

Meeting Minutes Committee on Diversity, Equity, And Inclusion
04/18/2023 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

<https://facultysenate.ecu.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion/dei@ecu.edu>

Attendance:

Angela Lamson, Amanda Klein (Chair), Jihoun An, Rachel Roper, Saulo Geraldeli, Tricia Wilson-Okamura, Shadman Memarian, Adriana Heimann-Rios, Elijah Asagbra

Ex-officio: LaKesha Alston Forbes, Sarah Bryson, Dennis McCunney

Student: George Cherry Jr

Visitor: Wyatt Gable

Format

- Virtually on Teams

-we meet as a full committee once per month on the following days at 4:00 pm

- January 31, 2023
- February 28, 2023
- March 21, 2023
- April 18, 2023

I. **Approve March Minutes:** Minutes were approved unanimously

II. **Vote: Updating our Charge:** The following update proposal submitted by Rachel Roper in response to resolution 13-35. It is recommended that; the Committee on DEI will request ECU's Office for Equity and Diversity to provide a report on diversity of the faculty to the Committee on DEI and cDEI will present the report to Faculty Senate annually.

Discussion related to proposal: Office for Equity and Diversity, Lakesha Forbes provided some historical context about why the report was originally instituted and reasons in which it was thought that the report was no longer needed to be presented at Faculty Senate. After feedback from faculty OED attempted to guide the ECU community towards access the information from IPAR themselves and be responsible for only gathering the data they were interested from the IPAR dashboard. Although providing the information at Faculty Senate is beneficial for awareness, there are concerns that the information alone, will not produce transformative action which may limit the effectiveness of the report. OED recommends that the new charge be presented as "The cDEI will request intuitional faculty data to identify trends and progress and will present it to the Faculty Senate. They further, recommend take cDEI obtain the information directly from IPAR who manages the data. Discussion was generated about who would request the data form IPAR for the cDEI committee. Motion was made by Chair Klein "That the cDEI will elect as part of their charge to request intuitional faculty data to identify trends and progress and will present the data to Faculty Senate annually." The motion was seconded by Adriana Heimann-Rios. Seven members voted in favor one member opposed. It was recommended that cDEI obtain the data directly from IPAR. Chair will contact Rachal Baker to determine how to get this resolution added to the committee's charge.

III. Vote to Endorse “Labor Acknowledgement”

Rachel Roper proposed **the Labor Acknowledgement**: We acknowledge the labor of enslaved Africans and their descendants to the economic development and success of Pitt County, our region, and the State of North Carolina. We are indebted to those who labored to support the foundation and ongoing mission of East Carolina University.

She reported that several CDEI committee members worked together with Black Faculty Association, the Black Student Union, the SGA and OED.

The Staff Senate voted to endorse the statement.

The vote by the cDEI committee is simply a vote to endorse the “Labor Acknowledgement” not a vote to adopt it. The drafting of the acknowledgment has been an effort from several committees across the university.

Members were provided opportunity for discussion. Because the crafting of the acknowledgment was a combined effort it more accurately represented the collective wisdom of those impacted. It was discussed that, in addition to the statement the committee include educational sessions related to the acknowledgment so that it does not become a docile statement without having any significant meaning not producing any actionable steps.

Motion to endorse the acknowledgment was made by Chair Klein and seconded by Rachel Roper and voted unanimously in favor of. The acknowledgment will be presented at Faculty Senate next week. Some committee members although in favor of the Acknowledgement, had some reservations as the Acknowledgement was not specific and that the language was not compelling enough in getting the message across. However, it was noted that adding additional compelling language could distract from the intent of the message and become a barrier in getting it passed during the current challenging resistant environment towards DEI work.

Note: the wording was changed during Faculty Senate meeting to

We acknowledge the labor of enslaved African people and their descendants to the economic development and success of Pitt County, our region, and the State of North Carolina. We are indebted to those who labored to support the foundation and ongoing mission of East Carolina University

IV. Discussion: Developing Guidance in the wake of the “Prohibition to Compelled Speech”

Questions from the google doc, which members of the committee generated are attached. The questions were forward to university council by Chair Klein. Although the Chancellor distributed some remarks regarding Compelled Speech, the committee felt that the questions would provide more detailed information needed to assist in providing additional guidance to faculty.

V. Subcommittee Reports:

Subcommittee on Fixed term faculty: Tricia Wilson-Okamura reported: Two listening sessions were conducted to gather information from fixed-termed faculty on how they view

the disparities, inequities and challenges faced by fixed-term faculty. Questions used to guide the discussions were sent to the cDEI committee last month. First meeting was held on main campus and the second meeting was held on the medical campus. Information from the sessions will be reviewed and used to inform future actions. It was recommended that the committee also, make contact with Sarah Williams from the OFE, who is also engaged in doing some work related to better understanding the challenges faced for fixed-term faculty.

Subcommittee on Shared Interests with Faculty Governance: Adriana Heimann-Rios reported they have been working on annual evaluations of faculty, by gathering data and identifying challenges related to how evaluations are conducted. The committee meet with Mark Bowler chair of the faculty governance committee. The committee is also, drafting a letter to the provost to obtain data related to faculty annual evaluations. The committee was able to evaluation previous data provided by Rachel Roper related to salary concerns. The new data will be helpful in analyzing current trends, DEI leadership and code of conduct.

VI. Student Representative: George Cherry reported: He was able to gather additional insight and information from Dr. Hargrove and Aisha Powell related to the “Labor Acknowledgment” Suggestions from the meeting included adding additional informational sessions to inform others about the Labor Acknowledgement and creating space for connecting African American students with those in the community. It was also suggested that a space be created on campus which highlights the contributions of Blacks in the building an advancement of ECU. George reported he has been discussing with SGA president about engaging more with cDEI committee so that he can become better aware of DEI issues. George said the student leadership supports the Labor Acknowledgment.

VII. Formations of a new subcommittee focusing on Salary Equity: Chair Klein, Sarah Williams Carver, Saulo Geraldeli: The committee met with Meghan Millea to discuss issued related to salary inequity. Future meetings will focus on reviewing what other universities have develop to address salary compressions, if other schools have framed the issue of salary equity as a component of DEI initiatives, and creating a task force to think about ways to incentive faculty to engage in meeting university goals.

VIII. Accessibility Survey

The campus accessibility survey data is still coming in, the survey will close on May 1st, 2023

Question was asked by visitor Wyatt Gable “has any progress been made on changing the bathrooms?” Chair Klein, informed visitor that changing the bathrooms is not the scope of this committee. The cDEI committee is simply conducting a survey about accessibility to bathrooms for those who may have any challenges which prevent access.

Chair Klein has encouraged members to consider taking on other roles on the committee as we move forward for next year.

Submitted: Secretary Michael Daniels

Questions for University Counsel related to Prohibition to Compelled Speech”

1. Can we have the Land Acknowledgement statement on our syllabus and email signature?
2. Can we have other statements/stickers (such as the Safe Zone, Green Zone, trans flag, BLM etc) in our email signature?
3. Can we provide students in our class with research articles that show racial/gender bias in SSOI as we send a reminder to them to write effective critique for the class?
4. Can we use our own pronouns (especially when someone is trans/non-binary + a person of colour) in the class?
5. Can we ask students to share their preferred pronouns?
6. Can we expect the university/unit/school to have our back when a student or their parent complains that the teacher is too queer to teach a class in science? (from my personal experience, right now we do not have this protection)
7. Can we help a student who faced discrimination in completing paper work for reporting? Especially, if the discrimination was based on systemic racism/sexism?
8. Do we have to use inaccurate scientific languages, such as, male and female hormone, gender and sex are binary etc?
9. Are we allowed to discuss politics when it is relevant to the discussion. For example a discussion of the topic of “ Fake News” and where the term originated would be urbane to a discussion of digital literacy and journalism.
10. How do we determine the line between what might be deemed “appropriate course content” and “politicized course content”?
11. Will the newly implemented DEI Professional Development requirement for faculty be terminated?
12. If a faculty candidate asks the search committee about DEI activities in the unit, how is the search committee supposed to respond?
13. Can we request a DEI statement to applicants for visiting speaker series that receive funding from the University?