

COMMISSION ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND
DIVERSITY Full Commission Meeting 10:30 AM,
Monday, November 12th, 2018 GLC Room B

PRESENT: Kimberley Homer, Menah Pratt-Clarke, Yolanda Avent, Ellen Banks, Lia Kelinsky-Jones for David Clubb, Kelly Oaks, Anthony Scott, Pamela Vickers, Bevelee Watford, Polly Middleton, Tracy Newton, Maia Greene-Havas, Khaled Hassouna, Deyu Hu, John Gray Williams, Ellington Graves, Christa Miller, Mae Hey, Elizabeth Spingola, Christine Tysor, Nikos Harasty, Davon Woodard, Marcy Schnitzer, Andrew Alston.
Guests: Sarah McCoy, VP for Operations Office; Jack Washington, University Planning.

REGRETS: Sara Leftwich, María del Carmen Caña Jiménez (with notice), Chris McCullough, John Livingston.

After welcoming the members and guests, Kimberley Homer read the Resolution to Observe Indigenous Peoples' Day at Virginia Tech. Discussion ensued about observations elsewhere and historical precedents. (Following the first reading, the resolution was sent to the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Student Government Association and the Graduate Student Assembly for comment.)

Veterans' Day, and the veterans present, Christine Tysor, Tracy Newton, and Anthony Scott, were recognized.

Ms. Christine Tysor gave a presentation on the Veterans' Caucus, summarized briefly here: "Veterans are deeply committed to issues concerning all realms of diversity because we are, to use the academic term, truly intersectional; we cross all diversity categories, including race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability. As a result of our breadth, we have played and continue to play an important role in our country's policies regarding diversity and social change. We are committed to helping Virginia Tech achieve its long-term vision of diversity and inclusion, and we believe there are opportunities to collaborate with other University caucuses in support of that vision. The VTVC Mission is "to improve the working, learning and living environment for employee and student veterans, advocate for mentoring and transitional support for veterans returning to work and/or school, and recommend actions to improve the recruitment and retention of student and/or employee veterans."

Dr. Ellington Graves led a discussion on issues of concern to the Black Caucus. He

said that retention failures, especially among AP faculty, are too high, and since bias incidents are not easy to report, they are probably underreported. Exit interviews might be granted, but as Ellen Banks pointed out, “stay” interviews are more effective, and do not have to involve Human Resources. Ms. Elizabeth Spingola suggested that the Access Barrier reporting form in Banner has been helpful, and perhaps this could be done for bias reporting, too. She and Ms. Kelly Oaks suggested that a Town Hall on this topic would raise awareness and generate new ideas.

Ms. Christa Miller reported on the Women’s Alliance and Caucus, which is now in its third year. It provides support structures for female faculty and staff: “Being the Change We Want to See.” There are concerns about discrepancies in promotion, summer salaries, and among Professors of Practice, with no stated protection in the Faculty Handbook. It is hoped that CEOD can partner with the Faculty Senate to address these concerns.

Deyu Hu then led a discussion on a letter from the Asian American Student Union and the Harvard Asian American discrimination case. (Documents attached.) The commissioners discussed the Holistic Review admissions process and some background information on the Cranwell flyer. There is still work to do on defining CEOD’s role on these issues.

The meeting adjourned just before noon. The next meeting will be at 10:30 a.m. on December 10, 2018, in the Graduate Life Center, Room B.