

Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council
Minutes
October 26, 2021

Present - Chassidy Cooper, Calvin Claggett, Adrianna Guram, Keith Johnson, Mary Jordan, Kim Maturo, Joe Sherlin, Laura Terry, Phyllis Thompson, Rachel Walden, and Jessica Wang

Not Present - Amyre Cain and Felipe Fiuza

- I. **Call to Order** - Chassidy Cooper called the meeting to order.
- II. **Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by Adrianna Guram, and seconded, stating, “I move that the minutes from the September 28, 2021 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. **Old Business** - Chassidy Cooper shared that the Equity and Inclusion data/campus climate data will be published on the Equity and Inclusion website by November 5, 2021.

Keith Johnson encouraged council members to attend the Town Hall for the Committee for 125 Chapter II to be provided with a progress report and to be provided an opportunity to become engaged in the strategic visioning process.

IV. **New Business**

A. **Office of Equity and Inclusion Video** - The council watched a “Meet the Office of Equity and Inclusion” video that is currently posted on the home page of the Office of Equity and Inclusion website.

B. **Inclusive Excellence through Cultural Competency** - Chassidy Cooper reported that workshops would begin in spring 2022. Six facilitators have been identified with two or three cohorts.

C. **Voices of Inclusion Award** - Adrianna Guram gave a brief recap of the ACPA Voices of Inclusion Award and the 2020 application submission. The submission was a synopsis of a variety of different areas of the institution that were doing diversity, equity, and inclusion work. The 2021 application, which will contain similar information, is due November 1st. She asked the council members if they have a programming initiative or some assessment data easily available, please forward it to her. Phyllis Thompson shared that she has information centered on the trauma-informed institute and women’s gender and sexuality program. Keith Johnson added that athletics is working on a strategic plan. Rachel Walden recommended adding information about the new Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion, College of Arts and Sciences. The big events that point to assisting with student retention and campus climate issues could be relevant because it shows impact. Keith Johnson spoke about having a place to bring all this information together in the future,

creating a rubric for assessing what we do in equity and inclusion on campus and being able to pull the data when we need it.

D. HEED Award - Keith Johnson stated that getting the HEED award is kind of like a seal saying that we do some things right regarding equity and inclusion. It is not necessarily our goal, but a byproduct of what we do on campus. HEED does provide us with some guidelines in terms of what an organization's perception should exist on campus. He shared that he aligned the strategic plan with the HEED application. There are a few holes to fill such as using contractors and companies with diverse populations. He is working with the President's office in this area.

Keith Johnson would like to put a system in place for the entire campus to be able to document all the equity and inclusion work being done. There also needs to be a continuous improvement process to show how we are going from point A to point B. Addressing questions such as, how the annual conference impacted the campus, how do the lunch and learns impact us, and how have the inclusive excellence workshops impact the campus. An evaluation process/assessment piece needs to be developed to show if these programs are working.

A HEED application team comprised of a cross-section of individuals from across campus will begin meeting soon to begin the comprehensive look at what needs to be done to complete the application. Keith Johnson shared that his initial contact with these individuals he provided information (application link) to assist them in determining their ability to commit to the work and time involved. Others will be added to the team as needed. Chassidy Cooper is the designated point person for this committee.

Keith Johnson added that he would like to put together an annual report for the office that aligns with the data collection, continuous improvement process, etc.

E. Community Voices Magazine - The next level of communication for the Office of Equity and Inclusion will be a magazine. The magazine lines up with the strategic goal of developing and strengthening partnerships with diverse communities locally, regionally, nationally, and globally. Elizabeth Cloyd, who has taught in the engineering and technology, technical communications courses and assists with editing the monthly newsletter, has volunteered to be the editor of the magazine. The magazine will focus on connecting with the community, feature students, diverse foods/recipes, equity and inclusion in medicine and music, resource guides, etc. The goal is to have the first issue ready at the beginning of the spring semester.

F. Advisory Council Membership/Engagement - Keith Johnson noted that membership terms will be expiring for several council members at the end of the academic year 2022. The bylaws allow members to rotate off after three years or choose to stay for another three-year term. He does not want members to feel like they have to stay on the council. Roles and responsibilities in everyone's day-to-day responsibilities change. He encourages members to make deliberate decisions based on how they want to contribute.

G. Open Discussion Items - Keith Johnson spoke about the first strategic plan 2020-2022, which is about implementing things that have a specific purpose and building a good foundation. The next strategic plan will be different as it builds upon the foundation of strategy and structure and heads toward focusing on culture.

Dates have been set for the 4th Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference which will be held September 27th-29th. Adrianna Guram and Stacy Onks will co-chair the conference. Adrianna Guram shared a few challenges that were identified during the conference debrief meeting. These include students struggling with the decision to attend class or go to the conference; the lack of notifying students on how to access recordings post-conference; how to embed the conference in the curriculum; and expectations for recruiting student participation.

Keith Johnson added that next year's conference would have a more far-reaching marketing strategy. Other institutions such as UVA Wise, Western Carolina, and Appalachian State have contacted him expressing an interest in collaborating and guiding them in their DEI efforts. The goal will be to make the next conference a better model, more efficient, more convenient for students, increase faculty engagement, promote through athletics, hold watch parties, possibly offer different levels of registration, and host a hybrid conference.

Adrianna Guram added that the conference should be a springboard for future purposeful activities/events with participants seeing the interconnections across campus. She also spoke about the viewing of a film in the spring *I'm Not Racist Am I*, a documentary about confronting racism.

Keith Johnson shared that he is involved in the initial planning stages with the Honors College of bringing Larry Thornton, an African American businessperson, artist, servant leader, and author to campus. Larry Thornton is the owner of several McDonald's restaurants, sits on the board of Coca-Cola, and wrote the book *Why Not Win*. The planning also includes a student exchange program with an HBCU.

Rachel Walden is working on getting Dorothy Roberts to speak to campus via a virtual event. She is a scholar and social justice advocate who wrote the book, *Killing the Black Body*, which is about racism and how it affects reproduction, especially in black women from slavery to modern times. She has secured some funding through the SGA and working on obtaining additional funds from other colleges/units on campus for a speaking engagement in February 2022.

Kim Maturo noted that in January 2022 the TBR will announce dates for submitting access and diversity grant proposals; SERS (Student Engagement and Retention Success) and OER (Open Educational Resources). All proposals should be reviewed by the Office of Equity and Inclusion grant review committee before submission.

V. Next Meeting Date – November 23, 2021, 1:00-2:00 pm, via zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Maturo