

Academic Senate DEI Committee | February 16, 2024

Present: Marisa Henderson (Chair), Suresh Balasubramanian, Cathryn Bock, Erica Edwards, Sean Hickey, Shelly Jo Kraft, Feng Lin, Cynthia Merritt, Tamme Quinn-Grzebyk, Erika Robinson, Christopher Kelly (Graduate Council Liaison)

Absent with Notice: Amber Case (AAUP-AFT Liaison), Mark Wenzel (PTF Union Liaison), Pramod Khosla (Policy Committee Liaison)

Absent: Chris Kliethermes, Ali Salamey, Nicole Wheeler

Guest: Tommy Martin (Associate Director for Equal Opportunity)

Meeting called to order: 1:04 pm

The minutes from the January 19th meeting were approved with no submitted changes.

The committee was joined by Tommy Martin, Associate Director for Equal Opportunity, to lead discussions on the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) and their process of investigating claims of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. A few notes from the discussion are as follows:

- OEO handles investigations into claims of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation and follow the University and federal policies of non-discrimination. A list of definitions and laws used by their office can be found on their website, <https://oio.wayne.edu/laws>.
- Protected classes are race, color, religion, age, disability, with Michigan laws, such as the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, also protecting against discrimination involving height, weight, and marriage.
- Anyone within the campus community can file a complaint through OEO, where they start the process by emailing OEO@wayne.edu. Other offices that can also handle complaints are the Equal Opportunity Commission, a federal commission that investigates claims of discrimination in employment; Office of Civil Rights, where students can file through that federal institution since WSU is a public institution supported through federal funds; the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, where both employees and students can file complaints, such as those that fall within the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act.
- OEO offers training, both asynchronously and synchronously, such as faculty search implicit bias training.

- OEO also facilitates accommodations, which is a change or modification of work environment for employees with disabilities, to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the federal requirement to accommodate unless there is an undue burden.
- OEO is also responsible for providing an annual Equal Opportunity Status Report to the Board of Governors, which compares WSU full time employees to other institutions as well as a list of complaints. Previous yearly reports can be found on their website, <https://oee.wayne.edu/resources>.
- Information about Wayne State employee statistics are found through the Office of Institutional Research portal, <https://irda.wayne.edu/dashboard/faculty-staff>.

Afterwards, during open discussion, a member informs the group about their upcoming participation in a University of Michigan DEI training and will provide updates on the training if interested. Other members are interested in brainstorming ways that we can connect better with other DEI groups around campus. The Office of DEI is currently working on creating a directory with other DEI groups around campus, which will be useful in making those connections.

The group then discusses possibly working on a DEI statement that can be included on syllabi, an idea brought forward to the chair by Alex Boesch, Director of Educational and Strategic Initiatives in the Office of DEI. With the recent changes that occurred with syllabus practices in an effort to shorten them, meaning the prospective diversity statement could be an agreed upon statement highlighting the University's commitment to DEI linked in Canvas. This would be a future collaboration effort with other standing committees, such as Faculty Affairs and Curriculum and Instruction.

Meeting adjourned at 2:27 pm.