

MINUTES
SENATE DIVERSITY COMMITTEE
OCT. 5, 2020

In attendance: Margaret Rubega, Willena Kimpson Pierce, Aida Silva, Christina Irizarry, Julie Guild, Kimberly McKeown, George McManus Anastasios Tzingounis, Likhita Athina, Shardé Davis, David Embrick, Milagros Castillo-Montoya, Sandeep Mishra, Stephany Santos, Diane Lillo-Martin, Clarissa Ceglie, Clewiston Challenger, Thomas Bontly Micki McElya and Maryann Markowski

M. Rubega called meeting to order at 10:02am

1. Approval of the minutes of the Sept. 14, 2020 meeting
 - a. Some errors were addressed
 - i. Title for Julie Guild needs to be changed
 - ii. Sandeep Mishra senior programmer analyst
 - b. Minutes were approved
2. Report from Chair: feedback from Senate Exec Committee on our name and charge
 - a. Low interest in meeting with senate executive committee – we will not schedule
 - b. We can provide motion to rename committee charge, should draft
 - c. Move on to discussing issues ourselves and deal with writing charge
3. Presentation: Shardé Davis, David Embrick, Milagros Castillo-Montoya on their report to the university administration about structural racism at UConn
 - a. Shardé Davis provided background information on the development of the faculty of color and staff of color council and the 1 credit Anti-Black Racism course
 - i. A racist incident that occurred on campus resulted in a student led protest; that led them to discuss the issue of the disconnection between faculty of color and students of color at the faculty of color writing retreat hosted by Milagros
 - ii. In effort to build community, the first faculty and staff of color townhall was held on December 2019
 - iii. The faculty of color and staff of color each had its own affinity group
 - iv. Second townhall was held in February 2020 and composed an executive report
 - v. Presented to the President Katsouleas in March
 - b. Milagros Castillo-Montoya
 - i. Addressed the community goal which was to understand the issues that faculty, staff and student are grappling with and that need to be brought to the president's attention
 - ii. Created an operating group to hold the institution accountable for change
 - iii. A report synthesized the outcomes of the townhall and the ideas that were developed to remedy those issues
 - iv. Gave President the report in March and he asked for a more directed plan for how he should address the issues
 - v. A 11-point plan working toward racial equality was developed
 - c. David Embrick

- i. Addressed the issues of diversity on campus
 - ii. Discussed that UConn, as a historically white college, needs to address inclusivity.
 - iii. The main issue is that universities address issues of prejudice and bigotry on the individual level but deflect institutionalizing structural changes
 - iv. We need to address why there is not representations of color on campus
 - v. Emphasized that the 1 credit course is not a solution as the course is not enough to cover the issues
 - vi. The course allows an introduction of the issues of racism on campus and allows great faculty to introduce resources to students and hopefully lead to more courses
- d. Shardé gave a brief overview what still needs to addressed
 - i. 1 credit class is not sufficient to address the issues.
 - ii. There is a need to institutionalize it in the future
 - iii. Committed to getting councils of staff and faculty institutionalized
 - iv. Deciding what entity will be in charge of the 1 credit class
- e. Questions/comments
 - i. **Sandeep**
 - 1. Actively participated in second team staff of color committee
 - 2. Executive summary timelines starting Fall 2020 and Spring 2020. Are we keeping up with the timelines?
 - a. 11 points are taken from the executive summary to give president a concrete plan
 - b. Next meeting, the president and provost will be addressing those 11 points
 - 3. Is faculty and staff of color council in effect currently?
 - a. Meeting to discuss townhalls for Fall 2020 and Spring 2021
 - b. Not in effect
 - c. Continuing the conversation with Provost
 - d. The idea is to have the Faculty of color housed in the provost office
 - ii. Stephany
 - 1. What does “of color” mean?
 - a. All racism roots from Antiracism
 - 2. Fourth person involved that left UConn, have you looked into why people are leaving?
 - a. The issue is that there is no systematic approach for exit interviews
 - b. Left due to racism and microaggression being overlooked
 - iii. Likhita
 - 1. Have you considered starting a mentorship program between BiPOC students and faculty and staff?
 - a. Not discussed yet
 - b. Make sure issues are institutionalized

2. What do you think could be a more substantial fix than a 1 credit course?
 - a. We need to engage in conversations about racism
 - b. Need to address structural issues and institutional racism
- iv. Clarissa
1. Possible to have a copy of the plan?
 - a. 11 Point was emailed
 - b. Milagros coauthored a report on the analysis of faculty and students of color and compared it to national data to see where UConn stands
 - c. Faculty of color are important for students because an institutions' failure to support faculty affects students
 2. Mandate from President that each college to develop their own diversity, equity and inclusion plan. Are colleges doing this?
- v. Julie
1. Update on staff
 - a. Understand the faculty issues are probably too often prioritized over staff and for that reason part of the conversation was whether or not faculty and staff should have separate councils
 2. Staff of color council could be housed in Human Resources
- vi. Thomas
1. Reached out to AUUP? Can I reach out to executive committee for them to offer help?
 - a. Will find a way to support efforts
- vii. Clewiston
1. 1 credit course is not enough and there is a lack of acceptance
 2. Part of the issue is that students come from different backgrounds
 3. Prejudice, bias and student racism is systematic and institutionalized
- viii. Aida
1. Been in this committee for a long time and the same issues come and one solution does not fit all issues. Other issues need to be addressed
- ix. Maryann
1. Wondering if and how you have considered additional level of challenge for the sector of staff participating. Rarely have the opportunity to support a course or take on a project. Staff are not empowered to define their own workload. How will staff run the council?
 - a. Staff feels constrained, had more challenges when they will be able to participate do to control over their workload
 - b. They merit more attention
- x. Margaret

1. What is your top priority for what this committee can do to support?
 - a. Course that was codeveloped, the course is not required, should it be?
 - b. Should there be antiblack curriculum?
 - c. Hope this committee can institutionalize the class so that students don't graduate without experience or background in racial equality
4. Discussion:
 - a. incident at Spirit Rock; Senate, President's response?
 - i. The Spirit Rock was painted over with "all lives matter" by an outsider who was not faculty, staff or student
 - ii. Faculty is concerned with the response being inadequate because no official statement was made
 - iii. President addressed the issue with a single tweet
 - iv. Senate never voted on condemning the racist action
 - b. Action items
 - i. Aida – something needs to be done in regards to student safety
 - ii. Sandeep – the rock should not be treated a different than a building or university property
 - iii. Need to meet with the president or office to discuss why the incident was not addressed
5. Other business
 - a. Willena on the African American Center
 - i. Friday night 6pm, the African American center is having a fall festival
 - ii. President and other notable people attended last week's event
 - iii. Need to continue to encourage students and faculty to attend events
 - b. Senate Diversity Committee
 - i. We need subcommittees since once a month, one-hour meetings is not enough time to address issues
 - ii. Need a platform to support committee
 1. Consider using Microsoft Teams to store documents and files and conduct meetings
 - iii. Plan going forward:
 1. What should our charge be?
 2. Should the 1 credit course be required?

Meeting adjourned at 11:34am

Chat from Meeting

10/05/2020 09:56:09 AM from willena price to Everyone:
Willena Kimpson Price

10/05/2020 09:56:36 AM from Aida Silva (internal) to Everyone: Aida Silva

10/05/2020 09:58:08 AM from Likhitadevi Athina to Everyone:
Likhita

10/05/2020 09:58:12 AM from Willena Price (internal) to
Everyone: Willena Kimpson Price

10/05/2020 09:58:28 AM from Anastasios Tzingounis (internal)
to Everyone: Anastasios Tzingounis

10/05/2020 09:59:24 AM from Julie Guild (internal) to
Everyone: Julie Guild

10/05/2020 09:59:30 AM from Christina Irizarry (internal) to
Everyone: Christina Irizarry

10/05/2020 10:00:14 AM from David Embrick (internal) to
Everyone: David G. Embrick

10/05/2020 10:00:25 AM from Sharde Davis (internal) to
Everyone: Shardé (Shar-day) Davis

10/05/2020 10:00:50 AM from Likhitadevi Athina to Everyone:
Likhita Athina

10/05/2020 10:01:23 AM from George McManus (internal) to
Everyone: George McManus

10/05/2020 10:01:27 AM from Kimberly McKeown (internal) to
Everyone: Kim McKeown

10/05/2020 10:02:40 AM from Stephany Santos (internal) to
Everyone: Stephany Santos - good morning!

10/05/2020 10:04:03 AM from Stephany Santos (internal) to
Everyone: My name is also spelled incorrectly on the minutes (ie
instead of y)

10/05/2020 10:18:34 AM from Sharde Davis (internal) to
Everyone: Yes we can

10/05/2020 10:21:06 AM from Sharde Davis (internal) to
Everyone: ... We worked with a 4th faculty person, Dr. Daisy
Reyes (former faculty in Sociology). She left UConn for another job
this past summer).

10/05/2020 10:21:11 AM from Julie Guild (internal) to
Everyone: Can you email this to everyone?

10/05/2020 10:27:29 AM from Margaret Rubega (internal) to
Milagros Castillo-Montoya (internal) (privately): Milagros, is it
possible to provide the committee with a copy of the report or this
list?

10/05/2020 10:32:22 AM from Milagros Castillo-Montoya
(internal) to Margaret Rubega (internal) (privately): Yes, just
emailed it to you.

10/05/2020 10:36:30 AM from Margaret Rubega (internal) to
Milagros Castillo-Montoya (internal) (privately): thank you!

10/05/2020 10:42:16 AM from Clarissa Ceglie (internal) to
Everyone: Does any one who was on the committee last year know
what became of the COACH survey that was presente dto as which was
supposed to address (in part) factors behind faculty of color who
leave UConn?

10/05/2020 10:45:01 AM from Sandeep Mishra (internal) to
Everyone: My thrid question was probably for Margaret -

I believe, our committee is more to do with Students and not with Faculty and/or Staff. Can you please confirm that?

I understand that we will definitely have a working relation with Faculty and Staff of Color Council maybe but want to make sure/clarify the scope of this committee.

10/05/2020 10:46:23 AM from Margaret Rubega (internal) to Everyone: I don't think that's a given at all, Sandeep: we'll be discussing that while redrafting the committee description/charge.

10/05/2020 10:46:55 AM from Sandeep Mishra (internal) to Everyone: That is great !!!! Thanks for clarifying it, Margaret!

10/05/2020 10:48:23 AM from Clarissa Ceglio (internal) to Everyone: Colleague of mine in DMD are part of a new-ish effort at UConn called Students of Color Mentorship Program called Students of Color Mentorship Program

10/05/2020 10:50:43 AM from Maryann Markowski (internal) to Margaret Rubega (internal) (privately): Margaret, I don't know how much time you planned to set aside for Sharde/David/Milagros, but I'd be happy to skip verbalizing my questions to the group and write Sharde/David/Milagros separately. :)

10/05/2020 10:51:33 AM from Margaret Rubega (internal) to Maryann Markowski (internal) (privately): thanks Maryann; I was going to let them go to 11:10 or so, so we'll see how far we get.

10/05/2020 10:56:50 AM from Margaret Rubega (internal) to Everyone: Clarissa, CLAS already has an Assoc. Dean for DEI, just appointed in Spring Semester.

10/05/2020 10:57:44 AM from Margaret Rubega (internal) to Maryann Markowski (internal) (privately): Ok if I move you down in the queue?

10/05/2020 10:58:01 AM from Maryann Markowski (internal) to Margaret Rubega (internal) (privately): Totally!

10/05/2020 10:58:03 AM from Stephany Santos (internal) to Everyone: In engineering we are starting a program for Faculty and Staff that is an "action-based inclusive excellence program". Essentially it will have 3 components (1) anti-racist education, (2) individual action like looking at and restructuring a course, (3) collective action like creating a summer research living and learning community for marginalized or URM student.

10/05/2020 10:58:44 AM from Stephany Santos (internal) to Everyone: to my knowledge engineering doesn't have a dean for DEI, and I'm not sure about conversations about a DEI plan for the college

10/05/2020 10:58:57 AM from Anastasios Tzingounis (internal) to Everyone: The CLAS DEI associate dean is Katharine Capshaw, Professor of English. She has put together a DEI committee to advise her on different topics.

10/05/2020 11:01:50 AM from Sandeep Mishra (internal) to Everyone: Seems like we are still figuring out the roles and responsibilities for councils, one versus two councils for Faculty and Staff, bylaws etc. so are we seeing like 6 months to a year for these Councils to come in effect? Any rough estimate on when we can expect to see something on the ground level?

10/05/2020 11:03:03 AM from Milagros Castillo-Montoya
(internal) to Everyone: We could provide an update again later
this academic year to provide more information on the council
development.

10/05/2020 11:03:07 AM from Thomas Bontly (internal) to
Everyone: I have to go teach in just a moment. Again thank you
for your excellent work.

10/05/2020 11:07:19 AM from Milagros Castillo-Montoya
(internal) to Everyone: These are great points Clewiston

10/05/2020 11:13:01 AM from Milagros Castillo-Montoya
(internal) to Everyone: Great points and question Maryann

10/05/2020 11:13:35 AM from Sandeep Mishra (internal) to
Everyone: Is your group (or 3 of you) still collecting incidents
or concerns from Faculty or Staff of color or you are past that
stage since FSOC meeting (as that would be upto the council, when
it's formed) and now you're more focussed on coming up with
institution wide plan?

10/05/2020 11:15:28 AM from Milagros Castillo-Montoya
(internal) to Everyone: There will be another town hall this
fall semester and issues can be raised there.

10/05/2020 11:15:40 AM from Milagros Castillo-Montoya
(internal) to Everyone: more information on the town hall will
be announced soon

10/05/2020 11:18:20 AM from Sandeep Mishra (internal) to
Everyone: Thank you for sharing your roadmap and plan with us!

10/05/2020 11:18:27 AM from Milagros Castillo-Montoya
(internal) to Everyone: thank you for having us!

10/05/2020 11:19:04 AM from Milagros Castillo-Montoya
(internal) to Everyone: that's great, thank you for giving this
further consideration

10/05/2020 11:19:21 AM from Christina Irizarry (internal) to
Everyone: This was great!! Alot of important information!! Thank
you so much for joining our meeting this morning Dr. Castillo-
Montoya, Dr. Embrick and Dr. Davis and for all of your hard work!!

10/05/2020 11:20:28 AM from Micki McElya to Everyone:
Thank you!!! :) Micki

10/05/2020 11:32:58 AM from Clarissa Ceglie (internal) to
Everyone: Reports say the following, just FYI, not saying agree
"School officials said they consulted the State's Attorney's Office,
which determined that the action was no a crime, so no charges will
be filed."

10/05/2020 11:33:49 AM from Sandeep Mishra (internal) to
Everyone: And what action did we take that would prevent
outsiders take similar action or paint any other University -owned
property. Letting it go would encourage such offenders.

10/05/2020 11:34:46 AM from Stephany Santos (internal) to
Margaret Rubega (internal) (privately): Thank you so much for
your leadership and strength!! Amazing.

10/05/2020 11:34:51 AM from Diane Lillo-Martin (internal) to
Everyone: Thanks all