

Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council
Minutes
January 18, 2023

Present - Chassidy Cooper, Gladstone Gunn, Keith Johnson, Kim Maturo, Phyllis Thompson, Rachel Walden, and Jessica Wang

Not Present - Felipe Fiuza, Adrianna Guram, Mary Jordan, Joe Sherlin, and Laura Terry

- I. **Call to Order** - Chassidy Cooper called the meeting to order.
- II. **Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by Phyllis Thompson and seconded stating, “I move that the minutes from the November 27, 2022 meeting be approved as written. 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. **Introduction of Khia Hudgins-Smith, Diversity-Focused Counselor** – Chassidy Cooper introduced Khia Hudgins-Smith who recently joined the ETSU Counseling Center as a diversity-focused counselor.

Khia Hudgins-Smith shared her excitement with all the happenings at the counseling center to meet the needs of everyone such as students of color, transgender individuals, and international students. She wants to make sure that all groups feel seen and validated and have good experiences on campus. Khia Hudgins-Smith added that on the mental health side, she hopes to always be aware of what student population is being left out or slipping through the cracks. The Counseling Center website has information about all the groups offered through the Center.

Khia Hudgins-Smith shared that she is available to be a part of and to serve and assist the Advisory Council in the initiatives that are taking place on campus. Mental health is an important component of ensuring we are impacting people in a meaningful way.

IV. **Old Business**

- A. **Moon Shot** – Keith Johnson provided updates on the Moon Shot initiative.

Team leaders and team members for the following best practice been initiated:

1. Hold Reforms – Tom Donohue, Registrar, Committee Chair
2. Retention Grants - Dr. Michelle Byrd, Assistant Vice President SLE and Dean of Students, Committee Chair
3. Coordinated Care – Ethan Hutchinson, Assistant Director Advisement Training, Committee Chair
4. Transfer Student Experience – Sharon McGee, Dean, Graduate & Continuing Studies, Committee Chair

We are also partnering with Northeast State Community College and Walters State Community College in this endeavor.

The ETSU [Moon Shot for Equity](#) website is active.

A year long professional learning series open to all ETSU faculty and staff and our community college partners will begin in January. These sessions will be presented by the USC Equity and Race Center and each month will focus on a different racial equity topic. Registration is required for each individual session and information can be found on the Office of Equity and Inclusion website, social media, and newsletter, the University calendar, and weekly event announcements.

IV. New Business

- A. **BIPOC Support Group** – Khia Hudgins-Smith, Diversity-Focused Clinical Counselor at the Counseling Center, shared that One Voice, a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) support group will begin meeting on February 7th. The group is open to all students of color, not just black/brown, but anyone that fits into the acronym.
- B. **Annual Review of Bylaws** – Chassidy Cooper noted that the Bylaws were previously distributed to the council members for review. One recommended change was to add the word “recruitment” to Article II. Mission, first paragraph as follows: “...access, inclusion, research, and *recruitment and* retention initiatives for all faculty, staff, and students.
- C. **Organizational Changes in Office of Equity and Inclusion** – Effective January 3rd, the Multicultural Center and the Pride Center now report to the Office of Equity and Inclusion. This will better align those units with the work being done around the Moon Shot initiative.
- D. **Students of Color Symposium** – The Symposium to be held February 27th is designed to advance opportunities to create an inclusive environment within the region, highlighting the work of others who are leading the work to support students of color and retention. A goal is to strengthen networks and build a regional coalition of individuals working in equity and inclusion. Invitations to participate have been sent to 20+ institutions such as Tennessee Technology University, Western Carolina University, University of Tennessee Chattanooga and Knoxville, University of North Carolina. The colleges at ETSU have also been invited to participate.
- E. **Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference** – Keith Johnson shared that Ethan Hutchinson and Joy Fulkerson are the co-chairs for the 5th annual conference. The conference theme and dates to be announced soon.
- F. **Viewpoint Diversity Website** – In response to legislation requiring that University’s should focus more on intellectual diversity, a new website was built called [Viewpoint Diversity](#). Updates to the website can be submitted to [Chassidy Cooper](#), Coordinator for Equity and Inclusion.
- G. **Open Discussion Items**

Keith Johnson shared that: articles are being drafted for the next issue of the Community Voices Magazine and February newsletter; College of Arts and Sciences is planning an event with Delta

Theater; and a Coordinator for Equity and Inclusion has been appointed in the College of Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Sciences.

Keith Johnson shared that there will be somethings coming out of the Tennessee legislature in the near future in the area of equity, inclusion, and diversity. Bridget R. Baird, Associate Vice President for Community & Government Relations, will keep the University informed. He shared that the Governor has already stated he is not in support of the LGBTQ+ community. Keith Johnson shared that he meets with Mark Fulks, University Counsel to advise him on what he can do. He is putting things in place to support all of our people, where people want to stay.

V. **Next Meeting Date** – February 15, 2023, 1:00-2:00 pm, via zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Maturo