

Committee for Fairness, Equity, and Inclusion (CFEI) Minutes

Minutes for December 9, 2020

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Meeting conducted via Zoom:

Present: Mark Allison, Irina Aristarkhova (Chair), Barry Belmont, Yi-Su Chen, Jason Kosnoski, Nicolai Lehnert, Holly Sorscher, Carmen Stokes, Karen Thomas-Brown, Sarah Williams

Absent: Carolyn Kuranz, Dinesh Pal, Alys Piesley, Yazier Henry, Sara Ahbel-Rappe (SACUA Liaison), Anne Cong-Huyen

11:01 Chair Aristarkhova called the meeting to order.

The group discussed the One University Resolution proposed by member Kosnoski. It was noted that SACUA suggested that anything concrete should start out in CFEI before moving forward.

One University requests ongoing support rather than one distribution. The Michigan Go Blue was rejected because funds are needed. A continual commitment is desired. They are talking to some of the Regents. It was stated that there is a new Regent, and that her agenda is not aligned with the One University initiative.

It was suggested to add the goals as in the One University platform. The Resolution confirms support the goals of One University.

It was noted that the Michigan Go Blue guarantee does not include Flint and Dearborn. It was argued that inequality between the campuses should be addressed, and that people need to be made aware of the issue. It was acknowledged that the goals of the One University platform are evolving. Member Kosnoski will add specific language about the Michigan Go Blue Guarantee to the Resolution.

It was stated that the resolution speaks to inclusivity.

Member Kosnoski is willing to present the resolution to SACUA. The revised Resolution in Support of One University Campaign carried with 10 votes.

Resolution in Support of One University Campaign

WHEREAS the University of Michigan is in a very robust financial position, with an endowment of \$12.4 billion, a AAA rating from Moody's, and an ability to establish a line of credit of \$1 billion within days of a sudden crisis, and at least \$3.5 billion in expendable, unrestricted funds,

WHEREAS the University of Michigan's Dearborn and Flint campuses serve a large proportion of the university's low-income students, first-generation students, as well as students of color,

WHEREAS the Regents have already approved \$10-20 million for the University of Michigan's Dearborn and Flint campuses in the 2020-2021 budget.

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BE IT RESOLVED, the University of Michigan University Senate Committee on Fairness, Equity and Inclusion endorses the continued support of the goals of the One University campaign and the extension of funding beyond that already allocated. We specifically endorse the extension of the Go Blue Guarantee and increasing funding from the Ann Arbor campus to extend DEI initiatives on Flint and Dearborn campuses.

11:25 A discussion took place about the meaning of inclusivity

Chair Aristarkhova reviewed the input received on the Google doc.

Chair Aristarkhova asked if the committee would like to have Rob Sellers visit. A potential topic could include what is being done in relation to inclusivity, and what units are being asked to do to address this.

Action items were discussed. What would the committee like the university to do?

Establishment of professorships was discussed. It was asked how this translates to people feeling included for faculty, students, and staff. How can the committee add to this?

What kind of questions to people have? How can the committee help in relationship to inclusivity?

Member Thomas-Brown identified requiring hiring practices that support inclusion. She also suggested ensuring through Rob Sellers' office that hiring committees are made aware of biases and are trained to recognize biases to improve hiring practices.

Chair Aristarkhova noted that search committee members are required to go to training, which includes DEI awareness. An inquiry was made about whether training is mandated. It was noted that some senior faculty continuously undermine DEI efforts. DEI language in annual reviews may be helpful.

It was noted that accountability is needed. Colleges approve hires. It was questioned whether lists are required to be sent to the dean's office before hiring. Diversity also includes moving from accountability to consequence. What are consequences for not acting with inclusivity and equity in mind? What are the consequences when someone is not inclusive? What are acceptable behaviors?

It was argued that a college could reject a recommended list, and that the department should need to give a formal justification. Training by itself is inadequate.

A member inquired about when you look at the leadership in colleges and units, whether there is diversity. Representation should be reflective of the community. DEI may focus more on diversity rather than on inclusion.

Diversity = representation – this is mandated and facilitated.

Inclusion was compared to infrastructure – everyone should feel like they belong and are supported. This needs to be cultivated.

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A middle ground would be to incentivize and reward diversity rather than provide consequences.

It was noted that best practices from other institutions would be helpful, and that students should be included in the conversation, such as student leaders who can speak to the climate in Ann Arbor.

Member Stokes gave an example that when interviewing for a head coach, they must interview an African American. This can be approached at times with a check the box mentality. The myth needs to be dismantled that someone was invited for this purpose – all people invited to the table are qualified.

An example at UI Urbana-Champaign was described where funds are put into the hiring process. This institution was suggested as a potential institution to look to for best practices. There must be a justification for rejecting a diverse candidate.

It was noted that Prop 2 banned affirmative action. It was argued that Prop 2 should not stop the practice of making sure a certain percentage of diverse candidates are included on a final candidate list. The first step is getting people here for interviews. It is helpful to need to justify why a diverse candidate is rejected.

Member Allison noted that search committees can ask a candidate what they have done in terms of diversity. Most candidates do not have anything to show, but they will make it to the short list. If a candidate cannot indicate what steps they have taken to promote DEI, they should not be considered further. This is an important skillset. Private companies would not hire this way.

[Tableau report](#) came out last night – this includes all demographics of all three campuses.

Members were encouraged to bring positive examples to the next meeting. For example, dentistry faculty are active and will not hire a dean who is not strong in DEI. What are incentives for people?

Chair Aristarkhova encouraged members to continue adding feedback to google doc. Members should think about other items to discuss.

Member Kosloski will work on bringing the resolution to SACUA.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00