

Faculty Senate Diversity and Inclusion Committee Report
September 13, 2022
Submitted by: M. Nathalie Hristov, Chair

The committee met for the first time at the Faculty Senate retreat on Friday, August 19, 2022. Agenda items included goals for the upcoming academic year and scheduling future meetings. We decided that the best course of action was to send out a Doodle poll to determine everyone's availability. Finding an hour when everyone could meet was challenging, so it was decided that we would schedule a meeting 1.5 hours in duration that would allow some members to participate for the first 45 minutes, while other could participate during the latter 45 minutes of the meeting. Our first meeting will take place via Zoom on Wednesday, September 14, 2022 from 1:15pm-2:45pm. A summary of goals and objectives identified by both the committee and the Faculty Senate leadership are listed below.

Protections for diversity and inclusion

- Protect diversity and inclusion efforts and programs on campus;
- Allow for and support the collection of data in terms of campus climate for underrepresented classes;
- Devise policies to protect underrepresented faculty who may be the subject of discriminatory practices/profiling by providing "indemnification" for those faithfully fulfilling their duties.
- Employ a fulltime Diversity Officer for each college division that reports to the Vice Chancellor of Diversity and Engagement¹

Commented [MOU1]: Part of the FS D&I committee's ongoing advocacy and accountability oversight role.

Commented [MOU2]: An important Divisional initiative to support.

Commented [MOU3]: Part of the FS D&I committee's ongoing advocacy and accountability oversight role.

Commented [MOU4]: An important item/measure/goal to strategically push for in collaboration with the Division over the next two years, given the expanded role of Deans under the new BAM budget model and this leadership team's commitment to advocacy on DEI-related matters.

Improve Campus Climate

- Provide funding for mental health access; hire counselors with training and experience in working with diverse populations, particularly those of the LGBTQ+ community²
- Ideally, we would like to see a Counseling Center that may be accessed by faculty, staff, and students where the staff are trained in trans-inclusive, gender, int'l, ethnic, etc.
- Development affordable and safe housing options for LGBTQ+ community³
- Address other "areas of improvement" identified by the Campus Pride Index.

Commented [MOU5]: These are items that I think the FS D&I committee can advocate for immediately by pushing up through FS Exec. Committee and out to the whole FS general body.

¹ The reason we suggest this position report to Tyvi Small is to avoid a conflict of interest within a college or division, so that strengths and weaknesses of a college's efforts can be objectively evaluated.

² Identified in "areas of opportunity" by the latest Campus Pride Index
<https://www.campusprideindex.org/campuses/details/197?campus=university-of-tennessee>

Dual career??

***Diane Kelly reported via email, “we supported approximately 10 faculty spousal hires last year. We honor all types of relationships and apply the most inclusive interpretation of “spouse.” Because we are the Provost’s Office, we support faculty spousal hires and not staff. Faculty are hired through the search exemption process and I am not sure what the equivalent would be for staff or if there is as much flexibility with those hires.”⁴

Recruitment, Retention, and Work Satisfaction of Underrepresented Minorities

Fair distribution of workload, merit, opportunities for advancement.

Mentoring of diverse faculty for retention; develop a website that features new minorities/networking opportunities on campus and external to the University; Commission for Blacks, AAPI Commission, Commission for LGBTQ+, Commission for Women: we need a mechanism to share information on research, surveys, programs, and other activities to reduce duplication of effort and more effectively support each other.

Increase mandated STRIDE training sessions; make training more inclusive of all communities (gender, race, sexual orientation, national origin, etc.)

Suggest certified personnel to serve as bias/compliance member on faculty search committees; oversee that recruitment efforts target underrepresented communities.

*** have received complaints that Interfolio hinders this effort by excluding common, discipline-based recruitment/employment portals (a September 12, 2022 email from Vice-Provost Diane Kelly responded to this comment to say that some discipline based recruitment portals do not comply with OED and EEO standards).

Commented [MOU6]: Overall, this is an area where I think FS D&I can support existing efforts in the Division and encourage the university to implement existing reports [i.e., the 2018 Diversity Champion Report, which offers best practices for recruiting and retaining diverse faculty, and/or the ACE Report on Mitigating Invisible and Emotional Labor] and/or to further improve and mandate existing training, such as STRIDE.

⁴ Email from Vice-Provost Kelly, September 12, 2022.