

Senate Diversity Committee Meeting

September 8, 2016

3-4:30 pm

**In Attendance:** Alice Fairfield, Maria Luz Fernandez (Chair), Pam Heath-Johnston, Guillermo Irizarry, Pat Jepson, Joelle Murchison. Lisa Pane, Willena R. Price, Christina Rivera, Lisa W. Rozas, Pamela Schipani, Susana Ulloa, John Zack.

1. The meeting started at 3 pm. After introductions, the whole meeting was focused on welcoming Joelle Murchison to the University and to the Senate Diversity Committee. During the meeting Joelle shared with us some of the initiatives that she will be working on as the new Diversity Officer. Her work will be focused on diverse issues that involve students, faculty and staff. She is also interested in reaching to the other UConn campuses, which the Committee thought was a great idea.
2. The Committee discussed with her the issues of recruitment/retention associated with faculty and staff and explained that the problem is not so severe in the case of students. Joelle shared that there would be an open forum for students to discuss some of the events that occurred during the summer that were upsetting the students. The forum was to be conducted with the central question “what is in your mind”. Joelle also asked the questions, what do we want for the students in terms of diversity and inclusion? And also what are UConn’s expectations for the students when they graduate in terms of recognizing diversity as a core value? The Committee thought those questions to be at the center of diversity awareness for the student body.
3. Joelle also shared that she met with Elizabeth Conklin from the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) and explained to us that both offices will have very distinct functions. For example diversity training will now be part of Joelle’s office and not part of OIE. OIE will be more in charge of compliance and in providing institutional data regarding diversity. Also the Different Cultural Centers at UConn now report to Joelle. Joelle also indicated that she will be speaking to the Senate on November 7.
4. In the next meeting, people will talk about what important diversity agendas, they want to undertake in the Academic year 2016-2017. The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm

Respectfully submitted

Maria Luz Fernandez, PhD  
Chair, Senate Diversity Committee