



University Diversity Council (UDC) Minutes
April 30, 2021
Zoom

Attendance: Gifty Ako-Adounvo, Mary Grace Almandrez, Jacquie Britto, Erin Earle, Maling Ebrahimpour, Corey Fernandez, Michelle Fontes, Nisa Ghonem, Trish Morokoff, Holly Nichols, Eileen Orabone, Kristina Perrelli, Jacqui Tisdale, Annemarie Vaccaro

Absent: Lulu Alyrati, Marland Chang, Brian Heikes, Jen Riley, Martha Rojas, Mary Stanley

I. Welcome and Updates

Mary Grace started the meeting with some updates. She said that the Faculty Senate had an excellent meeting and that the subcommittees were able to provide their annual reports around justice, equity, inclusion and diversity efforts. Trish had also suggested that the Faculty Senate pull all of those reports together and have one report. Mary Grace stated that she would like the UDC to follow suit and do the same thing and incorporate any other documents such as the Faculty Senate reports and the Agenda for Change into the UDC's document. She also updated them on the land acknowledgement statement letting them know that they have been vetting the statement out to different groups across campus and are hoping to get it in front of Faculty Senate soon. She reminded everyone that this statement would be a part of a group of initiatives that we are doing to support our indigenous community members. So, as mentioned at our previous meeting, starting in the fall, we will be providing full scholarships for students who identify as Native American, and the President has also shared that the University has committed resources for these scholarships. She also mentioned that President Dooley is going to be honored at the annual Tomaquag Honoring Dinner this summer. Other updates included the many searches that are going on right now at the university.

II. Subcommittee Recommendations Continued

Mary Grace continued the discussion of the subcommittee recommendations. She reminded everyone that they need to choose their top three recommendations, and then the recommendations will be included in a report that Jen and she will work on to give to President Dooley and incoming President, Dr. Parlange. Each committee talked about their top recommendations.

Curriculum – Recommendations included faculty authority over the curriculum, such as with the general education courses. It is suggested to strengthen DEI training through general education requirements, they are proposing to qualify as a GENED course, the course would need to address DEI in some manner. Another recommendation is to

provide incentives and resources for faculty to include DEI content in their courses. Incentives might include small curriculum development grants or recognition and/or awards for faculty demonstrating diversity in pedagogy. The third recommendation is to encourage norms for course revision through syllabus content such as inclusion of DEI learning outcomes or a diversity statement (comparable to other syllabus statements) that could be tailored to the content of the particular field.

Graduate Student Diversity – Recommendations include priorities for recruitment. Examples include to encourage faculty to develop a list of diverse networks and contacts, and there needs to be more fundraising for GTA lines and graduate fellowships. We also need to develop collaborative partnerships with HBCUs and Hispanic-serving institutions. Some priorities for retention would be to sponsor (or continue to support) undergraduate research programs, support JEDI-related professional development (Badge program) and encourage programs that require test scores for admission to consider possibility of waiving test scores (specify GPA, work experience).

Campus-wide Efforts and Professional Development – Recommendations for this subcommittee include creating a Center for Black Male Initiatives that is a joint sponsorship between academic affairs and student affairs, to allocate a budget to hire a consultant/expert to help us identify the best next steps for building a model for Social Justice Education that is effective and comprehensive. Also, for first-year students, to expand the already successful CED Diversity Dialogues program.

Faculty and Staff of Color Recruitment and Retention – This subcommittee is still waiting for some information and will submit recommendations after they get that information.

III. **Summer Retreat**

There was discussion about having a summer retreat. It was decided that Eileen would send out a Doodle poll with some dates to meet. Once the meeting date is established, we will find a location where it can be a hybrid meeting for those who are not comfortable meeting in person.

IV. **Next Steps**

Mary Grace just reminded that once they get all of the recommendations, they will create a report and send it to the group before it goes to the senior leadership. Also, she let the group know that the students' terms were up on this council, and she will contact them to see if they would like to continue. If not, then we will need to find new students.