



New College Equality, Diversity, & Inclusion Newsletter

We are delighted to share our second newsletter on EDI-related issues at New College! The purpose of this newsletter is to strengthen communication between the EDI Committee and the NC student body. Specifically, it offers a round-up of the various activities held each semester and provides contacts and resources for students to access support. Last spring semester we engaged a number of issues, such as Decolonising the Curriculum and the intersections between queer identity, race, and faith leadership. This autumn semester we branched out into new areas, including social class and working-class student experiences; mental health and wellbeing; and non-Christian perspectives on Black History. We look forward to building on all these areas, and many more, in the coming years.

We have some exciting updates in terms of the EDI Committee's composition. In order to ensure more parity between UG and PG student representation, we now have two UG reps and two PG reps. We welcome Andrea Milani as a new UG student rep and Whitney Buchanan as the new head of NC Pride. This January our EDI Director Dr Shadaab Rahemtulla will be going on research leave and Dr Alysa Ghose - our new Lecturer in Religious Studies and Decolonial Thought - will be taking over until July. Dr Ghose will be sending out an introductory email to students in January.

Last but not least, special thanks go to Lucy Swale for spearheading the newsletter this semester. If you have any questions about the newsletter, feel free to write to Lucy at l.swale@sms.ed.ac.uk. If you have any EDI questions or concerns in general, please don't hesitate to contact the EDI Director, Dr Shadaab Rahemtulla, at s.rahemtulla@ed.ac.uk

SOCIAL CLASS

Sutton Trust Summer School (July 18)

During the summer, Divinity participated in the Sutton Trust Summer School, an educational charity focussing on upward social mobility and making higher education more accessible. Dr Liam Sutherland gave two virtual taster sessions on religion and nationalism, which were attended by about thirty people each.

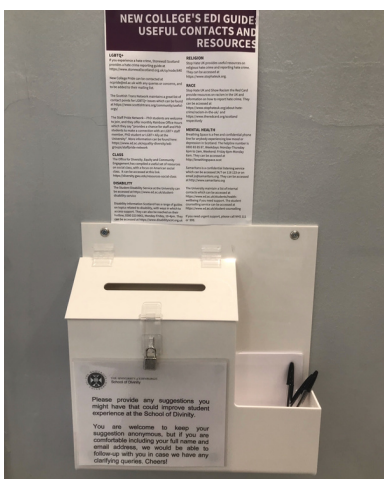
Staff and PG Tutor Training Workshop: "Classism in the Classroom" (Sept 28)

This semester we organised two staff / tutor training sessions, one on anti-racism training (see below) and one on anti-classism training. "Classism" is prejudice or unconscious bias against people belonging to a particular social class. The workshop was facilitated by Dr Neil Spears (Widening Participation Manager of the University) and was open to all student-facing staff, including teaching staff and professional services staff, and was also open to PhD tutors. The workshop was well-attended, with over 30 participants.

Student Discussion Forum on Social Class (Nov 23)

We had two students - an undergraduate and postgraduate - speak on working-class student experiences in the UK higher education sector. Andrew Wilson - a 3rd-year undergraduate student in linguistics, former president of EUSA (Edinburgh University Students' Association), and representative of the 93% Club - spoke more broadly on the UK and UoE context. Chloë Gardner, a PhD student in religious studies and a student rep of Divinity's EDI Committee - shared student experiences at New College. Their sobering and thought-provoking speeches were followed by a broader discussion by attendees. The event drew 20 participants.

If you would like to share your own reflections, comments, and experiences on social class, feel free to write to Chloë at Chloe.gardner@ed.ac.uk



***Have a suggestion?
Want to give feedback on EDI?
Feel free to use our
"EDI Suggestion Box" in the
Foyer of New College.***

***Online links are also available
on the UG / PG SharePoint sites.***



MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health and Wellbeing Session (Nov 7)

We organised a "Mental Health and Wellbeing Session," following a comment in the EDI Suggestion Box. Open to all students and staff, the session was run by Mhairi Shaw and Tam Mitchell. Mhairi is Divinity's wellbeing advisor and Tam is a University-lead wellbeing advisor. They gave excellent presentations on student support, "Keep Active" programmes, and general mental health. The PowerPoints were distributed to students and staff.

"Move & Stretch" Classes (Monday afternoons)

To promote better mental health and wellbeing, we have begun a weekly Move & Stretch class in the Althaus-Reid Room. Run by our very own Dr Suzanna Millar - who, in addition to being a Hebrew Bible scholar, is a certified fitness instructor - the class involves gentle stretching and movement to soft music. The class is open to all students and staff. Please note that classes have now finished for this semester and will resume in the new year. If you have any questions, please write to Dr Millar at suzanna.millar@ed.ac.uk



RACE & INTERFAITH

Anti-Racism Training Workshop (Sept 16)

A staff training workshop on race and unconscious bias was led by Dr Rashné Limki, who is the Convenor of the Edinburgh Race Equality Network (EREN) and also the Director of EDI at the Business School. Organised as part of the Tutor Training Day at New College, the workshop was also open to teaching and professional services staff. It was well-attended, drawing 36 participants.



New College Black History Month Lecture (Oct 28)

Our annual BHM Lecture was given by Imam Mustafa Briggs (Al-Azhar University / Cairo, Egypt), who discussed his fascinating new book, *Beyond Bilal: Black History in Islam*. Held in the General Assembly Hall, the lecture was a great success, drawing over 150 attendees. This year's BHM lecture thus offered a non-Christian religious perspective while also building on recent events on race, such as Father Jarel Robinson-Brown's lecture back in April on queer Black Christian experiences. This year's BHM lecture was co-sponsored by the UofE Islamic Society, Race.Ed, and the Edinburgh Race Equality Network (EREN).

NEW COLLEGE'S EDI GUIDE: USEFUL CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

LGBTQ+

If you experience a hate crime, Stonewall Scotland provides a hate crime reporting guide at <https://www.stonewallscotland.org.uk/cy/node/640>

New College Pride can be contacted at ncpride@ed.ac.uk with any queries or concerns, and to be added to their mailing list.

The Scottish Trans Network maintains a great list of contact points for LGBTQ+ issues which can be found at <https://www.scottishtrans.org/community/useful-orgs/>

The Staff Pride Network – PhD students are welcome to join, and they offer monthly Rainbow Office Hours which they say “provides a chance for staff and PhD students to make a connection with an LGBTQ+ staff member, PhD student or LGBTQ+ Ally at the University”. More information can be found here: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/edi-groups/staffpride-network>

SOCIAL CLASS

The 93% club is a student-led network and charity in the UK that provides support for working-class and state-school educated students in the Higher Education sector. Their website can be accessed here: <https://www.93percent.club/>

The Office for Diversity, Equity and Community Engagement has compiled a useful set of resources on social class, with a focus on American social class. It can be accessed at this link <https://diversity.gwu.edu/resources-social-class>

DISABILITY

The Student Disability and Learning Support Office at the University can be accessed at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service>

Disability Information Scotland has a range of guides on topics related to disability, with ways in which to access support. They can also be reached on their hotline, 0300 323 9961, Monday-Friday, 10-4pm. They can be accessed at <https://www.disabilityscot.org.uk>

RACE

Stop Hate UK and the Red Card provide resources on racism in the UK and information on how to report hate crime. They can be accessed at <https://www.stophateuk.org/about-hate-crime/racism-in-the-uk/> and also see <https://www.theredcard.org/scotland>

The Staff BAME Network welcomes all Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic academic and professional services staff, including PhD students. Their website is: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/edi-groups/staff-bame-network>

RELIGION & INTERFAITH

The University Chaplaincy provides personal, emotional, communal, spiritual, faith, and belief support, for all members of the University. People of no religion use it as much as people of particular faiths. The chaplaincy is also a good resource for reaching out to specific student faith groups and networks. Their website is <https://www.ed.ac.uk/chaplaincy>

MENTAL HEALTH

The University Student Wellbeing Service operates Monday to Friday 9am-5pm. Their website is <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-wellbeing-service> and they can also be reached at student.wellbeing@ed.ac.uk

The student counselling service can be accessed at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-counselling>

Breathing Space is a free and confidential phone line for anybody experiencing low mood or depression. The helpline number is 0800 83 85 87, Weekdays: Monday-Thursday 6pm to 2am, Weekend: Friday 6pm-Monday 6am. They can be accessed at <http://breathingspace.scot>

Samaritans is a confidential listening service which can be accessed 24/7 on 116 123 or on email jo@samaritans.org. They can be accessed at <http://www.samaritans.org>

If you need urgent support, please call NHS 111 or 999.

MEET THE EDI COMMITTEE



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WHITNEY BUCHANAN,
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PhD Student, Islam & Christian-Muslim Relations



MEET THE EDI COMMITTEE



PROF. HELEN BOND (she/her)

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Head of the School of Divinity

Professor of Christian Origins



DR SUZANNA MILLAR (she/her)

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Chancellor's Fellow in Hebrew Bible / Old Testament



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Director of Professional Services



MEET THE STUDENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We would like to introduce our four student representatives on the EDI Committee, comprising of two PG students and two UG students.



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PG Representative

PhD Student, Biblical Studies



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PG Representative

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MEET THE STUDENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS



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