

Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council
Minutes
October 20, 2022

Present - Chassidy Cooper, Felipe Fiuza, Gladstone Gunn, Adrianna Guram, Keith Johnson, Mary Jordan, Kim Maturo, Phyllis Thompson, and Jessica Wang

Not Present - Amyre Cain, Joe Sherlin, Laura Terry, and Rachel Walden

- I. **Call to Order** - Chassidy Cooper called the meeting to order.
- II. **Approval of Minutes** – Approval of the September 22, 2022 meeting minutes was tabled to the next meeting.
- III. **Introduction of Dr. Kevin Brooks, Director of Multicultural Center/Student Access and Success** – Members of the advisory council introduces themselves and welcomed Kevin Brooks to ETSU. Kevin Brooks shared that he was recently at Michigan State University where he was the academic specialist for diversity and civic engagement. He has experience in both academic affairs and student affairs. His professorship was around health and well-being and Black and Africana Studies. Kevin Brooks shared that he is concerned about student and employee well-being and puts a lot of energy into this area.
- IV. **Old Business**
 - A. **Moon Shot** – Keith Johnson updated the council members on the Moon Shot for Equity initiative at ETSU. Dr. Noland did address Moon Shot in his recent State of the University address. Part of the ecosystem of Moon Shot is partnerships: industry partnerships, community college partnerships, and ETSU partnerships. He shared that he meet with Eastman Chemical Company and they are on board with the University’s direction in this area. They asked how they could financially support this initiative. He is working with them to bring the community colleges on board as the community colleges are financially struggling due to a significant decrease in enrollment.

Keith Johnson will attend an EAB Connected22 conference in early November to participate in hands-on workshops to learn about EAB technologies. He is working with Northeast State and Walter State Community Colleges regarding participation in this conference.

Based on the results of the diagnostic survey that was recently completed, there are some areas within the fifteen best practices that the University will start immediately. The steering committee will meet to discuss and finalize.

Keith Johnson recently met with a representative of the University of Southern California’s Equity Center to discuss the Shaun Harper DEI training with ETSU and the community colleges in January 2023.

Keith Johnson has been meeting with Dr. Noland to discuss adding another position to the Office of Equity and Inclusion to manage the Moon Shot project and other projects like the annual conference, black male student initiatives, and black faculty/staff recruiting.

Keith Johnson noted that the current retention rate of underrepresented students is a bit higher than before. The current number of underrepresented students is arguably the largest diverse population ever at ETSU. The key to all of this is collaboration across the whole campus, everyone has a role in the process.

- B. Voice of Inclusion Award** – Chassidy Cooper informed the council that the award application has been submitted. She thanked Adrianna Guram and Christa Reid from the Multicultural Center for their assistance in applying for the award. Adrianna Guram noted that she also include a few of the letters of support from the prior year's submission.

IV. New Business

- A. SREB Institute on Teaching and Mentoring** – Chassidy Cooper shared that she and a few others from campus would be attending the 2022 SREB Institute on Teaching and Mentoring Conference in Atlanta, October 27th-30th. This conference is one of the largest gatherings of doctoral scholars and is a diversity recruiting event.
- B. Funds for Students** – Keith Johnson spoke about funding requests received by the Office of Equity and Inclusion from students, faculty, and staff. These requests can be an emergency request from a student so they aren't dropped from classes or helping fund a graduate assistant to attend a conference. Many times these requests are made last minute. The Office of Equity and Inclusion has limited funds. The funds a student needs cannot always be fully provided by the Office of Equity and Inclusion. Keith Johnson shared that he reaches out to other units on campus to assist in the funding efforts. Students are unfamiliar with all the potential places for funding. Students learn about funding opportunities from the Office of Equity and Inclusion through many sources such as Financial Aid, the Bursar's Office, the Dean of Students, the President's Office, and other students. Before funds are issued, students must complete the required request for support form (application) and research by the Office of Equity and Inclusion is done to verify and determine the actual needs of the student. Adrianna Guram recommended that the request forms be placed on the Office of Equity and Inclusion website for easy access by students and others.

Keith Johnson discussed identifying the gaps, developing a list of places students can contact to request financial support, engaging students in the groundwork to apply for funds, and enlisting council members to review and make recommendations on requests for support to better serve the students. Phyllis Thompson added that rotating an on-call advisory council member each month to assist with review, research, and determination would be a way to operationalize the bylaws of the council.

Adrianna Guram shared that there is a Buccaneer Student Crisis Fund to assist currently enrolled students who experience extenuating circumstances and a Bucs for Books Scholarship Fund for students experiencing extenuating circumstances. University staff review applications on a regular and ongoing basis.

Phyllis Thompson noted that graduate students can join the Graduate and Professional Student Association and apply for transportation funds to attend a conference. Honors College also has transportation funds available for undergraduate students. Clemmer College, with the assistance of Jessie Wang, has discretionary funds and several scholarships available to students.

C. Open Discussion Items

Chassidy Cooper shared about the upcoming Inclusive Excellence Workshop taking place in November 2022. Registration is open and sessions will take place on November 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th. Keith Johnson asked the council members to share this information within their departments.

Jessica Wang shared about the Tennessee Educator of Color Alliance. She is working with Adam Dixon to bring this Alliance to Northeast Tennessee which is in every area of Tennessee except the northeast. The Clemmer College relaunched its Strive Student of Color Leadership Program. The mentoring program has been revised to be more holistic rather than focusing just on mentoring. A first-generation mentoring program is kicking off in January where first-generation students are matched with first-generation faculty/staff in the College.

Adrianna Guram shared that she and Stacy Onks meet via zoom with Tennessee Tech to discuss some of their equity and inclusion efforts. She expects some ongoing learning to be connected to what took place during the annual conference.

Phyllis Thompson added that the WGSS Notable Women of ETSU recipients this year are Dr. Cerrone Foster and Dr. Mary Mullins. The ceremony is on November 16th via Zoom.

Felipe Fiuza announced signed a second book contract called *Interpretations* to be published by Finishing Line Press, an editor that aims at publishing underrepresented groups. A fundraiser to benefit the Ardis L Nelson Scholarship/Language and Cultural Resource Center will be held at Brassi51. Felipe Fiuza will forward flyers to council members for sharing.

V. Next Meeting Date – November 17, 2022, 1:00-2:00 pm, via zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Maturo