

# Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2024 - 1:30pm to 3:00pm

Via Zoom: <https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/88561158851>

## Land Acknowledgement

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People's homeland, and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that legislation and practices like the Morrill Land-Grant College Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands, both locally and in Western states and territories.

## Labor Recognition

Virginia Tech acknowledges that its Blacksburg campus sits partly on land that was previously the site of the Smithfield and Solitude Plantations, owned by members of the Preston family. Between the 1770s and the 1860s, the Preston's and other local White families that owned parcels of what became Virginia Tech also enslaved hundreds of people. Enslaved Black people generated resources that financed Virginia Tech's predecessor institution, the Preston and Olin Institute, and they also worked on the construction of its building.

## **Attendance – Please click on QR code or link to enter your attendance.**

Melissa, Stacey, Ranald Adams, Lydia Qualls, LaTawnya Burleson, Kelly Oaks, Pam Vickers, Rachel Maizel, Aimee, Nicole, Anthony Scott, Harrison Blythe, April, Ronnie, Nikeshia, Vincent Wang

### **1. Adoption of Agenda**

Motion – LaTawnya

Motion to add Transportation committee update – Lydia

Aimee second

Vote to add – Aimee & Lydia – no objections

To approve – Aimee & Nicole – no objections

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

- Approval of March 2024 minutes
  - Tabled until next meeting

### **3. Old Business**

- Representative from CEOD to serve on [University Curriculum Committee for General Education - Faculty Representative](#)

- Dr. Vincent Wang has agreed to serve on this committee.
- Disaggregation of Data Working Group
  - Review and/or approve [Letter to Stakeholders](#) with findings from Working Group
    - Approval of letter
    - Discussion on stakeholders
  - No edits/changes - Stacey will move this forward

#### 4. **New Business**

- Discussion - [CGPSA 2023-24A](#)
  - Adds a protected category “caste” and definition of caste to Policy 1025
  - Spoken to university legal about adding caste – there are no legal bearings to Policy 1025
  - Is caste something that we want to add to Policy 1025 – this is the question
  - Clarifies the policy
  - Working in conjunction with AIM (RSO at VT), especially for International students, unclear to students who may need this protection
  - Harrison – explanation of Policy 1025 and Kelly
  - Concerns about the resolution, current policy as written covers caste, caste is included in the protected categories, sometimes adding to the list makes it more exclusive, can get lawsuits on this – if specific category is added
  - Cal state system added caste in their policy, they were promptly sued by the Hindu Foundation, if VT were to get caught up in law suit could impact how to change the policy, how to uphold it – if caste is added – could be more difficult to collect information about discrimination specifically about caste rather than a national origin positionality
  - If policy remains the same – what can we do to make folks know this more
    - Training issue rather than policy issue
  - Feel that this should have come through CEOD rather than any other commission
  - Examples
    - <https://policy.umn.edu/hr/discrimination-faq07>
    - <https://hdapp.ucdavis.edu/discrimination>
  - Met with Menah, Kelly, and Ellington – to talk about the experiences of the students
  - Testimonials from students about caste tonight as part of APIDAHM
  - Does adding the word caste to the policy better protect students? (Aimee)
  - Harrison – does not better protect, solution is education rather than policy change
- Discussion – CEOD leadership and membership for 2024-2025
  - [Membership Roster](#)
- Parking & Transportation Committee Update
- Move to move forward with agenda – Melissa then Lydia
- Will save chat for the meeting minutes - Stacey

## **5. Committee and Working Group Updates**

- Caucus Support Working Group
  - Working group has met, will meet again and share updates in September
- PID Working Group
  - Dr. Bing – group has been meeting,
- Principles of Community Awards Working Group
  - Recipients announced in May as part of President's awards ceremony

## **6. Presentation**

- PID Working Group update – Dr. Bing, Director of Pride Center – **Tabled until September meeting (note added 4/16/24)**

## **7. Other Items**

## **8. Announcements**

- University council update
  - First reading of UC, CEOD is not ushering this through, only providing a summation of comments from this meeting
  - Two resolutions from Faculty Affairs were moved forward, UC resolution to revise UC constitution
- Caucus updates
  - App caucus meeting regularly since the fall
    - Planning celebration 8/31 in Squires
    - List serve available
  - Indigenous Alliance meeting monthly
    - Community building
    - Dr. Polanco
    - List serve available to join
    - Powwow this Saturday from 12 to 4
  - APIDA caucus
    - Summer book club
- Announcements
  - APIDAHM – add link
  - Powwow – add link
  - Achievement ceremonies – add link

## **9. Adjournment**

Ellington to adjourn & Nicole 2:46 pm