

Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council
Minutes
October 22, 2020

Present – Chassidy Cooper, Felipe Fiuza, Adrianna Guram, Keith Johnson, Mary Jordan, Kim Maturo, Joe Sherlin, Laura Terry, and Phyllis Thompson.

Not Present – Antonio Rusinol

I. Call Meeting to Order - Chassidy Cooper called the meeting to order. Chassidy Cooper took a moment to thank everyone and celebrate all the things the Advisory Council and campus partners have accomplished such as the annual conference, opening of the pride center, restructuring of the women’s resource center, resurgence of the black faculty and staff association, monthly newsletter, approval of council bylaws, and the lunch and learn series.

II. Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by Joe Sherlin, and seconded, stating, “I move that the minutes of the September 24, 2020 meeting be approved as distributed.” The motion carried. In keeping with open lines of communication, the approved minutes will be uploaded to the Office of Equity and Inclusion website.

III. Old Business

A. **Diversity Champions** - The council reviewed and discussed the diversity champion questionnaires for Calvin Claggett, Michelle Hurley, and Jessica Wang who are being considered for membership on the Advisory Council. The council agreed all three were excellent candidates. These individuals can assist with writing the HEED application and inclusive excellence training. Chassidy Cooper will contact them to discuss membership on the council. It was noted that other diversity champions would be involved in assisting with the annual conference and inclusive excellence training,

IV. New Business

A. **Evaluation of Lunch and Learn Session *How to Run An Inclusion Search*** - The session facilitated by Lori Erickson and Kasey Hommel was attended by 22 individuals. A highlight of the session was that the facilitators provided valid, timely answers during the question and answer time. Implementation of a diversity statement on job advertisements was an outcome of work done between HR and the Office of Equity and Inclusion. The process of getting this information to search committee chairs and to all academic and non-academic units is important. An action item that came from the session was creating a toolkit for search committees on how to run an inclusive search.

It was noted that some of the goals of the lunch and learn series is to provide directors/departments an opportunity to share what they are doing, discuss best practices, and collaborate with other individuals across campus.

B. Monthly Meeting Time - After a brief discussion, it was agreed that the monthly Advisory Council meeting time would be changed from a 90 minute meeting to 60 minutes.

C. Inclusive Excellence Training - Keith Johnson stated that the pilot program is currently being tested with 25 faculty and staff. The training is taking place each Friday during October. Participants are receiving a small incentive and funds are available to faculty to do projects related to equity and inclusion in their classrooms. A version of this training will be rolled out in the spring for use with the faculty and staff in each of the colleges/units. Keith Johnson noted that there is little effectiveness when diversity training workshops are only one/two hours. People need time to process the training over time as they deal with emotions that arise from the training. He is working with Keith Glover in HR to incorporate this training into the onboarding process possibly over the course of two semesters. Additionally, de-escalation training is being developed with the assistance of Jennifer Mayberry in public safety. Phyllis Thompson shared that the this training, provided by Dr. Yvette Alex-Assensoh, has given her a tool to re-conceptualize the way she is seeing the world, her work experience with others, and her relationship with her students.

D. Other Items Discussed

1. Keith Johnson shared that he has met with numerous students, faculty, and staff to discuss issues/concerns around equity, inclusion, and diversity. He has delegated some of these meetings to Chassidy Cooper, and has involved department diversity champions to communicate with students. Some matters are referred to compliance. Laura Terry expressed that students often are looking for follow through such as seeing change or updates on situations. Keith Johnson noted that there is always follow up with anyone that comes to the Office of Equity and Inclusion.
2. Mary Jordan recommended that in addition to diversity champions, the Office of Equity and Inclusion might want to consider developing an ombudsman group that is sensitive to issues, can hear and validate where people are coming from; that is, not view it from their own perspective, but understand that it is that individual's truth. Protocol and training would need to be developed. Keith Johnson noted that it could be similar to the safe zone training. Keith Johnson and Chassidy Cooper will discuss developing a formal protocol to train individuals who express an interest in assisting with this need.
3. Adrianna Guram added that discussion has begun with Carshonda Marin, Joy Fulkerson, Robert Minton, and herself about developing an educator in residence or a social justice scholar in residence program position to embed students in the residential communities to serve as peer point person for students who have minority identities and to provide educational programs and activities. Adrianna Guram described it as a "Diversity Educator Plus".

4. Keith Johnson shared that he has been working with athletics to develop an equity and inclusion plan for the department. Their plan runs parallel to the equity and inclusion strategic plan put together for academics.
5. Adrianna Guram asked the council to consider submitting a nomination for the Office of Equity and Inclusion for the ACPA Voices of Inclusion Award. The nomination is due November 6th. Adrianna Guram will be the primary nominator and Phyllis Thompson, Joe Sherlin, Chassidy Cooper, and Felipe Fiuza will contribute as well. Chassidy Cooper added that this is good preparation for applying for the HEED award.
6. Keith Johnson shared that he has been working with an ETSU alum who wants to donate \$300,000 to support students of color. Documentation is being finalized wherein funds will support students in the Bridge Plus Program, the National Society of Black Engineers, Quest Program, and other underrepresented populations as defined by the Office of Equity and Inclusion. An official announcement will be made once it is finalized. Additionally, the Dr. Angela R. Lewis Scholarship has been established scholarships are being developed in the Honors College that align with the underrepresented students.

V. Upcoming Events -

1. Felipe Fiuza invited members to an event at the Tipton Gallery on October 30th, at 6pm for a day of the dead celebration. This is a celebration of life, and an important day in the Mexican culture. One important part of it is the altar, where pictures of deceased loved ones are depicted. In previous years, there were altars for Angela Lewis and Ardis Nelson, founder of the LCRC. This year he will create an altar to celebrate the lives of all community members lost to COVID-19 and police brutality. Contributions to the altar are welcome. He added that this was also an opportunity to show support to Karlota Contreras-Koterby, Director of the ETSU Art Galleries.
2. Chassidy Cooper noted the upcoming lunch and learn session on October 27th, *Diversity, Inclusion, and Career Services: Helping Students Navigate Their Career Through and After College*, led by Jeffrey Alston and the upcoming Women on Wednesdays event on November 4th with Rachel Slough called *Examining Risk and Protective Factors for Youth Mental Health*.
3. Laura Terry shared that on November 5th the Multicultural Center will be hosting via zoom Chief Richard G. Sneed from Cherokee, North Carolina as part of Native American Heritage Month.

VI. Next Meeting Date – November 19, 2020, 2:30-3:30 pm, via zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Kim Maturo