

Equity and Diversity Committee
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences
February 14, 2024, 11:30am-12:45pm
240 Steenbock Library

Attendees: Brad Bolling, Victor Cabrera, Karie Cherwin, Kerri Coon, Amanda Gevens, Rosie Gittens, Tracy Hanke, Anam Khan, Jelena Lee, Mandi Moy, Amy Trowbridge, Bre Sinotte Wang, Erin Wall.

Not present: Burcu Alptekin, Dominique Brossard, Tom Browne, Al Kovalski, Louis Macias, Ivan Rayment.

Minutes by: Muhamed Sadiku

Attending as public meeting: None

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Brad Bolling at 11:34 am.

Welcome/review agenda

There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

Approval of January 10, 2024 meeting minutes

With a minor revision, the January 10, 2024 meeting minutes were approved.

CALS Equity and Diversity Award

The review committee met and unanimously recommended Beth Workmaster as a recipient of the award.

Professional Development Discussion

There is a major update related to the professional development requirement. It is important to step back and look at the bigger picture of climate and DEI within CALS. The four components considered to build a 'better picture' include:

1. DEI Professional Development

The hope is that we will have a team-oriented approach when looking at these four components. Individuals are part of 'the whole' and the idea is to work towards shared values and shared responsibilities in building a community.

Question: When you say meeting with the departments, do you mean meeting with the departments' committees?

Answer: We will meet with the committee first, and then hopefully everyone in the department will participate in that DEI experience - sort of an in-service model.

2. Individual Annual Reviews

- Still in the works but stemming from the conversation with the Dean, the faculty performance evaluations will be revamped. One of the aspects is mentorships and how to evaluate that.
- Staff performance evaluations will also be looked at. The current policy is that professional development should be part of that evaluation. The implementation of this policy is not consistent across college, so we are looking into ways to formalize the process.
- Graduate progression reviews are being discussed as well.

3. Department/Center Annual reviews

- Looking at the development around key performance indicators for climate and DEI. These will be compared to the climate survey.
- Key themes for evaluation are being worked on including satisfaction, commitment, and engagement.

4. Climate survey

The idea is to deliberately, and intentionally generate conversation and space for discussion around DEI. The hope is that these conversations lead to collaboration, understanding, and the building of community.

Proposed change overview

- Simplified process for CALS faculty and staff
- Shift from individual experience to group experience.
 - Department/Unit leadership (and DEI committee) will consult with the ODEI to develop a DEI-PD experience that meets the needs of the department/unit.
 - The workshop could take place at your scheduled department meeting.
- More time and effort required by the ODEI team.
 - Developing tailored learning experiences for all of CALS will require more time and effort from ODEI.
 - Faculty and staff will no longer need to find their own experiences. Since dept/unit leadership will help develop the experience with ODEI, experiences should be more relevant and applicable.
- It will no longer require an app; feedback to be collected via Qualtrics (anonymous)
- Participation will not be **required** but **strongly encouraged**, and it will be tracked via a sign-in sheet.

Question: What is the timeline? Will the workshops start this semester and who will be presenting?

Answer: ODEI is meeting with the dean at the end of this month and draft a communication for March. There is flexibility for when the workshops begin – depending on individual departments/units. ODEI will be working with a department committee/chair and create workshops tailored around a department/unit specific issue. Potentially, external folks could come in and present.

Question: One of the challenges could be bringing groups together. Will it be a one-time workshop?

Answer: It is expected that folks might miss these workshops, but we have flexibility and a year to complete these workshops. Agenda and content will be made available ahead of time, hybrid meeting options and make-up sessions will be offered.

Comments:

The idea of community and bringing folks together is a very good one. The major shift from required to optional will need approval from governance committees (APC).

This new approach offers good balance; perhaps being a requirement would have worked for some individuals, but this new idea could benefit those who do not want to participate individually but are willing to do so in a group setting.

There was a discussion about EDC possibly drafting a motion about this shift that goes into policy - after being approved by the APC.

Committee members discussed various aspects of the shift including the timeline, logistics, modality of workshops and how the shift might be perceived by departments.

Campus Updates

- Campus diversity committees met recently for their annual meeting, and this included the Diversity Deans.
- DDEEA is due to work on a new strategic plan for the university. Current framework can be found at: https://diversity.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Patricks-preferred-04.08.15-DF-REEL-Report-FINAL_Updated.pdf.
 - Details are minimal at this point, but we'll keep the group updated.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:36pm.