Division of Academic Affairs  
Diversity Task Force  
Tuesday, December 15, 2020  
3-4:30 PM  
Via Webex  

Minutes

Present: Vinka Craver, Don DeHayes, Mary Grace Almandrez, Anne Veeger, Brian Heikes, Jaunetta Hill, Kathleen McIntyre, Alycia Mosley Austin, Nelle Couret, Dan Persaud, Trish Morokoff, Lynne Derbyshire, Gifty Ako-Adounvo, Mary Greaney, Furong Xu, Peter Larsen, Sean Rogers, Julia Lovett, Alisa Baron, Ashley Buchanan, Martha Elena Rojas, David Fastovsky, and Michelle Fontes.

Announcements

The comments from last month’s meeting regarding MFF were very helpful regarding your thoughts and insights. Provost’s Office will continue working on recasting MFF as a cohort (3) model.

Graduate School First-Year Dean’s Diversity Fellowship – Grad School has a new fellowship competition taking place earlier in the spring for 1st year incoming students from diverse backgrounds. Requires a letter stating mentoring/support and environment in the program. Decision in early February to be competitive with other universities. Students already in the application pipeline. Due date (open January 4th deadline) January 27th. Letter from department and then upload application for submission.

Diversity is defined US Citizens, DACA or Permanent residents, Latinx, Pacific Islanders, Gender identity, underrepresented student. Masters or PhD students.

Approval of the Minutes of the November 17th meeting

Peter Larsen moves to approve, Lynne Derbyshire seconds, all are in favor; Vinka abstains as she did not receive the minutes.

Note: change reference from NEASC to NECHE.

Old Business

College Diversity Committees – Vinka Craver, College of Engineering (slides)

Recently formed Engineering Diversity Council as of 10/8/20, and serves as chair. Each department has a faculty representative, staff and undergrad student. Various representatives, levels of faculty and staff. Formed 4 task forces: faculty and staff recruitment and retention, recruitment and retention of diverse students, diversity and inclusion in the curriculum, professional development and community building. Initiatives – training for diversity statement, increase applicant pool, etc. DEI strategic planning for COE, etc.

Feedback requested: DEI statement on faculty search applications: How will it be assessed? Guidelines in position description? Applicant should submit a diversity statement along with the application and other materials (e.g. teaching statement, etc). Create a rubric to help search committee evaluate the statements equitably. There should be concrete evidence of the claims they make, how have they been trained, and how DEI manifests in their teaching. Make it a required qualification, from an HR perspective, add this bullet point “demonstrated ability to work across diverse lines” (also evident on the CV, teaching and research statement, letters of recommendation).
Curriculum discussed in the University Diversity Council. One of the suggestions was that each college create a course on diversity and inclusion, focusing on specific issues in that college. This needs to also be infused across the curriculum. This would be a required course, in addition to Gen Ed requirement.

COB Diversity Initiatives, Sean Rogers - presented in faculty meeting (slides) integrate Inclusive Excellence. Ethics and Diversity, 4 approaches to integrate based on best practices and accreditation.

Integrate learning objectives into syllabus
Diversity statement in the syllabus
Central repository of teaching resources for faculty to allow professors to integrate (give them tools).
Developing a diverse speakers bureau.

General discussion on strategies
There is a lot of work to advance goals - suggest assigning priorities, tier one, tier two, etc.

Need to fund the professional development and assessment of the program.

There needs to be a ‘required’ element: demonstrated commitment and demonstrated contribution. Demonstrating contribution to DEI in teaching, service and research.

Recent grads are more often than not, very strong in ability to demonstrate these elements.

Academic Summit
Overview of the day, recognition of organizers and presenters, and reflection.
Suggest giving a certificate as a good way to recognize participation. Certificates should explain or gives details of what took place (log of hours).
Reflection as evaluation of the event and then get the certificate.
If reflections could be made public then it would open up discussion.
Grad students can attend and the certificates will be useful for future job applications.
Sending a letter of thanks for participating can go in P&T documents. Books already available, so small communities can have a winter book club.
A formal letter from the Provost/President for presenters is meaningful.

The meeting adjourned at 4:34 PM