

Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council
Minutes
February 24, 2022

Present - Chassidy Cooper, Calvin Claggett, Felipe Fiuza, Adrianna Guram, Mary Jordan, Joe Sherlin, Laura Terry, Phyllis Thompson, Rachel Walden, and Jessica Wang

Not Present - Amyre Cain, Keith Johnson, and Kim Maturo

I. Call to Order - Chassidy Cooper called the meeting to order.

II. Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by Joe Sherlin, and seconded, stating, “I move that the minutes from the January 20, 2022 meeting be approved as written with the following correction “add Felipe Fiuza as present at the meeting.” The motion carried. In keeping with open lines of communication, the approved minutes will be uploaded to the Office of Equity and Inclusion website.

III. Old Business

A. HEED Award - Chassidy Cooper shared that the online application for the 2022 HEED award is scheduled to open in early March 2022. To be considered, the application must be submitted by June 30, 2022. The award application committee continues to meet to complete the application for this award cycle.

B. Inclusive Excellence Workshop - Chassidy Cooper reported that over 70 people registered for the spring workshop. Four, two-hour sessions will be held on March 4, 11, 18, and 25. There will be two faculty/staff facilitators at each session.

C. Voice of Inclusion Award - Adrianna Guram noted that award applications were submitted in 2021 and 2022. Although we were not recognized in either year, we did receive positive affirmation to continue to submit. The data collected for the award application is also consistent with what is needed for the HEED award. Adrianna Guram thanked everyone who provided data and other information.

D. Community Voices Magazine - Tabled to next meeting.

IV. New Business

A. Women’s Resource Center - Chassidy Cooper shared that the Women’s Resource Center will be relocating to the Culp Student Center in the former Pat Robertson Pride Center location. Plans are being made for a grand kick-off and celebration program.

B. Student Membership - Adrianna Guram spoke about a possible additional student member on the council, Gladstone Gunn. He is a graduate student in the social work program and a resident director in housing and residence life. Gladstone attended ETSU as an undergrad, was a member of

the football team, active with the CPA intramural programs, and is possibly interested in work in higher education after finishing his master's degree. Adrianna Guram also shared that he is very invested in areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and believes he would be a strong student voice. She encouraged him to complete the Diversity Champion Questionnaire. Chassidy Cooper noted that his completed questionnaire will be shared with the council members for review and membership consideration at the next meeting.

C. Committee for 125 Chapter II - Table to next meeting.

D. New Funding Opportunities - Table to next meeting.

E. Open Discussion Items - Joe Sherlin shared that ETSU has three Ukrainian students. Dr. Michelle Byrd, Dean of Students has reached out to the students. She had spoken with one student who is very distraught as his hometown is being shelled and has provided academic and personal support.

Phyllis Thompson shared that there is a suicide prevention training (QPR-Question-Persuade-Refer) on March 23, 1-2:30pm sponsored by Psychology Equity and Inclusion that is available through Matthew Nock at Harvard University. Phyllis Thompson shared that she recently learned that the suicide rate for kids in Tennessee schools is 20% higher than anywhere else in the nation.

Chassidy Cooper shared the following link:

<https://velocityconvergence.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/CSJ-in-Tennessee-Higher-Education-February-2022.pdf>. The report gives an overview of the colleges in the system and highlights what their equity and inclusion offices are doing. Rachel Walden shared that the main authors of the report are three right-wing think tanks and it's a landscape of what they call Critical Social Justice in Tennessee Higher Education. Jessie Wang also encouraged council members to read the report. The language is very strong. Laura Terry, Phyllis Thompson, and Joe Sherlin recalled a past situation that had an impact on campus, academic freedom, what was taught, and how it was taught. It is worrisome due to accreditation. Several programs can't be accredited unless were engaging in issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Another concern is funding from the state to the university and funding for colleges to support their diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.

Laura Terry shared about a recent student event held in the Culp Center. All student organizations were invited to participate. One student group chose an activity that was similar to picking cotton. Many students got upset about the reference to picking cotton which they felt didn't seem at all relevant to the theme of the event. Laura Terry noted that in future engagement meetings she will ask the members to look at the possible negative effects of a theme. Joe Sherlin added that there were follow-up conversations regarding a lack of awareness with the student groups and advisors.

Chassidy Cooper shared that the ETSU Commission on Women has a meeting scheduled and she will report on that at the next meeting.

The council discussed proposed legislation <https://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/112/Bill/HB2670.pdf> related to higher education and how or should units respond. It was suggested to contact Bridget Baird, Assoc. VP for Community and Government Relations who can provide insight on working through challenging legislative matters. Also, contacting Jessica Vodden in University

Communications and Marketing to assist with writing and distribution of the communication. It was also noted that the University does have a crisis management team when a situation warrants it.

IV. Next Meeting Date – March 24, 2022, 2:00-3:00 pm, via zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 2:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Maturo