

**Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council**  
Minutes  
March 11, 2020

**Present** – Keith Johnson, Kim Maturo, Jean Rushing, Antonio Rusinol, Laura Terry, and Phyllis Thompson.

**Not Present** – Felipe Fiuza, Adrianna Guram, Mary Jordan, and Joe Sherlin

- I. **Call Meeting to Order** - Keith Johnson called the meeting to order.
- II. **Approval of Minutes, February 13, 2019 Meeting** – A motion made by Phyllis Thompson, and seconded, stating “I move that the minutes of the February 13, 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.

**Old Business**

- III. **New Members** - Keith Johnson discussed the on-going need to recommend faculty, staff, students, and community members for the advisory council and as diversity champions. Kim Maturo assembled a lengthy list of possible questions for the council to consider while crafting a short questionnaire for potential council members/diversity champions. Access to the questionnaire would be through the Office of Equity and Inclusion website. Electronic access also allows an individual to submit the questionnaire without a recommendation. Discussion included developing a questionnaire that can be used by all or separate questionnaires for faculty, staff, student, and community members. Phyllis Thompson offered to draft an introductory paragraph incorporating the mission of the Office of Equity and Inclusion for the council to review prior to narrowing down the list of questions. Keith Johnson will begin contacting those individuals that have been recommended.
- IV. **Search Update - Office of Equity and Inclusion Coordinator Position** - Keith Johnson stated that Dr. Chassidy Cooper has been hired to fill the Coordinator for Equity and Inclusion position. She will begin work March 16, 2020.
- V. **LGBTQ+ Center** - Keith Johnson shared that the Center has been named after Patricia E. Robertson, a former College of Education faculty member. A highly attended open house was held March 4, 2020 in the Center located in the D.P. Culp Student Center which Pat Robertson was able to attend. Bethany Novotny is currently working on programming for the Center. A small office has also been provided for Center staff use. There is also an effort to develop a faculty and staff LGBTQ+ Association spearheaded by Bethany Novotny. The Center has created a supportive, safe place for all.

- VI. Women's Resource Center (WRC)** - Keith Johnson commented that under Phyllis Thompson's supervision, the WRC has been reopened. He noted that he would like to move the WRC into the Culp Student Center to increase its exposure should space become available.

Phyllis Thompson explained that the WRC serves all faculty, staff and students, but has become staff oriented. The purpose of the WRC is to facilitate programs dealing with an extensive variety of issues and concerns affecting women. The goal is to continue serving the faculty/staff, and to re-engage with the students to enrich and enlighten them. The hours are currently Monday-Friday, 12:00pm-4:30pm. The WRC is amply filled with books that are currently being cataloged by the student workers. This system will allow students to check out books most of which cannot be found in the Sherrod Library. Women's Studies also has numerous books not found in the Sherrod Library available for check out. Women's Studies will be celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in April. A celebration is being planned for April 16, 2020. Women's Studies is designing a shirt as part of the celebration with the possibility of making them available for many. Laura Terry offered the assistance of the Multicultural Center in promoting of the event.

- VII. Co-chairs Advisory Council** - Keith Johnson asked members present to consider the role of a co-chair to the Advisory Council. There is no pressure to take on this role. Keith Johnson shared that his objective is to have the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council be the university's council to guide his role as Vice President of Equity and Inclusion. He cautions himself not to dictate the role of the council, to have all the solutions, etc. Keith Johnson emphasized that he wants to empower and give autonomy to this council related to equity and inclusion matters on the ETSU campus; ensuring that the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council has a huge voice on campus. Phyllis Thompson commented that conversations focusing on the mission, goals, and strategic objectives will help prioritize and map out the immediate direction that needs to be taken. This will also help utilize the Coordinator for Equity and Inclusion in accomplishing the Council's mission, goals, and objectives. Keith Johnson added that while there is work to be done by the Council, there are resources on campus to assist in this endeavor such as the Center for Teaching Excellence to help train faculty. He stated that he does not want to overwork the Council, the group is to help determine how to get things done, not necessarily do the work to get it done.

### **New Business**

- VIII. 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference** - Planning for the annual conference scheduled for September 21 - 23, 2020 has begun. Dr. Jean Swindle from the Department of Educational Foundations and Special Education is chair of the Equity and Inclusion Conference Planning Steering Committee. Current planning includes hosting the conference in the DP Culp Student Center; student participation with a possible pre or post conference; extending invitations to other institutions and local community members; gathering recommendations for a keynote speaker; and subcommittee assignments. Any faculty, staff or student interested in serving on a subcommittee should contact Kim Maturo in the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

- IX. Lunch and Learn Series** - Keith Johnson noted that the Lunch and Learn series sponsored by the Office of Equity and Inclusion will be held year round. Popular topics will be repeated. Individuals are needed to present/lead discussions. Members are encouraged to recommend individuals to establish a speaker's bureau for these sessions as well as speak at colleges, departments or student groups on campus. The Office of Equity and Inclusion will continue to work with Human Resources Employee Learning and Development to promote and track sessions. The current Lunch and Learn flyer will be forwarded to council members for sharing within their respective areas. Antonio Rusinol shared that The Ohio State University has created training modules on implicit bias used by the Medical University of South Carolina.
- X. Multicultural Center** - The multicultural center was recently named the Mary Jordan Multicultural Center. Mary Jordan visited the Center on March 10, 2020 and was greeted by President Nolan, Carshonda Martin, Keith Johnson, and others who made the surprise announcement.
- XI. Upcoming Activities/Announcements** - Keith Johnson reminded all to continue to submit upcoming events to the Office of Equity and Inclusion. The purpose is to give everyone a wide variety of events to attend. Phyllis Thompson shared that the Presbyterian Campus Ministry, UKirk hosts an Open Space at their house on Mondays at 5:00pm. This is a safe and anonymous student group for integrating and celebrating a student's identity as spiritual/religious and LGBTQ+.
- XII. Miscellaneous** - The members present briefly discussed the current ever changing circumstances facing ETSU related to the coronavirus such as online learning, remote access, travel, etc. The university coronavirus update and response page will keep faculty, staff, and students informed.
- XIII. Next Meeting Date** – Thursday, April 20, 2020, 3:00-4:30am, 201F Burgin Dossett Hall. Future meetings will try to be scheduled in various locations across campus to assist in contact with equity and inclusion across campus.

**Respectfully submitted by: Kim Maturo**