

Academic Senate DEI Committee | December 15, 2023

Present: Marisa Henderson (Chair), Suresh Balasubramanian, Cathryn Bock, Erica Edwards, Sean Hickey, Shelly Jo Kraft, Feng Lin, Cynthia Merritt, Erika Robinson, Amber Harrison (AAUP-AFT Liaison), Zaynah Jadallah (Student Senate Liaison), Christopher Kelly (Graduate Council Liaison), Pramod Khosla (Policy Committee Liaison), Mark Wenzel (PTF Union Liaison)

Absent: Chris Kliethermes, Tamme Quinn-Grzebyk, Ali Salamey, Nicole Wheeler

Guest: Linda Beale (Academic Senate President)

Meeting called to order: 1:04 pm

The minutes from the November 17th meeting were approved with no submitted changes.

The chair provided follow-up about previous concerns and future guests.

- The chair will invite a member from the campus community to provide more insight about freedom of speech in academia for the committee. A memo about Free Speech in the Academic Context is included on the DEI Teams site for member reference.
- Concerning the charge to review the Strategic Plans, the documents submitted by schools and colleges are currently being reviewed by the DEI Council (DEIC), and the DEIC requests that the plans not be shared out to other groups around campus. The results from the plans would be eventually shared through public events or Deans, and this committee would not be able to view the individual plans in near future. Dr. Beale, the Senate President, expresses concerns about educational policy being finalized before coming to Senate. There will be further follow up on this issue to ensure the Academic Senate is properly involved in any policy implementation.
- Tommy Martin, Associate Director for Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO), will join the group and discuss the process for investigating claims of harassment and discrimination in February.

The chair encourages members to bring DEI concerns that members might encounter to the committee, so that group can be aware of campus concerns and to engage in discussion.

The committee then discussed the draft response to the Policy Committee concerning their response to the Student Senate's Religious Holiday resolution. The committee did not agree with the complete response to the Student Senate's Religious Holiday Resolution and the chair created a draft response trying to capture committee concerns that were expressed during prior discussions. However, both DEI and the Policy committee agree with the stance of enhancing online information on the religious holidays each calendar year. This was the first time a response to Policy was being discussed by the group and no action has yet been taken by

the committee. The Senate President expressed her concern that the response was negative and did not offer any real solutions. She requests that the committee revise the document and submit specific suggestions on actions that can be taken. The DEI committee will revisit the response before submitted to the Policy committee.

The Student Senate Representative then presented concerns about Interfaith Dialogue at the University. The specific event that was referenced was, "A Deeper Dive, A Deeper Understanding" hosted by Dr. Saeed Khan and Dr. Howard Lupovitch ([Today@Wayne Article](#)). The Student Senate Representative discussed the student group protests of the event and a letter of grievances that was submitted to University administration that referenced this event as well as other campus occurrences. However, the referenced event was funded by an external grant, and was not tied to this specific committee.

Next meeting will be January 19th at 1 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 2:22 pm.