – connected with the Diversity Unit – a specific, dedicated* **UvA Meldpunt Discriminatie (Discrimination Office) or Ombudsperson** *for tackling problems, registering complaints, promoting a culture of diversity awareness and offering support from specifically trained and dedicated counselors and mediators. Its authority should go beyond that of the confidential advisers, and – unlike these advisers – representatives of this Unit should not be positioned within departmental hierarchies. This should result in safe and efficient procedures for dealing with discrimination; procedures that are currently lacking.*
- **Cooperate** *with national and international universities to stimulate this process, determine best practices and make comparisons, and bring these issues to the*

attention of supra-institutional bodies such as NWO, KNAW, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, and the National Accreditation Organization NVAO. Closely engage in networks such as the LNVH, the National Network of Diversity Officers, the Platform Diversity in Science, the Alliance for Equal Chances in Higher Education and the European Network for Ombudsmen in Higher Education.

- *In collaboration with other Dutch universities, develop a **Dutch Diversity Charter for Higher Education** and a central expertise unit which develops criteria for institutional excellence that include measures of diversity and social justice.*

II.   Opening the University to the diversity in society

In 2015/2016, 14% of all students registered at the University of Amsterdam had a non-Western background, understood in the sense that at least one of their parents was born in a 'non-Western' country (*1cijferHO* database). When we exclude international students, this share is 13%. Although this roughly equals the national average (12% of university students in the Netherlands have a non-Western background) this 13% is relatively low when compared with the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (21%) and Erasmus University Rotterdam (22%), which find themselves in cities with comparably high shares of youth of non-Western descent. Of the employees who filled in the survey, 11% have a non-Western background, which drops to a mere 4% when we exclude the international professionals. For a university that presents itself as firmly rooted in the city of Amsterdam – which has recently become a majority-minority city – this is unsatisfactory.

This lack of diversity affects people at the University. Many of the students and employees with minority backgrounds who participated in our research reported that they lack role models and feel unrepresented at various levels.

Recommendations for a more diverse staff and student body:
- *Attract, retain, support and promote **more people with minority backgrounds** in order to increase their presence, particularly in visible positions and positions of power, and in representative bodies. For example, by:*
  - *Making staff application procedures more diversity-informed.*
  - *Increasing student recruitment at Amsterdam and regional schools with large populations of pupils with minority backgrounds.*
  - *Maintaining the* schakelcursussen (*bridging programs) that allow for the transition of students from HBO to the University.*
- *Anchor these goals in **concrete obligatory objectives** with explicit support from the Executive Board. Make results transparent, hold actors accountable and ensure follow up. When objectives are not met voluntarily within a determined time frame make them binding (quotas).*
- *Register **ethnic backgrounds** on aggregate levels solely for the purpose of monitoring and enhancing social justice.*

III.   Toward a socially just university

Exclusion is widely experienced at the University of Amsterdam. Of the employee respondents, 41% have observed exclusionary practices, while 15% have personally experienced discrimination. For the student respondents, these figures are 33% and 8%, respectively. Of employee respondents who are strongly hindered by an illness or disability, 27% have experienced discrimination. Of international employees with non-Western backgrounds, a staggering 42% have experienced discrimination. Women experience more discrimination than men, and older women more than younger women. Clearly, **the experience of working and studying at the University of Amsterdam is not the same for everyone**.

People are set apart from the mainstream – are excluded from the 'norm' – when they are placed in the position of outsider (or other) or when they are addressed as representatives of a certain group, which often occurs. Micro-aggressions, such as being ignored or facing insults disguised as jokes, can be extremely hurtful and have a profound impact on people's university experience. Mechanisms are lacking to safely address discrimination, intimidation and violence. Participants in the study explained that they were not taken seriously when they raised issues of discrimination.

People who are seen as belonging to minorities not only suffer from exclusion in everyday interactions, but are also disadvantaged in more structural respects. On average, students with ethnic minority backgrounds have lower study results. Women in general, and men and women with ethnic/racial minority backgrounds, are underrepresented in higher positions, which is at least partly indicative of discrimination. For people with physical disabilities, life at the University is challenging, as many buildings are still ill-equipped for people who use wheelchairs, or who have problems with hearing or sight, or other disabilities.

Recommendations to enhance social justice:
- *Take discrimination and racism **more seriously**, and more explicitly denounce acts of exclusion.*
- *Increase **awareness** of the impact of certain phrases, jokes and attitudes through a more visible and more explicit Code of Conduct.*
- *Create **safe mechanisms to address and tackle instances of discrimination** (see Point I. about the Ombudsperson).*
- *Consider the creation of small-scale teaching environments, with more guidance from the start, and smaller **distance between teaching staff and students**.*
- *Proceed with **improving the accessibility** of University buildings. Make accessibility for differently-abled people into a permanent focus.*

IV. From egalitarian thinking to 'diversity literacy'

Crucial to enhancing social justice and diversity is having a language in which these themes can be sensitively addressed. Unfortunately, in many places at the University such 'diversity-informed' language is lacking. Our research shows that many people are confident in speaking about gender and internationalization, but are uncomfortable in speaking about race and ethnicity. The fear that addressing differences – and diversity policy – contributes to stigmatization and exclusion is understandable, as much of the Dutch terminology is used in stigmatizing and polarizing ways (such as 'allochtonen' and 'autochtonen´).

Furthermore, several widespread ideas hamper the implementation of diversity policy and need to be explicitly challenged. Fear that enhancement of diversity threatens academic excellence is widespread, especially with regard to race/ethnicity.

1. *"Our meritocracy/egalitarianism ensures equality"*
   There is tension between the egalitarian, meritocratic view and the acknowledgement of differences. This egalitarian view is based on the assumptions that "everybody is the same" and that "only talent matters, so failure and success can exclusively be attributed to the individual." Research has proven that these ideas are ideals rather than facts. Attention to social inequality along various axes of difference – gender, race/ethnicity, educational status of parents, etc. – is indispensable.

2. *"Targeted measures jeopardize excellence"*
   If societies were entirely meritocratic and talent was an objective measure, then perhaps all talent would indeed be equally free to access the University, and targeted measures would only reduce the quality. However, what is commonly seen as success, talent, leadership and excellence is not neutral, but is primarily based on masculine, Western and middle-class socio-economic characteristics. In addition, people tend to favor those who are similar to themselves, and with whom they feel a connection, which affects selection procedures and evaluations. Furthermore, not everybody enjoys equally favorable conditions regarding economic, social and human capital. Is and should everyone then be treated the same? This view needs to be challenged.

3. *"Science is independent from actors and power structures"*
   It is important to acknowledge that science is produced in geo-political and historical contexts and is thus linked to power hierarchies. A science that is conscious of this position, or 'positionality', is a science that can better understand its implications and possible impact on social and environmental processes. This explains why a diversity of perspectives and a diverse body of students, teaching staff and researchers is important.

4. *"The canon leads the way"*
   The existence of disciplinary canons or mainstream perspectives should not mean that we exclusively use and teach the canon, nor that we should ignore its positionality.

5. *"Good scientists are nonreligious"*
   Unfortunately, these assumptions result in the exclusion of people who are religious. Secularism is too often confused with atheism, which not only spreads the unproven claim that only non-religious individuals can do good science, this also ignores personal religious needs in everyday life (which for some people include spaces for prayer).

The lack of diversity-informed language is a crucial issue, which is difficult to resolve overnight. Before 'diversity literacy' can be promoted, it first needs to be developed by means of awareness-raising courses and conversations. International examples offer sources of inspiration. We recommend the avoidance of terminology that is dated, polarizing, exclusionary and pejorative, such as the n-word, which still circulates at the University of Amsterdam. We also recommend refraining from the use of terms such as "Surinamese" or "Turks," when Surinamese-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch people are meant. Frameworks of decoloniality and intersectionality should be central to this diversity-informed language (see explanations at the end of the summary).

It is more important to open spaces for respectful dialogue rather than avoid all dialogue for fear of speaking incorrectly or offensively. However, this does not mean that everything may be said in the name of 'frankness'.

Recommendations to develop and enhance 'diversity literacy'
- ***Develop*** *a non-threatening, non-stigmatizing vocabulary, through:*
  - *Organizing, promoting and supporting ongoing conversations among students and staff.*
  - *Learning from international best practices.*
  - *Drawing on external (national/international) expertise.*
  - *Using frameworks such as decoloniality and intersectionality.*
- ***Use*** *diversity-informed language in formal and informal communication.*
- ***Disseminate*** *this language through voluntary courses included in academic skills courses and BKOs.*

V.   From 'closed' knowledge to 'open' knowledge

Too often, curricula only present the dominant scientific perspective and ignore or even disqualify alternative or critical voices. Not all researchers and teaching staff realize or

teach how knowledge is shaped by the context in which it is produced and evaluated. However, the fact is that knowledge is created by specific people (historically these were usually white men); is enabled by specific funds (industries, governments, funding agencies); emerges from specific political and commercial agendas (colonialism, slavery, religion, war, "third-world development," democracy, integration, commercialization of medicines and healthcare, capitalism, neoliberalism); and is inspired by specific worldviews and norms (currently in the Netherlands: secularism and the emancipation of women and the LGBT community). Obviously, people who evaluate and use this knowledge are also embedded in such contexts, as is the University of Amsterdam itself. In other words, knowledge is 'positioned'.

Recognizing that all knowledge and every scientist has a distinct position – recognizing their 'positionality' and the underlying power arrangements – creates space for alternative and critical perspectives and experiences. This enriches academic work as it stimulates dialogue, critical thinking, and the exploration of new angles. Furthermore, it challenges power inequalities and allows legitimacy to the thoughts and experiences of people with different positionalities.

Ignoring this positionality does not do justice to history and the present, nor to the variety of experiences and views. The proud celebration of the VOC period, for example, as is evident in the unproblematic use of the Heeren XVII (Lords Seventeen) meeting room in the Oost-Indisch Huis, is a painful example of how the University ignores its positionality. For people who trace their descent from formerly colonized peoples, this uncritical celebration is hurtful and ignores their views about this room and this part of Dutch history. As the students and employees who participated in our study strongly articulated: having space for multiple perspectives is motivating and enriching. Fortunately, such diversity-rich courses *do* exist, but these are often not core courses.

Recommendations to increase the openness of knowledge:
- *Give **institutional value and visibility to practices enriching diversity**, through including diversity as an important element in training, in teaching evaluations, in course evaluations, in research evaluations and promotion criteria.*
- *Make researchers, teaching staff and students more aware of the positionality of knowledge, and create **space for divergent perspectives**.*
- *Use **'curricula scans'** to monitor and stimulate the development of diversity-rich courses given by experienced teaching staff and trained professionals, who can also act as a sounding-board for teaching staff in developing their courses.*
- *Ensure institutional **protection** for researchers and teaching staff who engage with non-mainstream perspectives in their disciplines.*
- *Develop – as in U.S. Ivy League universities – **courses** in every faculty that reflect on issues such as the genealogy of the discipline, positionality and the roles that gender, race/ethnicity, class and (dis-)ability play in this particular field of studies.*
- *Further develop and stimulate **participatory teaching methods**.*

- *Enhance awareness of the **historical role of the University of Amsterdam**, for example, in colonial times.*

VI.   Moving forward

This report has mapped some main contours of diversity at the University of Amsterdam, revealing its strengths and weaknesses in this domain. The Commission is aware that the changes required will not occur overnight. Nonetheless, in the words of the poet Adrienne Rich, "a wild patience" will take us far.

Recommendation to move forward:
In order to begin to address the multifaceted challenges of diversity, it is necessary that the Executive Board of the University institutes ***a new Commission to inaugurate the next stage***. This Commission, Div-II, will consist of a delegation of relevant groups who first formed the Pre-Commission for Diversity, of university functionaries preparing the way for a Diversity Unit and of a representation of the faculties. It will have as its main tasks:

- To draft a **concrete Diversity Policy and Work Plan** for the coming three years on the basis of the present report, including the establishment of the Diversity Unit.
- To **engage the faculties in a discussion** of the present report and to map the possibilities for the enhancement of diversity in their own spheres.

Underlying frameworks

As noted above, the broad frameworks of decoloniality and intersectionality should be central to dealing with social justice and diversity at the University.

- ***Decoloniality*** is a perspective that allows us to see how the dynamics of power differences, social exclusion and discrimination (along the axes of race, gender and geographical and economic inequality) are connected to the ongoing legacy of our colonial history. Decoloniality also helps us understand the role of the University as a modern/colonial institution in the reinforcement of Western perspectives at the expense of the plurality of knowledges of the world. A decolonized university has open forms of expertise, and is open to intercultural and plural approaches to knowledge.
- ***Intersectionality*** is a perspective that allows us to see how various forms of discrimination cannot be seen as separate, but need to be understood in relation to each other. Being a woman influences how someone experiences being white; being LGBT and from a working-class background means one encounters different situations than a white middle-class gay man.
  Practicing intersectionality means that we avoid the tendency to separate the

axes of difference that shape society, institutions and ourselves. This separation, for example, makes us consider gender discrimination and racial discrimination as two entirely unconnected phenomena, which is why gender policies tend to only target white women. Race simply disappears from the agenda when the focus is on gender, and vice versa. The idea of intersectionality allows us to see why distinct social positions of individual students and staff determine how they experience the University. Intersectionality urges us to be sensitive to the variety of trajectories, experiences and perspectives among students and staff.

Contents

Preamble

In the following we present the end report of the Diversity Commission of the University of Amsterdam. The Commission was presented to the academic community on February 24, 2016, after the Maagdenhuis Occupation in the spring of 2015. In a little under 8 months, the Commission, supported by a team of dedicated research assistants, has managed to obtain an image of the state of diversity at UvA. Although there are scattered hopeful initiatives, passionate teachers and other staff, and articulate students who carry the torch for diversity, overall, an ambitious university such as UvA, which is situated in a very diverse environment, falls short of having a concerted commitment to diversity. This includes having a well-thought-out diversity policy, as well as manifold measures that are necessary to make it into an excellent, inclusive and socially just institution. In fact, UvA lags behind some other Dutch universities – such as the Erasmus Universiteit in Rotterdam and the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam – both in terms of the diversity of students and staff and in terms of policies. To date, the urgency to address issues of diversity has been paralyzed by the dominant ideology of egalitarianism, such that the prevalent belief in the equal opportunity for everyone to study and thrive at UvA – regardless of gender, race/ethnicity, (dis-)ability, religious background, sexuality, class, country of origin and age – dispels the need to think about and act more fundamentally in the service of diversity. We have diagnosed UvA as a case of ***strong egalitarianism coupled with a lack of diversity literacy***.

In this preamble, the Commission will present background information on its history and working methods and subsequently present some major observations and findings about diversity at UvA. These topics will be elaborated on in the body of the report. The Commission immediately wants to share with the reader the urgency of promoting diversity and to explicitly name some of the problems that it encountered in its research. In six sections, below, the Commission will reflect on:

- Its history, its mandate and ways of working (§1).
- The *meaning and pertinence of diversity* to the UvA as a whole. We will also address two perpectives that are characteristic of the work of the Commission: *decoloniality* and *intersectionality* (§2).
- The necessity of developing a commonly accepted, non-*oppressive and non-threatening discourse* to speak about diversity and the recommendation to jointly develop such terminology through conversations and dialogue (§3).
- The finding that different axes of difference, *gender* and *race/ethnicity* encounter different responses at UvA (§4).
- The importance of *epistemological diversity*, making space for more context-conscious ways of doing science that acknowledge the knower's positionality and broaden perspectives on knowledge production beyond curricula and canons

centered on Europe and the US; perspectives that are often conceived as the only valid ways of knowing (§5).

- *Common misunderstandings* about diversity, thriving in light of the pervasiveness of egalitarianism, which hamper the realization of a truly diverse university. We have dealt more elaborately with five of these misunderstandings in the summary. One we highlight here; this pertains to the equation of internationalization with diversity (§6).
- Finally, the content of the report will be taken up in §7.

§1. History, mandate and work of the Diversity Commission

The Diversity Commission was the third commission, after the Commissions for Finance and Housing (COFH) and Democratization and Decentralization (D&D), to be installed after the Maagdenhuis Occupation. During the Occupation, a banner hung from the front of the Maagdenhuis, stating: "No Democratization without Decolonization," pointing to the centrality of the notion of decoloniality to education, research and democratization in the eyes of the protesters. The centrality of this notion was brought to the fore in the manifold activities, lectures and debates organized around the issue of diversity, which thus far had not been addressed by the main protest movements. Existing and new student movements such as University of Colour, Amsterdam United and New Urban Collective, in concert with Rethink, the Central Works Council (COR), and the Central Student Council (CSR) (which all later became the Pre-Commission for Diversity) gave important impetus to the establishment of the Diversity Commission, which eventually became a sub-commission of the Commission D&D.

The Pre-Commission for Diversity drafted a mandate in the summer of 2015 (see the online Appendix at website of the Commission D&D[1]) and held a round of interviews with prospective candidates for the Commission, which was fully composed in January 2016,[2] when the members started meeting and preparing the ground for its work. The Commission was formally instituted after receiving approval in a joint meeting of the COR and the CSR, and it was funded by the Executive Board (CvB) on March 4, 2016. The Commission set to work with enthusiasm and urgency. It has translated its mandate into three goals:

I. To provide insight into and make recommendations about *the numerical presence of diversity among students and staff (both academic and support staff)*. In order to evaluate this diversity correctly, comparisons are made with the presence of diversity in other relevant places, such as the city of Amsterdam and other educational institutions. This research consists of a quantitative analysis.[3]

II. To provide insight into and make recommendations on *the UvA as an inclusive institution*. The focus is on the experiences of students and staff concerning inclusion and exclusion. Do students and staff feel part of the UvA community? The research focuses on formal and informal aspects of inclusion and exclusion. The informal part of the research, "Under the surface of an egalitarian university:

everyday exclusions," takes an original approach by assessing diversity through the collection of UvA stories and photos, also focusing on people with various specific needs and disabilities.[4] The formal part, "The meaning(s) of diversity in higher education: learning from UvA experiences," addresses understandings of diversity at the EU, national and UvA levels and compares *diversity policies* to international 'good practices.' [5]

III. To provide insight into and make recommendations on the current state of *knowledge and teaching practices at the UvA*. What is taught and how is it taught? This part of the research will identify to what extent the knowledge practices at the UvA reflect the diversity among students and staff as well as the diversity in schools of thought.[6]

In order to keep in touch with a broader variety of voices and perspectives than present in the Commission itself and, given the limited research time of the members in light of our daunting tasks, it was decided from the outset that the Commission would collaborate closely with a team of research assistants. We hired a secretary, a coordinator and nine other students to assist in the research.[7] In addition, the Commission was fortunate in attracting two volunteers who, passionate about diversity, offered their services. Thus, all in all, 18 people have collaborated on producing this report. In addition, an International Advisory Board, consisting of professor dr. M. Jacqui Alexander, professor Gurminder K. Bhambra, professor dr. Maurice Crul, dr. Ana Cruz, dr. Antonia Darder, professor dr. Philomena Essed, professor Gustavo Esteva, dr. Wendy Harcourt, dr. Isabel Hoving, professor Walter Mignolo, dr. Pierre Orelus, professor Louk de La Rive Box, professor dr. Hanneke Takkenberg, ms. Mary Tupan-Wenno, and professor Catherine Walsh, have been supportive in reading and commenting on our texts. In April 2016, the Commission moved from the Roeterseiland complex to its own office at Handboogstraat 2. During its tenure, the Commission has kept in close touch with the Pre-Commission, now called the Contact Group, jointly working toward an end product. The Contact Group has kept in touch with their various constituencies, has helped to organize the consultation meetings in September and a public lecture entitled, "Everyday Racism and the Future of the Academy. What does it mean for the academy to be a diverse and decolonial place of work and learning?" by Prof. Philomena Essed on June 16, 2016.

In keeping with the nature of diversity as the Commission conceives of it, a variety of approaches has been applied. Thus, quantitative and qualitative work have gone into producing this report, while members have been inspired by diverging but often overlapping perspectives such as intersectional feminist theory, decolonial and Paradigm III theory, visual anthropology, critical development studies, critical race theory and other bodies of work that interrogate the ongoing reproduction of structural inequalities in general, and sexism, racism, islamophobia and ableism in particular, in the higher education sector. The report is thus interdisciplinary. As for methodologies, importantly, the work of the Commission has consisted of visits to all of the faculties, Amsterdam University College (AUC), the Maagdenhuis, and the Administrative Center, interviewing

members of the academic community of UvA from the highest echelons in the organization to students and members of the administrative, secretarial and catering services.[8] In addition to interviews, we carried out a survey, collected relevant reports and data, invited people to tell UvA stories, took photographs of important UvA sites, organized discussion circles about diversity with staff and students, and internal and external diversity literacy-enhancing events were also organized. The Commission has made an effort to organize outreach activities during its tenure, aimed at awareness raising, information exchange and networking. Thus, a two-pronged approach of **research and awareness raising** has been the hallmark of the Commission.

In keeping with our mandate that we consult the academic community on the results of our work, we chose to continue on the path we had already embarked upon, i.e. to do so by way of public meetings, where we presented our main preliminary findings. These feedback sessions were held at various UvA sites in the month of September 2016. We were convinced that these meetings would yield valuable feedback. Our impression after meetings with the COR and CSR, and public meetings at Roeterseiland, Science Park, and the Maagdenhuis is that the majority of the participants are supportive of the transitions and measures that we propose. On the major point on which criticism was raised, quotas, we have come up with a milder reformulation.

The report is a first mapping of the state of diversity at the UvA. The work started here will have to be continued. Given the chronic lack of time that afflicts members of UvA, we decided to publish a condensed, succinct report that is manageable and readable, while we will also publish an extended version of the report (which includes appendices with additional information on methodologies, data and theoretical apparatuses) on the website of the Commission D&D.[9]

§2. On the pertinence of diversity, decoloniality and intersectionality to UvA as a whole

In the past decades, there has been increasing recognition of the importance of diversity in the international academy, from the US to the UK, South Africa and the Netherlands. The enhancement of diversity is necessary so that the University, more than is the case now, becomes *an inclusive community, where*: "[e]veryone gets the opportunity to optimally develop his or her talents, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, ablebodiedness and social, cultural and religious background" (Mandate, 2015). What is diversity? We follow the definition proposed by the special issue on diversity, published by *Nature* in cooperation with *Scientific American*: "**Diversity means an inclusive approach, both to the science itself and the make-up of the groups who carry out the research**" (*Nature*, 2014: 279). Thus, we advocate epistemological diversity and diversity in terms of people working on a problem or studying at the University. *Nature* notes: "A mixture of people (mixed across whatever divisions you care to mention)

will be able to consider and to enable a wider range of solutions to a problem" (idem). In other words, diversity is paramount to generating academic excellence.

The UvA Diversity Commission works from a different perspective than the existing diversity initiatives at other Dutch universities such as Leiden, the Vrije Universiteit and Erasmus. While we agree that the importance of diversity in the academy takes shape in increasingly complex local and global contexts, the UvA Commission thinks about the role of the University and the question of diversity in relation to the challenges posed by social inequality, which involves the contemporary legacies of our colonial history at the local and global levels. Social inequality among the young in the Netherlands is powerfully shaped by the educational level of their parents, and this process starts at an early age, exacerbated by the pressure of having to make a choice about the direction of one's education at the age of 12. A mixture of class and race/ethnic factors play into this inequality.

In order to address these inequalities, we work, first of all, with an understanding of diversity that is enhanced by *a decolonial awareness*, which we understand in broad terms, and hence is relevant for many dimensions of inequality. This is necessary so that the University, more than is the case now, becomes an inclusive community, where people, regardless of their gender, race/ethnicity, class, religion, sexual orientation and disability, can develop their talents, their knowledge about our historical present and become responsible and ethically accountable members of society. ***Diversity is an aspect of, and more precisely a precondition for, academic excellence and social justice.***

The notion of decoloniality comes from a body of thought primarily developed by academics from the South, especially Latin America, in which a connection is made between modernity and coloniality: the era of Western modernity was thoroughly suffused with colonial processes and practices necessary for Western imperial expansion and these continue to mediate global inequalities up to the present. Coloniality was implemented through a system of social classification that assigned a superior position to Western European peoples and an inferior position to peoples of the South, peoples of color (Quijano, 2000, 2010). The same applies to peoples (Muslims) from the Middle East through Orientalist views, buttressed by the idea of a 'Clash of Civilizations'. Mapping the histories of modern disciplines – explicitly including the 'hard' sciences – it is clear that the era of colonialism has played a tremendously important part in their development (Mignolo, 2000, 2003).

Decoloniality wishes to break through that historical legacy of Western-centrism. In the academic domain this means, among other things, that teaching staff, researchers and students should all be aware of the geohistorical location of their disciplines. This can be achieved by developing and offering courses that transmit knowledge in a situated way. Until now, only a few disciplines find this knowledge – which contemplates on their

historical and present position in the geopolitics of knowledge – worthy of transmission to future generations of scholars (Harding, 1993, 2015).

In addition to decoloniality, the UvA Diversity Commission is also driven, theoretically and methodologically, by a *strong intersectional impulse*. In the most straightforward terms this means that the existing dimensions of difference that construct society, culture, institutions and ourselves – i.e. gender, race/ethnicity, class, sexuality, disability, age and religion, to name but a few important ones – do not function independently from each other, but co-construct each other. Practicing intersectionality means that we avoid the tendency to separate these dimensions of difference. This separation, for example, makes us consider gender discrimination and racial discrimination as two entirely unconnected phenomena, which is why gender policies tend to only target white women. Race simply disappears from the agenda when the focus is on gender, and vice versa. The idea of intersectionality allows us to see why distinct social positions of individual students and staff determine how they experience the University. Intersectionality urges us to be sensitive to the variety of trajectories, experiences and perspectives among students and staff. Thus, in the view of the UvA Commission, it is impossible and undesirable to give priority to gender only, since that would mean that race/ethnicity would be overlooked and that only inequality in relation to white women would automatically come to the fore, for example, when it comes to filling positions. Taking 'intersectionality' as our second, fundamental point of departure means ***acknowledging that everyone, in view of their specific positionings, is implicated and positioned in matters of diversity.*** In addition, diversity is a matter that needs to be addressed institution-wide.

These various dimensions of difference are not in balance; often one pole is seen as the norm (male, white, middle-class, secular/atheist, heterosexual) while the other pole is the 'diverging' side (female, black, lower-class, religious, homosexual). This other side is often explicitly labeled, whereas those who fit the norm are not labeled, and hence get 'normalized' (see for example the adjective 'ethnic' to solely refer to people with non-Dutch backgrounds, as if the Dutch have no ethnicity). By making the 'norm-category' invisible, we contribute to the hierarchy by placing this norm beyond discussion. We would like to avoid the too frequent tendency to annul the most powerful pole of such axes.

§3. On the lack of a commonly accepted, non-oppressive and non-threatening discourse to speak about diversity

During the many conversations and interviews that the Commission has engaged in, the basic lack of an appropriate vocabulary to speak about ethnic/racial diversity, much less about decolonization, became apparent. When diversity was put on the table, most interlocutors spoke about gender and/or about internationalization, but race/ethnicity (and also religion; Islam in particular) was usually avoided, unless we brought it up. Many people are uneasy and at a loss about the terminology to use. Several students of color

commented on teachers using pejorative terminology in class, and even when some of them objected to these terms as hurtful, oppressive and anachronistic, this apparently was not a sufficient reason for teachers to refrain from using them. Using inappropriate terminology is of course the tip of the iceberg, as the many experiences and narratives of students and faculty attest to: the larger problem is the unproblematized ***Eurocentrism of the canon and the curriculum***. International movements such as "Why is my curriculum so white?" and "Why are all my teachers white?" have called attention to this broader phenomenon.

The unease with ethnic/racial terminology is partly connected to the general Dutch unease with and uncertainty about race/ethnicity as an important social and symbolic grammar. When it is put on the table this unease sometimes comes out as verbal aggression, at others as inappropriately endearing but patronizing terminology ('allochtoontje,' 'zwartje'), and sometimes as aphasia.

Clearly, diversity will not be enhanced by avoiding the topic or by using inappropriate terminology. In the domain of race/ethnicity, we will be using terms such as black, migrant and refugee' (BMR) staff, or 'staff and students of color.' We also use 'minoritized' to avoid naturalizing ethnic minority status and instead to bring out the active ingredient in the process; people are only (seen as) members of a minority group when this is considered a socially relevant category. The Commission certainly does not want to prescribe or police correct terminology, as this is a gradually developing process that follows its own trajectory. Terminology needs to be addressed and developed by organizing lectures, conversations and discussions across the institution to enhance, what we call 'diversity literacy', fluency and awareness.

§4. Comparing different differences nationally and at UvA

When it comes to ***gender diversity***, there is consensus among all but a few rare individuals that measures need to be taken to ensure that female staff are able to climb the academic ladder commensurable with their numbers in the academic world. Actually, this consensus has led to very meager results over the years and female faculty tell many a chilling story of being marginalized, passed over for promotions and other instances of everyday sexism. Nevertheless, it is in keeping with our national self-representation of gender egalitarianism and with the rather generally accepted insight that more gender diversity leads to better scientific results, that gender diversity is broadly supported, at least verbally. This positive attitude toward gender measures is, for example, expressed in the NWO Aspasia program, which helps promising young female academics to become UHD, Associate Professors. Without protest, statistics are collected to monitor the advancement of women in the academy. Notwithstanding all these efforts, the current national percentage of female full professors in the Netherlands is estimated at a deplorable 20%. This is reflected at the UvA, where the figure is 19% (LNVH Report, 2015), which puts UvA in fifth place nationally.[10] Interestingly, all of the various initiatives

in the domain of gender have not been criticized for the lack of quality that would supposedly result from them. This is in stark contrast to measures proposed in the framework of ethnic/racial diversity, which regularly and routinely meet with strong opposition.

The main national measure that was taken in the framework of *ethnic/racial diversity* was a program to advance excellent students from ethnic minority groups to a PhD trajectory: the NWO Mozaïek Program (2004–2012), which NWO undertook in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (OCW). In 2002, it became clear that members of ethnic minorities were barely represented among academic staff, although increasing numbers of students of color were graduating. This meant additional efforts were required. The program selected and catered annually to a group of about 20 black, migrant and refugee students who were partly financed by NWO and by their home universities. During the course of its existence, Mozaïek saw about 200 BMR students complete their PhDs, but it was forthwith abolished by the first Rutte Government. It is worth reflecting upon the reasons why these often excellent students, with stellar grades, could not participate in regular PhD trajectories in the first place. The official reasons were often thought to lie in their lack of appropriate networks and role models, lack of Dutch proficiency, and a less supportive home atmosphere (Wolff, 2013). According to Essed and Goldberg (2002), one should consider the mechanism of 'cloning,' whereby the process of being handpicked by mentors and professors is interrupted by these students, who are just not similar enough to them.[11]

It is clear that there has not been comparable national or local infrastructure for BMR students or faculty with regard to ethnic/racial diversity as there has been for women. Nor is there an urgent, national consensus that something needs to be done with regard to racial/ethnic diversity in the academy. The most usual attitude seems to be one in which little urgency is experienced or warranted: "everybody with enough talent can enter the University. The members of these groups will automatically appear in academic staff positions, when they have been here long enough; when they have developed the appropriate attitudes and interests." Also illustrative of this lack of interest is the lack of routinely generated statistical data on teachers and students with ethnic minority backgrounds, which is often defended with a view to protection of privacy (while gender data are readily available and apparently do not suffer from the same sensitivity).

This lack of affect, of existing infrastructures to remedy disadvantage, and of concrete measures taken, is distinctly linked to the argument that targeted measures will lead to a decline in the quality of academic teaching and research. This suggestion is often made openly, and stated as self-evident, sometimes it is made more implicitly. Apparently, notwithstanding the progressive image that UvA enjoys in the world at large, this pertains more to the field of gender than to the field of race/ethnicity and this is generally felt to be rightly so. Often even, intolerance of those who are seen as racial, ethnic and religious minorities is legitimized in the name of 'protecting gender and sexual equality'. Minority

groups are played out against one another. Why is this the case? Why is one difference, gender, considered a legitimate ground for concern and policy measures, while another, race/ethnicity, is not? The Diversity Commission cannot escape the conclusion that in this respect the UvA is tainted with the same Dutch brush, which paints gender difference as a deplorable state of disadvantage which can and should be remedied, while covering over issues of race/ethnicity (Wekker, 2016). Race/ethnicity is a highly contested variable, and its relevance for people's life and educational chances is often denied. When it *is* acknowledged, the burden is placed on people of color themselves, who are seen to need to adjust to Dutch society in terms of language, mores, ambitions and networks. This so-called 'cultural deficit model' (Essed and Goldberg, 2002) does its work by removing the responsibility of action, at least partly, from institutions – such as universities –placing it with the disadvantaged parties themselves, their families, cultures, communities and value systems.

Comparable reflections should be made on other dimensions such as sexuality and religion, however, space does not allow for that here. We will just briefly signal that, notwithstanding the fact that gender and sexuality have in recent decades become the litmus tests for being modern and belonging to the Dutch nation, non-normative sexualities, according to LGBTIQs[12] at UvA, are mostly met with unease, resounding silence or even jokes behind one's back, while the default position in the domain of religion is secularism (or rather: atheism).

§5. On inclusivity and the geopolitics of knowledge

Universities are and have been key actors in the global production and reproduction of knowledge. It is necessary to reflect on their participation in the geopolitics of knowledge (Hountondji, 1997; Mignolo, 2011; Santos, 2014). The history of the university is entwined with the colonial history of Western modernity; it has played an important role in the articulation of the modern/colonial divide. The largely 'Western-centric' approach to knowledge of our 'global universities' is a legacy of modern/colonial history. The reproduction of Western-centric, or 'monocultural,' knowledge has been accomplished through a double mechanism of denial: the denial of the positionality of Western knowledge and the denial of other knowledges. This enabled 'Western-centric' knowledge to appear as the only valid knowledge and to establish its position as the norm (Vázquez, 2011).

Too often, curricula today only present the dominant scientific perspective and ignore, or even disqualify, alternative or critical voices. Not all researchers and teachers realize or teach that knowledge is shaped by the context in which it is produced and evaluated. After all, knowledge is created by specific persons (historically these are often white males); is enabled by specific funds (industries, governments, funding agencies); emerges from specific political and commercial agendas (colonialism, slavery, religion, war, 'third world development,' democracy, integration, commercialization of medicines and healthcare,

capitalism, neoliberalism), and is inspired by specific worldviews and norms (currently in the Netherlands: secularism and emancipation of women and LGBTIQs). Obviously, people who evaluate and use this knowledge are also embedded in such contexts, as is the University of Amsterdam itself. In other words, knowledge is 'positioned.'

As Haraway (1988) and Harding (2015) have shown, a more truthful knowledge is *a located knowledge*. We think that recognition of the geohistorical location of knowledge is necessary to move toward inclusive practices of knowledge which foster diverse and inclusive approaches to teaching, learning and research. Diversity in terms of knowledge means a move toward inclusivity, away from largely monocultural and 'closed' forms of expertise to pluri-cultural and 'open' forms of expertise. This would also enable an active reflection on the responsibility of any university vis-a-vis the global politics of knowledge.

The Commission makes a plea for the importance of epistemological diversity, making space for more context-conscious ways of doing science that acknowledge the knower's positionality and broaden perspectives on knowledge production beyond curricula and canons centered on Europe and the US, which to date have been seen as the only valid ways of knowing. The recognition of the geohistorical positionality of the University and its knowledge practices is a necessary condition to move toward an inclusive academic community. This path will allow us to develop a more open and truthful expertise in which diversity and academic excellence can thrive.

To be clear, we do *not* argue to discard the ideal of science being objective. Rather, we argue for a 'strong objectivity' of science (Harding 2015). This entails the acknowledgement that much of our scientific knowledge is partly influenced by the backgrounds, lenses and interests of the researchers and the funding institutions, and that this developed knowledge is only *part* of what there is to know. By making science more diverse, this knowledge can be broadened.

§6. On some common misunderstandings with regard to diversity

Due to the pervasiveness of egalitarianism, *common misunderstandings* about diversity thrive, and these hamper the realization of a truly diverse university. The misunderstanding are the following:
- *"Our meritocracy/egalitarianism ensures equality"*
- *"Targeted measures jeopardize excellence"*
- *"Science is independent from actors and power structures"*
- *"The canon leads the way"*
- *"Good scientists are nonreligious"*
"Diversity is internationalization"
For the first five misunderstandings, we kindly refer the reader to the summary of the report where these are dealt with. Here, we discuss the misunderstanding that for 'doing diversity' it suffices to attract international students because they bring diversity with

them, and thus no specific measures are needed to cater to minoritized Dutch students; in other words, internationalization equals diversity. Although the presence of international students contributes to an enriching academic environment and they do bring diversity with them, it is not correct to equate diversity with internationalization, as diversity should also and specifically target Dutch students of color. Specific measures are needed to attract and retain these students. By not distinguishing between the two concepts and the different discourses surrounding them, the fiction can be maintained that "by taking care of internationalization, diversity is simultaneously provided for."

§7. Content of the report

Chapter 1, "Diversity and social equality at the University of Amsterdam in numbers," presents a quantitative analysis, establishing the baseline of the UvA's demographic composition in 2016. Data were obtained from relevant reports and existing databases such as UvAData, 1cijferHO and Statline. In addition, a *survey* was conducted among students and staff. The chapter maps the composition and the experiences of students and staff, with gender and ethnicity as meaningful variables, and also class, sexuality, religious orientation and disability taken into account. Insights into the relationship between gender and ethnicity and study/career progress; and into the relationship between diversity and experiences of inclusion/exclusion and attitudes toward 'diversity initiatives,' will be presented.

Chapter 2, "Under the surface of an egalitarian University," presents a collection of *characteristic stories* from students and staff at the UvA gathered via interviews. These stories demonstrate everyday experiences with regard to sexism, racism, disability and exclusion that usually remain 'under the surface.' The stories illustrate current situations at UvA regarding diversity, while they also give a clearer picture of the underlying patterns of behavior and attitudes. In addition, photos of UvA buildings (of the inside and outside) are deconstructed to review the accessibility of the buildings.

In Chapter 3, "The meaning(s) of diversity in higher education," the objective is to identify the meanings attached to the notion of 'diversity' and the effects with respect to overcoming or reproducing discrimination in higher education. Methods used include the analysis of key policy guidelines with regard to diversity at the EU, national and UvA levels, and semi-structured interviews with deans, teaching staff and course leaders. The team interviewed 21 people, including five of the seven UvA deans, and developed an analytical tool to highlight the findings.

Chapter 4, "Diversity in teaching and learning," approaches diversity as practices of teaching and learning. A theoretical framework was developed for the analysis of diversity in relation to what is taught and how it is taught at UvA. To identify structural as well as pedagogical practices that either discourage or foster difference, interviews and conversation circles with students and staff were organized, for which a tool-kit and

facilitating guide were designed. Furthermore, the team conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with key faculty informants.

Chapter 5 presents a range of policy recommendations.

The Diversity Commission wishes this report to mark the start of a fruitful and productive period in which diversity will be taken up by the academic community of UvA; from the bottom up and from the top down and everywhere in between.

Amsterdam, September 24, 2016.

1. Diversity and social equality at the University of Amsterdam in numbers

In this chapter we explore several themes in quantitative ways:

- **Diversity:** What is the composition of the students and employees? Is the University 'diverse' enough? (§1 and 2)
- **Equality in terms of chances:** Do people who are seen as members of minorities fare equally well? (§1 and 2)
- **Equality in terms of experiences:** Do some people experience more exclusion and discrimination than others? (§3)
- **Opinions about diversity:** Do students and staff value their environment being diverse, and do they think action should be taken? Who, in particular, holds or does not hold these opinions? (§3)

The data we used comes from several sources. The two main sources are:

- Administrative data: mainly UvAData and the national database 1cijferHO.[13] This contains information about gender (students and staff) and ethnic background (students).
- A survey among all students and staff at the University, through which we explored experiences and opinions in relation to a variety of characteristics, such as gender, ethnic background, class background, sexual orientation, religion and (dis-)ability.

About the survey

A link to the survey, which was developed in collaboration with many people, such as the Contact Group, was sent by email in Dutch and English to all students and staff.[14] (For more information about the survey, the methods and the data, see the online Appendix). Of the staff, 2,815 respondents filled out the survey. In relation to the 8,998 people registered as UvA personnel,[15] this is a response rate of 31%. Of the students, 3,841 filled out the survey, which is approximately 10% of the total number of students registered (36,649).[16] Women were slightly overrepresented. The ethnic composition of the student respondents was very similar to the ethnic composition of the student body.

Like any survey, particularly those that are distributed through emails, this survey is unlikely to be fully representative of the entire university. It is likely that people with a strong affiliation with diversity and inclusion are overrepresented. Nevertheless, as the numbers are large, particularly among the staff, the survey presents the situation and opinions of a substantial share of the University population. Furthermore, these large numbers enabled us to uncover trends, for example, to explore whether certain experiences and opinions are more present among some groups of respondents than others.

§1. Student composition and study progress

Is the University of Amsterdam diverse and fair? Is it diverse and fair enough?

Student composition
Of the total number of students registered at the University in 2015/2016, 13% have a 'non-Western' immigrant background (1cijferHO data).[17] When we include international students, this share is 14%.[18]

Is this 'diverse' enough? In comparison to other universities in cities with similar shares of citizens with 'non-Western' backgrounds, this share of 13% is low. At the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU), 21% have a 'non-Western' background and at Erasmus University in Rotterdam this share is 22%. (Figure 1 displays the shares of people with 'non-Western' backgrounds among university students at all Dutch universities, among the 18-year-old in the respective cities, and among 6 VWO students in Amsterdam.) Despite its location in the most ethnically diverse Dutch city, where over half of the 18-year-olds have a 'non-Western' background and 28% of the pupils in the pre-academic
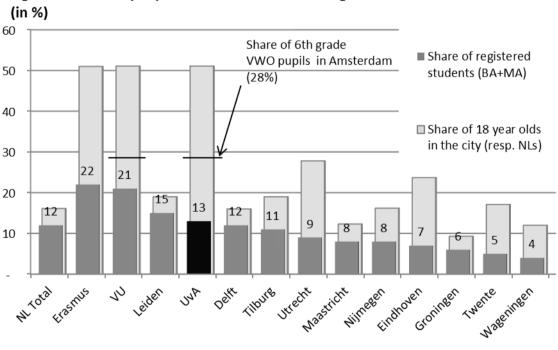

Figure 1. Share of people with 'non-western' backgrounds[a] (in %)

Source: 1cHO 2015/2016 (universities); CBS Statline 2014 (cities); OIS 2015/2016 (VWO Amsterdam)
[a] Includes VWO students and students with alternative secondary education. International students are excluded.
Note: Leiden is close to the Hague (where 47% of the 18-year olds have a 'non-western' background)

track at high school (in VWO 6th grade) have a 'non-Western' background, the share of the University only matches the Dutch average. ***For a university that presents itself as firmly rooted in the city of Amsterdam this 13% is unsatisfactory.***

Compared to the VU and Erasmus, particularly the share of students of Turkish and Moroccan descent is very low at the UvA (3% at the UvA versus 7% at the VU and Erasmus); in absolute numbers, 208 Turkish- and Moroccan-Dutch students started a Bachelor at the VU in 2015/2016 against 123 at the UvA (see Table 1). This difference could indicate that students with 'non-Western' backgrounds perceive UvA to be less open to ethnic, racial and religious diversity.

Table 1. Share of people with 'non-western' backgrounds[a] (in %)

	Share of first year university students						Share of 18y-olds in cities/NL		
	NL	Erasmus	VU	Leiden	**UvA**	Delft	NL	A'dam	R'dam
Antilles & Aruba	1.0	1.6	0.8	1.4	**1.0**	1.3	1.4	2.2	6.0
Surinam	1.8	4.0	3.3	2.6	**2.7**	1.1	2.6	11.9	10.3
Morocco	1.5	3.6	3.8	1.7	**1.4**	1.1	3.1	15.2	10.2
Turkey	1.7	3.7	3.0	1.7	**1.9**	1.4	3.4	7.9	11.2
Ant., Aruba & Sur.	2.8	5.6	4.1	4.0	**3.7**	2.4	4.0	14.1	16.3
Mor. & Tur.	3.2	7.3	6.8	3.4	**3.3**	2.5	6.5	23.1	21.4

Source: 1cHO 2015/2016 (universities) and Statline 2014 (cities/NL)

[a] Includes VWO students and students with alternative secondary education that are registered at a university for the first time (2015) at Bachelorlevel. International students are excluded.

Should the University of Amsterdam take other Dutch universities as its standard? A rough estimate, obtained by comparing university students to the total number of 18-year-olds in the Netherlands, reveals a gap between ethnic Dutch youth and youth of 'non-Western' descent. Of the first group, 19% enter a university, while among the latter this share is about 12%.[19] Of course, the responsibility for this gap goes beyond the universities. After all, many factors in society influence educational trajectories. Some of these mechanisms are unjust and reproduce inequality, such as the fact that in the Netherlands children of lower-educated parents are given advice to choose lower level high school tracks than children of higher educated parents with similar scores in their primary school tests. As a result, they achieve lower-level high school diplomas (CBS 2016; Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2016). Other studies show that children of immigrants particularly benefit from late selection moments, and relatively often follow alternative, less 'straight,' educational trajectories (Crul et al., 2012; Wolff, 2013). These young people benefit from opportunities to switch between educational levels, and to 'stack' them ('stapelen'). This is why pre-Master's programs are important in enabling students from 'non-Western' backgrounds to enter university. Despite the acknowledgement that ensuring a fair educational system partly goes beyond the university and needs to be studied and improved at all levels, this does not liberate the university from taking its share of the responsibility.

UvA-wide there is a gap in numbers between female students and male students: making up 56% of the total number of UvA students, female students outnumber the male students. [20] This is the case among all ethnic groups. At the Master's level, the share of female students is even higher at 58%.

Note on the use of terminology

We acknowledge the sensitivity of using data on ethnic background; as this easily results in stereotyping and profiling. Nevertheless, questions of inequality warrant the registration and analysis of characteristics such as ethnic background. These data should only be used on aggregate levels to explore trends; not on the level of individuals, which carries an even greater risk of leading to stereotyping and discrimination.

Consequently, our analyses are based on categories as used in Dutch society, such as 'autochtoon' (both parents born in the Netherlands), 'Westerse allochtoon' (at least one parent born in a 'Western' country), and 'niet-Westerse allochtoon' (at least one parent born in a 'non-Western' country). However, to avoid the polarizing and racializing (white/non-white) connotations, we refrain from using these particular terms. We refer to these categories as having 'ethnic Dutch' backgrounds, and immigrant backgrounds, with roots in 'non-Western' and 'Western' countries.

We adopt the terms 'non-Western' and 'Western' with reluctance. Rather than merely reflecting objective geographical location – as they suggest – these terms reflect (perceived and generalized) sociocultural and socioeconomic differences, and hence have stigmatizing effects. This is illustrated by the fact that Japan and Indonesia are formally labeled 'Western' countries.

Study progress

At all Dutch universities, ***students with 'non-Western' backgrounds have higher dropout rates and slower study progress than their ethnic Dutch peers.***[21] At most universities, among students with 'non-Western' backgrounds the share that obtained their Bachelor's degree in four years is over 10% less than among students with an ethnic Dutch background; even when controlled for high school level. UvA, VU and Erasmus (and also Delft) do slightly better, although those with 'non-Western' backgrounds are still at a disadvantage (see Table 2).

At UvA, 29% of students with ethnic Dutch backgrounds stopped after their first year, while among those with 'non-Western' backgrounds this share is 37%.[22] Of those who continued, 75% of

Table 2. Share of second-year BA students who obtained a diploma within four years[a] (in %)

		Ethnic Dutch	'Non-Western'	Diffe-rence
	NL Total	*76*	*69*	*-7*
1	Erasmus	79	75	-4
2	Delft	60	55	-5
3	**UvA**	**75**	**68**	**-7**
4	VU	80	71	-9
5	Nijmegen	81	71	-10
6	Leiden	76	65	-11
7	Tilburg	80	69	-11
8	Utrecht	82	71	-11
9	Eindhoven	72	61	-11
10	Groningen	72	61	-11
11	Twente	69	55	-14
12	Wageningen	82	65	-17
13	Maastricht	85	67	-18

Source: 1cHO (2015/2016)
[a]) Students with VWO diplomas who started in 2011

32

the students with ethnic Dutch backgrounds completed their Bachelor's degree in four years, in contrast to 68% of students with 'non-Western' backgrounds (see Table 2). This means that of those who started at a university, 53% and 43%, respectively, obtained a degree in four years. At VU, 80% of the ethnic Dutch students who continued after the first year had obtained their degree in four years, in contrast to 71% of the students with 'non-Western' backgrounds. At Erasmus, the difference was only 4% (79% versus 75%) (see Table 2).

In all ethnic groups, women do better than men. For example, of the ethnic Dutch, 80% of the female students who continued after the first year obtained their degrees in four years, whereas among the male students this was 68%.[23] Among the students with 'non-Western' backgrounds, these shares were 75% (for women) and 59% (for men). This illustrates the necessity of taking various characteristics into account at the same time: having a 'non-Western' background reduces the chances of continuing after the first year and obtaining a degree in four years, but these chances are even further reduced when the student is male.

Who are the student survey respondents?
Who are the students who filled out the survey? The ethnic composition of the student respondents almost exactly reflects the UvA student body (see Table 3). In comparison with the student body, women are slightly overrepresented among the respondents (61%). Mirroring the student population, the largest share of the respondents study at the Faculty of Behavioral and Social Sciences (FMG: 28%), Humanities (FGw: 24%), Science (FNWI: 20%) and Economics and Business (FEB: 11%).[24] Our student survey findings are primarily applicable to these faculties.

Of the respondents with 'non-Western' roots, a large majority were born and/or raised in the Netherlands, with 62% born here (formally the 'second generation') and 13% arriving here in their childhood, before the age of 17 (formally the '1.5 generation') (see Table 3). One-quarter (24%) of the respondents with 'non-Western' backgrounds arrived in the Netherlands at the age of 17 or older, so they are probably international students who arrived without their parents. Students with 'Western' backgrounds are relatively often international students (46%). To facilitate the interpretation of the results, in the remainder of the analyses we take the second and 1.5 generations together under the label 'second generation,' contrasting them with the respondents who arrived in the Netherlands as adults (the 'first generation,' labeled 'international students').

Table 3. Ethnic background and immigrant generation of the student respondents, compared with 1cHO data[a]

	Ethnic background			Immigrant generation				
	Survey		1cHO	Survey				1cHO
				2nd gen	1.5 gen	1st gen/ internat	Total	1st gen/ internat
	N	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Ethnic Dutch (ED)	2343	68	68					
'Non-western' (NW)	512	15	14	62	14	24	100	23
'Western' (W)	603	17	18	49	5	46	100	51
Total	3458	100	100					

Source: Survey Diversity Commission and 1cHO (2015/2016).

[a] *These figures include all students registered at Uva, with all secondary education levels (including international students).*

§2. Staff composition and job position

Here, we first focus on gender using administrative data. Subsequently, we discuss the ethnic composition based on the survey data.

Staff composition and position (gender)

Although the share of men and women among UvA staff is quite equal (48% is female), there is some imbalance when we consider academic staff and support staff separately. Among scientific staff (WP) the share of women is 43%, among management and support staff (OBP) this is 57% (see Table 4). The share of women varies per faculty: among scientific staff it ranges from 23% at the Faculty of Economics and Business to 57% at the Faculty of Social and Behavioral Science (see Table 4). At all faculties, women make up the larger share of support personnel. Among contractors (such as cleaning, security and catering), who also shape the university landscape, the percentage of women varies between 18% and 43%.[25]

In all faculties, there are fewer women than men in higher academic positions the higher the position, the fewer women (see Table 4)*.* This reflects a national trend (LNVH, 2015: 13). Regardless of the reason, this is an undesirable situation from the perspective of diversity. Not only is an increase in gender-diversity likely to increase the presence of various perspectives and attitudes, having women represented at top levels is also important to provide role models for women (and men).

National figures show that with 19% of the professors being female, the UvA, together with Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, occupies the fifth position in the Netherlands (LNVH, 2015: 19). The Open University has the largest share of female professors (26%), followed by Leiden University and Radboud University Nijmegen (both 23%). Particularly in the first career steps, this gap cannot be fully explained by the historical deficit of women in

science (LNVH, 2015). The good thing is that the share of women in higher positions is steadily increasing. A note of caution, however, as at the current pace it will take until 2055 to close this gap at the level of professors (LNVH, 2015: 4). International comparison urges us to raise our ambitions: in a list of 27 European countries, the Netherlands is ranked 24th based on the share of female professors (SheFigures in LNVH, 2015: 17). Clearly, additional effort is needed to increase the share of women at the higher levels.

Table 4. Share of men and women per position (per faculty/entire UVA)

	UvA		FGW		FdR		FdT		FNWI		FEB		FMG	
	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f
Professor	81%	20%	70%	30%	76%	24%	94%	6%	94%	6%	89%	11%	68%	32%
Associate prof	73%	27%	71%	29%	72%	28%	92%	8%	89%	11%	76%	24%	51%	49%
Assistant prof	56%	44%	57%	43%	39%	61%	65%	35%	70%	30%	80%	20%	43%	57%
Researcher	54%	46%	49%	51%	51%	49%	47%	54%	72%	28%	77%	23%	43%	57%
Teacher	52%	48%	40%	60%	51%	49%	48%	53%	60%	40%	81%	19%	37%	63%
PhD candidate	51%	49%	44%	56%	45%	55%	25%	81%	64%	36%	60%	40%	37%	63%
Total WP	57%	43%	49%	51%	55%	45%	52%	48%	71%	29%	77%	23%	43%	57%
Total OBP	43%	57%	30%	70%	30%	70%	35%	66%	48%	52%	32%	68%	29%	71%

Source: UvAData (year 2016; PID and PNID)
Note: The Medical Faculty is not included in UvAData

Ethnic composition of the staff survey respondents
Of the staff respondents in our survey, 11% have 'non-Western' backgrounds. Half of them are internationals, who arrived in the Netherlands as an adult, thus, only ***about 5% of the staff respondents has a second-generation 'non-Western' background*** (see Table 5).

Table 5. Ethnic background and immigrant generation of the staff respondents

	Ethnic background		Immigrant generation			
			2nd gen	1.5 gen	1st gen/ internat.	Total
	N	%	%	%	%	%
Ethnic Dutch (ED)	1645	67				
'Non-western' (NW)	277	11	35	14	51	100
'Western' (W)	531	22	42	6	52	100
Total	2453	100				

Source: Survey Diversity Commission

That this share is much lower than among the students is related to the fact that most immigrants from 'non-Western' backgrounds who arrived in the Netherlands in the previous decades had low formal educational levels themselves. Nevertheless, in terms of diversity and role models, this low share is regrettable. Half of the staff with immigrant backgrounds (both 'Western' and 'non-Western') arrived as adults and are probably

predominantly international knowledge migrants; 'internationals' who traveled for the sake of their careers. These include people who are in the Netherlands on a temporary basis. Internationals primarily come from Europe, South America, China and other Asian countries, while staff members who were raised in the Netherlands have roots in Indonesia, Morocco, Aruba/Antilles and Suriname.

It is hard to say to what extent the survey respondents reflect the real staff composition. In light of the expectations that people who are concerned about the theme of diversity are particularly motivated to fill out the survey, and that people who are (seen as) members of minority groups would be more sensitive to issues of diversity and inclusion, it is likely that people with 'non-Western' backgrounds are overrepresented, and that the ethnic composition of UvA staff is likely to be less diverse than the survey respondents. Nevertheless, among the students, the ethnic composition of the student respondents reflected the student body quite well. In relation to the staff, at least with regard to gender, we know that women are slightly overrepresented (53% of all staff respondents is female; 49% of the scientific staff respondents and 57% of the support staff respondents).

Also most the staff respondents work at the faculties of Behavioral and Social Sciences (FMG: 26%), Science (FNWI: 25%) and Humanities (FGw: 18%). 17% of the respondents works at the Central Services.[26]

§3. Experiences and opinions among staff and students

In addition to getting a feel for the composition of at least a selection of staff and students in relation to various dimensions, with the survey we aimed to explore:
- The experience and observation of inclusion and exclusion
- Attitudes toward diversity and inclusion at the UvA
- Attitudes toward responsibility of the UvA in matters of diversity and inclusion

To explore these themes, the survey included many questions and statements. For the analyses we selected the following eight items (see the argumentation in the online Appendix). Text that is specific to the student survey is placed in square brackets.
1. I observe practices that I find discriminatory or exclusionary toward myself or others.
2. I am discriminated against [by teachers].
3. Diversity in terms of background, culture, lifestyle and school of thought enriches the academic environment.
4. I would welcome it if my direct work [study] environment became more diverse in terms of background, culture, lifestyle and schools of thought.
5. How do you view the current attention to 'diversity and inclusion' at UvA?
6. The content of education and research is independent of the degree of diversity among staff and students.
7. UvA must do more to increase diversity among its staff [staff/teachers].

8. If I reported exclusion and/or discrimination, I would not be taken seriously.

Answers were given on a 4 or 5-point scale, ranging from '(almost) never' to '(almost) always', and to 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree.' To facilitate the interpretation of the data, the answers are displayed in a dichotomous yes/no manner ('yes', meaning 'yes, this happens at least sometimes' or 'I agree'; and 'no' meaning 'no, this does not happen' and 'I do not agree; I disagree or I am neutral').[27] The main results for this section are presented in Table 6.

Presence of discrimination
Discrimination at the University deserves attention. It is observed and experienced by many of the respondents; more by employees than by students. Of the respondents, ***41% of the staff and 33% of the students have observed discrimination*** (at least sometimes). Of the staff respondents, ***15% have personally experienced discrimination*** (at least sometimes). Of the student respondents, 8% have experienced discrimination by teachers. An equal share, 8%, experienced discrimination by fellow students.

As we discuss here, the analyses reveal that people who are not considered to be part of the majority or of what is generally seen as the norm, more often experience discrimination. This is the case for nearly all characteristics that we analyzed:

Gender. Women more often than men observe exclusion and experience exclusion, while for people who do not identify with these binary genders – who describe themselves as agender, genderfluid, transgender and queer – this is even more so. Of the respondents, 1.4% of the students and 0.8% of the staff reported an identity other than the dichotomous labels male and female.

Age. While for men there is no difference between younger and older respondents, older women experience more exclusion than younger women. This implies that age discrimination occurs in a 'gendered' way: only for women is there is an effect of age.

Sexual orientation. Although the Netherlands prides itself in being entirely tolerant of homosexuality, LGBTIQ respondents experience discrimination nearly twice as often as respondents who are heterosexual. Of the respondents, 16% of the students and 12% of the staff who answered the question about their sexual orientation selected an answer other than 'heterosexual.'

Disability, medical condition, illness. Of the respondents, 25% of the students and 17% of the employees are affected in their work or study by a disability, medical condition or illness. 11% of the students and 4% of the staff reported that the hindrance they experienced was *strong.* This depends on gender and ethnic background. In all ethnic groups, less than 10% of the male students experienced strong hindrance, while among

Table 6. Experiences and opinions regarding discrimination and diversity
Respondents that answered 'yes/agree' (% per subgroup)

Staff

	All	Gender			Sexual orientation		Strongly hindered		Parents' education[b]		Ethnic background			Religion							
		Male	Fem	Oth	Het.	LGB.	Not	Yes	HE	NoHE	EtnD	N-W	Wes	No	Cath	Prot	Isl	Jew	Hin	Bud	Oth
N (total)[a]	2815	1171	1333	19	2054	280	2704	111	933	704	1645	277	531	1651	283	209	47	29	16	14	122
Observe exclusion	41	34	46	65	39	48	39	65	39	35	37	56	44	40	39	35	61	38	64	50	50
Experience discrimination	15	12	16	38	13	22	14	27	11	9	10	30	19	12	19	11	33	18	53	7	21
Diversity is enriching	90	85	94	71	90	90	90	90	91	85	89	93	92	90	91	86	93	86	93	100	86
More diversity is welcome	62	50	73	71	61	69	61	71	63	51	58	75	67	62	58	55	79	70	85	69	59
Diversity needs more attention	36	28	44	59	34	53	35	57	36	26	32	50	44	37	35	32	49	36	36	57	39
Science is independent	36	43	29	41	37	28	37	25	33	40	36	36	34	35	44	38	36	38	46	31	29
UvA must do more to enhance diversity	54	42	64	67	53	62	53	62	51	45	49	69	61	53	51	51	68	72	69	77	55
Will not be taken seriously	11	7	14	36	11	12	10	33	9	8	8	14	18	10	12	11	12	21	9	11	15

Students

	All	Gender			Sexual orientation		Strongly hindered		Parents' education[b]		Ethnic background			Religion							
		Male	Fem	Oth	Het.	LGB.	Not	Yes	HE	NoHE	EtnD	N-W	Wes	No	Cath	Prot	Isl	Jew	Hin	Bud	Oth
N (total)[a]	3841	1335	2204	49	2795	517	3432	409	1719	608	2343	512	603	2487	267	222	105	32	17	17	178
Observe exclusion	33	32	32	58	30	46	31	42	27	30	28	48	40	31	33	25	55	57	44	40	48
Experience discr.	8	6	9	21	7	11	7	16	5	5	5	20	11	6	9	9	20	21	38	7	16
Diversity is enriching	88	79	94	91	88	90	88	91	87	85	87	91	92	89	85	85	93	96	100	100	85
More diversity is welcome	67	55	74	85	65	78	66	72	64	59	63	77	74	67	60	59	84	100	75	100	63
Diversity needs more attention	23	17	25	54	20	36	21	33	17	16	17	39	30	22	22	16	41	35	44	21	24
Science is independent	40	49	35	22	43	30	41	36	42	43	42	35	36	41	36	43	43	29	33	29	46
UvA must do more to enhance diversity	46	36	52	73	44	60	46	53	43	33	41	67	52	46	46	34	75	64	56	50	48
Will not be taken seriously	11	9	12	26	9	19	9	23	8	10	9	21	11	10	11	6	15	23	23	10	20

Source: Survey Diversity Commission

a) 'N (total)' refers to the number of respondents who answered the question about the particular characteristic (e.g. sexual orientation).
The amount of respondents for every statement is slightly lower, as not all respondents answered all questions.

b) Shares for parents' education inlcude only respondents with ethnic-Dutch backgrounds.

38

female students the shares were 13% (ethnic Dutch backgrounds), 17% (second-generation 'Western' backgrounds), and 20% (second-generation 'non-Western' backgrounds). Among international students, this share is relatively small (3-7%). Of the female employees, 23% reported they were hindered by a medical condition or disability, in comparison with 15% of the male employees.

As if being strongly affected by a disability or condition is not enough, these respondents experience discrimination twice as often as people who are not strongly hindered; either with or without a condition. This corresponds with the results in the ASVA report, indicating that, alongside students with 'non-Western' backgrounds and those who are religious, students with a disability feel less at home at the UvA than others. The urgency of the matter is underlined by the fact that of all Dutch universities, year after year, the UvA has the lowest satisfaction scores among students with a disability (see the results of the National Student Survey (NSE) in Choi, 2016).

Parental education. Of the ethnic Dutch respondents, 43% of the employees and 26% of the students indicated that their parents had not obtained higher education diplomas (HBO or university). In other words, they are 'first-generation' university graduates/students. Among those with second-generation 'non-Western' backgrounds, these shares are higher: 55% of these employees and 37% of these students are first-generation university graduates/students. Contrary to our expectation that having a lower class background – and hence deviating from an implicit norm – leads to feelings of exclusion, respondents with parents without higher education degrees did not experience more discrimination. This is the case for those with ethnic Dutch and 'non-Western' backgrounds.[28]

Ethnic background. Having an immigrant background, particularly a 'non-Western' background, is clearly a ground for discrimination. Students with 'non-Western' backgrounds experience discrimination four times as often as students with an ethnic Dutch background. Among employees, this is three times as often; 30% of the employees with 'non-Western' backgrounds have experienced discrimination. Among 'non-Western' internationals, this share is a staggering 42%. People with 'Western' backgrounds have a middle position. Only among the ethnic Dutch do female respondents experience and observe more discrimination than male respondents.

Skin color/race. As one of the questions allowed respondents to indicate the ground for discrimination, we know that many respondents have experienced discrimination based on skin color/race. Of the respondents whose mother was born in Suriname almost one-third (32% for staff and 29% for students) answered they were discriminated against because of their skin color/race. Of people with roots in Aruba, Curacao or the Dutch Antilles this was approximately one-quarter (22% of the staff and 29% of the students). Of people with roots in Africa, this share is 16% for staff and 35% for student respondents.

Also others feel discriminated against based on skin color/race, such as people with roots in Morocco, Asia and Middle/South America (10-20%).

Religion. Being religious is also related to discrimination, particularly for people who are not Christian. Respondents who feel affiliated with Islam and Hinduism – and also students who feel affiliated with Judaism – more often experience discrimination than respondents who feel affiliated with Catholicism, Protestantism or no religion. Although this discrimination can also be related to their ethnic backgrounds (most of them are not ethnic Dutch), they themselves indicated that they experience discrimination because of their religion. Among the students, nearly half of the Muslim and of the Jewish respondents indicated that they have been discriminated against on religious grounds.

Furthermore, when we exclude variations in ethnic background and only focus on ethnic Dutch students, we see that those who affiliate with a religion more often experience exclusion than those who do not. This reflects the idea that secularism (or rather, atheism) is a dominant norm at the University. This is particularly felt among students and supports the ASVA finding that being religious relates to feelings of exclusion (ASVA, 2016).

Religion-based exclusion is a problem particularly for students and employees with immigrant backgrounds, as they are relatively more religious. Approximately half of the respondents with 'non-Western' backgrounds say they are affiliated with a religion (Islam or Christianity), whereas among the ethnic Dutch this is 19% of the students and 24% of the staff (all of whom are Christian).

Opinions regarding diversity and the role of the University
In their opinions regarding diversity and the role that the University should play, staff and students respond rather similarly. The figures suggest that ***support for diversity initiatives is broad, or at least should be easy to mobilize,*** although a small critical minority also exists. A very large majority (90% of the employees and 88% of the students) see diversity, in terms of background, cultures, lifestyle and schools of thought, as enriching for the academic environment. Approximately two-thirds of the respondents would appreciate the University becoming more diverse, and welcome attention to the theme of 'diversity': they value the current attention or would even appreciate more attention being paid to the issue. Approximately half of the respondents hold the opinion that the University of Amsterdam should do more to increase diversity. Nevertheless, a small percentage also explicitly disagrees with the University needing to become more diverse; this is 7% of the student respondents and 7% of the staff respondents. 7% of the staff and 11% of the students deem attention to diversity unnecessary; according to them, the University should not pay attention to the theme of diversity and inclusion.

People who differ from the majority and/or the norm appreciate diversity more than others, and are more often in favor of action being taken. Of the male respondents,

approximately half would value the University becoming more diverse, while among women this is three-quarters; a share similar to that of respondents with 'non-Western' backgrounds, from sexual and religious minorities, and respondents who are strongly hindered by a disability or medical condition. The latter groups also more often say that the UvA should do more to enhance diversity. Being discriminated against also affects these attitudes: of the employee respondents who experienced discrimination, 79% would welcome their environment becoming more diverse, 64% find that diversity needs more attention, and 74% hold the opinion that the UvA should do more about this issue. For student respondents who experienced discrimination, these shares were 80%, 47% and 68%, respectively.

Furthermore, of the respondents who personally experienced discrimination, ***an astounding 39% indicated they would not be taken seriously if they were to report discrimination***. This explains why confidential advisors receive extremely few complaints about discrimination and other forms of undesirable behavior (Essen, 2016: 7). This calls for action to deal with discrimination.

Support for initiatives
Broad support exists for many of the initiatives proposed in the survey. Over two-thirds of the respondents are in favor of a ***UvA Meldpunt for discrimination*** and ***specially equipped confidential advisors*** (see Tabel 7). Around half of the respondents support the ***permanent anchoring of diversity in policy***, ***optional training in diversity*** for students and staff, as well as ***free childcare***. Support for curricula scans and the inclusion of the theme of diversity in course evaluations is slightly stronger among students than among staff. Of all the measures, compulsory training is most strongly opposed. Also, there is relatively broad opposition (around one-third of the respondents) to measures that primarily target – and affect – those who would benefit from them, such as provision of a place where people can safely share experiences of exclusion, prayer rooms and gender-neutral toilets.

Although support for measures is crucial, we warn against making majority support the precondition to tackling exclusion and discrimination. In order to enhance diversity and improve social justice for those who find themselves in more or less marginalized positions, it seems inevitable that measures need to be taken that are unpopular with the majority. This is illustrated by the fact that ***nearly all of the measures proposed in the survey can count on much broader support among people who personally experience discrimination*** than among people who do not experience discrimination. For example, the support for compulsory training is much higher – and the opposition much less – among those who have experienced discrimination. Particularly marginalized students see this as an important measure to change awareness about difference, diversity and fairness.

Table 7. Support for initiatives:: against (X) neutral (O), and pro (V) (in %)

| | Staff | | | | | | | | | Students | | | | | | | | |
| | All | | | Not discrim. | | | Discrim. | | | All | | | Not discrim. | | | Discrim. | | |
	X	O	V	X	O	V	X	O	V	X	O	V	X	O	V	X	O	V
A centre at UvA for the reporting of complaints about discrimination (meldpunt)	6	25	**68**	6	26	**68**	7	21	**71**	8	26	**67**	8	26	**66**	8	21	**71**
Confidential advisers (vertrouwenspersonen) who are specially equipped to deal with exclusion and discrimination	7	23	**70**	7	24	**69**	7	15	**78**	7	22	**71**	7	22	**71**	6	18	**76**
More attention for diversity and inequality in course evaluations	24	**40**	35	26	**42**	32	17	30	**52**	23	36	**41**	24	38	38	15	19	**66**
The possibility to scan course curricula for 'diverse' content (which reflects the diverse nature of both society and academia, and goes beyond most established schools of thought)	28	37	36	29	38	33	23	29	**49**	21	35	**45**	21	36	**43**	12	25	**63**
The permanent anchoring of policy focused on diversity and inclusion	13	35	**52**	14	38	**49**	10	21	**68**	18	37	**45**	18	38	**43**	11	27	**62**
Optional training for students about diversity and inequality	8	36	**56**	8	36	**56**	11	32	**57**	9	30	**61**	9	30	**61**	15	27	**58**
Optional training for teachers about diversity and inequality	9	33	**58**	9	33	**58**	11	30	**59**	9	27	**64**	8	27	**65**	14	27	**59**
Optional training for other staff about diversity and inequality	9	34	**57**	9	35	**56**	11	30	**59**	9	32	**59**	9	32	**59**	12	33	**54**
Compulsory training for students about diversity and inequality	**51**	33	16	**54**	33	14	38	32	30	**58**	27	14	**60**	27	12	37	27	37
Compulsory training for teachers about diversity and inequality	**42**	30	27	**45**	31	24	29	26	**45**	36	25	39	38	26	37	19	16	**64**
Compulsory training for other staff about diversity and inequality	**46**	31	23	**49**	32	19	30	29	**41**	**41**	34	25	**43**	35	23	21	27	**53**
A noticeable (physical/organisational) space where people can exchange experiences of exclusion (a 'safe space')	33	**45**	22	34	**46**	20	25	39	37	30	**40**	31	30	**41**	29	25	29	**47**
Gender-neutral toilets	30	38	32	30	38	32	33	36	31	30	29	**40**	31	29	**40**	27	29	**44**
Prayer rooms	34	35	30	36	35	29	28	36	36	30	33	36	31	33	35	24	32	**44**
Free child care	16	26	**59**	16	26	**58**	13	24	**63**	20	31	**49**	20	32	**47**	14	22	**63**

Source: Survey Diversity Commission

(Not) discrim.: respondents who have (not) experienced discrimination at least sometimes.

Percentages of 40 and higher are in bold, under 40 are in grey.

§4. Conclusion

Diversity. We can conclude that – although the share of students with 'non-Western' backgrounds at the University of Amsterdam (13%) reflects the national average (excluding international students) – the University could be more ambitious in attracting more students and employees of 'non-Western' backgrounds. This recommendation is inspired by the importance of the University being grounded in society in combination with UvA's ambition to be a university that is firmly rooted in the city of Amsterdam, and the student compositions at other universities, such as the Vrije Universiteit and Erasmus. Furthermore, diversity in terms of background, culture, lifestyles and schools of thought is generally seen as enriching, and a majority of the survey respondents would welcome a more diverse environment at UvA. This should go beyond a focus on ethnicity and include other characteristics, such as religion, sexual orientation, gender, class, (dis-)ability, age and previous education.

Social justice. Greater attention needs to be paid to enhancing equality in the sense that everybody has equal opportunities and feels a valued part of the University regardless of ethnic background, skin color, religion, gender, (dis-)ability, sexual orientation, age and class. Among staff, women and people with 'non-Western' backgrounds are underrepresented at higher levels. Although these differences are not necessarily indicative of discriminatory practices, it is desirable to have these and other groups represented at all levels. If no action is taken, the gender gap, for example, will not close for another 40 years. Among students, there is a gap between those with ethnic Dutch and 'non-Western' backgrounds. The latter more often leave university without completing their degree, and on average it takes them longer to obtain it. We did not investigate the exact causes of this, but they probably include a mismatch in cultural and social resources ('capital'). Measures that have proven to help elsewhere (Wolff, 2013) include small-scale environments, guidance, and limiting the distance between teachers and students. Across all ethnic groups, including the ethnic Dutch, male students lag behind the female students.

Not all people experience the University as equally inclusive. People who differ from the majority or the 'norm' regarding ethnic background, religion, (dis-)ability, sexual orientation, gender and age more often experience discrimination than others. At the same time, they more often observe exclusion, value diversity and welcome attention being paid to diversity, and they are more often in favor of practical measures. Apparently, being or being seen as a member of a certain socially relevant category shapes both the world and worldview of individuals. This personal positionality is something that should be taken into account. The experience of working and studying at the UvA is not the same for all, and no experience should be more just, legitimate or authoritative than another.

2. Under the surface of an egalitarian University: everyday exclusions

This qualitative research project, critical experience-based research, aims to find meaning in the experiences of diverse minoritized students and staff as they encounter the study and research environment of the University of Amsterdam. We are interested in the 'hidden' stories that students and staff tell, which may be about their own experiences, about the curriculum, about research activities, about the culture and the buildings of the UvA. In a call on our website and an email to all UvA staff and students, we invited them to share their experiences of inclusion and exclusion at the University regarding a number of intersecting dimensions: age, class, disability, ethnicity, gender, race, religion and sexuality. Many staff and students emailed us to say that they had a story to tell. We subsequently conducted 37 interviews, 15 with students and 22 with employees, with the aim of revealing the dynamic perspectives of those navigating the University with 'non-normative' identities, identities that deviate from the majority and/or some implicit or explicit norm. The team of research assistants conducted the interviews, and then transcribed and analyzed them. In addition, photos were taken of UvA spaces and these were also analyzed.

The main research question in this part of the report is: *How do differently positioned people, who in one or more respects do not belong to the (white, male, heterosexual) 'norm,' experience the UvA*? *Which experiences that usually remain below the surface occur among minoritized people?*

In centralizing the question of feeling accepted and experiencing a sense of belonging, this research is a successor to and an elaboration of the report "Diversiteitsbeleid: een overbodig kwaad of een noodzakelijke stap vooruit?" (ASVA, 2016). Many of the employees we interviewed experienced the UvA as a stressful working environment, while many students felt out of place. We thus looked for possibilities for the UvA to become more inclusive. In order to bring that goal closer, diversity literacy needs to be enhanced: members of the academic community need to listen to each other and to acknowledge the differences between them. This becomes possible by making each other's images and stories visible, audible and accessible.[29]

In this chapter, we present various *narratives of Othering* at the UvA as we encountered them in our research, all of which address one form of exclusion or another. Othering has to do with the efforts to see oneself as someone with a 'normal', positive social identity by (positive) comparison with others. Others are seen as different, as less-'normal', or even as people who have fewer rights to their opinions, norms, cultures and experiences, and have to adapt. They are seen as outsiders, as others. One's own position is defined in contrast with the position of others, so there is a strong connection between othering and

positionality. These contrasts can be based on (perceived) differences in race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, social position, (dis-)ability, religion, ideology, and so on. Othering is a way of taking distance from and inferiorizing others because of the way they are and/or live.

§1. Explicit Othering and discrimination

Various staff members and students that we interviewed told us about instances of Othering.

> *I hear that the person who got the job, a male colleague, he didn't have a PhD. And this is not supposed to happen. So there are regulations in which that can happen, but it is very exceptional. There was nothing exceptional at all here. So a male colleague gets the job, who is formally absolutely not qualified for it. And I was. So that was kind of interesting to me ... Later on I heard, I gave a trial lecture on gender history and I later on heard from a colleague that this was when the committee reacted very negatively, saying 'We cannot do that.' So all that gives you an impression of the culture. - N2*

The respondent is a white woman and the person who got the job was a white man. The respondent's experience debunks the myth of meritocracy, in this case in a gendered manifestation, at the UvA: a male candidate without the necessary qualifications got the position for which she was qualified. The respondent elaborates on her suspicion of a culture of sexism by sharing that she heard later that her trial lecture on gender was negatively received. The fact that the respondent herself volunteers the term 'the culture' alludes to the fact that this is not an isolated incident; indeed, later on in the interview she describes the culture of sexism and gendered intimidation as 'endemic' at the UvA.

Another respondent, a student, relates:

> *So when I pointed out, you know, that not only were the examples super racist but that I didn't believe in the core argument of the text because it was founded on racism, um ... I mean, within 15 minutes of having a discussion about that, I was so angry and emotional that I was ready to leave because I didn't want to put myself in a situation where I knew I would be seen as subjective, etc., etc. Um, but then I was kind of emotionally manipulated into staying, because when I put on my coat and took my bag, they all kind of looked at me ... They were five in total, all white, one girl, the rest all guys, they all kind of looked at me like 'I can't believe you're leaving right now, we're having a discussion, you know?' So I ended up ... I felt like I had to stay, because he was grading me, and fellow students ... I do care a little what they think of me. Um ... I ended up staying and then I ended up being so emotional I cried. And I was just being accused of ... Of basically not being nice to Rousseau because I was calling him racist, and that I wasn't allowed to place him in this genealogy of thinking about race ... Which is, you know, race was kind of developed in Enlightenment thinking so ... absurd, but basically even when I proved that I had lived experience, that I had the academic knowledge, etc., concerning race, I was the one that was basically being mean and racist towards Rousseau because Rousseau is an individual, so whiteness, you know ... being afforded individuality. Um, whereas*

I became just another one of those brown people that is too obsessed with race and um, already is seeing all white men as evil before even reading their text, because that was also sort of a … They were telling me that I was reading him negatively from the get go, you know?' - T1

The student here describes an exchange between themselves[30] and the rest of the class regarding a text by Rousseau that the student relates to the 'noble savage' trope, the idea that people of color are simple-minded and closer to animals. It is a tense exchange, the student mentions that they cried, and although they got up to leave, they felt pressured by the other students to stay and continue to engage in the discussion that was causing them great emotional distress. In this classroom, the rest of the class, including the teacher, chose to defend Rousseau. The student placed Rousseau in a broader genealogy of thought about race, a critical maneuver, but was actively discouraged and derided for doing so. The class material was considered immune to critique, and instead the class collectively targeted the single student as being somehow incapable of objectivity because they were black. The implication is that the black student cannot be objective when it comes to the topic of race, but the rest of the white classroom can, reproducing the idea that the canon is unassailable: that whiteness is not only intellectually superior but also that it is the default, and that it does not inform part of racial relations and conversations when in actuality the very text of Rousseau proves that it does.

That the experiences of individuals at UvA differ based on their positionings is borne out again and again, and also that being female and/or being of color or practicing Islam carries distinct epistemological disadvantage. As another student notes:

I was invited for an interview because I handed in a PhD proposal and it was quite good, so I was happy with it. It was about insecurity in religion, in Islam, and philosophy and that's quite a strange proposal of course, but I thought this is what I really want to study, so I will hand it in. I was invited for an interview of fifteen minutes and most of the conversation, probably half of it, was that someone in the commission, or two people, were worried I could not be objective because I am a Muslim woman, because I would not discuss certain ideas or thoughts in my research or something … I was really shocked, I thought 'Okay, you are actually saying that I have to be white, if I were white, you would maybe give me the money but you're doubting it because I am a Muslim woman talking about my own religion' … - M2

In this passage, the respondent describes an interview in which her sociocultural identity as a Muslim woman was explicitly invoked to question her qualification to do the research. A fifteen-minute interview intended to discuss her proposal is dedicated instead to a discriminatory survey of her ability to practice academic research for no reason other than her perceived identity. This questioning of her objectivity must be considered in the context of the UvA at large: is the objectivity of white Dutch scholars questioned when they research white Dutch culture, or other cultures for that matter?

Finally, a black male teacher relates an incident whereby the negative images that always already precede and accompany people of color become clear:

I gave a course on methods in the Faculty of the Humanities and I had a course assistant, a white male PhD student. At the end of the course, when the course evaluations came out, it transpired that all during the course the students had turned our roles around: they had assumed that I was the assistant and the PhD candidate the professor. The students' advice was that the 'professor' should get rid of his 'assistant', who was no good, not well organized – while I had well in advance taken great care of course syllabi, required and extra readings, proposing possible paper topics, etc., and they had trouble following his lectures. I felt really strange about those evaluations and did not know what to do with them or who to turn to ... - K3

These events collectively illustrate how far removed in reality UvA is from being a meritocratic place, where people, regardless of their gender, race/ethnicity, religion or sexuality, can thrive and have equal opportunities. There is little knowledge about such hurtful experiences, since talking openly about them already places one in an unfavorable position as a supposed 'victim'; people cannot talk about what these experiences mean, or about what one can do and who one can turn to when they occur.

§2. Microaggression and violent humor

In our interviews, a number of respondents recalled moments in which they felt discriminated against through microaggressions. The 'micro' aspect of the discriminations does not refer to the degree of the insult but rather to the subtlety with which it happens. This subtlety may be covered over or safeguarded by disclaimers, such as the well-trodden "I am not a racist, but …", or the aggressor might defend his or her intentions as innocuous, or as being humorous, which makes them all the more difficult to address. Microaggressions often function as a test to be accepted into the group: when the respondents challenge the incident, they clearly do not pass the test. Noteworthy is that usually those who witness the exchange do not protest against it. On the contrary, often there is a lack of acknowledgment of the discrimination.

I had one very nasty experience. It was in the introduction week, before I started the study. Sometimes I still get angry when I think about it. Luckily it was the only time when such a nasty thing was said. I think we were at someone's house, playing some game, trying to get to know the other students. One of the other students had some kind of joke about monkeys, and related it to me. I did try to … I was of course very shocked. You've heard these jokes before; I think every student of color would have … So I tried to act like I didn't hear it, but sometimes I have to think back about [it]. - R1

The experience above points to a rather general comfortableness with discriminatory discourse in University environments. This example demonstrates the 'casual racism' that occurs in majority-white spaces which are not bound by a code of conduct but are characterized instead by an 'anything goes' attitude among young people at the UvA. The fact that a deeply racist insult, comparing a black student to a monkey, was expressed

during an introduction week at the UvA and that this was not addressed by anyone in the audience is indicative of how cultural silence around racism manifests in more racism. R1's presumption that 'every student of color' would have heard a joke like this stands in stark contrast with the idea of a socially just and non-discriminatory university climate for students.

> *I was on the Board of Studies and we went out for dinner and at one point we were just sitting at the table, and there was an atmosphere of enjoying ourselves and one of the lecturers wanted to be funny. We received our menus and he gave me the wine list and said, 'Oh, you don't drink of course, ha-ha,' and I thought 'okay …' Then the menu for the food came and he started laughing, saying that I couldn't eat anything on the menu because I eat halal. - M2*

This respondent's experience during her time on the Board of Studies illustrates the way in which humor is used to other and ridicule a Muslim woman at the UvA. In a situation that in no way requires this direct outing of a perceived 'other,' the lecturer engages with his own perception of M2's identity and conjectures information that is not solicited by M2. The lecturer not only centers the respondent's 'otherness,' but explicitly does this in the form of a joke – cultural practices are construed as material for humor, foregrounding the behavior of the respondent and excluding it from the range of 'the normal', hence making it impossible to confront the racism or discrimination.

That microagressions can also be more subtle and non-verbal – but not less painful – is illustrated by the following example:

> *Well, I'm also a bit, how do you say it, different, I'm not really fully Dutch, my father is from South America, but I look a bit, exotic. And usually, I also went to a white high school, so usually I kind of fit in with white people, but uhm … I don't know, sometimes I study, I study a lot at Roeterseiland because I like it there, but you see that sometimes, when I'm sitting at a table, and a white boy is sitting at a table, usually they'll go first to that person [to ask a question or something]. Well, yeah. I experienced it, but it's not really harming me, or something … yeah … But I think it's wrong, because people, especially here at the University, have kind of a judgment when someone is different like me. – Respondent M1*

In recounting his experience at Roeterseiland, the respondent makes it clear that exclusion does not always take place at the verbal level. The moment of exclusion occurs subtly, and there is little that the respondent could have done in response: it is an unspoken (and maybe even unconscious) decision of his peers to physically keep a distance from him because of his appearance. It is important to consider the context: he cannot completely access a fellow student's motivation for not sitting beside him, but a contextual knowledge of prejudice and discrimination leads him to deduct that it is because he looks 'exotic.' That knowledge informs his experience of the UvA and, in turn, an incident like this confirms that context. The incident points to the need to widely raise awareness of implicit biases which inform and guide his fellow students' micro decisions and which carry grave consequences for him.

§3. Outing as Other

'Outing as Other' refers to the process in which a person at the UvA feels pressured to out themselves as an 'Other' – that is, to place themselves in a position that stands out from the 'mainstream' student or staff member. The respondents recounted circumstances in which they felt forced to declare their deviating position, their non-normativity. In addition, they shared experiences of *being* outed: instances in which a peer or superior made it a point to emphasize their deviation from the default identity in the classroom or the UvA at large.

> *And I also took a gender and sexuality minor and I had one experience that I'm not really sure if I would describe it as a positive experience or a negative experience … It was uncomfortable. But it was the core introductory course to gender and sexuality and we were discussing different gender identities and the lecturer knew that I had more knowledge than she did about the meaning of … There was like a list of gender identities, I think it was when Facebook in the States introduced like fifty different options or something. So we were going through them and she ended up kind of turning towards me and, you know, she asked me if I was okay with explaining what they meant, um … And she acknowledged that she didn't have that … knowledge, but it was very uncomfortable to be put in a position where all of a sudden I felt like I had a different role than the rest of the students in the class … - T1*

T1 is unsure whether to describe this as a negative or a positive experience because they recognized that the teacher here most likely acted with good intentions. The problem that arises here is that the teacher's good intentions created an uncomfortable space for the student. In principle, the student acknowledges the benefit of being given the space to represent themselves, but notes that because the rest of their University experience has been one with the teacher's authority being central and singular, the resulting atmosphere was odd because the student was placed in a particular spotlight based on a non-normative positionality. The student could not avoid being seen as 'the other'.

§4. Underrepresentation and denial

The question of misrepresentation, underrepresentation and absence is one that prevailed especially in interviews with the students. The theme refers to a lack of representation not only at the demographic but also at the curricular level. Our respondents spoke at length about the 'Eurocentrism' of their curricula, and occasionally elaborated on this with stories of their own interrogation of this issue, be this by private investigation into their syllabi or by approaching their teachers. The issue of misrepresentation refers to a curricular presence of non-normative identities that are interpreted by the respondent as problematic, inaccurate or damaging. Under-representation refers to a lack of diversity in the curriculum.

[The teacher's response to my question if] the curriculum should be more diverse, 'No, we do want the best literature.' Or about authors from Africa: 'I really looked for them but they just aren't that good.' -- Then I think, oh wow. - J2

J2 shares two counter-narratives with which her concern was met: the desire for the 'best' literature, and the 'unavailability' of alternative material. The former discourse, 'We want the *best* literature instead of a diverse curriculum,' is premised on an exclusionary logic that implies that diversity lowers the quality of education, and that the homogeneous white, European and male perspective that currently predominantly forms the UvA's canon is the 'best.' The second argument, about the supposed unavailability of high-quality alternative literature, is in this excerpt substantiated by that same logic of the intellectual poverty of more 'diverse' sources, in this case authors from Africa.

'Positive' values of the UvA, such as the ideals of student involvement, meritocracy and egalitarianism, are often experienced less positive by the respondents:

But okay, when I give my opinion (in the Board of Studies), also concerning diversity, gender, and race, it isn't taken seriously at all. At one point, I had an appointment with the director of studies, myself and another student member, to indicate what we wanted to work on that year, what they could support us with … You give them a number of points, one of which was that in my experience in the first weeks of the Master's program that the curriculum was not diverse at all, which I had expected, but we couldn't do anything about that. Then the director of studies actually got angry at me for saying this, and said, 'Well, there just happens to be a canon.' I thought, 'Really? This is really not up to standard. Are you not taking my input seriously, and why aren't you?' - E2

The respondent foregrounds the process of diversifying the curriculum. The issue of underrepresentation that the respondent reports in this excerpt is qualified by the UvA's own established representation: "the canon." The phrase "there just happens to be a canon" is ahistorical and positions the canon as a neutral and therefore unchangeable body of knowledge within the UvA.

§5. Silencing and intimidation

Processes of 'silencing and intimidation' have been experienced by both students and staff, and can take many forms. Silencing can occur both as an innocuously intended instance of oversight, as a moment of casual dismissal or ultimately also as a tactic of intimidation. In our interviews, respondents shared moments of having witnessed the silencing of someone who was not present, and also first-hand experiences with being threatened or harassed to the point of silence. These processes were often directly related to the identity of the respondent: they felt targeted either because of their social role within the UvA, or because they verbalized what they felt were the social problematics of the UvA.

This person was very critical about the curriculum we had, especially regarding IQ tests and personality tests. He said that they were biased, and he was right. And my boss called him the angry Egyptian, and he laughed about it. That was uncomfortable. And I think … It doesn't happen often that people address these issues. And I don't know if that's because the issues don't exist or because people have a feeling of, 'If I address this, I will be considered difficult or annoying.' - A1

In recounting this private exchange between himself and a superior, the respondent alludes to the complications of diversity at the UvA, which engages one both at the personal and the professional level. A colleague expressed his disapproval about the bias in testing conducted at the UvA, but when the respondent reports this concern to his superior, the colleague is amusedly dismissed. In 'the angry Egyptian' the ethnic/racial positioning of their colleague is constructed as a joke and the concern is dismissed on those grounds. The respondent contextualizes this moment with a possible consequence: people will feel discouraged from bringing these issues forward, as they risk their reputation and claim to neutrality by being positioned as troublemakers.

§6. Inaccessibility and other everyday exclusions

During the interview with respondent A2, the research team encountered potentially dangerous oversights regarding the physical administration of Roeterseiland. In the middle of the interview, the building's electrical facilities began to malfunction – the respondent and the research assistant exited the now dark room to find an alternative interview space. Minutes later, the alarm system went off, followed by an intercom announcement in Dutch to evacuate the building – during the exit process, we were told not to take the elevators but to take the stairs instead. The physical design of Roeterseiland is such that the staircases do not join each other from floor to floor in one section of the building and one has to walk to the other side of every floor to find the next staircase. Unfamiliar with each floor of the building, the research assistant and the respondent spent considerable time attempting to locate each individual set of stairs. When the second intercom message followed declaring that evacuation would not be necessary after all, several lecturers of various non-Dutch backgrounds approached the research assistant and the respondent to ask what was going on. The intercom messages had both been only in Dutch and so the international non-Dutch speaking members of the staff and student body had not even understood the message to evacuate the building. Moreover, there was no readily available assistance in evacuating the building for people who use wheelchairs, nor was there a clear indication of where people should go in the event that they could not use the stairs independently. These kinds of oversights are potentially perilous in the event of an emergency in which people have real reason to evacuate the building quickly.

At the student services there are 'studentendecanen' specialized in advising/consulting students with special requirements. Currently, there is a 'special' Committee for students with special requirements, and the UvA, with the Hogeschool of Amsterdam (HvA), has formulated policy for those students (and staff).[31] Nevertheless, many of the UvA buildings are not easily accessible for students and staff members with a disability. For example, the stairways in one of the Roeterseiland buildings,[32] the absence of Braille in elevators and classrooms, the lack of guiding tracks for people with compromised eyesight using a cane, heavy doors, not enough bathrooms for people with disabilities (and almost no gender-neutral bathrooms), none or too few deaf loop systems for people with compromised hearing, and the list goes on. This is the wrong signal for students and staff.

In several of our interviews, respondents divulged that the spaces at the UvA felt inhospitable to them, and this not only concerned people with disabilities. The UvA design and administration seems to envision students to be able-bodied, atheist and Dutch-speaking. For some, this was of primary concern. A user of the Roeterseiland building notes:

> *In the B-building there is a large staircase and I always take the stairs there … One time there was a girl wearing hijab on her knees with a mat, praying. I thought, 'I am so ashamed that I work at a university where this is necessary.' - JA*

Also another respondent explains how the lack of a prayer room results in praying in other, less suitable (more public) places:

> *What I found difficult was that half of the student council, who saw me pray every day, they still had issues with it, but they allowed it, they were okay with me doing it. I was allowed as an exception, but the rest have to find a spot in the city. - M2*

The excerpts above speak clearly of a lack of spatial awareness regarding an environment that caters for people with a disability and for people whose religious practices are neglected by the UvA.

3. The meaning(s) of diversity in higher education: learning from UvA experiences

The research reported on in this chapter aims to uncover the constellations of meanings that are associated with the notion of *diversity* in the decision-making processes related to teaching and research activities in higher education in the Netherlands, and the University of Amsterdam in particular. We found the notion of a 'constellation of meanings' valuable (De Lauretis, 2001),[33] emphasizing the potential association between the *understanding* of diversity and the *effects* of these associations in relation to the *actions (or lack thereof)* by members of the academic staff responsible for the everyday administration of teaching and research activities. Our aim is to highlight which terms circulate around the notion of diversity, in order to make sense of their effects in the everyday administration of UvA activities.

This chapter is divided into two sections. In the first, we briefly present our findings, while the second elaborates on our diagnosis. In the online Appendix we present the theoretical and methodological approach developed for this study.

§1. Findings

On policy guidelines: Diversity as an *inescapable* context
The analysis of European, Dutch and UvA policy guidelines on diversity included a textual analysis[34] of key documents produced by the European Commission (Bologna Process), Dutch national legislation on Higher Education and Research and UvA Institutional Plans[35] that have explicitly addressed the question of diversity in relation to higher education and research. The analysis was driven by the following questions: How is diversity in higher education and research defined and what shifts and continuities over time are discernable? Who is the implicitly targeted subject of diversity policies in higher education and research and what are the present and past roles she/he is assumed to play in relation to the University?

EU policy
Our analysis of the European Commission's key documents on the Bologna Process revealed that diversity has been associated with the challenges that are implied by the promotion of the intra-European and international mobility of students, teachers, researchers and administrative staff of universities. This mobility is seen as contributing to the international competitiveness of the European Higher Education Area.

More recently, the European Commission also associated diversity with the challenge posed by European demographic transitions and the rapidly diversifying student body resulting from a highly interconnected Europe:

> [T]he student body entering and graduating from higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations.[36]

'Diversity' has become a societal challenge inasmuch as it is related to securing access to higher education of underrepresented groups in society and of dealing with the obstacles faced by these groups, which hinder them in fully completing their studies. These particular understandings of diversity have gained in relevance in the Bologna Process since 2007:

> We reaffirm the importance of students being able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background.[37]

It was also possible to identify an interest of the European Commission in specific groups of students who often experience barriers to entering and completing higher education, for example, for women:

> With regard to gender, some imbalances have reduced over time but nevertheless continue to exist in most countries and across the EHEA [European Higher Education Area] as a whole.[38]

Additionally, there is an expressed concern about students with immigrant backgrounds and the impact that their parents' educational backgrounds might have in relation to securing access to higher education:

> Another central concern of the social dimension is whether immigrants and children of immigrants have the same opportunities to participate in and attain higher education as native students.[39]

Dutch policy
Our analysis at the Dutch policy level looked at the National Law of Higher Education and Scientific Research and Strategic Agenda 2015-2025, the national government position in relation to Science and Research and at the latest policy documents of the Vereniging van Universiteiten (VSNU) and the Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO).

The National Law of Higher Education and Scientific Research uses 'diversity' to mean different options in the education on offer. Meanwhile, the Strategic Agenda 2015-2025, suggests a broader understanding of diversity as explicitly associated with the increasing diversification of the Dutch population and the low level of access of particular groups to higher education. This approach tends to be similar to the latest view on diversity expressed in the European Commission's documents.

[T]he current differences in the level of education of young people are still clearly related to the educational level and the socio-economic status of their parents. For example, students who enter from the MBO in the HBO, have lower-educated parents. Women do well, but non-Western immigrants still have less opportunity to reach higher education than others. Their participation fortunately in recent years has increased dramatically. But we are not there yet.[40]

As for the VSNU's latest vision document from 2015, "Good morning professor! Vision on studying in a new era," local and global changes in demographics are taken into consideration. For example, it is stated that 13% of the student population in the Netherlands have a non-Dutch background and are also known as "international students." These students are considered as having a positive impact on Dutch students:

We want to increase that share. By selecting foreign talent, Dutch education will become international and of higher quality. The zeal of international students has a positive effect on the rate/tempo of the average Dutch student.[41]

The VSNU makes a distinction between increasing diversity at the international and at the national level. At the national level, VSNU considers "customized qualifications/ diplomas" for students to complete their education at any level and tempo, and "plus documents" to inform universities about their extracurricular activities as tools for better "study matching."

This gives universities more info on abilities and interests of prospective students. It increases at the same time, the demand for more selection tools, so student and training can match.[42]

Meanwhile, the analysis of the document, "Science Vision 2025: Choices for the Future," produced by the national Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, revealed that when it comes to 'diversity,' a primary concern is the position of women in higher education. The Ministry emphasizes that only Belgium, Cyprus and Luxembourg did worse than the Netherlands in relation to the low numbers of female professors (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2014: 71-72). This same document speaks about the lack of awareness of the implicit prejudice toward women:

To make use of female talent, awareness of implicit prejudice is essential. Implicit prejudices in both men and women could explain (a part of) the lagging numbers of women in science.[43]

In addition to this, the NWO makes an effort to ensure a gender balance by developing policy on better financial instruments, and hiring more women for their committees, boards and the organization in general.

This year, gender diversity was also a priority on the agenda … the NWO has decided to prepare new Charter arrangements in 2016. In addition, it will be considered how gender diversity can be implemented in a broader sense.[44]

UvA policy
Finally, our analysis of the UvA "Instellingsplan 2015-2020" reveals that, in contrast to the European Commission and Dutch policy, diversity at the UvA is explicitly understood as internationalization and related, for example, to attracting and hosting international staff.

> *The UvA strives towards a good mix of academics. Therefore, we intensify the recruitment of (inter)national talent w*ith 0 to 12 years of experience.[45]

This emphasis on the internationalization of staff recruiting policies ignores European and Dutch policy guidelines on the inclusion of an increasingly diverse local student body. This perspective is present in some, but not all, of the policies of some UvA faculties, accompanied by a focus on gender:

> *As to composition of staff, the [Faculty] tries to do so over two main dimensions: gender and nationality. The policy of the [Faculty] is partially influenced by the standards of international accreditations. These standards are mainly about gender mix, nationality mix and international curricula.[46]*

This same faculty reports that in its strategic plan the focus is on internationalization and gender in relation to the recruitment of students and personnel policy:

> *to ensure that students develop intercultural skills, making them better prepared for a global labor market … attracting good scientists and provide good shelter for international scientists and their partners … when hiring PhD students and tenure trackers, the focus is on diversity, which meant hiring 3 female tenure trackers from three countries.[47]*

In contrast to this, a different faculty reports no "active recruitment policy to attract specific groups of students. All students who are interested in the field and meet the demands for application are welcomed."[48]

Conclusions on 'diversity' in policy
Our overall diagnosis is that in the three policy contexts we found a common understanding of a rapidly changing context as an inescapable trend, regardless of the opinion of what this changing context concerns; that is, whether it is an issue of the internationalization of Dutch and European higher education or an increasingly diversified Dutch student body given European evolving demographic transitions. At the same time, we found a tendency to speak about diversity as both a challenge and an opportunity, each emerging from that given context.

We also found that the recipient subject of these three policy contexts appears to be someone who lacks certain skills and available resources in comparison to an abstract norm. Interestingly, the provision of skills and opportunities that need to be offered to this imagined subject varies. In the case of black, migrant and refugee students ('allochtonen' in the Dutch context), the lack of skills and available resources emphasizes cultural capital and economic resources (i.e. European Commission and Dutch Policy).

In the case of an imagined abstract local (Dutch) student, such as in the case of VSNU, greater exposure to the cultures of different countries is promoted in order for that student to succeed in a changing context. Diversity is taken to be equivalent to internationalization, as in the UvA Instellingsplan, and this usually means mobility across borders according to the European Commission, VSNU and some UvA faculties.

Constellations of meanings: the good, the bad and the ugly
The analysis of our data involved the textual analysis of documents and the interviews conducted,[49] and indicated that in the everyday administration of academic activities at UvA, the meanings associated with the notion of diversity gravitate around internationalization, international competitiveness and gender equality, and much less toward race/ethnicity, (dis-)abilities, religious identities and underrepresented minorities.[50] The conflation of diversity with internationalization and gender balance was salient in two of the three inputs especially produced by some UvA faculties for this study.

We were able to identify the following constellations of associations:

When diversity is mainly understood as internationalization, it is related to the global and international competitiveness of Dutch higher education (Informants Q and O, Faculty Xi). This led some informants to even indicate that English is the language of diversity and inclusion at UvA (Informants C, D, J, K).

When diversity gravitates toward questions of race/ethnicity and of underrepresented groups in society, it becomes strongly associated with the challenges it might pose to the quality of education at UvA, the lack of certain skills or the phenomenon of dropout (Informants B and F). For some of our informants, a good level of Dutch is indispensable for certain disciplines and this becomes an issue that must be dealt with when addressing diversity challenges (Informant B and J).

Diversity also gravitates against the notions of secularism and emancipation. When diversity is opposed to secularism we have found that the latter is seen as a value that must be protected even through the exclusion of some (of Muslims in particular): "If Muslim students want a prayer room, this is not the place for them. They can go to another institution" (Informant F). Diverse as opposed to a secular education was also associated with particular stereotypes of people who practice a religion: they were seen as less emancipated (Informant B), in need of special arrangements, such as halal food or specific information on dress codes in professional practice (Informant F), and as deviating from what is considered the "typical Dutch student" (Informant O).

> *Compared to, for example, the Erasmus/VU University, a lot of students who come here are children of refugees … more secular, political, and not religious… For example, [standing] on the stairs of the VU building gives a completely different impression than standing on the stairs here [at UvA] because they [the students at UvA] look more alike … The other thing is that we*

are a secular university which means that certain parts of the population won't be interested in going to UvA - Informant K.

As for emancipation being contrary to diversity, two of our informants insisted that in their faculties they had the most "emancipated" members of underrepresented groups in Dutch society and considered this as something positive (Informants O and B). From our perspective, this view on emancipation is conflated with that of assimilation, as these informants emphasize that these students were "not so different" from some implicit norm:

It appears that there is no difference in percentage regarding level of diversity, but that it is less visible in the UvA than in the VU, possibly because the UvA is attracting more emancipated students or perhaps students who do want to emancipate themselves – Informant K.

On diversity and curricula

In our analysis of the EU, Dutch and UvA policy guidelines we found that diversity policy often refers to dealing with a diverse student body that reflects Europe's changing societies; with little to no reference to the diversification of the curricula as part of broader institutional change (Experts 1 and 2).

During the interviews, diversifying curricula was spoken about to varying degrees: from those seeing no change to be necessary to those who see change as a crucial aspect for intellectual development in universities in the twenty-first century:

Clearly, diversity has a place in our courses as a subject because issues such as racism, feminism, queerness, Orientalism, global power relations are discussed in around 50% of the subjects – Faculty Xiii.

The University needs self-reflection, it needs diversity to achieve academic excellence – Informant C.

The analysis of our data reveals that the implicit assumptions informing what diversity is associated with – internationalization, gender equality, a challenge to the quality of teaching and learning, and the assumption that it is opposed to emancipation and the secular university – have an effect on how the relationship with curricula is envisaged. We identified the following associations:

When diversity is defined as a reality of contemporary Dutch society and the world (Expert 1 and 5; Informants A, C, G, H, K, Q and O; faculties Xi and Xiii) or as enhancing quality and a prerequisite of excellence (Informants A, C, D, G and H), emphasis is placed on the need to build on more explicit relationships between curricula and diversity through various types of interventions informed by international best practices (Experts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 and Informants A, C and L, faculties Xi and Xiii).

Diversity is also understood as having the potential to create problems "where there are none" (Informant F), of stigmatizing underrepresented groups and reproducing inequalities (Informant B) and a threat to the quality of UvA academic programs (Informants B, D, F). In these cases, a relationship with curricula is simply rejected.

> *Change is ok, but also not compromising the standards of the university …* – Informant B.

In contrast to this perspective, for Expert 6 the framing of diversity as a threat to the quality of higher education per se is racist and discriminatory in itself:

> *That is very racist. […] It goes back to what is diversity: only if you look and think like me and if you do not, you are less than me. Then you assume it [diversity] is less than [the norm]* – Expert 6.

The 'relevance' of diversity
In all of our interviews with UvA members of the academic staff, diversity was acknowledged as a relevant issue. However, we found no evidence of a systematically planned and implemented policy at the UvA level or across faculties. Indeed, for Informant G, diversity was an issue that is "no more than a year old and that was recently brought to the attention of academic staff by the students."

Nonetheless, the lack of a general policy on diversity does not mean that there is a lack of individual and ad-hoc, informal initiatives scattered across faculties and disciplines seeking to address or redress diversity and inclusion/exclusion-related issues.

One of the oldest initiatives we came across aims to redress the lack of women in positions of power and decision-making at faculty level (Informant I). According to one person involved in this initiative, after 10 years few things have really changed in relation to gender-based inequality. In this same faculty, informants A and D stressed the loss of female talent and the labor precariousness of young female academic staff as important issues to be addressed.

We also came across informal, ad-hoc and well-intentioned initiatives, including socializing exercises such as organizing parties where halal food is served, and personal consultations with academic staff from other Dutch universities aimed at redressing what is referred as "the self-segregation of students with a Muslim background from Dutch students" (Informant F).

In contrast, the only program organized at the faculty level to reduce dropout rates through mentoring students in their study choices was explicitly ruled out as a diversity initiative because "all students with problems, the weak students, were included independent of their background" (Informant B).

We also discovered that for some informants diversity is not a priority in terms of budget (Informant F, faculty Xiii) and human resource allocations (Informant L). We were introduced to only one diversity portfolio holder among the five faculties (Informant H) where interviews and visits were conducted.

Productive tensions? Between egalitarianism and difference
In our interviews, we documented a sense of awareness of a rapidly changing student body at UvA, and international students, particularly students of Chinese origin, were often referred to as the face of that change: "Chinese students have a different culture to our own culture" (Informant H), was a reflection we often heard.

However, all of our informants, with the exception of two, emphasized that more could be done (Informant G) to address the lack of representation of people of black, migrant and refugee background in UvA academic staff and in particular in decision-making bodies: "diversity drops down higher up the ladder" (Informant G), "more diversity in governing bodies will help us a lot with everything" (Informant H).

Interestingly, the idea of the eventual establishment of a diversity policy or unit revealed tensions between an understanding of an egalitarian society – all humans are equal and have the same rights despite their social status, or background – and the acknowledgement of existing differences, status and privileges.

For example, Informant F expressed the idea that the changing context was a "natural" process and there was no need for an explicit policy or change. This was emphasized, despite this informant also mentioning some examples of explicit cases of gender-based violence, such as an honor killing of a female student, and of discrimination based on religious grounds, such as the objection to a prayer room based on budget priorities and the fear of creating a precedent, because "then the Christians will want one, the Protestants will want another one." This same informant emphasized the danger of "transforming diversity into a problem when it is not a problem." Meanwhile, another informant revealed some concerns about creating policies or initiatives that had the potential of reproducing stereotypes and profiling people (Informant B).

We found a strong emphasis on an egalitarian basis to society and the University – "we are all equal," "everybody can come to UvA," "we don't select anybody, they select us". According to one of the experts consulted, there is a high level of trust in the system's capacity to reduce any inequality, a strong sense of its reliability in upholding the fairness of higher education, as a system that judges its participants on their quality and ability, hence not on their "marks of difference" (Expert 1).

Diversity as internationalization and the lack of diversity vocabulary
Four informants (G, J, L and Q) explicitly expressed the opinion that internationalization and diversity were two different processes: "one is about attracting foreign students while the other is about connecting with minority communities in the city of Amsterdam"

(Informant G). This same informant shared an interesting distinction: "an international student is here for a short period of time and then returns to their home country. Real diversity is here to stay."

However, many of the other informants explicitly stated that diversity equals internationalization: "diversity is an outcome of internationalization" (Informant O) or implicitly conflated both terms (Informants A, B, D, F, I, and K) until the research team formulated an explicit question about the difference between the terms.[51]

For Informant A, internationalization took away the emphasis, interest and resources of the UvA on diversity. Meanwhile, Informant H considered that internationalization was not as beneficial as previously thought because it had brought significant challenges to "our forms of teaching and engaging with students who are culturally different."

In all of our interviews with UvA staff, we found that it was easier for the respondents to speak and engage in a discussion about internationalization than to speak about diversity. This was apparent in the form of explicit references to a personal experience in the classroom when talking about internationalization: "I realized that Chinese students do not challenge the teacher" (Informant K); "In this faculty I make sure that all group assignments are organized with teams that are diverse, they come from different countries" (Informant O).

Meanwhile, experiences with diversity and dealing with it tend to be focused on: (i) dealing with gender inequalities (between males and females); (ii) dealing with cultural differences based on religious backgrounds (halal food, non-alcoholic options, prayer versus silence room); (iii) dealing with a lack in competencies and skills (mostly referring to the Dutch language).

On the lack of policy frameworks
We found no indication or awareness of the need for a specific legal framework or regulation stipulating the value and norms of the everyday life of an increasingly diverse student body at UvA. Meanwhile, the experts consulted all concurred on the need to redress this through institutional frameworks guided by international best practices (e.g., the UK Equality Act of 2010 was brought to the attention of the experts).

Informants 7 and 9 confirmed the existence of a strong body of legal resources at the national and international levels to be used in instances of discrimination in higher education in the Netherlands, but not on diversity as a positive duty. Informant 9 mentioned human rights treaties that the Dutch State has signed and, in particular, Article 7 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and Article 13(1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

§2. Diagnosis: UvA a case of strong egalitarianism and diversity illiteracy

This section briefly presents an overall diagnosis focused on three interrelated areas of potential intervention: ideas/mentality, awareness/learning, and silences/conversations on diversity.

Strong egalitarianism makes diversity and inclusion irrelevant. The awareness of a more diverse student body across UvA faculties has failed to translate into a more systematically organized set of policies and/or initiatives. We agree with the recent ASVA report on diversity (ASVA, 2016) that the reason for this failure concerns the focus on egalitarianism as a predominant discourse/ideology. From this perspective, the University seems to be understood as a given, and its role is seen to be adjusting to a rapidly changing context in order to maintain levels of quality and performance *vis-a-vis* other national and international competitors. Accordingly, any person with the right credentials can access UvA, regardless of background, class, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation. The focus seems to be, for some, on maintaining the quality and less on creating a more diversity-rich and inclusive environment.

Diversity understood as internationalization and primarily about gender equality might contribute to the reproduction of old prejudices and discrimination and create new ones. When diversity is conflated with internationalization or with an increase in the participation of women in decision-making, subtle and explicit forms of discrimination and prejudice tend to be silenced or to be considered non-existent.

To be more precise, the conflation of diversity with internationalization or the former being seen as a product of the latter leads to a positive assessment of the state of diversity across different faculties: "We are the most international faculty of all," "We have many Chinese students," "We have many courses in English," and so on, were some of the remarks that we often heard as examples of diversity. In the same vein, we were able to witness emotive and explicit celebrations of the increased numbers of women being appointed in the five faculties that were visited: "We are the most egalitarian faculty of all at UvA," "The Dean has made a strong commitment to women," "We need to support female talent," were some of the remarks we often heard.

The emphasis on promoting gender equality has, unfortunately, worked to obscure other axes of difference and discrimination, which tend to be related to race/ethnicity, social class, religious identities, sexual orientation, able-bodiedness and age/generation. Hiring procedures in some faculties were explicit about gender but not in relation to other axes of discrimination (Informant K).

Diversity illiteracy and the silent issue of racism and discrimination. Among UvA academic staff responsible for the administration of academic activities, there is a

problem of a lack of diversity literacy, which is connected to the absence of conversations and discussions about racism and discrimination. This leads to paradoxical opinions, for example, about English being the language of diversity (when conflated with internationalization) and, at the same time, of a poor level of Dutch being the trademark of diversity (when understood as a term used to discuss race/ethnicity).

Meanwhile, the implicit assumptions informing representations about the 'typical' Dutch UvA student as white, secular and emancipated, and of the University as a space to protect and encourage individual emancipation, competency and freedom, have resulted in an undercurrent of discrimination, with the value of a secular education becoming the ground on which to exclude those who do not comply with the norm.

4. Diversity in teaching and learning

Today, it is widely accepted that diversity is paramount to achieving academic excellence. This research is grounded on the conviction that "embracing diversity – in all its senses – is key to doing good science" (*Nature*, 2014: 279). What is at stake is the scientific quality of the university, the inclusivity of its community and its direct social and environmental impact. The study reported on in this chapter looks at how diversity is stimulated or deterred through the practices of teaching and learning at the University of Amsterdam.

We understand the practices that foster diversity as those that, through their inclusive approach, nurture difference as a positive force for academic excellence. Concurrently, we understand the practices that reduce diversity as those that lead toward the reduction of difference. In short, we ask to what extent are practices of teaching and learning at the University conducive either to the reduction or the fostering of difference.

The question of diversity in teaching and learning requires that we look at *what* is being taught, that is, the knowledge content, as well as at *how* knowledge is being taught, namely the ways of teaching. The question of *what* is being taught looks toward the curriculum that is being used, while the question of *how* leads toward the pedagogies, toward the way in which teaching and learning is happening. A *diversity-rich* curriculum can be taught in a diversity impoverishing way and, conversely, a *diversity-poor* curriculum can be taught in a diversity enriching way. For example, a course on a postcolonial subject can be taught in a monocultural, one-dimensional way, reinforcing a single perspective, whereas a course on the 'fathers' of a discipline can be taught in a way that reveals the need to go beyond a single perspective, or beyond the canon. The nurturing of diversity for academic excellence requires a transformation of both *what* is being taught and *how* it is being taught.

The question of diversity in relation to knowledge practices has been contextualized in relation to the geohistorical location of the university. It must be recognized that the university has played a central role in the reproduction of the modern/colonial division of knowledge. The university has been implicated in epistemic violence; that is, in the reproduction of the hegemony of a dominant knowledge that is monocultural in kind and that has had the effect of erasing and invalidating other knowledges and other worlds of meaning. The university has a key role in addressing global social and environmental justice through being actively engaged in epistemic justice and in cultivating an academic community concerned with its direct impact on social and environmental issues.

Our aim here is thus to outline that *what* is being taught and researched at the University of Amsterdam and *how* it is taught, to some extent reproduces diversity-poor or diversity-rich perspectives (Fornet-Betancourt, 2009; Santos, 2014; Walsh, 2014). A decolonial and intersectional approach reveals that diversity-poor practices are monocultural in kind,

often developed by academic communities that are predominantly male, white and Western-centered, whereas diversity-rich practices are intercultural and inclusive in kind. (A brief description of the theoretical tools used for this part of the research is to be found in the online Appendix.)

This overview of diversity in teaching and learning aims to prepare the ground for future University-wide discussions – at the level of programs, departments and faculties, as well as at a central level.

The mandate: diversity and knowledge
The mandate of the UvA Diversity Commission, which resulted from the demands and questions formulated by the student movements in 2015, broadened the question of diversity. In the mandate, diversity is seen not only as a question of access to the University, a question of inclusion, but also as a question of what knowledge is (re)produced at the University through research, teaching and learning. Diversity as a task and as an opportunity to enhance the University cannot be achieved without recognizing the relationship between the knowledge that is (re)produced at the University and local and global forms of inequality and environmental impact.

We recognize that the University of Amsterdam is implicated in the social divides that characterize the modern/colonial world due to its geohistorical position. Global divides need to be addressed by bridging knowledge divides. "There is no global justice without global epistemic justice" (Santos, 2006). The University has an important role to play in addressing today's global inequalities, the environmental challenges and the increasing social tensions in Dutch and European societies.

The mandate of the UvA Diversity Commission states that the commission should "gain more insight into the mechanisms of exclusion and or suppression related to knowledge infrastructures within the University of Amsterdam and whether these result in obstacles for alternative schools of thought to be sufficiently researched and taught." The mandate also raises the issue of curricula: "[C]urricula normally only cover Western/Eurocentric perspectives. Authors who do not fit in the aforementioned dominant culture are often not read. Where this happens, these authors are only treated as marginal critics; they are not part of the core curriculum." In other words, the mandate emphasizes that the question of diversity cannot be separated from inquiring into *what* knowledge is (re)produced at the University and *how* it is being taught. Thus, an integral approach to the question of diversity has to engage with the transformation of knowledge at the curricular level and the transformation of the ways of teaching and learning.

The research strategy thus implemented the mandate by raising the question of the content of *what* is being taught, and focused on the ways of *how* it is being taught. The question of *what* is being taught points toward the need for future assessments to see to what extent the curricula and research at the University remain monocultural and

dominated by authors that are male and Western-centric. The question of *how* knowledge is being taught and learned leads us to assess to what extent the ways of teaching and learning at the University enable students and teachers to locate their geohistorical positionality, to participate democratically in the learning process and to recognize the social and/or ecological impact of the knowledge produced at the University.

Methodological strategies

The research questions and methodologies were specifically designed to respond to the Diversity Commission's mandate. The research method was geared to identify and recognize relevant in-house expertise, present at the University, instead of putting emphasis on external sources. The aim was to find key informants and stakeholders among students and staff by making a series of open calls for ´diversity discussion circles´, organizing in-depth interviews and an expert workshop. Our interview respondents and the participants in the workshop were found by building on local knowledge at the UvA: we used snowball sampling to locate key figures amongst staff members. The diversity discussion circles functioned as open forums, and the interviews and workshop were geared towards identifying practices and conditions within the academic community that either reduce or foster difference. The methodology developed to set up the discussion circles is related to participatory research methods (Gill et al., 2012; Gitlin et al., 1994). Six 'Diversity Discussion Circles' were organized with approximately 10 participants per discussion circle. Additionally, through this process we have obtained up to 50 feedback forms with students' reflections on their personal experiences of pedagogical practices that either reduce or foster diversity. In order to build on UvA's in-house expertise, the team conducted ten in-depth and semi-structured interviews with key-informants at the faculty level and identified, consulted and connected key informants who are currently doing valuable diversity-work. We found various good practices that are in need of being recognized, valued and made visible for the benefit of the university community. Finally, the team organized an expert workshop with key informants at the faculty level.

§1. Findings of the diversity discussion circles

Curricula and positionality

The diversity discussion circles revealed the importance of pedagogies of positionality. Students recognized the value of an inclusive approach, when teachers addressed the location of knowledge.

> *During my Bachelor, a teacher actively made us think about authors' identities. We did exercises where we had to share an experience that made a big impact on us during our semester abroad. We had to actively play out this experience in the classroom. I had to give all the students a place in this scenario and play out my own position in the story. Then we talked about what had happened and how it made me feel. We all realized that everybody had a very different interpretation of the situation – Discussion Circle 5 (DC5)*

Conversely, when a teacher omitted the positionality of the knowledge taught, assuming a Western-centric perspective, the students felt that diversity was reduced and this negatively impacted on their learning experience.

> After the question was raised whether in China the same historiographical traditions exist as in the Netherlands, the teacher's answer was simply: yes, probably. I think this is a portrayal of not seeing Western perspective as A perspective but as THE only perspective – DC2

One of the main topics that recurred throughout the discussion circles relates to the curricula. We learned that students experience much of their education and what is taught at the University as one-dimensional, one-sided and not contextualized within a geo-historical awareness of multiple knowledges. Participants in the discussion circles frequently pointed out that many courses present Western perspectives that are not taught in relation to other perspectives, experiences or histories, or that are simply presented as the only available knowledge and not explicitly situated as 'Western.' Students point out that they are not taught to situate their own opinions and experiences within a geo-historical context.

> In every other course so far, writing from a personal opinion has cost me dearly in terms of grades. As a result, I have now dissociated my opinions from University work, which caused me to hate the results of my own research because I'm reinforcing the dominant one-sided view. However, my grades are good now. – DC3

The question of the pedagogies of positionality is not simply about allowing any opinion, but rather to open the canon in a situated way, so as to allow for inclusive approaches in which different perspectives may be expressed and recognized as valuable for learning. The refusal to do so manifests itself in particular topics not being recognized as relevant content for core courses. Students often see curricula functioning as a form of exclusion of difference rather than working in a porous way and being open to dialogue and to including diverse perspectives. Students have also reported exclusionary practices in the ways in which course material is being taught at the UvA. The exclusion of alternative perspectives in the curricula goes hand in hand with intersectional biases (gender, nationality, class, race, ethnicity, age, disability and sexuality) and modern/colonial divides (global north/global south).

The exhibition of diversity

The diversity discussion circles brought to the fore the problem of the 'exhibition' of diversity. We learned that an inclusive approach to teaching and learning should not reinforce the monocultural approach by exhibiting difference as 'other.' Several students reported that a concurrent problem to that of the exclusion of difference is that of this exhibition of difference. This exhibition of other perspectives or positionalities often functions to reinforce a monocultural learning environment rather than to provide an inclusive platform for learning.

Professors often exoticize non-white cultures and languages. One professor at the UvA course, in trying to make a point about a concept found in languages, asked only the students of color if the concept existed in their languages, assuming they were more exotic. He didn't recall that I am an English native speaker and from the US. I did not feel safe in this class because the professor saw me as belonging to a group and didn't acknowledge other aspects of my identity. – DC4

I have experiences that persons who are a visible minority should not be there to represent all Muslims, etc. I've seen this happen too many times. This is a burden on individuals to educate their peers when we talk about diversity. – Staff respondent 5 (R5)

We have learned that the recognition of differences does not always lead to inclusive pedagogies. In these cases, we see how difference is exhibited in a way that ends up reinforcing the monocultural approach as the norm. This exhibitionary recognition of difference is experienced as a peculiar form of discrimination. Students identified along the intersections of religion, race, ethnicity, nationality or gender, or on modern/colonial divides, are often exhibited and in fact used to reproduce the separation between the norm and the other. In Chapter 3 this phenomenon is addressed as 'being outed as Other.' Instead of pluralizing the practices of knowledge, the exhibition of difference tends to reinforce the monocultural approach to teaching and learning. The exhibition of diversity functions to reinforce exclusion and discrimination by marking certain bodies and knowledges as 'the other.' We suggest that the recognition of difference has to be radically distinct from the exhibition of difference, in that it should work toward the pluralization of the canon, toward inclusive practices of teaching and learning and not toward the reinforcement of monocultural approaches.

Positionality and participation
Participants in the diversity discussion circles pointed out that their teachers often lack the expertise, tools and techniques to work in ways that include different perspectives and that reach out in a meaningful way to students who come from different backgrounds. Moreover, positionality is discouraged, as participants point out that they are taught to leave their own opinions, experiences, feelings and particular interests outside the classroom. These elements are either perceived as non-academic or as not fitting into the canon and are thus not deemed relevant to the academic field as specified by their program. In contrast, students react positively to teachers who take the role of facilitators during discussions in class and who enable the active participation and the recognition of students' positionality in the learning process.

I believe that discussion is the most effective means to stimulate diversity. Particularly when the teacher/discussion leader assigns multiple perspectives (that you may not necessarily agree with) ... if an issue of ethnocentrism is being confronted or noticed in class, it has been greatly beneficial when the discussion leaders or teachers allow a discussion or facilitate a debate... – DC6

Students feel motivated and included when they are given the opportunity to share their background, their own perspectives and experiences in class or during debates, or when they can include their own interests in the course material. Students are motivated to participate in class discussions when course material is added that deals with different perspectives on topics and that contextualizes (historically and geographically) the knowledge that is being taught.

> *Most philosophy courses I took encouraged discussion, and some professors allowed people to upload their own recommended literature. This is where I learned a lot from different perspectives and felt my own background was made relevant. – DC5*

> *When we actually got to do research … and we put the theories in practice, that was really amazing because I got to detach myself from my own views and learn from other perspectives. – DC5*

The fostering of diversity occurred in situations in which students felt like their experiences and background mattered and when teachers added course material that dealt with different perspectives which stimulated discussions. In contrast, diversity is reduced when teachers approach the material as a neutral subject and are reluctant to address their own partial knowledge, experiences and background in the way the material is taught. Furthermore, some students stated that they do not feel safe to talk about certain topics because they might possibly be attacked by fellow students or not taken seriously. Teaching and learning practices that are diversity-rich enable the active participation of students in the recognition of the multiple positionalities that converge in the learning process, the positionality of the authors, of the teachers and of the different students. This enables inclusive approaches that recognize the incompleteness and partiality of all knowledge and thus the value of diversity for learning and doing good academic work.

Transitionality
The question of the relation between the knowledge produced at the University and the wider world is central to the pedagogies of positionality. Students are concerned about the direct relevance of what they are learning for society at large and for the planet. Participants pointed out that they usually learn about multiple perspectives (non-normative perspectives) mostly outside the classroom: in debates, protests and with organizations that discuss public affairs.

Participants emphasize the importance of finding groups outside the University where they feel safe to share, discuss and criticize normative perspectives. There is an emphasis on individual learning and assessment, which is in tension with the search for knowledge that is relevant to the wider community, to society at large. Students pointed out the necessity of connecting academic knowledge to processes taking place in society.

I learned the most about different perspectives during many events on experiences of refugees, decolonization, everyday racism, which gave me a lot of knowledge and personal stories of other people. This broadened my horizon because these are ideas and people that I don't usually get in contact with throughout my study year. – DC5

What we learned from the discussion circles is that certain students experience the limitations of the curricula in terms of the usefulness of the knowledge they gain and its applicability outside the university environment. We find that a diversity-rich learning environment is one that, apart from recognizing its position and the importance of plural approaches, also recognizes the relevance of societal and environmental processes. Students also recognize the direct impact of what they are learning in relation to the 'outside world,' be it a societal and/or environmental effect, which gives a broader meaning to their individual trajectory within the University.

§2. Staff interviews

Marginalization of knowledges that are diversity-rich

During the interviews with teaching staff we found that diversity-rich approaches – approaches that attempt to diversify the curricula – are to be found in electives or minors but are often not part of the core courses in the different departments. For example, some attention is paid to gender as an analytic category in minors, or to critical race theory and the history of colonialism in electives. A recurring topic in our conversations at the UvA is that diversity-rich approaches are not part of core curricula. Often faculty members who bring in inclusive approaches are praised by their students, but report that they feel marginalized or side-lined within their programs or departments. They are often branded as marginal or ideological.

Democratic forms of teaching: closed versus open expertise

Students own their learning process, we encourage that at all levels. Through peer-teaching. They teach each other, they become responsible for other people's learning so they become responsible for their own learning. – R8

We found that inclusive teaching practices were those where teachers acted as the mediator and facilitator of discussions. They engaged students in discussions about the limits of their own expertise as teachers and encouraged students to pursue interests that took them out of their own comfort zone and immediate expertise. By doing so they create an atmosphere where there is room for students to make mistakes and to learn from them. Several faculty members also attempted to integrate the idea that knowledge is always geo-historically positioned into their teaching practices. A diversity-rich and inclusive approach to teaching is one that practices a form of 'open expertise,' instead of an expertise that is geared to reinforce disciplinary or monocultural approaches.

Positionality

I want to contribute to the preparation of students as responsible scientists. But also to the idea of scientists who see their own perspective as valuable. Many who are concerned about climate change and sustainability are aware of their own roles in this but this also requires a wider reflection on science, the university and their own positions in this, their friends, wider networks, their upbringing. – R6

We found that positionality is essential for teaching methods that enable students to recognize themselves as socially and historically embedded and thus give meaning to their learning experience. Positionality is necessary to foster difference, since it recognizes that a truthful approach to knowledge is one that is contextual and grounded in its geo-historicity (Haraway, 1988; Mignolo, 2011). Knowledge that values difference is a knowledge that moves away from singular perspectives and that is conducive to excellence and social justice. Our interviewees provided us with key examples that illustrate the importance of students being able to position themselves in relation to dominant narratives and structures.

Transitionality: social and ecological impact and outreach

There is a real need for students to become motivated about their field and doing community work can contribute to that. – R6

I also try to make students aware of the space for agency. Often the presumption is that there is either apathy or activism and nothing in between so I want to break through this dichotomy and show what the options are for agency. – R4

Exercises that allow students to recognize their own impact in relation to the world and their own role as a university student are often mentioned as a way to foster a sense of social and/or environmental responsibility and engagement with the material taught. Tying academic knowledge to real-world examples was a practice that interviewees found to be very productive, especially when it involved giving students the space to come up with their own examples, interpretations and projects. This allows students to connect to local communities, and to societal and environmental issues at large. Instead of only producing expert knowledge, they are given the opportunity to relate to knowledge in a meaningful way.

The notion of talent and excellence in relation to diversity

What do we mean by talent? People might have specific talents but it is also something that is cultivated. For example, when you read to your child, you are not only reading and creating a bond but ... also promoting literacy. By the time they go to school they are already literate, and when they go to school they are seen as talented. Now this child was privileged, everything has contributed to this child's talent. Talent needs to be exposed, it does not fall out of the sky, in most cases it is cultivated through support. – R5

The meritocratic notion of talent presupposes the idea that there is a level playing field. As several interviewees mentioned, the egalitarian narrative around talent can become a way to obscure privilege. Talent needs to be put into context. The notion of talent obscures students' trajectories through complex sociopolitical arrangements that are imbued with intersectional and colonial inequalities.

The canon: fostering epistemic diversity through curricula

> *Certainly, the real problem is when we have working groups and I bring up this point about the texts the response is always that I should suggest something. I have to be the one with the solution. It becomes about quantitative diversity to solve the problem. – R2*

We found that the core curriculum of disciplines often constrains the diversification of knowledge practices. It is very difficult to bring authors into the 'canon' who are not perceived as part of the established genealogies of thought in disciplines that are markedly Western-centric and male dominated. We found a need to open the canons and disciplinary frameworks to diverse knowledges and diverse approaches to the field. Several interviewees pointed to the importance of epistemic diversity and how diversity can be cast as an inclusive relation between different knowledge systems. For example, discussions on the canon or curriculum are often at risk of succumbing to an additive view of diversity, that is, "Let's just add more of something different." However, what is actually necessary is an open debate about what comes to count as valuable knowledge and how that process takes place in contemporary academia.

Academic freedom is a core value at the UvA, and diversity-rich approaches to the canon are being formulated at a local level in elective courses, for example, but although they are visibly appreciated by the students, they are still in need of institutional recognition. We found that transformations occur when teachers have the freedom to build on the richness and the limits of their own positionality and expertise. We found that diversifying curricula was easiest in fields that self-defined as interdisciplinary. However, we also stress the importance of allowing other sources of knowledge and other perspectives to come into a meaningful and enriching dialogue within the established disciplinary frameworks.

Diversity as addressing the norm

> *We should try to be busy with what we encounter and not see whiteness as a default that automatically appears. We need to realize that we are there and what is wrong with that. But it is hard to see the default; it is like we [white students and staff members] are Times New Roman, you forget that it is there and why it is there. – R2*

> *We have a blindness that concerns everyone who does not conform to the blueprint of the mostly white middle class. – R7*

Diversity relates to both the self-understanding of those who are in the normative unmarked position as well as those who are marked as different. Interviewees pointed out the importance of addressing the norm; without this, diversity-work is at risk of reinforcing the monoculture, for example, when people who are considered part of a visible minority are 'exhibited' to educate their peers. We have found teaching practices that contextualize the norm and question privilege and whiteness to be crucial to an inclusive approach that diversifies the classroom and positions the canon.

> *So, one way diversity can be addressed is while teaching, while selecting literature. Getting students to become more self-reflective about who is around them in the class. Look around, why is it that most people look like me, I might ask. Or how is it that we got to arrive in this lecture hall, what steps brought you here. So that hopefully gets students over time to reflect on their own experiences, their school experiences, their families, their neighborhoods, where they grew up. – R5*

> *I work towards working through this uncomfortableness … we have to talk before and after the class when they feel uncomfortable. Being privileged is not the same as being wrong, but there must be room for this uncomfortableness, as a form of ignorance. I believe it is very important to always talk about whiteness and intersectionality combined and not as separate subjects. – R3*

A pedagogy of positionality that promotes diversity is not only directed toward the recognition of marginalized positions, it also requires the recognition of the default position. It requires the unmarked positions in the practices of knowledge, in particular the intersectional positions of privilege, to be spelled out and recognized as particular historical and contextual formations. Exercises that reveal the positionality of Western-centrism, of whiteness, masculinity, cisgender and able-bodiedness have proven to be fruitful to the transition toward inclusive practices of learning in which difference can thrive.

5. Recommendations

The Commission's work reported here leads us to five main recommendations, or conclusions. For a description and an overview of the main conclusions we refer to the summary. Here, we discuss the recommendations in more detail with respect to each of the conclusions. In the elaboration of this set of recommendations, the Diversity Commission has incorporated suggestions received from informants and experts during the research and consultation moments. The five main conclusions are:

I.   Strong anchoring of 'social justice and diversity'
II.   Opening the University to the diversity in society
III. Toward an inclusive and socially just university
IV.   From egalitarian thinking to 'diversity literacy'
V.   From 'closed knowledge' to 'open knowledge'

We also make recommendations on how to move forward from here (section VI).

I. Strong anchoring of 'social justice and diversity'

The UvA should permanently and formally embed diversity through a ***Diversity Policy***, coordinated and safeguarded by a ***Diversity Unit*** and a ***Discrimination Ombudsperson***. Through ***national and international cooperation***, the UvA can contribute to building expertise and advancing diversity in national (and global) academia.

UvA Diversity Policy
We advise the adoption of a broad diversity policy on how to improve and anchor diversity and social justice at the UvA. To guarantee its implementation, we strongly advise that it has central and vocal support at the very top and that there is co-governance and ownership of this policy both at the central level and at lower levels, in the faculties/departments. The UvA should explicitly express what its position is with respect to the field of diversity. Gradually, also on the basis of the Charter and the Senate-new-style proposed by the D&D Commission, the UvA should take a clear stance as to what kind of university it wants to be and how it wants to achieve that, and this should be voiced by the academic community and endorsed by the leadership of UvA. This requires a long process of active engagement.

The Diversity Policy should:
- Have the explicit support of the Executive Board (CvB) and deans (co-owners).
- Contain common goals, but a decentralized implementation strategy for each faculty or study program, resulting in decentralized practices and initiatives.
- Contain concrete and measurable (voluntary and binding) objectives and milestones.

- Provide clear mechanisms for monitoring, transparency, accountability and follow-up.
- Provide numbers and statistics in order to show the imbalances within the University; but data on ethnicity, class background, (dis-)ability, etc. should only be used on aggregate levels.
- Have students and staff as key contributors.
- Encourage and protect the participation of those systematically excluded from decision-making in the phases of design, implementation and evaluation.
- Value, recognize and expand best practices.
- Encourage improvements in social accountability.
- Provide criteria for giving institutional value to diversity through different forms of performance and quality indicators.

Diversity Unit
Establish a Diversity Unit responsible for the coordination of diversity policies and the implementation and monitoring of the diversity policy. The Unit should monitor progress toward an inclusive university, in numerical and qualitative terms. If the goals are not voluntarily met within the period set for them, the Unit should do research on the desirability and possible implementation of quota in relation to gender and race/ethnicity.

Following international good practices, the Unit should be centrally funded and composed of a group of experts whose job is to track the progress and implementation of diversity policies within the University and also to act as a liaison with relevant internal and external bodies. The Unit should directly report to the Executive Board.

The Diversity Unit has ***diversity protection*** and ***diversity literacy*** at the core of its mandate. It should liaise with best practices and activities around the world, such as the University Rights Charter for Students and Staff and Britain's Equality Challenge Unit (ECU), which advances equality and diversity in colleges and universities. The promotion of diversity literacy should be assessed. The Diversity Unit should promote the valuing and integration of diversity in career development, teaching and research. It should work to increase diversity in representative bodies, such as the Works' Councils (COR and ORs), Student Councils (CSR and FSR), and Boards of Studies (OCs), but also in application and visitation committees.

The Unit should have a central role in ***giving institutional value and visibility to diversity-enriching practices***, through including diversity as an important element in training, in teaching evaluations, in course evaluations, in research evaluations and promotion criteria. The University should give institutional value to diversity-work and support already existing initiatives. The present institutional culture does not always value work that stimulates diversity-rich teaching and learning practices. We recommend more explicit commitment to and support for such initiatives. The University needs to give

value and visibility to the expertise that is already present in the institution. Hence, the Unit should have (and provide) the means, to support bottom-up student and staff initiatives; both financial and in the form of other facilities.

Discrimination Ombudsperson
The Office of the Discrimination Ombudsperson should be able to professionally address problems, register complaints, promote a culture of diversity literacy and offer support from specifically trained and dedicated counselors and mediators. This should result in *safe and efficient procedures to deal with discrimination*. These are currently lacking.

The University does not have a strong infrastructure in place to deal with complaints about discrimination. There is a system of confidential advisers ('vertrouwenspersonen') but it is weak and informal. It is important that students and staff have a person they can approach regarding issues of racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination and violence – a person who will confidentially deal with their concerns and who has been appointed and trained specially to tackle these issues.

The Discrimination Ombudsperson must have greater authority than the confidential advisors, and this authority must be guaranteed by a set of regulations. The Ombudsperson should have a central autonomous position and should not be positioned within the faculty hierarchies. The Ombudsperson will file complaints, offer psychological support and have the authority to resolve the issue at hand. This would ensure impartiality in the resolution of disputes around the issue of discrimination and would also provide a path through which the most vulnerable members of the University community can feel safe and can feel heard.

The Ombudsperson should:
- Avoid making the person who suffers from discrimination solely responsible for resolving the issue at hand.
- Create safe/sensitive and accessible mechanisms for reporting and actually resolving occurrences of discrimination.
- Learn from incidents: use experience to improve our understanding of exclusion and of follow-up mechanisms, which can help to identify systemic problems and weaknesses in institutional policy and practice.
- Be highly visible across the UvA through adequate communication strategies.

We strongly advise UvA to join the European Network for Ombudsmen in Higher Education and to seek this Network's support in the establishment of an UvA Ombudsperson.

National and international cooperation on diversity
The Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) values diversity. The UvA should build on its own strengths, that is, its in-house expertise and its active student

movements, in order to jointly develop thinking with the Ministry how to stimulate diversity-rich academic communities in the Netherlands.

The UvA Executive Board and the Diversity Unit should cooperate with other national and international universities in order to:

- Build and develop expertise, make comparisons and promote best practices.
- Participate in the development of a Dutch Diversity Charter for higher education.
- Provide mechanisms for monitoring, transparency and feedback.
- Expand attention to diversity and inclusion to include supra-institutional bodies, such as the Ministry of Education, KNAW, NWO, other funding agencies and the NVAO (visitation committees).
- Include measures of diversity and inclusion as criteria for institutional excellence.
- Promote the inclusion of questions about diversity in student surveys at the University and inclusion in the National Student Survey (NSE).
- Sign the general Dutch Diversity Charter.
- Closely engage in networks such as the LNVH, the National Network of Diversity Officers, the Platform for Diversity in Science, The Alliance for Equal Chances in Higher Education and the European Network for Ombudsmen in Higher Education.

Further organizational anchoring through various institutions
In order to solidly embed the theme of diversity and social justice in the University, we also suggest to anchor the theme in various institutions: (1) assessment and evaluation bodies, (2) funding institutions, (3) teacher accreditations, (4) teaching evaluations, (5) annual performance reviews, (6) and the Boards of Studies.

Assessment and evaluation bodies
First of all, it is necessary to give a quantifiable value to diversity in teaching evaluation procedures. We recommend that the UvA, through the Diversity Unit, as well as the NVAO (Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie) initiate the incorporation of diversity into their quantitative and qualitative accreditation criteria, so as to give it an institutional value. For example, at the level of the visitation committee, it is worth noting that the current criteria do not include diversity as an important element in determining academic excellence. While we recognize that departments and other units should develop their own diversity practices and criteria, we believe that it is important to have an institutional framework connected to the visitation committees in order to provide a strong set of incentives for the development of these practices and criteria.

Secondly, it is also important to engage with the methodological approaches that the visitation committee will use to assess diversity, keeping in mind that the conflation of diversity with internationalization should be avoided. We want to stimulate a qualitative approach that values those practices that, through their inclusive approach, nurture difference as a positive force for academic excellence. We would like to see the NVAO express an intention to use diversity criteria which are open to bottom-up perspectives.

Funding institutions

We identified three main external funding streams: NWO, the European Union and partnerships with private enterprises. None of the streams place significant emphasis on diversity, despite their official positions on the matter. The UvA could partner with other similar institutions to advocate for a more inclusive set of standards for research quality. We would like to see quality criteria move away from narrowly construed impact metrics and income targets to incorporate the perspective of societal and environmental impact, as well as the recognition of fields that lead toward diversity-rich teaching and learning practices and to approaches that challenge or go beyond established fields.

Teacher accreditations

At present, the teacher training accreditations (BKO and SKO) do not reinforce a focus on inclusive teaching practices that can foster diversity-rich research, teaching and learning practices. We would encourage the University to ensure that diversity-enhancing pedagogies become a central element in the teaching training and accreditation provided by UvA. The Diversity Unit should also have an advisory role on this matter with respect to other education and accreditation bodies, such as CNA (Centrum voor Nascholing)

Teaching evaluations

Regrettably, diversity does not play a significant role in UvA's current teaching evaluation practices. It would be desirable for the University to introduce criteria for the assessment of pedagogies that lead to the fostering of diversity. For example, the UvA-Q evaluation system could be amended in that direction across most, if not all, disciplines. We envision evaluation questions focusing on whether the course is inclusive, whether it includes a reflected positionality with regard to the knowledge at stake, whether it has space for participative forms of learning rather than top-down instruction, and whether the importance of social or ecological impact is recognized.

Annual review of staff performance

At the moment, the annual review forms for staff members are centered on a very traditional account of the activities of research, teaching and administration. We propose changes in the criteria to assess the role of academic staff in ways that are more attuned to recognizing the importance of diversity in teaching and learning practices. More specifically, the annual assessment forms could be modified to mention more explicitly the importance of diversity-related activities in teaching, outreach, research and administration.

Councils and Boards of Studies

The Works councils and Student Councils as representatives of all employees and students have important roles in decision making processes. Boards of Studies (OCs) advice in educational programs, exam regulations, educational evaluations and the planning of new programs. These bodies should have in their mandate the task of

enriching diversity practices in their own constituencies and ensure diversity among their members, in line with the recommendations of this report.

II. Opening the University to the diversity in society

For a university that presents itself as firmly rooted in the city of Amsterdam – which recently has become a majority-minority city – the percentages of black, migrant and refugee staff and students are unsatisfactory. This lack of diversity affects people at the University. We make various recommendations in order to increase the presence of people with minority backgrounds in general, and for people with second-generation 'non-Western' backgrounds in particular. More diverse people should be attracted, retained, supported and promoted at the UvA. Here, we make recommendations of how this could be achieved for students and staff, and we suggest general touch stones for both domains.

Recommendations to enhance the diversity among the students:
- Increase student recruitment at Amsterdam and regional schools with large populations of pupils with minority backgrounds.
- Make an effort to reach out to pupils with parents who have lower educational attainments, and offer special support and attention in the transition to university for students with non-academic backgrounds.
- Maintain the schakelcursussen/'bridging programs' that allow for the transition of students from HBO to the UvA (see the note below).
- Actively work toward closing the gap in study success between students with ethnic Dutch and 'non-Western' backgrounds. Consider the creation of small-scale teaching environments, with more guidance from the start, and a smaller distance between teachers and students. The gap in belonging and study success between students with 'non-Western' backgrounds and ethnic Dutch backgrounds are smaller in such environments (Wolff, 2013). Such environments have also been shown to be beneficial to students with mental challenges, for example, for those on the autism spectrum.

Note on schakelcursussen/'bridging programs'. Currently, there is a trend to cut the preparatory programs ('schakeljaar') throughout the UvA. This is bound to reduce the accessibility of the institution to institutionally and structurally disadvantaged social groups and individuals. There is a need for an infrastructure and a concrete set of policies aimed at helping students to transition between different educational structures, particularly from HBO to the academy, where different skills are required. This is not only a matter of fulfilling the University's social function, but also of improving its rates of success in education: dropout is a drain on the University's resources in general and the dropout rates of students from disadvantaged backgrounds are higher than the average. The University's commitment to diversity and inclusivity requires finding solutions that maximize participation and the academic success of disadvantaged students.

Recommendations to enhance the diversity among the staff:
- Make staff application procedures more diversity-informed.
- Introduce the position of a ***diversity recruitment officer***. This person should ensure the representation of minoritized people on hiring committees and shortlists of both academic and support staff. The diversity recruitment officer should be a member of the Diversity Unit.
- Close the gap in career prospects between male and female employees, and employees with ethnic Dutch and 'non-Western' backgrounds.
- Include questions in the Employee Monitor about diversity and inclusion.
- Strengthen the structural labor conditions, by reducing precarious situations and enforce its regulations on the ratio of permanent to temporary contracts (see the note below).

Note on precarity. The precarity and employment vulnerability among temporary staff negatively impacts the possibility of diversifying knowledge practices, as it deters staff members from formulating innovative and transformative proposals that would foster diversity and enrich the curriculum.

The University has guidelines on the ratio of permanent to temporary staff, but they are not always or uniformly followed, and, in any case, various forms of precarity affect the diversity and quality of education and research. It is well understood that precarity has a particularly adverse effect on pedagogic and scholarly practices that seek innovation. It should also be noted that academic precarity affects already marginalized groups disproportionately (e.g., most temporary staff members are women).

As a starting point to tackling this problem, it would be desirable for the University to enforce its regulations on the ratio of permanent to temporary contracts and improve the labor conditions of all staff, so as to strengthen the structural conditions necessary for a community daring to innovate and bring about excellence through diversity.

Recommendations that apply to both staff and student body:
- Anchor the goals in concrete obligatory objectives, with explicit support from the Executive Board. Make results transparent, hold actors accountable and provide follow up. When objectives are not met voluntarily within a determined time frame, make them binding (quotas).
- Register ethnic backgrounds on aggregate levels, solely for the purpose of monitoring and enhancing social justice.
- Consider 'diversity' in its entirety and complexity, looking beyond gender as the sole and separate dimension, and acknowledging the intersectional nature of personal characteristics.

III. Toward an inclusive and socially just university

Exclusion on the basis of race, gender, disability, non-normative sexualities, religion, etc. is widely experienced at UvA. Women experience more discrimination than men, and older women more than younger women. Clearly, working and studying at the University of Amsterdam is not the same experience for everyone.

UvA staff and students should be able to safely express their personal (minoritized) identities, orientations and religion and be able to fulfill their everyday personal (religious) needs in an ambience of mutual respect within the context of the UvA.

Recommendations to achieve a more inclusive and socially just university:
- Take discrimination and racism more seriously, and more explicitly denounce acts of exclusion.
- Increase awareness of the impact of certain phrases, jokes and attitudes, through a newly developed, more visible and explicit *Diversity Code of Conduct* (see the note below).
- Become more inclusive toward religious people, by translating UvA's secular heritage into being a religiously neutral institution that is inclusive and respectful to various believers, instead of imposing a non-religious (anti-religious) norm (see the note below).
- Further improve the accessibility of UvA locations and events for people with disabilities, in collaboration with the newly installed Commissie Functiebeperking. It should also ensure permanent focus on the accessibility of locations, events and services for people with disabilities (see the note below).
- Use anonymized grading (see the note below).

Note on the Diversity Code of Conduct. In order to eradicate discrimination in all forms, the UvA community has to take discrimination, sexism and racism very seriously, and should loudly denounce acts of exclusion. People at UvA, students and employees alike, should be made aware of the impact of certain phrases, jokes and attitudes and the impact of singling out individuals. This can be achieved through a more visible and more explicit diversity policy and code of conduct. Such *Diversity Code of Conduct* should detail, in line with the diversity policy what counts as unacceptable behavior with regard to discrimination (racism, sexism, classism, etc.). We recommend that the Diversity Unit produces such a document through consultation, to provide a legitimate and clear reference point in cases of disputes about discrimination.

Note on the accessibility of the buildings. Engaging with the academic community, we recommend that the UvA stipulates what is absolutely necessary for new buildings and makes decisions accordingly. Look with and through the eyes of those who are minoritized, have a disability or identify as LGBTIQ, etc. at the buildings and the facilities and 'repair' the mistakes and address the lacks. Older buildings should be appropriately

adapted. The newly installed 'Commissie Functiebeperking' might be of great help in that process. Because people with disabilities are currently strongly excluded, the UvA must map and improve all facilities in all UvA buildings. In light of the lack of gender-neutral bathrooms, the UvA should renovate all bathrooms.

Note on religiosity and secularism. The UvA prides itself on the value of tolerance and on its secular heritage. However, the Commission found that the secular heritage of the UvA can also lead to the exclusion of some, and reduce the tolerance of difference. Students with religious backgrounds reported that they perceived the UvA environment to be hostile to their beliefs. The UvA's secular heritage should not condone anti-religious sentiments; rather, being a religiously neutral institution should be the condition to foster an inclusive and respectful community.

Note on anonymized grading. Unconscious biases in grading can disproportionately affect students from minority backgrounds. Research has shown that biased grading "appears consistent with statistical discrimination" (Hanna & Linden, 2012). Perceived performance in earlier courses can also contribute to faculty grading bias. Research respondents highlighted the lack of transparency in the grading and student evaluation mechanisms at the University of Amsterdam. We recommend that more research is done on the feasibility and desirability of implementing anonymized grading as a way to counter discrimination and unconscious bias.

IV. From egalitarian thinking to 'diversity literacy'

Crucial to enhancing social justice and diversity is having a language in which these themes can be sensitively addressed. Unfortunately, in many places at the University such 'diversity-informed' language is lacking.

Recommendations on how to develop and disseminate this 'diversity literacy':
- Develop a non-threatening, non-stigmatizing vocabulary, through:
  - Organizing, promoting and supporting ongoing conversations among students and staff.
  - Learning from international best practices, such as UCLA's mandatory BA course on diversity.
  - Using external national/international expertise.
- Use diversity-informed language in formal and informal communication.
- Disseminate this language through courses included in academic skills courses and BKOs (see the note below).
- Cooperate with national and international universities to stimulate this process, find best practices, make comparisons, and bring these issues to the attention of supra-institutional bodies.
- In tandem with the development of a Dutch Diversity Charter for higher education, institute a central expertise unit within the Diversity Unit, where

criteria for institutional excellence are developed that include measures of diversity and social justice.
- Use frameworks such as decoloniality and intersectionality.

Note on a Bachelor's course on diversity in all faculties. One best practice that can be instituted based on practice at many Ivy League universities in the US (such as at UCLA), is that all Bachelor's students should be required to take a course on ethnic/racial, gender, cultural, sexual and religious diversity. This course will help them to become informed about the society that they will have to function in. This course would not only be required in the social sciences and the humanities, but in *all faculties*. Nearer to home, students at Leiden University College (LUC) in The Hague, already follow a mandatory course on Diversity in their first year. At Amsterdam University College as well, diversity and community involvement are quite accepted and popular themes. As their website states: "They [students at AUC] build bridges not only through their own intercultural exchanges, but also with the many neighborhoods and various communities in the Dutch capital where they are active members in the booming cultural and academic scenes."[52] This can be seen as an in-house good practice.

V. From 'closed' knowledge to 'open' knowledge

Knowledge is produced and evaluated in certain political and social contexts. Acknowledgement that knowledge and scientists have specific positions, that they have a 'positionality', strengthens the academic climate, as it stimulates dialogue, critical thinking and innovation. Furthermore, it does justice to the variety of perspectives present, including the perspectives of those who are not represented by the current canon.

Recommendations to further increase the openness of knowledge:
- Make researchers, teachers and students more aware of the positionality of knowledge, and in particular of the canon, and create room for divergent perspectives (see the note below). Jointly develop ideas about how to interpret and use the idea of positionality, though discussion/debate.
- Use 'curricula scans' to monitor and stimulate the development of diversity-rich courses by in-house experts and trained professionals, who can also act as a sounding-board for teachers in developing their courses.
- Ensure institutional protection for researchers and teachers who engage with non-mainstream perspectives in their disciplines.
- Include in the Bachelor's diversity courses, mentioned under IV, reflections on issues such as the genealogy of the discipline and the importance of positionality.
- Further stimulate participatory teaching methods.
- Enhance awareness of the geo-historical role of the University of Amsterdam by reflecting on its colonial legacies (see the note below).

- Engage in the process of transversal thinking: that is, putting oneself in someone else's shoes and looking at the world from that perspective (Yuval-Davis, 1997).
- Strengthen the relations with the surrounding societal environment, with the neighborhood.
- Broaden the criteria for evaluation of research (see the note below).

Note on positioning the canon. The teaching of disciplinary canons or discussion of mainstream debates can enhance diversity when it includes a reflection on the geo-historical positionality of the authors/figures taught in the curriculum or the major trends in the field. In this way, students can clearly contextualize and position the knowledge that they are learning. This recommendation can be implemented across different faculties. A canon or mainstream debate that is not positioned presupposes a one-directional and often monocultural approach that is not conducive to open and inclusive – and thereby diverse – learning experiences.

Note on UvA's colonial past. The colonial history of the UvA need to be studied and taught at the UvA. The Executive Board should commission a new historiography of UvA, which takes UvA's ties to elite Amsterdam merchant and banking families and to colonialism into account. The colonial history of the old UvA buildings should be visible on information boards at the entrance to those old buildings.

Note on contact with the neighborhood and broader society. In order for our knowledge to have practical relevance and be applicable to the broader world, but also for our knowledge to contribute to a more just, more sustainable world, it is important that knowledge is developed that represents various stances and is applicable to various groups in society. The UvA should maintain permanent contact with broader society, and the city of Amsterdam, to develop and disseminate knowledge.

Note on the assessment of research. The Commission would like to see more recognition of research initiatives that are not at the center of disciplinary frameworks or within the established canons. We believe that research evaluation could stimulate diverse approaches that go beyond the mainstream. Furthermore, research evaluation should not only be bound to journal rankings and grants, but also to other criteria, such as social and ecological impacts. A more inclusive set of criteria of what counts as societal and environmental impact needs to be developed.

VI. Moving forward

In order to address the multifaceted challenges of diversity, it is necessary that the Executive Board institutes *a new Commission to inaugurate the next stage*. This Commission should consist of a delegation of relevant groups who first formed the Pre-Commission on Diversity, of functionaries preparing the way for the new Diversity Unit to be established and of a representation of the faculties.

This successor will have as its main tasks:

- To draft ***a concrete Diversity Policy and Work Plan*** for the coming three years on the basis of the present report, including the establishment of the Diversity Unit; and
- To ***engage the faculties in a discussion*** of the present report and to map the possibilities for the enhancement of diversity in their own spheres.

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Nederlandstalige samenvatting.
Diversiteit is een werkwoord

Van maart tot september 2016 heeft de Commissie Diversiteit onderzoek gedaan naar diversiteit aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam. Om vorm te kunnen geven aan **sociale rechtvaardigheid** aan de universiteit is een actieve houding nodig ten aanzien van diversiteit. De commissie benadert diversiteit op twee manieren: diversiteit van mensen en diversiteit in kennis.

De diversiteit van mensen verwijst naar de uitdaging om een gevarieerde academische omgeving te creëren, met mensen met een verschillende culturele en sociaal-economische achtergrond, religie, huidskleur, geslacht, leeftijd en seksuele oriëntatie, of andere kenmerken die hun positie in de maatschappij vormen. Wij stellen ons een universiteit voor die streeft naar gelijke kansen voor alle mensen; een universiteit die vrij is van discriminatie, een universiteit waar mensen zich thuis voelen. Om dit soort diversiteit in kaart te brengen, hebben wij gekeken naar vragen als: welke dynamiek zien we als we kijken naar gender en etniciteit van mensen die belangrijke inhoudelijke posities bekleden binnen de universiteit? Welke bestendige machtsverschillen bestaan er binnen alle verscheidenheid in de archipel van eilanden die samen de UvA vormen?

Diversiteit in kennis verwijst naar de uitdaging om de heersende canon te verbreden en de focus op westerse tradities en teksten te verrijken met andere academische perspectieven en pedagogische benaderingen. Wij stellen ons een universiteit voor die zich bewust is van de historische processen waarbinnen kennis wordt geproduceerd, een universiteit die zich bewust is van haar impact op de sociale en natuurlijke omgeving. Om dit type diversiteit te bestuderen hebben we vragen gesteld als: welke epistemologische kaders krijgen de voorkeur binnen een bepaald vakgebied, welke kennis wordt serieus genomen en van wie komt deze kennis, met andere woorden: wie spreekt er in curricula, in de klas, in lesboeken, en welke processen bepalen wie een stem krijgt?

Diversiteit biedt een kans om de UvA-gemeenschap te verrijken. Zij heeft een belangrijke meerwaarde voor de universiteit. Diversiteit aan ideeën en standpunten kan wetenschappelijk werk naar een hoger niveau brengen en tot nieuwe inzichten leiden over menselijke culturen en de wereld om ons heen. De beste voedingsbodem voor **academische excellentie** is een omgeving die divers en inclusief is; een omgeving die een breed en divers spectrum aan perspectieven op waarde schat. (*Nature*, 2014).

De Commissie heeft in haar onderzoek gebruik gemaakt van verschillende methoden. Zo hebben we rapporten, beleidsdocumenten en databronnen bestudeerd (zowel van de UvA zelf als op nationaal en internationaal niveau). Ook is er een enquête gehouden, zijn er

foto's gemaakt en geanalyseerd, interviews afgenomen en focusgroepen georganiseerd (zogenaamde 'diversity discussion circles'). Om sociale rechtvaardigheid en diversiteit bij de universiteit te bevorderen, doen we verschillende aanbevelingen die we hieronder presenteren onder zes hoofddoelen.

I.   Stevige verankering van sociale rechtvaardigheid en diversiteit

Op verschillende plekken binnen de UvA zetten studenten en werknemers zich actief in om van de universiteit een meer diverse en inclusieve omgeving te maken. Er bestaan vakken die rijk zijn aan diversiteit, waar studenten uitgedaagd worden om verschillende perspectieven met elkaar te vergelijken. Ook zijn er hier en daar stilteruimtes gerealiseerd. En in de afgelopen jaren zijn er verschillende initiatieven geweest om de positie van vrouwen te verbeteren. Echter, de meeste van deze initiatieven zijn incidenteel en onvoldoende op elkaar afgestemd. Het ontbreekt de universiteit aan een consistent, gecoördineerd en goed gefaciliteerd diversiteitsbeleid.

Gelukkig blijkt uit de enquête dat de steun voor diversiteitsbeleid breed gedragen wordt, of in ieder geval gemakkelijk gemobiliseerd kan worden. Een meerderheid van de respondenten onder UvA-werknemers zou het waarderen als de UvA diverser zou worden in termen van achtergronden, culturen, levensstijlen en denkscholen (62%), en veel mensen zien graag dat er meer aandacht komt voor diversiteit (61%). Deze steun is nog breder onder mensen die gezien worden als minderheden.

Aanbevelingen om sociale rechtvaardigheid en diversiteit te verankeren:
- ***Maak het bevorderen van sociale rechtvaardigheid en diversiteit tot een centraal aandachtspunt van de universiteit, vastgelegd in een Diversiteitsbeleid en een Actieplan**, met doelen voor de lange en korte termijn.*
    - *Diversiteit moet enerzijds uitgesproken steun krijgen van het hoogste centrale niveau, en anderzijds verankerd zijn in praktijken en initiatieven op lokaal, decentraal niveau.*
    - *De doelen moeten transparant zijn. Mensen moeten zowel op centraal als op decentraal niveau verantwoordelijk gehouden worden, en er moet continuïteit in het beleid zijn.*
    - *De participatie van de gehele UvA-gemeenschap (studenten, medewerkers en ondersteunend personeel) moet worden gestimuleerd en beschermd, met name van degenen die structureel ondervertegenwoordigd zijn.*
- ***Installeer een Diversiteitsunit** die als een spin in het web fungeert, verantwoordelijk is voor het coördineren van het diversiteitsbeleid, en toeziet op de implementatie van het actieplan. De Unit moet toezicht houden op de vorderingen ten aanzien van de doelstelling om een meer inclusieve universiteit te worden, ook in termen van aantallen. De Unit zal onderzoek doen naar de wenselijkheid en uitvoerbaarheid van het instellen van quota voor gender en ras/etniciteit wanneer deze doelen niet bereikt worden binnen de gestelde periode. De Diversiteitsunit*

- o *Staat direct onder het College van Bestuur en legt aan hen verantwoording af.*
- o *moet verschillende vertakkingen hebben op een lokaal, decentraal niveau, omdat 'ownership' van het beleid en steun van onderop essentieel zijn voor het succes van het beleid.*
- o *moet de middelen hebben om door studenten en werknemers opgezette initiatieven te ondersteunen.*

- **Installeer – gekoppeld aan de Diversiteitsunit – een UvA Meldpunt Discriminatie of Ombudspersoon**, *specifiek gewijd aan het oplossen van problemen, het registreren van klachten, het bevorderen van bewustzijn ten aanzien van diversiteit en het aanbieden van steun door counselors en bemiddelaars die daar specifiek voor getraind zijn. De autoriteit van dit orgaan reikt verder dan die van de vertrouwenspersonen, en het is, anders dan de vertrouwenspersonen, niet ingebed in de afdelingshiërarchieën. Dit zou moeten leiden tot veilige en efficiënte procedures waarmee discriminatie aangepakt kan worden. Momenteel zijn dergelijke procedures er niet.*

- **Werk samen met andere universiteiten** *in binnen- en buitenland om dit proces te bevorderen, internationale voorbeelden te vinden, vergelijkingen te maken en deze onderwerpen onder de aandacht te brengen van instellingen zoals NWO, KNAW, Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap en NVAO (visitatiecommissies). Zoek aansluiting bij netwerken zoals LNVH, het Nationale Netwerk van Diversity Officers, Platform Diversiteit in Wetenschap, de Alliantie voor Gelijke Kansen in Hoger Onderwijs en het Europese Netwerk van Ombudspersonen voor Hoger Onderwijs.*

- **Ontwikkel samen met andere Nederlandse universiteiten een Nederlandse Charter Diversiteit voor hoger onderwijs** *en een centrale expertise-eenheid die criteria ontwikkelt voor institutionele excellentie, waarbij de mate van diversiteit en sociale rechtvaardigheid centraal staan.*

II. Stel de universiteit open voor de diversiteit in de samenleving

In het academisch jaar 2015-2016 had 14% van alle geregistreerde UvA-studenten een niet-westerse achtergrond, wat inhoudt dat ten minste één van de ouders geboren is in een niet-westers land (nationale database '1cijferHO'). Wanneer we buitenlandse studenten niet meerekenen bij dit percentage komen we uit op 13%. Hoewel dit ongeveer gelijk is aan het nationale gemiddelde (12% van de studenten aan universiteiten in Nederland heeft een niet-westerse achtergrond), is 13% relatief laag als we het vergelijken met de VU (21%) en de Erasmus Universiteit (22%), twee universiteiten die zich in steden bevinden met een vergelijkbaar aandeel jongeren van niet-westerse afkomst. Van de medewerkers die de enquête hebben ingevuld, heeft 11% een niet-westerse achtergrond en dit is nog maar 4% wanneer we internationale professionals buiten beschouwing laten. Voor een universiteit die aangeeft nauw verbonden te zijn met

de stad Amsterdam – waar autochtone bevolkingsgroepen sinds kort in de minderheid zijn – laat dit percentage te wensen over.

Dit gebrek aan diversiteit heeft invloed op mensen aan de universiteit. Veel van de studenten en werknemers met een minderheidsachtergrond die onderdeel waren van ons onderzoeksproject, gaven aan dat ze zich op meerdere niveaus niet gerepresenteerd voelden, en dat er voor hen te weinig rolmodellen waren.

Aanbevelingen voor een diversere samenstelling van studenten en staf
- ***Mensen met een minderheidsachtergrond moeten actief aangetrokken, behouden, ondersteund en bevorderd worden**, zodat zij meer aanwezig zijn in de UvA, met name op zichtbare en invloedrijke posities zoals in medezeggenschapsorganen. Dit kan o.a. door:*
  - *Diversiteit een factor te maken binnen sollicitatieprocedures voor werknemers.*
  - *Meer studenten aan te trekken van scholen in (de regio) Amsterdam met een hoog percentage leerlingen van minderheidsachtergronden.*
  - *De schakeltrajecten intact te houden waarmee studenten kunnen doorstromen van het HBO naar de UvA.*
- ***Deze doelen moeten vastgelegd worden in concrete voorstellen** voor beleidsdoelen die expliciet ondersteund worden vanuit de bestuurlijke top. De resultaten van dit beleid moeten transparant en inzichtelijk gemaakt worden, actoren moeten verantwoordelijk gemaakt worden voor dit beleid en er moet sprake zijn van continuïteit . Wanneer de doelen niet bereikt worden op een vrijwillige basis, dan **moeten ze bindend gemaakt worden** (bijvoorbeeld door middel van quota).*
- ***Etnische achtergronden moeten geregistreerd worden**, maar uitsluitend om een eerlijke afspiegeling van de maatschappelijke samenstelling te evalueren en bevorderen (deze gegevens worden alleen op een geaggregeerd niveau bewaard en gebruikt).*

III.   Op weg naar een sociaal rechtvaardige universiteit

Uitsluiting komt veel voor aan de UvA: 41% van de medewerkers die deelgenomen hebben aan de survey gaf aan zo nu en dan getuige te zijn van praktijken van uitsluiting, terwijl 15% aangaf persoonlijke ervaring te hebben met discriminatie. Voor de studentrespondenten lagen deze percentages op 33% en 8%. Van de medewerkers die aanzienlijke hinder ondervonden door een ziekte of functiebeperking, had 27% ervaring met discriminatie. Onder de internationale medewerkers met een niet-westerse achtergrond had zelfs 42% persoonlijke discriminatie ondervonden. Vrouwen hebben vaker te maken met discriminatie dan mannen, en oudere vrouwen vaker dan jongere vrouwen. **Studeren of werken aan de UvA is blijkbaar niet voor iedereen dezelfde ervaring.**

Mensen worden apart gezet en uitgesloten van de 'norm' wanneer ze in de positie van buitenstaander (of 'de ander') geplaatst worden. Dit gebeurt ook wanneer zij worden aangesproken als de vertegenwoordiger van een bepaalde groep, wat vaak voorkomt. Andere microagressies, zoals negeren of beledigen onder het mom van een grap, kunnen ook uitermate kwetsend zijn en een blijvende indruk achterlaten op de manier waarop studenten en medewerkers hun universiteit beleven. Het doel zou daarom niet moeten zijn om meer mensen zich aan te laten passen aan de norm, maar om de norm zelf meer divers te maken. Ook is er geen adequate infrastructuur om klachten of problemen rondom discriminatie, geweld of intimidatie aan te pakken. Respondenten van het onderzoek gaven aan dat zij niet serieus werden genomen wanneer zij voorvallen van discriminatie probeerden te bespreken.

Mensen die worden gezien als leden van een minderheidsgroep, lijden niet alleen aan uitsluiting in sociale interacties, ze worden ook op meer structurele manieren benadeeld of achtergesteld. Zo hebben studenten met een etnische minderheidsachtergrond gemiddeld lagere studieresultaten. En zo zijn vrouwen ondervertegenwoordigd in hoge posities; vrouwen met een etnische minderheidsachtergrond in het bijzonder. Dit wijst (op zijn minst ten dele) op discriminatie. Voor mensen met fysieke beperkingen is het lastig werken of studeren aan de UvA, doordat veel gebouwen slecht toegankelijk zijn voor rolstoelen. Ook zijn er te weinig faciliteiten voor slechtzienden en slechthorenden en andere mensen met een functiebeperking.

Aanbevelingen om sociale rechtvaardigheid te bevorderen:
- ***Neem discriminatie en racisme serieus*** *en stel voorvallen van uitsluiting expliciet aan de kaak.*
- ***Vergroot het bewustzijn*** *over de impact van bepaalde uitdrukkingen, grappen of attitudes door een zichtbare en expliciete gedragscode.*
- ***Creëer een infrastructuur waarbinnen klachten over voorvallen van discriminatie veilig behandeld en aangepakt kunnen worden*** *(zie ook punt I over de Ombudspersoon).*
- *Overweeg kleinere leeromgevingen te creëren waarbij er vanaf het begin begeleiding is en er een* ***kleinere afstand is tussen docenten en studenten.***
- ***Ga verder met het verbeteren van de toegankelijkheid van universiteitsgebouwen****. Maak toegankelijkheid voor mensen met een functiebeperking tot een permanent aandachtspunt.*

IV.   Van zogenaamd 'egalitair' naar 'diversiteitsvaardig'

Om sociale rechtvaardigheid en diversiteit te kunnen bevorderen is het van cruciaal belang om een taal te hebben waarmee deze thema's veilig besproken kunnen worden. Helaas ontbreekt het op veel plekken binnen de universiteit nog aan een gedeelde taal of begrippenkader waarmee we op een weloverwogen manier over diversiteit kunnen

praten. Ons onderzoek toont aan dat veel betrokkenen zelfverzekerd spreken over gender en internationalisering, maar zich ongemakkelijk voelen wanneer het over ras of etniciteit gaat. De angst dat het erkennen van verschillen – en het bespreken van diversiteitsbeleid – bijdraagt aan stigmatisering en uitsluiting is begrijpelijk, aangezien veel Nederlandse termen een problematische connotatie hebben (zoals het onderscheid tussen 'allochtonen' en 'autochtonen').

Daarnaast zijn er verschillende wijdverbreide opvattingen die een obstakel vormen voor het implementeren van diversiteitsbeleid en die expliciet aan de orde gesteld dienen te worden. Zo is er de vrees dat het bevorderen van diversiteit ten koste gaat van academische excellentie, vooral met betrekking tot ras/etniciteit. De volgende opvattingen zijn voorbeelden van dergelijke obstakels:

1. **"Onze meritocratie/egalitarisme is een garantie voor kwaliteit"**
   Het egalitaire, meritocratische denken staat op gespannen voet met de erkenning van verschil. Deze opvattingen zijn gebaseerd op de aanname dat iedereen gelijk is en alleen talent ertoe doet: 'iedere persoon is geheel zelf als individu verantwoordelijk voor het eigen succes en het eigen falen'. Onderzoek heeft reeds bewezen dat deze opvattingen berusten op een ideaal en niet overeen komen met de maatschappelijke werkelijkheid. Aandacht voor sociale ongelijkheid in meerdere dimensies (gender, ras/etniciteit, opleidingsniveau van ouders, etc.) is daarom van essentieel belang.

2. **"Gerichte maatregelen tasten excellentie aan"**
   Als de samenleving geheel meritocratisch was en talent een objectieve waarde, dan zou het inderdaad zo zijn dat getalenteerde studenten allemaal in gelijke mate toegang hadden tot de universiteit. Dan zouden gerichte maatregelen de kwaliteit misschien alleen maar aantasten. Maar wat gezien wordt als talent, succes, leiderschap of excellentie, is vaak niet neutraal. Deze waarden zijn meestal gebaseerd op kenmerken die masculien en westers zijn en worden geassocieerd met de sociaal-economische middenklasse. Daarbij geven mensen vaak (onbewust) de voorkeur aan mensen die op henzelf lijken en met wie ze een klik voelen. Dit beïnvloedt selectieprocedures en evaluaties. Ook heeft niet iedereen evenveel economische en sociale en menselijke hulpbronnen ('kapitaal'). Zou iedereen dan hetzelfde behandeld moeten worden? Dit uitgangspunt behoeft een kritische houding.

3. **"Wetenschap is onafhankelijk van actoren en machtsstructuren"**
   Het is belangrijk te erkennen dat wetenschap bedreven wordt in een geopolitieke historische context en daardoor verweven is met machtshiërarchieën. Een wetenschap die zich bewust is van deze positie – dus van haar 'positionaliteit' – begrijpt de impact die zij heeft op sociale en natuurlijke processen. Daarom zijn

diversiteit aan perspectieven en een diverse samenstelling van studenten, docenten en onderzoekers belangrijk.

4. **"De canon is richtinggevend"**
Dat er disciplinaire canons en mainstream-perspectieven bestaan, moet niet betekenen dat we uitsluitend deze canonieke teksten gebruiken en onderwijzen. Ook is aandacht nodig voor vragen over hoe de canon tot stand is gekomen en hoe deze gepositioneerd is.

5. **"Goede wetenschappers zijn geëmancipeerd en niet religieus"**
Deze aanname leidt er helaas toe dat mensen die religieus zijn worden uitgesloten. Secularisme wordt te vaak verward met atheïsme. Enerzijds draagt dit de ongegronde veronderstelling uit dat alleen niet-religieuze mensen goede wetenschap kunnen bedrijven, en anderzijds draagt het bij aan een cultuur waar de alledaagse persoonlijke behoeften van religieuze mensen worden genegeerd (zoals de behoefte aan gebedsruimtes).

Het gebrek aan een gedeelde taal om diversiteitsgevoelige onderwerpen te bespreken is een cruciale kwestie, die niet gemakkelijk op te lossen is. 'Diversiteitsvaardigheid' moet daarom bevorderd worden, maar moet eerst ontwikkeld worden door gesprekken en cursussen, die bijdragen tot een groter bewustzijn. Internationale voorbeelden kunnen hier een inspiratie zijn. Wij raden aan om terminologie te vermijden die gedateerd, polariserend, discriminerend of kleinerend is, zoals het n-woord, een woord dat nog steeds circuleert op de UvA. Ook raden wij aan om termen als 'Surinamer' of 'Turk' te vermijden wanneer er verwezen wordt naar mensen die Surinaams-Nederlands of Turks-Nederlands zijn. Kaders zoals intersectionaliteit en dekolonialiteit staan centraal bij deze diversiteitsgevoelige taal. (Zie het einde van de samenvatting voor een verklaring van deze termen).

Het is belangrijker om een plek te creëren voor respectvolle dialoog dan om alle dialoog te vermijden uit angst om het verkeerd te doen. Dit betekent echter niet dat alles gezegd kan worden onder het mom van 'oprechtheid'.

Aanbevelingen om' diversiteitsvaardigheid' te ontwikkelen en bevorderen:
- *Ontwikkel een vocabulaire dat niet bedreigend en niet stigmatiserend is, door:*
  - *Gesprekken voor studenten of staf te organiseren, ondersteunen en bevorderen.*
  - *Goed internationaal beleid en internationale 'best practices' te zien als leermogelijkheid.*
  - *Externe nationale en internationale expertise te gebruiken.*
  - *Begrippenkaders als dekolonialiteit en intersectionaliteit te gebruiken.*
- *Gebruik diversiteitsgevoelige taal in formele en informele communicatie.*

- ***Verspreid deze taal*** *via cursussen en vakken op het gebied van academische vaardigheden en BKO's.*

V.   Van 'gesloten' kennis naar 'open' kennis

Curricula behandelen vaak alleen het dominante wetenschappelijke perspectief. Daarbij worden alternatieve, kritische stemmen te vaak genegeerd of zelfs gediskwalificeerd. Niet alle onderzoekers en docenten zijn zich voldoende bewust van de context waarbinnen kennis geproduceerd en geëvalueerd wordt. Kennis wordt tenslotte gecreëerd door specifieke personen (historisch gezien zijn dit vaak witte mannen), wordt gefaciliteerd door bepaalde geldstromen (overheden, industrieën en fondsen), komt tot stand binnen specifieke politieke en commerciële agenda's (kolonialisme, slavernij, religie, oorlog, ontwikkelingshulp voor de 'derde wereld', democratie, integratie, commercialisering van medicatie en gezondheidszorg, kapitalisme, neoliberalisme) en is het product van bepaalde wereldbeelden en normen (in Nederland is dat momenteel secularisme en de emancipatie van vrouwen en lhbt'ers). Uiteraard zijn ook de mensen die deze kennis evalueren en gebruiken ingebed in zo een gelaagde context, evenals de Universiteit van Amsterdam zelf. Met andere woorden: kennis is 'gepositioneerd'.

Wanneer we erkennen dat kennis en wetenschappers specifieke posities hebben – wanneer we ons bewust zijn van hun positionering binnen onderliggende machtsstructuren – creëren we ruimte voor alternatieve perspectieven en ervaringen. Deze ruimte voor kritische perspectieven verrijkt het academisch werk omdat het leidt tot dialoog, kritisch denken stimuleert en ons in staat stelt om nieuwe invalshoeken te verkennen. Bovendien biedt het tegenwicht aan bestaande machtsongelijkheden door deze kritisch te bevragen, en verleent het waarde en legitimiteit aan de gedachten en ervaringen van mensen met andere posities.

Wanneer we recht willen doen aan zowel het heden als het verleden, kunnen we deze positionaliteit en verscheidenheid aan perspectieven en ervaringen niet negeren. Een pijnlijk voorbeeld van hoe de UvA deze positionaliteit negeert is de trots op het VOC-tijdperk die tot uiting komt in de Heeren XVII-kamer in het Oost-Indisch Huis, een kamer die zonder verdere problematisering van de koloniale geschiedenis wordt gebruikt. Voor mensen die hun afkomst traceren naar gekoloniseerde volken, is het kwetsend om te worden geconfronteerd met deze onkritische trots, omdat hun visie op deze kamer en de geschiedenis waar de kamer deel van uitmaakt, op deze manier wordt genegeerd. De studenten en werknemers die meededen aan het onderzoek gaven aan ruimte voor verschillende perspectieven motiverend en verrijkend te vinden. Gelukkig bestaan er al vakken die rijk zijn aan diversiteit, maar dit betreft meestal niet de kernvakken.

Aanbevelingen om open kennis te bevorderen:

- ***Zorg voor een institutionele verankering en zichtbaarheid aan praktijken die de diversiteit bevorderen***. *Dit kan o.a. door diversiteit een belangrijk element te maken binnen docent- en vakevaluaties, onderzoeksevaluaties en promotiecriteria.*
- *Maak onderzoekers, docenten en studenten meer bewust van de positionering van kennis **en creëer ruimte voor uiteenlopende perspectieven.***
- ***Gebruik vrijwillige 'curricula-scans'*** *om in kaart te brengen welke vakken rijk zijn aan diversiteit, en om de diversiteit aan perspectieven binnen vakken te vergroten. Deze curricula-scans kunnen uitgevoerd worden aan de hand van de expertise die binnen de UvA aanwezig is, en door hiervoor getrainde professionals die ook als klankbord kunnen fungeren voor docenten die hun vakken verder willen ontwikkelen.*
- ***Zorg voor institutionele bescherming*** *van onderzoekers en docenten die denkscholen of perspectieven gebruiken die niet tot de mainstream of de norm behoren in hun vakgebied.*
- *Ontwikkel, net als bij de Ivy League-universiteiten in de VS, binnen iedere faculteit **vakken die reflectie bieden** op onderwerpen als de genealogie van het vakgebied, de positionering en de rol van gender, ras/etniciteit, functiebeperkingen en klasse binnen het specifieke vakgebied.*
- *Bevorder en stimuleer **participatieve onderwijsmethoden.***
- ***Vergroot het bewustzijn rondom de (historische) rol van de Universiteit van Amsterdam**, bijvoorbeeld binnen de koloniale geschiedenis.*

VI   De weg voor ons

Dit rapport brengt de contouren van diversiteit aan de UvA in kaart, met de zwakke en de sterke plekken. De Commissie is zich ervan bewust dat de benodigde veranderingen, niet van de ene op de andere dag verwezenlijkt kunnen worden. Hiervoor is tijd nodig, maar, in de woorden van de dichteres Adrienne Rich: "wild geduld" zal ons ver brengen.

Aanbevelingen voor vervolgstappen:
Om verder te kunnen werken aan alle uitdagingen, zou het College van Bestuur een nieuwe commissie moeten instellen die aan de universiteit deze nieuwe fase in gang kan zetten. Deze commissie, Div-II, zou moeten bestaan uit een delegatie van relevante groepen, waaronder de voormalige precommissie Diversiteit, functionarissen die de weg bereiden voor de nog te installeren Diversiteitsunit en vertegenwoordigers van de verschillende faculteiten. Deze nieuwe commissie zal de volgende kerntaken hebben:
- * **Het opstellen van een concreet Diversiteitsbeleid en Werkplan** voor de komende jaren op basis van het huidig rapport. Hierbij hoort ook het oprichten van de Diversiteitsunit.*
- ***Vertegenwoordigers van faculteiten betrekken bij de discussie** over het huidige rapport en met hen in kaart brengen welke mogelijkheden er zijn om diversiteit te bevorderen op de afzonderlijke faculteiten.*

Theoretische kaders

Zoals eerder al opgemerkt zouden de brede theoretische kaders van dekolonialiteit en intersectionaliteit centrale begrippen moeten zijn in de benadering van sociale rechtvaardigheid en diversiteit aan de UvA.

- ***Het perspectief van dekolonialiteit*** *stelt ons in staat te herkennen hoe de dynamiek van machtsverschillen, sociale uitsluiting en discriminatie (gebaseerd op ras, gender, geografische en economische ongelijkheid) verbonden is met de erfenis van onze koloniale geschiedenis zoals die voortwerkt in het heden. Dekolonialiteit helpt ons ook te begrijpen hoe de universiteit als een modern/koloniaal instituut een rol speelt in de sterke verankering van westerse perspectieven, ten koste van de rijke schakering van soorten kennis die in de wereld voorkomt.*

- ***Het perspectief van intersectionaliteit*** *stelt ons in staat te zien hoe verschillende soorten discriminatie met elkaar verbonden zijn en invloed op elkaar hebben; en dat ze niet apart van elkaar bestaan. Witheid wordt anders ervaren door iemand die een vrouw is, en een lhbt'er die uit een lagere sociaal-economische klasse komt, zal in andere situaties terecht komen dan een blanke man die homo is en uit een middenklassenomgeving komt. Categorieën zoals gender, seksualiteit en ras vormen onze maatschappij, onze instituties en onszelf. Met een intersectionele aanpak kunnen we herkennen hoe die dimensies elkaar beïnvloeden. Van elkaar gescheiden lijken discriminatie op basis van gender en ras twee aparte fenomenen, die niets met elkaar te maken hebben. Dat maakt bijvoorbeeld dat genderbeleid vaak alleen gericht is op blanke vrouwen. Ras verdwijnt simpelweg van de agenda wanneer de nadruk op gender ligt, en andersom. Het begrip intersectionaliteit laat ons zien hoe de verschillende sociale posities van individuele studenten en werknemers invloed hebben op hoe zij de universiteit ervaren. Intersectionaliteit vraagt van ons dat we aandacht hebben voor de verschillende ervaringen, trajecten en perspectieven van studenten en medewerkers.*

Endnotes

[1] See: www.democratisering.uva.nl and www.commissiedd.nl.

[2] The Diversity Commission is made up of Prof. dr. Gloria Wekker, cultural anthropologist, emeritus professor Gender Studies, Faculty of the Humanities, Utrecht University, chair; Dr. ir. Marieke Slootman, sociologist, researcher at AISSR, Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research, UvA, vice chair; Dr. Rosalba Icaza, International Studies scholar, assistant professor/researcher at the Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR); Prof. dr. Hans Jansen, pedagogical scientist, University of the West of England, Bristol, UK; and Dr. Rolando Vázquez Melken, assistant professor/sociologist at University College Roosevelt, Utrecht University.

[3] Marieke Slootman (Principal investigator, PI), with Lilith Philips and Zenab Tamimy.

[4] Hans Jansen (PI), with Sander Bolier, Evelien Moors, Max de Ploeg, Willemijn Rijper, Inez van der Scheer and Dominique van Varsseveld.

[5] Rosalba Icaza (PI), with Jessica de Abreu and Melissa Evora.

[6] Rolando Vázquez (PI), with Tashina Blom, Emilie van Heydoorn, Max de Ploeg and Ana Terol Díez.

[7] The assistants, promising young scholars, are, despite our efforts to diversify, mainly from the Humanities and the Social Sciences.

[8] Due to time constraints the Commission has unfortunately not managed to include HvA, which we highly regret since in terms of staff and student numbers and in terms of expertise HvA has a different track record than UvA in the field of diversity.

[9] See: www.democratisering.uva.nl and www.commissiedd.nl.

[10] Statistics on gender are usually not simultaneously broken down by ethnicity. It has been estimated that less than 1% of these female Dutch professors are of black, migrant or refugee descent (Ellerbe-Dueck and Wekker 2007).

[11] Another short-term program of OCW was "In de Wieg gelegd voor Wetenschap"/"Born to do Science" (2011-2012), which took place at the universities of Utrecht, VU, UvA, EUR and Leiden (G5).

[12] Lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders, intersexed and queers.

[13] We had access to the registered data through the Department of Strategy and Information, it was presented to us only on aggregate levels. We obtained special permission to use the data on ethnicity. The 1cHO database is owned by DUO (Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs); it is partly based on Municipal Data (Gemeentelijke Basis Administratie).

[14] At the Medical Faculty (AMC) and the Faculty of Dentistry, the survey was only distributed through regular newsletters. Hence, the response rates at these faculties are relatively low.

[15] Source: UvAData, headcount 2016, including PID and PNID (people with and without UvA contracts). This excludes the AMC. (Selection: Dienstverband: [PID; PNID] UvA/VU: [UvA] Organisatorische eenheid: [FMG; UvA]).

[16] Source: UvAData 2015/16 (Selection: Geaccrediteerd: [Ja] Programmatype: [Diplomaprogramma; Schakelprogramma; Bijvakprogramma] Opleiding: [UvA]).

[17] This includes students with secondary education levels that are registered as "VWO" and "<VWO." The remaining category, secondary education level "Other," are primarily students who undertook their secondary education abroad, and are here referred to as "international students."

[18] Often, reporting focuses on students that are registered for their first year at a university (Bachelor's level). At the University of Amsterdam, 14% of these students have a 'non-Western' background (15% when we include international students).

[19] In 2015, of the total Dutch population of 18-year-olds (197,661), 150,420 (76.1%) 'autochtoon' and 32,614 (16.5%) were 'niet-westerse-allochtoon' (source: Statline, labels as used at the website). This is compared

to the university students in the Netherlands: in 2015/16, 28,769 and 4,055 students of ethnic Dutch and 'non-Western' descent entered the University (Bachelor's level; international students excluded) (source: 1cHO). Although not everybody who enters university is 18, by taking one specific cohort as a base (and assuming that the size of cohorts do not greatly vary between successive years), this comparison gives an indication of how university access relation to the total population among these two groups.

[20] Source: 1cHO (Selection: all students registered in 2015/2016 with all secondary education levels)

[21] Source: 1cHO (Selection: 1st year WO registration; all faculties; VWO; all genders). Note: Only at VU was the dropout of VWO students (starting in 2011) after the first year lower among those with 'non-Western' backgrounds (30%) than with ethnic Dutch backgrounds (34%).

[22] Source: 1cHO. Figures based on students who started in 2011 and have VWO diplomas.

[23] Source: 1cHO. Figures based on students who started in 2011 and have VWO diplomas.

[24] Students at FMG are slightly overrepresented (28% of the survey respondents who answered this question studies at FMG, against 24% of the student population – UvAData 2015/2016), as are the students at FGw (24% versus 19%). Students at FEB are underrepresented (11% versus 17%), just as those at the Faculty of Law (FdR) (6% versus 11%).

[25] Source: data were compiled by the contractors on our request, via Facility Services. The data is extremely confidential, and we were only allowed to report about them on aggregated levels.

[26] The employees at FMG are slightly overrepresented (25% of the survey respondents who answered this question worked at FMG, against 21% of the UvA employees – UvAData 2016, PID and PNID included), as are the employees at FNWI (25% versus 22%). Employees at FEB are underrepresented (6% versus 8%), just as those from Law (FdR) (5% versus 7%).

[27] Item number 5 was not a statement but a question: "How do you view the current attention to 'diversity and inclusion'?" For the reporting, this was rephrased as the statement "Diversity needs more attention"; of the 6 answer categories only answer (f) was coded as 'yes.' (a) UvA should not pay attention to this, as no such problems exist at UvA; (b) UvA should not pay attention to this, as this is not a topic that should occupy UvA; (c) UvA should not pay attention to this, as this will not solve such problems at UvA; (d) I have a neutral stance toward this topic; (e) the current attention to this topic is good; (f) more attention should be paid to this topic.

[28] It is possible that the effect of having lower educated parents does not play out at the level HBO/university, but at lower levels. Perhaps having parents with only primary school education affects feelings of exclusion. This was not analyzed in this study.

[29] Because this research is not a 'standard' empirical inquiry but Paradigm III full body research, information to understand the research design and the research progress is needed. This information, together with the references, is provided in the Appendix on www.democratisering.uva.nl and www.commissiedd.nl.

[30] The use of the traditionally plural pronoun 'they/them/their' in this context does not refer to the plural third-person but is used as a gender-neutral pronoun for a non-binary respondent, instead of the binary third-person pronouns 'she/her/hers' or 'he/him/his.'

[31] *Beleid voor Personen met een functiebeperking, een chronische ziekte of een arbeidsbeperking*.

[32] For one student with an illness, the staircase in one of the Roeterseiland buildings is an 'exercise' equivalent to climbing Mt Everest. This student has found support from the student organization Amsterdam United and wrote a story (*The story of a door*), which can be found the website of that organization.

[33] See the online Appendix for the full references to the books, articles and policy documents consulted.

[34] See the online Appendix for the question-led framework developed for the text analysis.

[35] We also consider the written input produced for this study by three of the seven UvA faculties on the meaning of and activities and initiatives dealing with diversity. In the online Appendix we present a detailed explanation of the information-gathering methods developed for this study.

[36] The European Higher Education Area in 2012: Bologna Process Implementation Report, p. 71.

[37] The European Higher Education Area: London Communiqué 2007, p. 5.

[38] The European Higher Education Area in 2015: Bologna Process Implementation Report, p. 19.

[39] Op. cit.

[40] *Strategic Agenda 2015-2025*, 2015, p. 42.

[41] "Goodmorning professor! Vision on studying in a new era," p. 2.

[42] Op. cit., p. 3.

[43] "Science Vision 2025: Choices for the Future," p. 71.

[44] NWO Annual Report 2015 (2016: 51-42). Document available at: http://www.nwo.nl/beleid/genderdiversiteit

[45] UvA Instellingsplan 2015-2020, p. 17.

[46] Faculty Xi.

[47] Faculty Xi.

[48] Faculty Xi.

[49] See the online Appendix for a detailed explanation of the methodology of this study.

[50] Figure 1 visually represents these series of associations. See the online Appendix.

[51] See the online Appendix for the questions formulated to make this distinction explicit.

[52] http://www.auc.nl/about-auc/welcome-by-the-dean/welcome-dean-murray-pratt.html.

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