

UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD

THE HARTT SCHOOL

Hartt Commitment Committee AY2022-23 Annual Report

The meetings of the Hartt Commitment Committee were open to all Hartt students, full-time and part-time faculty, and staff and were conducted by Zoom to be accessible by the largest number of attendees. The Committee met on November 11, 2022; February 3, 2023; March 3, 2023; and April 28, 2023. Agenda items were open-ended to encourage meaningful discussion of issues and solutions.

Actions Resulting from Committee Discussions

- Dean Merrill created the position of Student Liaison providing a peer resource for students to express concerns directly with a neutral person in a confidential or anonymous manner as desired by the student.
- Dean Merrill conducted division-specific town hall meetings with Hartt students to engage with them directly on division-specific issues.
- Hartt Student Liaison created a form for students to submit concerns electronically and confidentially or anonymously.
- Dean Merrill used the Committee's suggestions when developing his questions to ask the finalists in Hartt's faculty searches (assistant professors of Jazz, Music History, and Theatre), and he used the committee's profile of what to look for in a candidate when assessing the finalists for each position.
- Hartt recruitment is focusing on making prospective students feel like they belong—and will fit in—at Hartt.
- Hartt faculty are reexamining their syllabi for inherent biases.
- Hartt's website is being reexamined to be sure it reflects Hartt's DEIJB goals and mission.
- Hartt staff organized two separate DEIJB trainings for Hartt staff and faculty.
- Dean Merrill will use the committee's suggestions for DEIJB training and its implementation when he schedules the Hartt Faculty and Staff retreat for August 2023.

Actions Items Under Examination from Committee Discussions

- How to provide comprehensive, arts-focused, ongoing, effective workshops and training in a safe environment.
- Assessing the benefits of program area (smaller group) focused training and initiatives with oversight by academic leadership.
- Assessing the possibility of creating mandatory DEIJB training for faculty and staff.
- Assessing the benefits of restoring the position of University Ombudsman who can get the attention of the administration and be a connected ally to faculty and students.
- How to equip Hartt venues for visually impaired or hearing-impaired audiences.
- How to inform students, faculty, and/or staff of action taken to correct a situation they have complained about so the complainants can see results of their advocacy and see that their concerns have been addressed. This will instill the belief that they can effect change and will build their trust in the institution.