

**College of Dental Medicine**  
**Report to the Office of the Provost and**  
**the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Diversity and Inclusion**

*August 31, 2015*

In response to the Provost's Initiative for Enhancing Faculty and Pipeline Diversity, and as a follow-up to the goals described in the diversity strategic plan developed in 2011 for our school, the College of Dental Medicine (CDM) is continuing its efforts towards enhancing diversity among students and faculty. Our progress to date and our new 3-year goals and initiatives are outlined below. Of note, CDM received the 2014 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award from *INSIGHT Into Diversity*, the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher education. The award recognizes schools, colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion, and we were recently informed that CDM was honored with the HEED Award again in 2015. CDM is the first school at Columbia University to receive a HEED award, and the only dental school in the nation to be given this honor to date.

**A. Addressing underrepresented in dentistry enrollment at the pre-doctoral (DDS) level**

*Progress*

In keeping with the mission set forth by our admissions policy for diversity, which affirms CDM's commitment to assure a "critical mass" of Underrepresented in Dentistry (UID) students as well as a student body broadly diverse in character, we have continued to enroll a diverse DDS class. Indeed, over the last 5 years, we have consistently been enrolling classes that have included unprecedented numbers of students underrepresented in the dental profession (*Appendix A, Fig. 1*). We are now wrapping up the class of 2019 enrollment (currently 21% underrepresented) and we anticipate maintaining similar numbers going forward. Excluding the historically black dental schools of Howard and Meharry, and the University of Puerto Rico, CDM ranks in the top 10% of U.S. Dental Schools for enrollment of underrepresented minority dental students, and first among our peer northeast private dental schools. Currently, there are 12% Hispanic, 7% Black and 1% Native American students among our DDS students in all 4 years (*Appendix A, Fig. 2*). Funding is a crucial piece of the challenge in attracting the top UID students in the country, and we are in a steady state of funding with 3 half-

tuition scholarships for our underrepresented students. The representation of women among our current DDS students in all 4 years is at 48% (152 out of a total of 318 students; *Appendix A, Fig. 3*).

One of our most successful pipeline programs to date, the Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDEP), is funded through a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and is administered in collaboration with the College of Physicians & Surgeons (P&S) Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs. CDM has enrolled a total of 42 graduates of the SMDEP program over the past decade, 24 of which graduated from our own CUMC SMDEP site (including one entering with our Class of 2019).

The CDM Office of Diversity Affairs continues to sponsor recruitment trips to several conferences targeting promising UID students (including the Hispanic Dental Association Annual Conference, the National Dental Association Conference, the Morehouse College Public Health Awareness Conference, the University of California Davis Pre-Health Conference, and the SMDEP annual recruitment fair sponsored by the Northeast SMDEP sites). In line with our mission, CDM not only supports students to attend these meetings, but also supports their scholarship endeavors through submission of scientific abstracts and poster presentations. In the past several years, our student body has also increased its presence at local recruitment events and health fairs to get the word out about CDM and the dental profession. Specifically, our Student National Dental Association, Hispanic Student Dental Association, and American Student Dental Association chapters have attended numerous events and also hosted events on campus targeting underrepresented students from NYC. It is of great significance to note that these student chapters are incredibly active at the national level and highly recognized amongst their peers. CDM's Student National Dental Association has several members per year that hold nationally elected positions, our Hispanic Student Dental Association group just won "Chapter of the Year" at the annual national meeting, and our American Student Dental Association chapter has won various awards throughout the years and has provided our students with active leadership roles nationally. The CDM Office of Student Affairs and Admissions has also coordinated efforts with our students to streamline information and further expand our mailing list with many prospective students from underrepresented backgrounds. Our students continue to participate in our successful hosting program for UID applicants during interview season; they host individuals who are coming to interview, helping them reduce travel costs and providing them with a more personal experience during their visit.

### *Plans going forward and challenges*

We strive to attract the nation's greatest students and know that we cannot achieve this without realizing Columbia's core values of inclusion and excellence. With 20% of our student population consisting of underrepresented minorities in dentistry, CDM is proud of its efforts to foster a student body diverse in thought, background, and experience within an inclusive environment. Our goal is to maintain the success that has been achieved and even increase the numbers of UID DDS students going forward, one class at a time. We also have a significant number of underrepresented DDS students (5 out of a total of 12) enrolled in a dual degree program with Teachers College to receive an MA degree in Health Science Education. The goal is to get these students in the pipeline for a career in academic dentistry. Our major challenge remains securing funding for more UID scholarships. Having only 3 half-tuition scholarships available, we every so often lose qualified applicants to more affordable dental schools.

### **B. Addressing underrepresented in dentistry enrollment at the post-doctoral (post-DDS) level**

#### *Progress*

CDM has gradually improved its underrepresented minority post-doctoral enrollment, currently at 15% (16 out of a total of 104; *Appendix B, Fig. 1*), while prior to that we were under 5% minority enrollment in the post-doctoral specialty programs. This progress first began through a collaboration of CDM and Harlem Hospital with the goal to provide opportunities at CDM for targeted graduates of the Harlem Hospital Dental General Practice Residency program. CDM continues to expand its hospital-based networks to increase minority post-doctoral students in specialty programs. The goal is to have these dentists come to CDM for post-doctoral specialty training and eventually contribute to increased diversity among CDM faculty. A significant percentage of newly hired junior faculty members at CDM have come from our own specialty programs. We are actively involving Section Chairs, Division Directors, and Post-doctoral Program Directors to target underrepresented CDM students interested in the specialty programs and help them through the process in a continued effort to "grow our own". The goal is to have them enter CDM or other post-doctoral training programs, and then recruit them as faculty members. With respect to women's representation, we are at 50% among all our current post-doctoral trainees (*Appendix B, Fig. 2*).

To promote a culture of acceptance and inclusion among our current post-doctoral trainees, we introduced this summer for the first time a day-long “self-, social- and global-awareness” training session. This session was introduced, with much success, last year to our incoming DDS students during their orientation. It is a structured “ice-breaker” with small groups led by faculty and student co-facilitators. In these groups, issues of privilege, dominance, and culture are discussed in a supportive environment. Student feedback was extremely positive and the experience was valued, despite the “heaviness” of the topics. Our plan is to continue to provide such programming to all entering DDS and post-doctoral students in the future.

#### *Plans going forward and challenges*

We are expanding our efforts to increase representation of minority post-doctoral students at CDM, and have planned a number of changes for our post-doctoral programs. Indeed, CDM is undergoing a restructuring of the Admissions/Student Affairs operations for post-doctoral students. Historically, each specialty program has managed its own applicants and post-doctoral student affairs. Moving forward, these services will be centralized and managed by the CDM Student Affairs Office. The goal is to streamline the application system, boost student support services, and ultimately enhance the students’ experience. Importantly, we anticipate that with a common centralized application we will be able to draw a more expansive pool of applicants, representing various backgrounds, and begin to enroll a more diverse group of students across all specialties. By streamlining our support services, we will also be able to provide additional programming that promotes inclusion to all post-doctoral trainees, similar to what is provided to our DDS students, and achieve more interaction between pre- and post-doctoral minority students. We will also continue to nurture relationships with the individuals involved in the selection process in each of the programs (Section Chairs, Program Directors and faculty members), and promote recruitment of promising UID post-doctoral students at national dental conferences, modeled on our success with pre-doctoral recruits.

A challenge is the limited national pool of qualified UID applicants for some of the specialty post-doctoral programs. Further, the increased number of underrepresented students, particularly in our advanced education in general dentistry (AEGD) post-doctoral program in years past, has been associated with increased enrollment of international students, who are often faced with the challenge of financing their education through private loans that require a U.S. citizen as a co-signer. The loan

terms and application requirements are stringent and often times funding is not granted. CDM does not have targeted funding to assist UID post-doctoral students and often such students may not afford to join, or stay on the program.

### **C. Addressing retention and recruitment of underrepresented in dentistry faculty**

#### *Progress*

The current race/ethnicity breakdown for our full time faculty (with tenured, on track, or “at CUMC” appointments) is shown in *Appendix C, Fig. 1*. Over the past years, we have made considerable progress with the numbers of minority faculty members at CDM. However, a major limitation remains the lack of a tenured underrepresented in dentistry faculty member. Significant progress has been achieved with women; they are represented at 43% overall (33 out of 76 full time faculty members) and, notably, account for 50% of our tenured and on track groups (*Appendix C, Fig. 2*).

Enhancing faculty diversity and inclusion is a major focus for Dr. Christian Stohler, who assumed his role as CDM Dean in August 2013. Dean Stohler has an impressive track record of supporting women and minorities in his two previous leadership positions, and has been very open about championing diversity and inclusion efforts at CDM. He has clearly articulated that an important goal in his strategic plan for the school is to actively identify and recruit a minority scientist that can join CDM as a tenured professor. Dean Stohler already has, and will further cultivate, relationships with potential underrepresented minority recruits in order to achieve this goal.

As part of his concentrated effort to create an environment at CDM that not only stimulates innovation and progress, but also promotes diversity and inclusion, enhances faculty retention and advancement, and supports new recruitments, Dean Stohler appointed Dr. Evanthia Lalla as Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Development in December 2014. Dr. Lalla, a tenured professor, began at CDM as a post-doctoral student in the Periodontics specialty program, was recruited as a faculty member, and over the years rose through the academic ranks. In her new role, Dr. Lalla introduced a number of new initiatives. She instituted one-on-one meetings with CDM Section Chairs in order to: discuss annual faculty reviews, mentoring efforts and quality of life issues for existing faculty members; engage Section Chairs in efforts to increase numbers of minority students in their post-doctoral programs; promote Section accountability for faculty diversity and equity in all efforts to hire, promote, and retain

faculty members; and reinforce use of the Provost's *Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Search and Hiring*. Dr. Lalla has also initiated one-on-one meetings with on track faculty members at regular intervals, in order to identify their challenges and develop a framework for support in setting goals and achieving milestones. She has been meeting with several junior "at CUMC" faculty members as well, to guide them in their effort to progress and answer questions regarding career goals, expectations and opportunities.

Importantly, over the past few months, Dr. Lalla has begun working on bridging the gap between CDM faculty and the CUMC/CU-wide career growth programs and opportunities. In late 2014, Dr. Anne Taylor (P&S) was appointed Senior Vice President for Faculty Affairs and Career Development for CUMC, overseeing faculty development for all four schools across the medical center. In addition to Dr. Lalla's newly established close working relationship with Dr. Taylor's office, a joint Program Coordinator position was created and resulted in hiring Ms. Diana Dumitru, in June 2015. Ms. Dumitru works on faculty development half-time for CDM and half-time for P&S/CUMC. This facilitates coordination of efforts and increased attendance of CDM faculty in cross-school initiatives, including programs that support diversity and inclusion. As an example, Dr. Taylor's office manages events and programs for the Virginia Kneeland Franz Society, a CUMC group that advocates for the equitable career advancement of women faculty and has organized programs such as "The Intersection of Gender and Leadership: Perspectives and Strategies for Success" and "Managing Conflict, Negotiating Differences Workshop". Such programs, as well as other diversity-focused events organized by the CUMC Office of Academic Affairs, are now actively promoted among CDM faculty and significantly increased participation has already been noted. The CDM Faculty Development Office also initiated its own seminar series in May 2015. The inaugural session, led by Dr. Panos Papapanou, Chair of the CDM Committee on Appointments and Promotions, focused on the new "at CUMC" titles and tracks and clarified the path to promotion by discussing criteria and expectations. In July 2015, Dr. Dennis Mitchell, Vice Provost for Faculty Diversity and Inclusion, led the discussion on "Enhancing Faculty and Pipeline Diversity", in the second event of this seminar series. Both events were very well attended and received great reviews by the faculty. The Faculty Development Seminar Series will continue with 5-6 events annually. Additionally, the CDM Faculty Development Office has initiated a "Lunch with the Dean" Program, where small groups of faculty from different Divisions, but with similar characteristics/career needs, meet with Dean Stohler and Dr. Lalla. The first small group, in June 2015, consisted of CDM's "at CUMC" assistant professors who have been at Columbia 5 years or less. The next two groups to

participate are a group of underrepresented minority faculty members, and a group of mid-career female faculty members. The program is designed to give these faculty members the opportunity to informally interact with the Dean and discuss needs/concerns and also allows for “peer mentorship”. Other similar initiatives and programs are in the works and are publicized through email communications and a new page within the CDM website dedicated to CDM Faculty Development; the latter includes internal and external resources and links, such as to the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Planning, the Office of Work and Life, the AAMC Minority Faculty Career Development Seminar, or the latest report on the State of Women in Academic Medicine.

Additionally, the CDM Human Resources (HR) department has undergone restructuring, which resulted in the recent hiring of a new HR and Academic Affairs Director, Ms. Novella L. Jones. Ms. Jones has most recently been the Assistant Director for Administration at the NYU Laura and Isaac Perlmutter Cancer Center where she had oversight for HR, faculty affairs, fellowship programs, as well as faculty and staff recruitments. Her background and expertise will be an asset in facilitating retention of existing faculty members and in supporting recruitment efforts of a diverse faculty body.

Finally, and as described above, CDM continues with the strategy it adopted over many years of “growing our own”, by investing time and effort in formal and informal mentoring of students and post-doctoral trainees with the goal to get these students in the pipeline for an academic career. Dr. June Harewood is a major success story of this strategy. She is a black female, who was identified during her second year in the DDS program as interested in academic dentistry. Following her graduation with a dual degree (DDS from CDM and MA in Science Education from Teachers College), Dr. Harewood was recruited to our post-doctoral program in Orthodontics and was a recipient of our “Fellowship in Academic Dentistry” program. This program waives tuition in one of our specialty programs and provides a small stipend with the understanding that the student intends to join the CDM faculty after completion of the program. Dr. Harewood went on to complete a fellowship in Orthodontics/Orthognathics Surgery at the Jacoby Medical Center and was hired as an Assistant Professor at CUMC, in July 2015. Dr. Harewood will be an asset for our pre- and post-doctoral Orthodontics curriculum and will serve as a unique role model for our UID students.

#### *Plans going forward and challenges*

Our plans include continuing the initiatives introduced in the past year and expanding programming

and support for our faculty members. The CDM Faculty Development Office, with Dean Stohler's endorsement, has laid out specific plans to aid faculty professional growth and implement a formal mentoring program for all junior faculty members. Mentoring efforts will use the Mailman School example; Section Chairs and Division Directors will be responsible for mentor-mentee pairing and the CDM Faculty Development Office will introduce and support the process, by addressing, among others, issues of cross-cultural mentoring and the importance of developing affinity between mentor and mentee. We aim to align our faculty development initiatives with those of the Medical Center and the University, and help women and diverse faculty to advance through the academic ranks and assume leadership roles. As an example, a CDM Junior Faculty Development Fund will be available starting this academic year; it will provide junior faculty with financial support to pursue a training program, attend a conference, or run a pilot research project; and it will generally encourage any scholarly activity that can contribute to their growth. Further, we plan to promote faculty inclusion and retention by acknowledging and celebrating faculty achievements. We are working on organizing a "Dean's Honors Day", an event to celebrate faculty promotions, honors, awards and mentoring contributions each year. We will also continue with plans to recruit and nurture from within CDM. We are now at the point where some of the students that we have worked with in past years are considering paths in academia.

Financial constraints in recent years, have minimized new faculty hires at CDM in general, including recruitment of minority faculty. For any new hires in the future, a strategic effort will be made so that diverse faculty are considered. Dr. Lalla will participate in future search committees for tenure-track and tenured faculty, review searches for "at CUMC" faculty, and promote a process that is fair and equitable.

Importantly, with respect to Dean Stohler's commitment to pursue (beginning with the current academic year) a tenured minority recruit, specific plans are in place. Dean Stohler already has, and will further cultivate, relationships with potential underrepresented minority recruits in order to achieve this goal. It is challenging to recruit mid-career or senior faculty members from outside Columbia. Typically, issues of mobility and relocating to New York City are important concerns. Furthermore, we recognize that the national pool of minority dentists-scientists is extremely limited and that potential candidates are less than a handful. Our plan is, therefore, to identify and attract a minority PhD (non-DDS) scientist in a discipline relevant to dentistry, such as cancer biology, bone biology, immunology, or materials. Such a tenured recruit will eventually serve as a magnet for more junior and/or mid-level

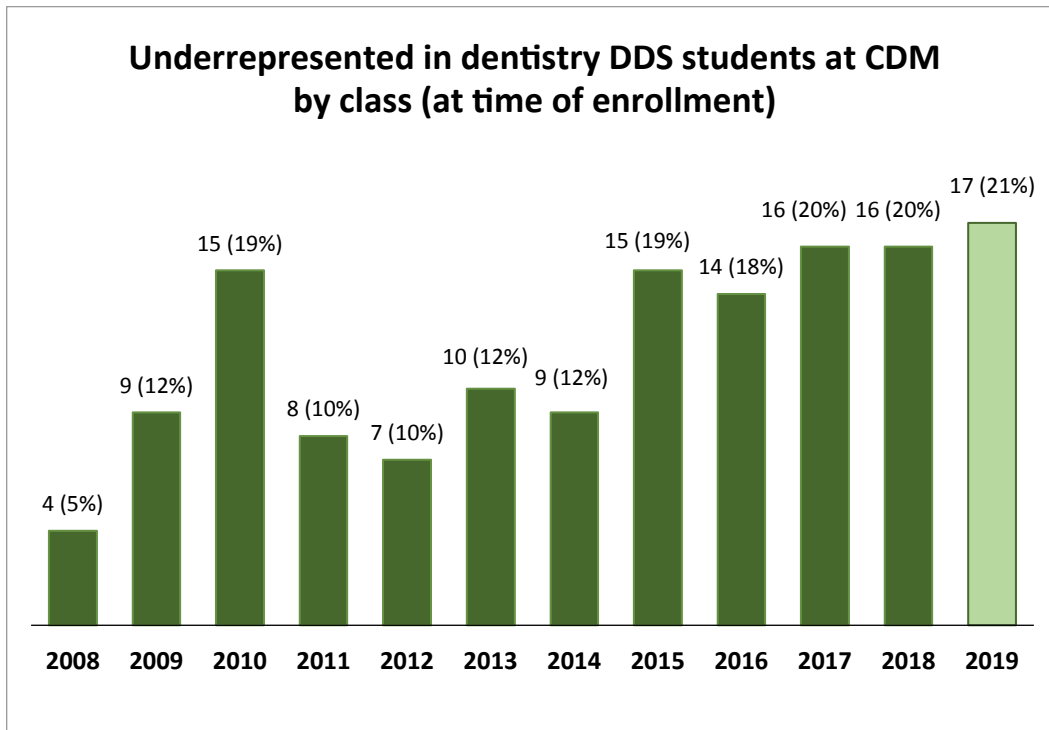


minority recruits (and will also attract/provide mentorship for minority pre- and post-doctoral students). We plan to seek support from the Provost's office by pursuing the Target of Opportunity mechanism for this recruit.

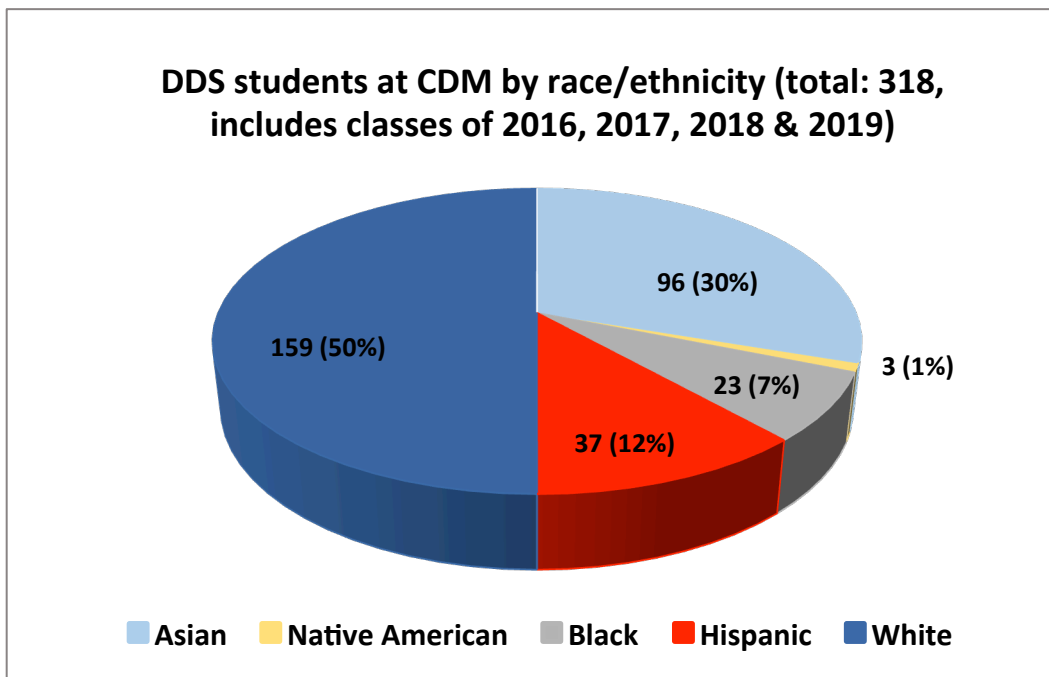
Finally, with respect to our faculty on track: with the departure from the track of one of CDM's faculty members (Dr. Daniel Oh, an Asian male) as of September 1st, 2015, we have 4 faculty members remaining. Dr. Mildred Embree is one of them. She had chosen not to disclose her ethnicity when first joining CDM and we were initially unaware of her Native American origin. Dr. Embree is an outstanding clinician scientist who has, among other accomplishments, received a most prestigious honor for young scientists in the field, the Hatton Award from both the American Association for Dental Research and the International Association for Dental Research. In 2014, CDM successfully supported the application of Dr. Embree for funding through the Provost's grant program for junior faculty who contribute to the diversity goals of the University. Dr. Embree has made significant progress towards tenure to date, had a favorable 4-year review, and in July 2014 was placed on the extended 11-year clock due to her ongoing clinical responsibilities at CDM. As we plan to hire another junior faculty member on track, particular consideration will be given to potential underrepresented candidates.

**Appendix A**

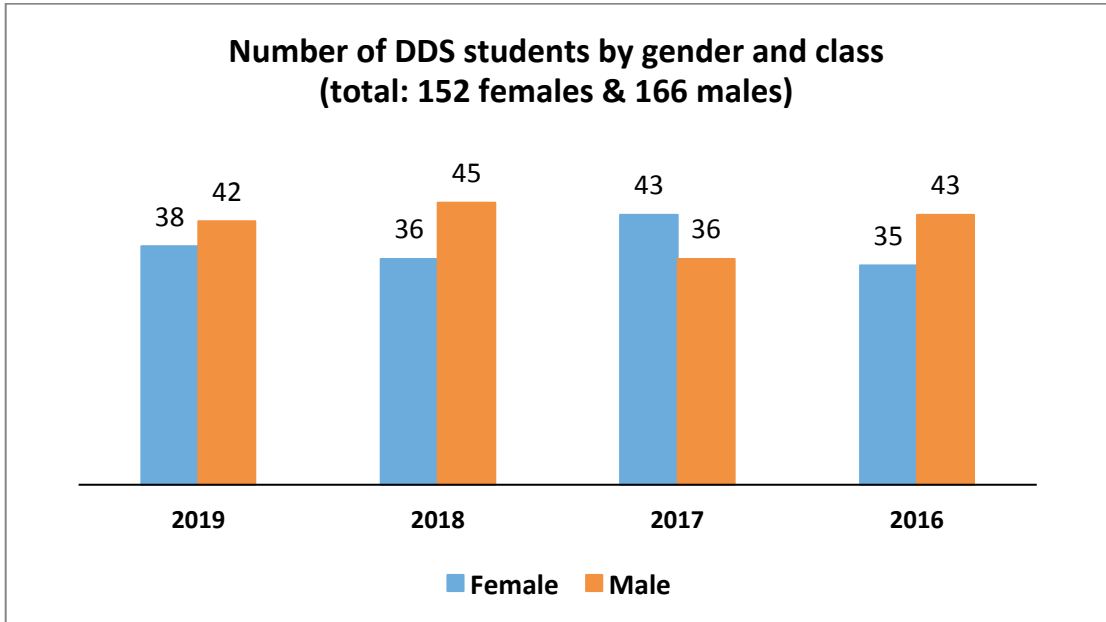
**Figure 1.** Underrepresented in dentistry DDS students by class, 2008-2019



**Figure 2.** DDS student race/ethnicity breakdown, all current 4 classes

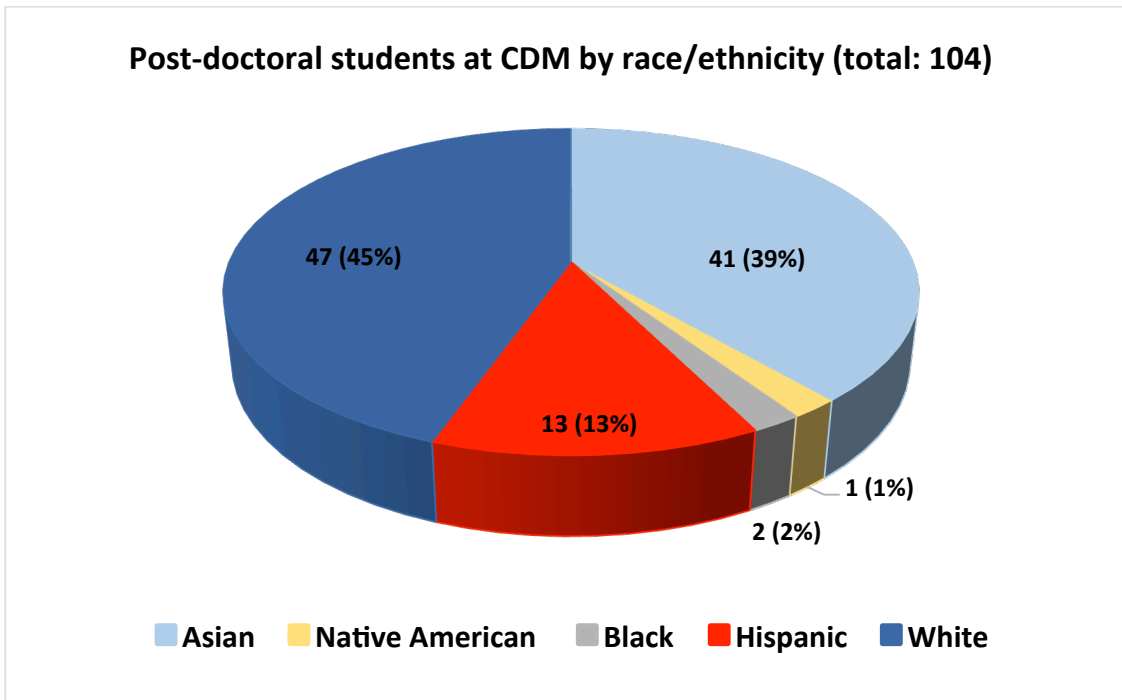


**Figure 3.** DDS student gender breakdown, all current 4 classes

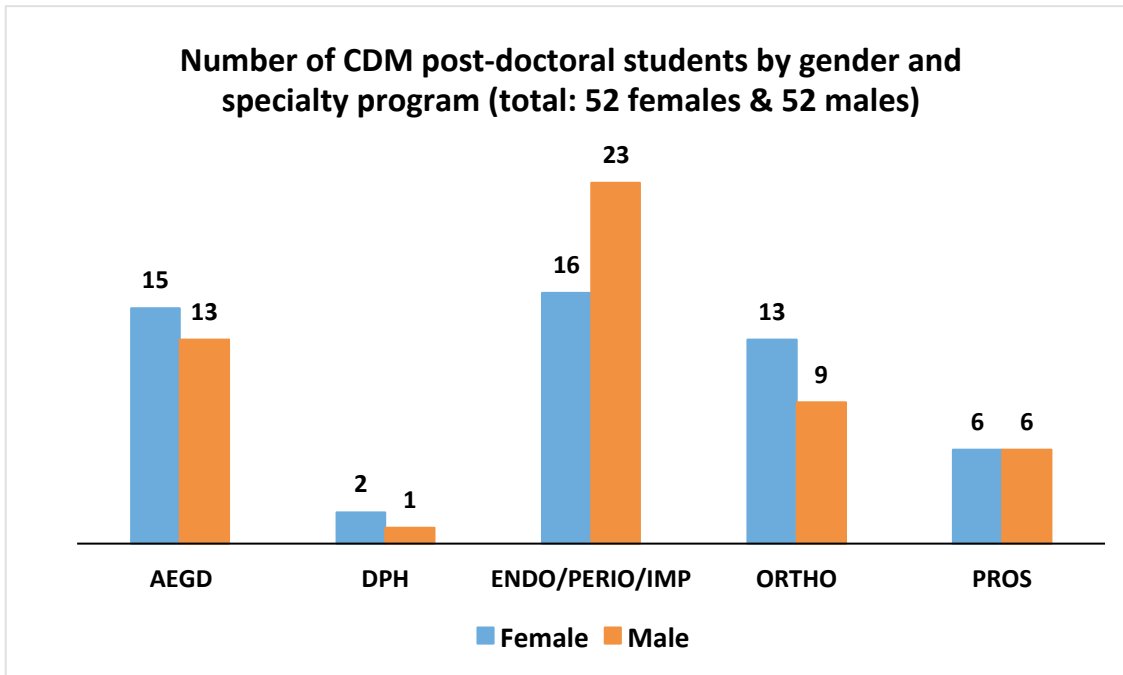


**Appendix B**

**Figure 1.** Post-doctoral student race/ethnicity breakdown, all classes and specialty programs



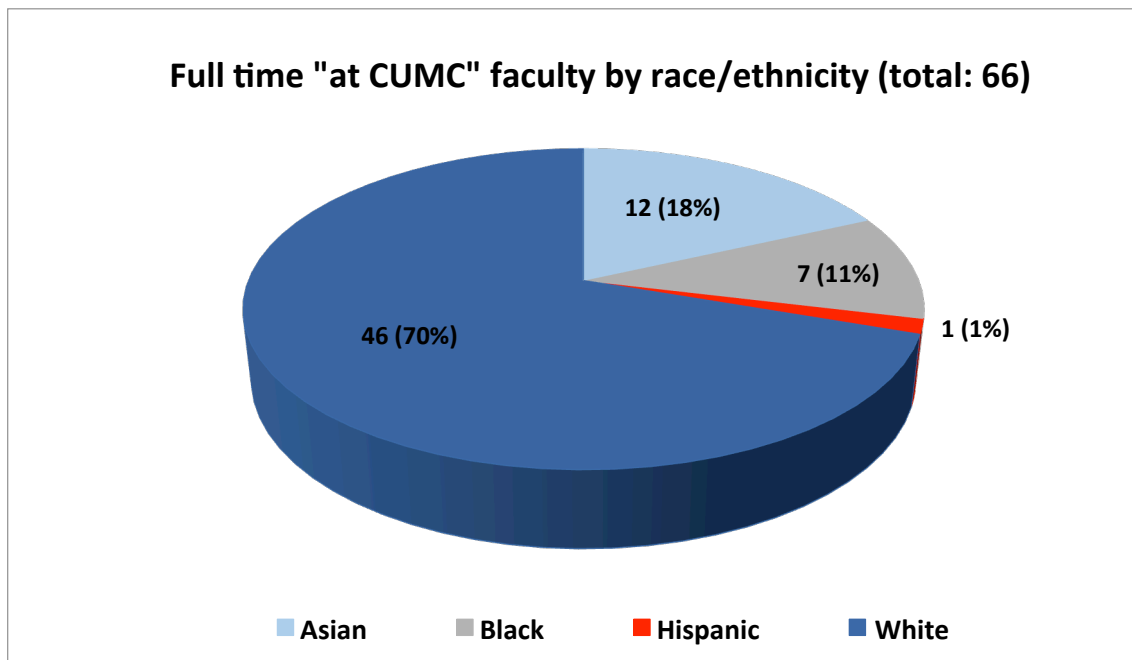
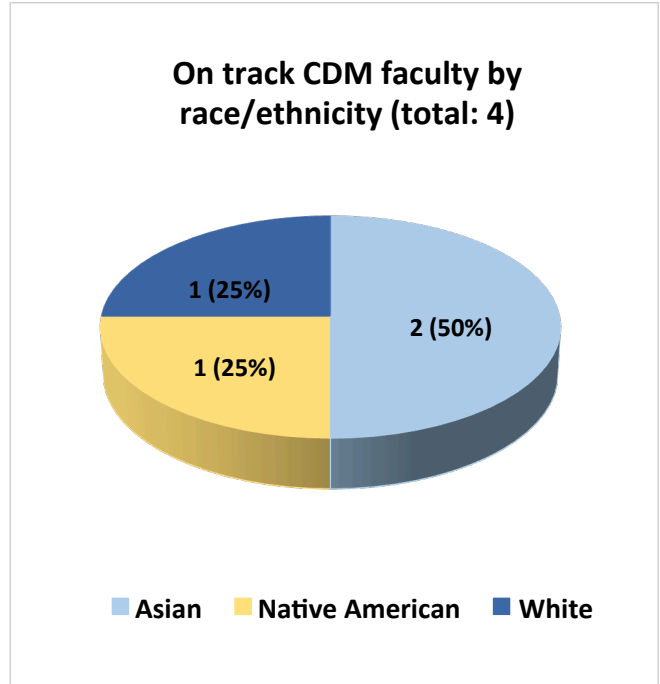
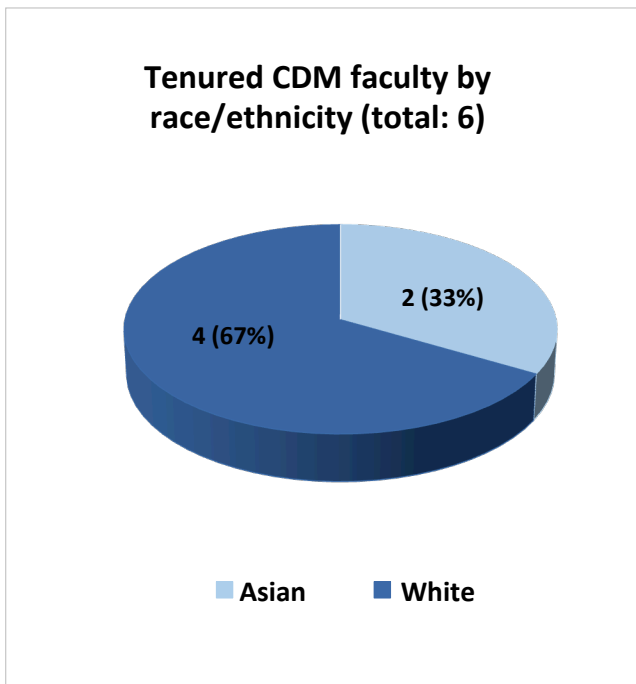
**Figure 2.** Post-doctoral student gender breakdown, all classes and specialty programs



*AEGD: advanced education in general dentistry; DPH: dental public health; ENDO/PERIO/IMP: Endodontics/Periodontics/Implant Dentistry; ORTHO: Orthodontics; PROS: Prosthodontics*

**Appendix C**

**Figure 1.** Full time faculty race/ethnicity breakdown; tenured, on track, and "at CUMC"



**Figure 2.** Full time faculty gender breakdown; tenured, on track, and “at CUMC”

