

Committee for Fairness, Equity, and Inclusion (CFEI)

Minutes of Meeting: 10/18/23

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Approved: 11/15/23

Present: Caitlin Finlayson (Chair), Michael Atzmon, Daniel Burns, Amir Eldan, Yongqing Li, Loyd Mbabu, Nilton Rennó, Bénédicte Veillet, Matthew Castilho, Ryan Yip

Absent: Simon Cushing (SACUA Liaison), Stefanus Jasin, Brandon Bond

Faculty Senate Office: Eric Vandenberghe

9:03am-9:05am: Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The agenda was approved. The minutes for the September CFEI meeting were approved. Brief introductions were made for those who had not attended the first meeting.

9:05am-9:39am: Consider Committee Charge #1: Revisit the existing criteria for appointment and promotion within the various tracks, while considering whether current DEI efforts should be better incorporated.

Summary: The Chair introduced the topic to gauge the committee interest in pursuing this topic. There is a general consensus that this issue should be pursued by the committee.

A suggestion was made to prioritize raising awareness of the benefits of pursuing DEI-centered work. Another member mentioned the need for focus on making DEI work beneficial to faculty promotion and tenure. There are often one or two people in units who are given DEI assignments, and it is important to spread this important work out among colleagues. It is important that those faculty who choose to meaningfully engage in this work are properly rewarded for their endeavors.

A question is raised about how to ensure that value is provided to both research and DEI efforts. The DEI effort cannot be required as its own separate path of work; it needs to be incorporated into the existing paths of research, teaching, and service. Promotion and tenure requirement documents could be updated to incorporate DEI language.

A member mentioned that their unit does a good job focusing on promoting DEI efforts, but recognized that other units may not be at the same level. Should there be a University-wide effort to improve tenure and promotion language, or can it vary unit to unit? It ultimately should not vary, and should be consistent across units.

A point was made that it is important that DEI work is seen as an inclusive activity. It does not come up in every faculty member's work. It should not be valued in one place more than others. DEI work should also not be mandatory. This can create disingenuous work, completed simply to "check a box." We want to avoid this.

How do we enact positive change? Awareness is mentioned as a priority. Providing a list of



possible activities one could engage in could be a beneficial option. Any recommendations would need to be moved up the chain to SACUA, and from there to the administration. The committee would need to justify the alterations and inserted language to ensure it has the best chance to be implemented.

Next steps: Committee members are asked to add ideas to the Working Google Doc. This will be reviewed at the next meeting. How will we incorporate DEI inclusive language into the 3 categories of tenure and promotion?

Action: Discussion

9:39am-10:02am: Initial discussion of Charge#3 and how we wish to proceed: Renew efforts to pursue a tri-campus fellowship proposal, which would support faculty teaching and/or research in a department or unit on one of the other two campuses

Summary: The Chair provided context for the tri-campus fellowship proposal. She provided information on when it was being worked on, what the priorities were, and areas where it can be improved now.

A primary component of the proposal is having freer movement of faculty between the three University of Michigan campuses. Each faculty member who participated in this program could find benefits, as each campuses has unique opportunities and resources.

Logistical issues of this proposal were discussed. The faculty member's salary would remain the same. Teaching assignments pose different challenges on each campus and in each unit.

How is this going to be funded? There was buy-in initially by administration pre-pandemic; it will need to be presented to them again to generate support. It was originally an initiative from the Ann Arbor Provost's Office.

Next Steps: Committee members are asked to add comments to the old file to suggest improvements. A meeting with administration would be the end goal. Once initial ideas are determined, having a few members spearhead the effort may be a path the committee decides to take.

Action: Discussion

10:02am: Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Vandenberghe
Faculty Governance Coordinator
Faculty Senate Office