



Student Relations Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

October 15, 2021

Circulated: November 17, 2021

Approved: November 19, 2021

Present: Harish Ganesh (Chair), Michael Atzmon (SACUA Liaison), Simon Cushing, Helen Look, Laura MacLatchy, Jeannie Moody Novak, Jessica Pasquale, Amanda Peters, Monica Porter,

Absent: Ashley Gerhardt, Charlie Koopmann, Xiomara Santamarina, Yaacov Ritov

Administrative: Martino Harmon, Jennifer Schrage, MaryJo Banasik, Pam Morris, Elizabeth Devlin

Guests: Will Sherry, Interim Director of Strategic Initiatives and Director of the Spectrum Center

Chair Ganesh called the meeting to order at 11:35am and asked committee members to review the agenda and September 17, 2021, meeting minutes for approval. There being no changes the minutes were approved. Chair Ganesh indicated that the responses to the questions brought forth by SAUCA Liaison Atzmon were available in the minutes and encouraged members to review them.

Chair Ganesh welcomed the committee members. He let the committee know that the meeting would be recorded to provide this information to the student representatives who will join the committee at the next meeting.

Student Life Update: *Martino Harmon, Vice President for Student Life*

VP Harmon meet with the president and vice president of CSG to stress the importance of student representatives on the committee. He anticipates that students will be assigned soon.

VP Harmon introduced the committee to their guest speaker, Will Sherry, who serves as the Director of the Spectrum Center, Chair of the Student Engagement Task Force and who was recently named Interim Director of Student life. His focus is major student life initiatives such as DEI work and student engagement.

VP Harmon gave an overview of recent Student Life events, including parents' weekend and the 50th anniversary of the Spectrum Center. Planning for winter events is underway taking into consideration COVID protocols as events move indoors.

VP Harmon shared that there is a labor shortage in housing, dining, and the mail center which normally employs students. Student life is currently advertising open positions and increasing wages.

Priority Agenda Topic: *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion & Student Engagement Update*

Will Sherry, Interim Director of Strategic Initiatives and Director of the Spectrum Center

- Overview of FY 21 DEI impact report & SL's FY22 DEI Goals



- Review of Student Engagement Task Force Accomplishments & Insights

Q & A/Member Discussion

As you consider student life's mission and core work alongside your experiences within and outside of the classroom, what are some critical areas of focus to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion at Michigan?

Committee members commented and discussed what they have observed regarding DEI initiatives which included the following:

- Implicit/unconscious bias training – students are less tolerant of hearing opposing viewpoints.
 - Will Sherry indicated that there are some trainings that are available and some mandatory for students and will provide the committee with those resources that are available to students, faculty, and staff.
- Clear communications on where resources are available.
- A committee member shared the creation of a new position for a trained social worker that will be shared by three departments. This position will offer support to students that faculty are not trained to do.
- Resources for administrators on how to react or facilitate a conversation when incidents occur.
- Creating an inclusive environment for economically challenged students
 - Will Sherry shared with the committee the collaborative initiatives with the Office of Enrollment and Student Life that works specifically with first generation and economically challenged students.
 - VP Harmon indicated that this is highlighted by the work of the Student Engagement Task Force that helps students make connections.
- The committee members asked what technology or apps have been used to encourage student engagement.
 - Instagram is a popular platform to share resources, Discord has been used at the LGBTQ Center and across queer students at UM, Eastern and WCC.
- Responsible use of social media might be a topic for future discussion.
- Trauma informed approaches when engaging with students is another topic.

Next Steps:

Will Sherry will provide the committee with a list of resources for the implicit bias training and resources available on campus.

Will Sherry will look into the student organization www.welistenusa.org to check if this student organization is still active.

VP Harmon thanked Will Sherry for his work, and he thanked the committee for their engagement in the discussion topics and questions.

The meeting adjourned at 12:55pm.

Respectfully submitted

Elizabeth Devlin

Faculty Governance Coordinator, Faculty Senate Office