

Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee
Minutes
June 7, 2019

Present – Filipe De Oliveira Fiuza (via Zoom), Ann Eargle, Sarah Houck, Keith Johnson, Antonio Rusinol, Joe Sherlin, and Phyllis Thompson.

Not Present – Adrianna Guram, Mary Jordan, and Laura Terry.

Overview – The committee reviewed several working documents for the purpose of refining and consummation. Dr. Johnson shared that these documents serve, in part, as work previously initiated by Dr. Lewis, and it is his intention to continue with the plan of action established. The committee will supplement the documents with ideas and conceptual framework from participation. As the infrastructure of the Office of Equity and Inclusion is set in place in relation to a clear mission, goals, operating functionality, and web presence, appropriate representation in the overall structure of the institution will result. Dr. Johnson communicated that the documents are working documents and unbarred as we move forward toward an inclusive institutional environment.

- I. **Mission and Vision Statement** – Dr. Johnson shared that several months ago, Dr. Lewis and he created a mission statement. The committee, in an effort to discuss and assess the verbiage for finalization of the document, reviewed the document in its draft stage. Dr. Johnson shared that the mission and vision statement will formalize the pathway and help conceptualize the game plan for moving forward with the equity and inclusion initiative. Units, departments, and colleges will develop individual plans that will encompass the equity and inclusion mission and vision embracing varying action items. The individual plans will be linked to our website in an effort to illustrate each partner's contributing effort toward the mission and vision. The committee agreed to adopt the university's vision illustrating institutional congruency as a whole. (See attached document.)
- II. **Strategic Goals** – The Strategic Goals are comprised of seven benchmarks that Dr. Lewis and Dr. Johnson have developed over the last year for the Office of Equity and Inclusion. The goals serve as components of the foundation and plan for the inception of the restructured unit. Although the seven indications are earmarked as strategic goals for the office, they are intended to be attained in collaboration with units, departments and colleges. (See attached document.)
- III. **Functions of the Office for Equity and Inclusion** – The working document for the Functions of the Office for Equity and Inclusion was reviewed and considered. One of the fundamental functions of the Office for Equity and Inclusion is to be a resource for units, departments, and colleges in relation to their equity and inclusion plan. To date, Dr. Johnson has met with many units for the purpose of plan consultation, assisting in identifying perpetual pathways, establishing measurable outcomes, and assist with developing plans that are to be evolving documents. Plans are not merely intended to be shared during periods of accreditation review, but meeting the plan objectives will serve as a component of the annual evaluation system. The document is in alignment with the university's strategic plan. (See attached document.)
- IV. **Awards/Recognition Criteria** – Dr. Johnson shared the importance of rewarding and recognizing folks who excel in inclusion efforts. Discussion of this item was tabled until the next meeting. However, Dr. Johnson asked members to consider criteria and processes for discussion at the next meeting. Current awards being considered are the Angela R. Lewis Award – a department/unit/individual award, and the Mary V. Jordan Award – an academic college award. Dr. Johnson has hopes for resources to accompany the awards to enhance and support promotion of the initiative. A piece of the criteria may include requiring a report identifying the objectives that were met, an explanation of process, procedures, etc. In addition, plans are to revisit and possibly regenerate the Patricia E. Robertson Diversity Leadership Award.
- V. **Communication/Website** – Communication, campus wide, remains a source for concern. Aware of the importance of social media, and realizing that populations receive and process information dissimilarly and, in order to touch everyone, a suggestion was made to disseminate regular modes of communication constructed in multiform. Mechanisms of distribution could be via annual reports, newsletters, and/or social media.

The prior structure of the Office of Equity and Diversity was one in which leaders were the sole communicators for anything and everything diversity related. With the new office structure, and in keeping with the mission of inclusivity, communication becomes everyone's responsibility, however, pointedly the Office of Equity and Inclusion, advisory committee members and diversity champions across campus will be equipped to promote and carry the mission forward. Posted to the website will be a list of the current Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee Members along with their contact information and photographs. As diversity champions are identified throughout campus, their contact information will be posted to the website as well. The Equity and Inclusion site will not be a catch all site, but will serve as a guide to points of interest for internal and external constituents. For units, departments, and colleges involved in unique initiatives relating to equity and inclusion, it is Dr. Johnson's hope to include a snippet of information spotlighting the exemplary programs and stratagems on the site of the Office of Equity and Inclusion with a link leading the reader to the site of interest. Photographs of supported events is important to include on the website.

VI. Building a Network of Diversity Champions – Dr. Johnson has shared documents relating how other institutions are infusing diversity champions into campus environments. In the interest of time, this item was tabled until the next meeting.

VII. Diversity and Inclusion Conference – Dr. Johnson commented that the date for the Diversity/Inclusion Conference is finalized and scheduled for September 26, 2019. Dr. Johnson has plans to meet with Dr. Carter to discuss the specifics of the conference on June 14, 2019.

Conclusion – After edits, documents will be disseminated to committee members for final review. Discussions of criteria, processes and procedures for awards and recognition, building a network of diversity champions, and an update on the Diversity/Inclusion Conference will be addressed at the next committee meeting.

Next Meeting Date – June 27, 2019, 10:30-Noon, Burgin Dossett, Business and Finance Conference Room, 201F.

Attachments: Mission and Vision Statement, Strategic Goals, Functions of the Office for Equity and Inclusion,

Respectfully submitted by: J. Ann Eargle