

COMMISSION ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th, 2016
10:30 am – 12:00 pm
GRADUATE LIFE CENTER ROOM B

Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: Robin Boucher (for Rosemary Goss), Tom Brown, Matt Chan (representing Commission on Student Affairs), Maria Elisa Christie (for John Gray Williams), Sam Cook (for Mike Bowers, Mary Beth Dunkenberger, Menah Pratt-Clarke, David Clubb, Ellington Graves, María del Carmen Caña Jiménez, Bradley Klein, Sandra Muse, Jennifer Nardine, Takumi Sato, Don Taylor, Christine Tysor, James Venable, Pamela Vickers, Daron Williams.

ABSENT: Disability Caucus, Melissa Elliot (with notice), Nicole Johnson, Sara Leftwich (with notice), Erika Meitner (with notice), Mikayla Meyer, Patty Perillo (with notice), Lisa Wilkes (with notice), Amer Fayad (with notice); Karisa Moore, Robin Lawson

GUESTS: Mercedes Ramírez Fernández, Marcy Schnitzer, Leemar Thorpe

WELCOME

Mary Beth Dunkenberger called the meeting to order. She emphasized the importance of meeting attendance, and asked that members designate a proxy if they are unable to attend.

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mary Beth reported that the Commission Chairs met with President and Provost and reviewed items on their respective agenda. She noted that other groups may have common agenda items: the Faculty Senate and Research Commission are interested in issues of compensation; The Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies is also looking at how to provide credit for life experience (particularly military). Raifu Durodoye, Vice Chair, committed to support the work groups, serve as a resource, pass on information from the Executive Committee, and through his position in Institutional Research, support the data needs of the Commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Based upon feedback from the members present, the minutes from the May CEOD meeting were not received. The minutes will be resent, and a vote will be held at the next full meeting in October.

WORKGROUP REPORTS AND OLD BUSINESS

Pathways Workgroup:

Ellington Graves reported that the workgroup is joint body between CEOD and the

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for General Education (UCCGE). The charge for the workgroup came out of last year's CEOD resolution to reconsider the treatment of intersectional diversity within the Pathways general education curriculum. Pathways will be replacing the existing Curriculum for Liberal Education beginning in Fall of 2018. The workgroup will discuss how diversity is being addressed, as it is possible within the proposed structure for students to graduate without having a meaningful engagement with questions of diversity, especially domestic diversity. Ellington reported on meetings held in April, June, and July with teaching and research faculty, AP faculty and staff, to talk about intersectional diversity in the curriculum. In addition, meetings have also been held with Deans and Assoc. Deans from each college, the Executive Board of the Faculty Senate, and the Student Government Association President and Vice President. The work group will consider why addressing domestic diversity is needed and how to build it in to curriculum. Options include: 1) revisiting entirety of core areas for integration; 2) revise Intercultural and Global Awareness integrative outcome; 3) have a third separate integrative outcome; 4) define an additional core learning outcome area. Learning indicators are also being drafted.

Mary Beth asked about the timeline for an initial reading with CEOD. Ellington anticipates that a draft will be ready in October. Bradley Klein asked what is meant by intersectional diversity. Ellington responded that we all have multiple identities - the intersection produces unique experiences and circumstances. Intersectionality provides an opportunity to give students the beginnings of an understanding of the nuances and complexity of diversity by dealing with multiple dimensions of diversity and difference. Matt Chan suggested we reach out to GTAs who teach a lot of the CLE courses through the Academy of GTA Excellence. He noted that there hasn't been a lot of outreach to this group about Pathways. Menah Pratt-Clarke reiterated that the goal is to have a proposal by October 10 CEOD meeting. Mary Beth will make sure it gets emailed out for review.

Faculty/Staff Equity Workgroup:

Mary Beth will be recruiting a chair for the faculty/staff equity workgroup to address equity and opportunities for advancement, which can also include graduate students. This issue was raised by the Women's Alliance, which is concerned that we may be losing underrepresented faculty because we are not competitive with other universities. The committee charge will be to define questions about equity that we want answered, and ask the administrative level to put together resources to answer those. Menah said that we will ask Lisa Wilkes to present on this topic and use that discussion as a basis for the workgroup. Mary Beth noted that in the meeting with other commissions, President Sands had reported that the university is working to bring HR system up to date.

The membership discussed previous studies on equity and advancement. Takumi Sato inquired whether there could be other things going on that push faculty away. Raifu Durodoye, who authored the most recent study, noted that a quantitative perspective doesn't point to definitive issues, so a qualitative study could provide needed information. Matt Chan asked whether there was quantitative data about graduate student compensation? Raifu responded that he is not aware of anything specific about graduate student compensation. Matt noted

that the graduate student position is tricky, because technically they are not employees, and don't go through HR. This issue has come up in the Graduate Student Assembly. The Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies is looking at health insurance issues Bradley Klein asked about last year's report, and why the analysis is insufficient? Raifu noted that the report is on the Provost's website. It could not address issues of compensation within rank, particularly why there are clusters of different gender and minority groups within certain ranks. There are more questions that need to be answered. Mary Beth emphasized that we need to push questions to administration to have answered. Most work has been done around tenured and tenure track faculty; this means that the majority of positions have not been considered for equity concerns.

Gender Identity and Banner:

Mary Beth reviewed that the current Banner system does not have the ability to change preferred name or go beyond binary gender options. John Gray Williams has offered to chair this group, and we will invite a representative from Banner to address our next meeting. Tom Brown suggested Randy Crockett, who is the primary representative for student records; and Cathy Petry will be invited from HR to discuss what flexibility exists in the latest version of Banner, which will be implemented this year.

Other:

Mary Beth noted CEOD's ongoing need to adjust membership. As those governance issues arise, we may need an additional workgroup, which could be combined with the recognition workgroup for the Presidential Principles of Community Award. She asked whether there were any additional issues facing constituency groups, noting that the intent of the workgroups is to get in detail to operationalize and move forward on issues. Ellington Graves expressed concern about the impact of teaching evaluations on women and faculty of color. Over-reliance on these evaluations, along with a lack of recognition of bias has not been a concern. This may be another component of the conversation on equity.

Mary Beth distributed a sign-up sheet for all workgroups.

NEW BUSINESS

Overview of Office for Inclusion and Diversity Activities and Initiatives

Menah Pratt-Clarke distributed a once page summary of initiatives through the Office for Inclusion and Diversity. She noted that our charge integrates the Principles of Community and the university's motto of Ut Prosim. Through multiple meetings held throughout the Spring OID established institutional goals and objectives. Menah expressed that Virginia Tech can't fulfill its responsibility to the motto without having conversations about identity, privilege, and who serves. Alumni have expressed a need for students who are prepared to lead in a complex and diverse society.

Institutional structures are needed to create sustainable transformation, and the office is building the InclusiveVT structure to help with this work. New structures comprise InclusiveVT

Senior representatives for each senior management area to help ensure climate issues are addressed, as inclusion is fundamentally local. They join diversity committees which already exist in many College and Vice Presidential areas. In addition, the AdvanceVT/InclusiveVT team has been created with representatives at the full professor level from each college. This group will be a resource for helping to advance faculty diversity. Caucuses and CEOD will continue to be an important part of the structure.

Many new initiatives, including the American Indian summit in Spring. Three new cultural centers have been created with new directors for each. The College Access collaborative in Enrollment Management has identified 15 schools for pipeline program to build stronger relationships.

Current Projects from the Office for Inclusion and Diversity are: DiversityEdu, an online course for new students and one for Search Committee members; revisions to the Pathways general education curriculum; Project 2022, an alumni outreach initiative to recruit underrepresented students; a Student Academic Success committee; a strategic growth area (related to the new Destination Areas) focusing on Equity and Social Disparity in the Human Condition; and an interdisciplinary research symposium, exploring integration of diversity into multiple disciplines. Jennifer Nardine suggested we include non-college units. Maria Elisa Christie asked about the ongoing role of the President's Executive Council. Menah noted that it is now called President's InclusiveVT Executive Council, with representation from all Dean and VP areas, SGA, GSA, and CEOD. Mary Beth suggested that the Gay in Appalachia event often has scholarship associated with it, and could be part of the new strategic growth area.

Matt Chan reported that the Commission on Student Affairs has efforts similar to CEOD, but is looking at the student experience outside of the classroom. The Muslim Student Association is applying to become Chartered Student Organization, and has been cleared to go through this process to be approved by CSA. The Student Budget Board will be looking at procedural changes. In addition, CSA is considering questions of religious holidays and excused class absences. Menah Pratt-Clarke will be addressing the commission. Bradley Klein asked about other religious chartered organizations. Tom Brown reported that both the Jewish Student Union and the Muslim Student Association are considered cultural organizations. Sam Cook suggested CEOD and others should take into account diversity training regarding holidays reflecting other spiritual beliefs.

WORKGROUP GATHERING AND SELECTION OF CHAIRS

Mary Beth asked the membership to convene in workgroups, select chairs, and organize meeting schedules.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m. The next full CEOD meeting will be October 10, 2016 in GLC Room B.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leemar Thorpe
Recording Secretary, Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity