



University Diversity Council Minutes
November 12, 2021
Memorial Union, Room 300

Attendees: Gifty Ako-Adounvo, Mary Grace Almandrez, Lori Ciccomascolo, Erin Earle, Brian Heikes, Eileen Orabone, Jen Riley, Richard Song,

Absent: Jacquie Britto, Maling Ebrahimpour, Corey Fernandez, Michelle Fontes, Nisa Ghonem, Trish Morokoff, Martha Elena Rojas, Jacqui Springer, Annemarie Vaccaro

- Welcome
- **Approval of Minutes**
Minutes will be approved at next meeting.
- **Conversation with Dr. Cory Clark, Director of the Counseling Center**
Mary Grace introduced Cory Clark, the new director of the Counseling Center. He gave an update of some of the things that are going on at the Counseling Center. Some of the highlights were that they are in a search process right now of trying to hire three clinical positions, one with whom they have made an offer to. He also reported that he hired his first diversity hire in his new role as director and would like to continue in that direction. He also said that he has changed one of the positions in the Counseling Center to a multicultural specialist position, but the search failed a couple of times due to various reasons. There is also his former position open, and they are in the process of editing the position description to include DE&I language. He also is working on trying to be more responsive to the community, especially the diverse population including the graduate students and international student population. He talked about the challenges of the students getting the counseling services due to shortages in staff, students not being comfortable talking to the counselors and instead are more comfortable talking to their peers. Also, they received approval for getting a new contract with an outside provider to help with teletherapy appointments, as the demand for services has been very high. This will include adding a peer support network that has been shown to be highly utilized by BIPOC students. Discussion also included Cory talking about how he would like to meet with different student groups on campus to get their input on how the counseling center can support them and what they need, and how can we help educate our faculty on how they can support the students' success. He also reported that there have been a lot of students in certain departments such as Nursing and Pharmacy that come for services due to the high stress levels of their program. He said he would like to form some sort of "Let's Talk" group for students to be able to come and just connect with other students.
- **Check-in re: Action Plan Fora**
Mary Grace wanted to check in about the action plan fora meetings that have been taking place to see if there is anything that we needed to be mindful of moving forward, and how they have been going in general. She did state that she received a request from GSO to come on December 3rd to speak about the campus climate survey results. The consensus of the council was that the forums are going well, and the

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discussions were fruitful and full of good ideas, but it was noted that not everyone had read the report or the executive summary before they came to these meetings. It was also stated that in order to get some good ideas for action from students is to go to certain student organizations, because we are not getting a good turnout of students at the forums. At one of the student forums, they felt like the students were very engaged, and were very action oriented. Another concern was the staff forums did not have people from the maintenance and housekeeping areas. Mary Grace indicated that she could reach out to the people we gave the survey to in those areas and see if they would like to have a session. She also said that the President has been meeting with student groups and hearing things from them, so that could be used as data from the survey.

Mary Grace let the group know that John Stringer and Laura Beauvais would be attending our next meeting.

The next meeting is Friday, December 10th from 10 – 11:30 am at Memorial Union, Room 300.