

**COMMISSION ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY**  
**Full Membership Meeting**  
**10:30AM, Monday, December 4th, 2017**  
**Room B, The Graduate Life Center**

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome
2. Information updates and discussions (10 minutes)
  - a. CEOD poster at Advancing Diversity Workshop at VT annual conference: January 9, 2018
    - i. If you want to take a look at this opportunity, the link is on the CEOD canvas site under the Modules
    - ii. Last date to register for this conference is December 20<sup>th</sup>
    - iii. They have posters and Deyu volunteers that CEOD put together a poster
      1. List all of the caucuses and organizations CEOD has representatives in
      2. Some of the caucuses are going to have a poster at the event already (i.e. Disability Caucus)
        - a. Make a list of all of the caucuses with a list of who has posters at the event
  - b. November meeting minutes approval
    - i. Meeting minutes approved at 10:36 AM.
  - c. CEOD response to white supremacy
  - d. Feedback to the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies on resolution to incorporation of an inclusion and diversity component into graduate education
3. Work group updates (10 minutes)
  - a. Diversity in Academic Missions
  - b. Human Resources
  - c. Governance and Recognition
4. Presentation: University Master Plan (45 minutes)

Jason Soileau, University Architect & Assistant Vice President, Office of University Planning

- a. Visit the VT Facilities website and you will find a link to the Master Plan; has every presentation that has been done on the Master Plan, along with additional helpful information on the draft and the Plan
- b. Has a series of 10 FAQ's on the site
- c. Most important thing you will find is an email address, which is your opportunity to get input into the plan
- d. In the process of working with consultant to write the final written report
- e. As we go through the projects and the plan, almost nothing of what we saw today has been funded
  - i. When project becomes funded, we hire an architect who will be handed a series of information
- f. "Sense of place"
  - i. Virginia Tech has a very unique sense of place
- g. InclusiveVT is a key component of the Master Plan
- h. Virginia Tech's strategic advantage: COMMUNITY
- i. Benefit of community to the student and university
  - i. Adjustment to the university for first-year students is significantly enhanced through the development of a friendship network and belonging to a diverse and inclusive community
  - ii. Development of community and participation within a diverse and inclusive community teaches students how to live in a multicultural society and enhances their opportunities to build transformative leadership skills
- j. The Master Plan was tasked with respecting the past, impacting the present, and providing a vision for the future!
- k. Sasaki and Associates was chosen for this project and is an internationally recognized and highly-awarded planning firm
- l. Scope of work on this plan is quite extensive
- m. 20 peer institutions have been contacted so we can work to create a multitude of benchmarks and standards for this process

- n. New space policy: how will we reallocate space that is fair and equitable across campus?
  - o. Student life initiatives are imperative to focus on for this master plan
  - p. New utility infrastructure
    - i. Thinking about infrastructure in a much more holistic way
  - q. How can we look at storm water as an amenity for the campus? Use it as an opportunity to teach best practices for students?
  - r. This plan is developing a future-looking strategy
  - s. Executive Steering Committee
  - t. Beyond Boundaries has been developed in parallel with the Master Plan, which has made the Plan much stronger
5. **Presentation:** Organization and community representatives to CEOD. Please report a) missions and goals; b) this year's top three priorities; c) how are the priorities related to CEOD? (15 minutes)
- a. Staff Senate
    - i. Missions and goals:
      1. To serve as the representative body for the staff employees of Virginia Tech
      2. To act in an advisory capacity to the university administration and governance system
      3. To appoint or recommend staff representatives to University Council, commissions, advisory councils, committees, and other ad hoc committees as appropriate
      4. To provide a two-way medium for the exchange of information between the staff and the administration
      5. To foster a spirit of unity and cooperation
      6. To provide referral for individual concerns and problems to appropriate organizations or personnel
      7. To accept and share responsibility with the administration, faculty, and students in all efforts to attain the stated goals of the University

ii. This year's top three priorities:

1. Increase participation of staff in shared governance
2. Ensure remote staff can participate (institutional support for video conferences for committees, commissions, and University Council)
3. Review policies, benefits, HR procedures, and barriers that affect our lowest-paid staff

iii. How are the priorities related to CEOD?

1. The last priority is related to the economic diversity of our staff, who deal with commuting, parking, healthcare, child care, retirement, and insurance in ways higher-paid staff never even think about. It affects their upward mobility (because they have less professional development opportunities they can take advantage of), which ultimately affects the economy/economic diversity of the entire region

b. Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs

i. Mission and goals:

ii. This year's top three priorities:

iii. How are the priorities related to CEOD?

c. American Indian Caucus

i. Mission and goals:

1. To create supportive and welcoming spaces for Peoples to connect and be empowered
2. To build reciprocal relationships between constituents
3. To ensure all voices are represented in university programming
4. To optimize the spirit of Virginia Tech's land grant mission
5. To honor the Monacan Nation (as Virginia Tech is a land grant university on Monacan land)
6. To foster the development of positive and lasting collaboration between Virginia Tech and Virginia tribes

7. To promote the tenets of the university's statement of purpose regarding culturally inclusive learning communities
8. To engage Natives, especially youth, in pathways that might lead to future studies at Virginia Tech

ii. This year's top three priorities:

1. Mentoring our existing constituency providing support across our spectrum of stakeholders
2. Addressing the concerns of Virginia's Indigenous communities within the state and beyond
3. Connecting the university's resources with Indigenous community resources

iii. How are the priorities related to CEOD?

1. To have a voice in the representative and support for incorporation of our unique worldview
2. To have a place to share lived experience(s)

d. Appalachian Caucus

6. Discussion: Setting us up for success: Training needs assessment (7 minutes)

- a. What problems and challenges is CEOD experiencing?
- b. What specific knowledge, skills, and resources will CEOD and its member need to meet the challenge?

i. Knowledge

ii. Skills

iii. Resources

- c. Core information every member should know, e.g. mission/vision, charge, history, basic policy and procedure, etc.

7. Wrap-up: (3 minutes)

- a. Agenda for next meeting

- i. Nominate and self-nominate: vice-chair of CEOD
- ii. Work group report
- iii. Presentation: Governance Structure and Process by Kim O'Rourke, Vice President for Policy and Governance and Secretary to the Board of Visitors
- iv. Results for organization/caucus reports
- v. Members suggest items to be on next meeting's agenda

**COMMISSION ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY**  
**Executive Committee Meeting**  
**10:30 AM – 12:00 PM, Thursday, November 9, 2017**  
**Graduate Life Center Room B**

**AGENDA**

**PRESENT:** Menah Pratt-Clarke, Kelly Oaks, Lisa Wilkes, Jack Finney, Patty Perillo, David Clubb, Pam Vickers, Julia Ross, Jennifer Nardine, Matthew Gabriele, James Venable, LaTawnya Burleson, John Gray Williams, Khaled Hassouna, Maria del Carmen Caña Jiménez, Robin Queen, Kimberley Homer, Valencia Turner, Mayank Periwal, Jeena Sajimon, Chris Saunders, James Spotila

**ABSENT:** Tom Brown, Erika Meitner (with notice), Robin Lawson, Melanie Darden, Prateek Mishra, Ellington Graves, Mae Hey (with notice), Rosemary Goss, Christa Miller, Elizabeth Spingola, Christine Tysor (with notice), Takumi Sato (with notice), Michele Waters

**GUESTS:** Tracy Newton, Alexa Parsley

**WELCOME**

Deyu started the meeting at 10:31 AM.

**INFORMATION UPDATES**

We now have all of the seats filled and are excited to welcome Prateek Mishra, representative from The Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs, LaTawnya Burleson, representative from The Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs, and Jeena Sajimon, representative from The Council of International Student Organizations.

The minutes from October's meeting were approved with no corrections at 10:32 AM.

There was a short follow-up discussion on branding and the university master plan. Representatives from University Planning were in the gallery at the meeting and were able to hear a question posed about how best CEOD can improve its communication and outreach plans.

Andrew Peck, President of Virginia Tech Jewish Student Union, sent out a formal letter to address issues of white supremacy on campus. Ellington's workgroup has been working on this and has drafted a letter in response, which is available on Canvas and via email. Once Ellington's group is comfortable sharing the solution they have put together, it will be shared with the group.

The Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies has composed a resolution to incorporate an inclusion and diversity education component into graduate education. It is available to view on Canvas and via email. They plan to make each department/program consider this, and wants

CEOD to provide some form of feedback before they move forward. Deyu has created a Discussion forum on Canvas to post feedback on this resolution.

To address how CEOD can be a better organization, Deyu put together a graphic and further explanation is listed below:

1. We want to ensure CEOD is inclusive: representative of each kind of body of students, as well as faculty and staff. This is something the Governance and Recognition workgroup is posted to consider.
2. The suggestion of less information sharing and more discussion.
3. Covering topics of hate/religious freedom, and systematic suppression.
4. Areas where CEOD can make a difference and have a large impact: we want workgroups to be encouraged to think about concrete, deliverable products deliverable by the end of the academic year and establishing yearly goals and priorities.
5. We need to increase awareness of CEOD on campus.
6. We need to work to be involved earlier in university initiatives and want to create impact beyond University Council. If we want to tap into getting involved early in diversity-related initiatives, we need to be sure to have a point of contact and have a comprehensive understanding of our action plan.
7. Folks would like to see outside presenters visit CEOD and share in meetings.
8. How do we move forward from here?

### **WORK GROUP UPDATES**

*Diversity in Academic Missions:* This workgroup has been spending time on the Pathways Curriculum that was approved last year. There is a lot of work to be continued, which will cut across academic and social lines. They also wrote a letter in response to the Jewish Student Union's letter about issues of white supremacy on campus.

*Human Resources:* They spent their first meeting looking at different issues they covered last year and had discussions about potential areas of concern, and have decided to focus on three areas:

1. *Orientation and on-boarding as part of an HR transformation project.* They want to ensure that what they are doing is inclusive and plan to have the orientation coordinator come talk to the workgroup. They are also scheduling a mock orientation in the spring, where feedback from other CEOD members will be welcome.
2. *Campus accessibility.* Pam Vickers and Lisa Wilkes plan to discuss at next meeting what the plans are in the master plan in terms of access.
3. *Leadership and professional development programs.* This goal is to determine whether all of the programs offered through UOPD are diverse, and to invite members from UOPD to come to CEOD and discuss/listen to thoughts.

The workgroup is also sharing their agendas and meeting notes on Canvas, and they meet at 9:30 AM before regularly-scheduled CEOD meetings.



*Governance and Recognition:* This workgroup has been meeting to discuss the criteria for being a caucus and having voting rights in CEOD. CEOD is a representational body and the caucuses have more of a structure, so the workgroup has thought about and recognized some concerns that have been raised about membership and connecting that to confidentiality. They are working to ensure CEOD is a representative voice without violating aforementioned concerns, and have been framing definitions around caucuses.

The workgroup has also been having discussions on raising perimeters to prevent CEOD from getting too big, working to establish where the line should be drawn, as CEOD should not be approached by a particular group and it not have a plan in place.

Lastly, they are beginning conversations about creating and establishing a timeline for Principles of Community awards.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### *Council of College Deans:*

As a group, they do not necessarily have a place in the governance structure, but they do get together once a month independently to talk about current campus events that deans should be discussing. They also meet monthly with the Provost.

They have been talking a lot about destination areas, faculty hiring, and the PITT model.

Anything that happens around diversity and inclusion that is happening in academic units are things the Council will bring to CEOD, and this will vary monthly.

### *Faculty Senate:*

The purpose of the Faculty Senate is to create an effective faculty organization that can enter into partnership for shared responsibility and cooperative action between the faculty, administration, staff, and students in order to promote the general welfare of the university. They do not have a formal role in governance and are more of an advisory group. They have representatives from every campus unit.

Their priorities were largely surrounding concerns of the former Provost and encompassed concerns of promotion and tenure, governance, implementation of initiatives, and eFARS. They will continue to be points of conversation moving forward.

Faculty Senate represents the faculty at large and partners with all other constituencies to ensure that governance is truly shared amongst all.

### *Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs:*

The Commission is charged to study, formulate, and recommend to University Council policies and procedures affecting the working conditions of classified and university staff and to promote staff participation in the University community.

They research and advise on leave issues, which include but may not be limited to changes to the winter closing schedule. They also research and advise how to better support lower pay-band employees, as well as updating the Career Staff Achievement Awards.

### *Commission on Student Affairs:*

The Commission on Student Affairs is charged to study, formulate, and recommend to University Council policies and procedures affecting graduate and undergraduate student life and morale. Areas for consideration include: student relations with peers, staff, faculty, administrators, alumni, and the community; student organizations, social life, and recreation; employment, placement, and counseling; residential life, health, safety, and quality of student-related services; and other matters affecting student life.

Their top three priorities for the year are to ensure the student voice is heard in areas where decisions directly affect students, to define Student Budget Board's role within CSA, and to make sure the university's policies represent the current reality of student life and our Principles of Community.

CSA is purposely diverse in an attempt to continually represent both the view of the majority as well as underrepresented communities. Most conversations at CSA are about how major decisions tend to neglect the views of those who do not speak the loudest.

### *Commission on Faculty Affairs:*

Charged to study, formulate, and recommend to the University Council policies and procedures affecting faculty employment and professional standing of the collegiate, library, and extension faculty. Areas for consideration include: commencement, academic freedom and faculty morale; procedures for appointing, evaluating, disciplining, recognizing, and promoting faculty, including department heads and chairs; tenure, benefits, academic and personal leave, and extra-university professional activity; and matters of equity and diversity that affect the university's professional environment.

Their top priorities for the year are to focus on the promotion and tenure process, equity in access to large-scale research facilities and teams, retiree health benefits, and faculty morale, recruiting, and retention.

The priorities of CFA directly overlap with CEOD's charge related to recruitment, retention, and advancement of faculty in context of inclusion and diversity, equity in promotion and tenure and compensation, diversity advocacy on search committees, and prioritization of faculty effort.

### *Student Government Association:*

The Student Government Association was established by the Student Body of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in order to provide an effective organization for the administration of student activities, to promote academic freedom and academic responsibility, to establish and protect student rights, to foster awareness of the student's position in the campus, local, state, and national communities, and to provide a liaison between the student body, faculty, and administration.

Their top priorities for the year are to increase student representation of students by creating more pathways for student participation in student government; allow more voices to be heard in town halls and open forums, foster stronger relationships with administration and use those relationships to advocate on behalf of students, improve outreach efforts to students – rebuilding relationships with other student organizations, constituent groups, and students, and to create meaningful programming and legislation.

SGA has an Equity and Inclusion Executive Committee to create inclusive student programming and they are increasing student input in administrative decisions and policies that affect students.

*Graduate Student Assembly:*

They are a representative democracy that advocates for 6,000+ graduate student voices on 4+ Virginia Tech campuses. They convey the many and varied needs of grad students by way of representation on a variety of university committees, and they provide small grants, research-sharing opportunities, and social events to encourage inter-departmental engagement. Some examples of these include the Graduate Research Development Program, the Travel Fund Program, Cap and Gown Loan Program, GSA Research Symposium, and more.

Their top priorities are to connect graduate students across campus, ensure safe and accessible spaces are designated for underrepresented students in the Master Plan, and to create/promote anti-bullying initiatives to protect students in both personal and academic life.

This year, GSA founded their External Advocacy Committee, which will focus on promoting an inclusive environment for all graduate students and communicate their activities and ideas across campus and beyond.

*Council of International Student Organizations:*

They represent and promote international student organizations and their interests, serve as a liaison between international student organizations and the university administration, campus organizations, wider university, and the Blacksburg community. They also provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and dissemination of information, coordinate collective activities of the international community by promoting cultural awareness ideas and diversity, and they support the integration of international students within the university campus.

The top three priorities for the year are integration, awareness, and communication.

CISO has representation of varied levels of voice from the most diverse communities that exist within the student community, and has increased inclusion of otherwise marginalized student groups.

*International Caucus:*

The purpose of the International Caucus for Virginia Tech Faculty and Staff is to serve as an advocacy and support group for faculty and staff at Virginia Tech who identify as international, do work pertinent to international communities, and/or are interested in participating in conversations relevant to those who identify as international and those who do the pertinent work.

The caucus functions as a liaison to the university community on issues relevant to international faculty and staff, international scholars, international students, international research and education, and is committed to supporting Virginia Tech's "serving the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation, and the world community."

Their top three priorities for the year are to create pre- and post-arrival orientation resources for new international faculty and staff, create an awards committee to honor an international student from each college at future International Student Cultural Achievement Ceremonies, and to co-sponsor/collaborate with international/cultural student groups to provide education to faculty/staff about diverse cultures.

## **TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

CEOD members were posed with considering the problems and challenges the Commission is experiencing and what specific knowledge, skills, and resources CEOD and its membership needs to meet.

The group also considered core information every member should know, e.g. mission/vision, charge, history, basic understanding of policy and procedure, etc.

## **AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING**

We are still looking for Nominations and self-nominations for Vice Chair of CEOD. Please send in those nominations to Deyu at [dhu@vt.edu](mailto:dhu@vt.edu).

We anticipate and look forward to work group reports at every meeting.

If there is anything you would like to see on the agenda, please email your suggestions to Deyu at [dhu@vt.edu](mailto:dhu@vt.edu).

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 PM and the next meeting will be on Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, in the Graduate Life Center Meeting Room B.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alexa Parsley, Secretary of the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity