Commission for Women  
Meeting Minutes  
March 7, 2019


I. Welcome from Chair Rachel Chen

II. Approval of Minutes

III. Ferlin McGaskey. The Innovative Teaching and Learning Conference will be held on April 8th from 8am-5pm in the Student Union. More information and a link to register can be found at https://teaching.utk.edu/itlc2019/.

IV. Introductions from commissioners

V. Reports from committees and other groups
   a. Events committee. A variety of Women’s History Month events will occur throughout the month. More information can be found here: https://cfw.utk.edu/events/
   b. Safety committee. Catherine Luther reported the committee helped organized a screening of “RBG” for Women’s History Month. The committee has met with members of the Commission for LGBT People to collaborate on the development of a campus climate survey. Catherine Luther also noted UTPD is organizing self-defense classes.
   c. Work and Family committee. Jenny Ward reported recently meeting with Greg Kaplan, a member of faculty senate, to discuss leave policies for faculty and staff after arrival of a child and examined peer policies from Austin Peay University. Jenny Ward noted Austin Peay offers paid leave for exempt and non-exempt staff, and the committee will use those policies to create our recommendations.
   d. Professional Development committee. Joan Heminway discussed the panel discussion event, Empowering Women to Deal with Unit-Level Conflicts, to be held on March 29th. A panel of heads/experts (details found on website indicated above) will discuss how to resolve issues at the unit level well, reflect on mistakes made, and offer ways to avoid mistakes in the future.
   e. Equity committee. Bonnie Ownley reported recently meeting with analysts at OIRA and the Provost regarding conducting a salary analysis. The data set will include information from payroll, which covers all faculty ranks, and split in two sets; various components will be added to the data set (e.g., gender, time since appointment, and rank). Donald Cunningham and team of analysts have agreed to lead the research. Bonnie Ownley reported there has been caution to run the
analysis in the past because of potential legal repercussions should the University not respond in a manner that adequately addresses findings.

f. Jenny Richter discussed a recent announcement made by the Provost regarding UTK joining the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine to collaborate on preventing sexual harassment in higher education. UTK is among 28 institutions joining as a founding member of a 4-year effort; in addition to outreach, research will be conducted and shared with the campus community; there will be a call for faculty to join in these efforts. Jenny Richter noted UTK is the only major University from the southern region of the U.S.

g. Award committee. Hillary Fouts reported the committee has selected winners for our Chancellor’s Honors Awards: Angie Warren Perkins Award and UT Notable Woman Awards. Winners will be announced in April. Hillary Fouts reported the committee has discussed the limited scope of our awards and are proposing a new award: “Rising UT Woman Award.” This award will parallel the Notable UT Woman award in that the nominee categories will rotate through 4 role distinctions, off-setting the other two awards across faculty, student, and staff eligibility. Hillary Fouts asked commissioners to please read the proposal, included in the agenda, and email her (hfouts@utk.edu) or Nancy (nthacke2@vols.utk.edu) with any feedback. We will discuss and move to vote on the award in April.

VI. Discussion with Tyvi Small, Interim Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Engagement

a. Introduction from Tyvi Small. He discussed his history at UTK in the Haslam College of Business, and he expressed excitement in his new role. He noted the Office for Diversity and Engagement is and will be more than a programming office. The focus of his efforts is in building infrastructure for long-term success and infusion of diversity and inclusion across our community.

i. The first piece of creating this vision is with accountability. Tyvi Small discussed starting efforts in this domain with the VolVision, particularly thinking about diversity in the long-term. Creating metrics of accountability for deans and senior leadership was a starting point from this effort. Implementation of dash boards from the report on metrics will allow our accountability to be more than checking boxes; the plan is to measure progress in the present and plan for growth over time. Tyvi Small discussed a goal for colleges and units to submit diversity plans. He voiced helping units create strategies to reach various goals they outline in their plans. He also noted the Provost has agreed to use metrics in performance reviews.

ii. The second piece of creating this vision involves addressing climate issues via education. Tyvi Small noted four or five departments are creating or conducting climate surveys; he noted wanting to focus on how to institutionalize those efforts to create a broad, institutional climate survey. In terms of implementing education, Tyvi Small noted partnering with Joe Miles, specifically on the intergroup dialogue project. He also is building partnership with the Community Building Institute. Another goal is to address curricular transformation, notably with general education
curriculum changes that have been recently approved. His office also will support the inclusive teaching certificate. He noted collaborating with Dr. Janelle Coleman to support faculty creating inclusive practices in the classroom. Tyvi Small also discussed a partnership with faculty of an English 295 course. Students in the course have created a mission/vision statement for the Office of Diversity and Engagement. He discussed visiting with students to discuss the proposal. He noted unique opportunities for faculty to do similar diversity and inclusion work in their courses, even with the course is not specifically focused on diversity and inclusion. A final goal within this focus area is to create faculty, staff, and student advisory boards. He noted wanting to use the expertise of UTK faculty, engage them, and incentivize them to do this education. There will be a call for volunteers to assist with the intergroup dialogue project soon. They also, in collaboration with the faculty senate diversity committee, intend to create a directory of faculty who are doing diversity work. He noted some issues and strategies he highlighted have been fast forwarded due to recent events, and others may take more time. Overall, he stated his focus is on building infrastructure for the long-term, to sustain diversity and inclusion.

VII. Questions from commissioners
   a. Question: Can you talk about programs or policies you plan to implement for minoritized students, particularly programs and policies focused on making students feel safe and welcome at UTK?
      i. Tyvi Small responded there are a lot of existing programs on campus that he wants to support in those various units (e.g., Multicultural Student Life, the Pride Center). He noted programming should be distributed across units, and he and his office will support them. He also discussed implementing cultural competency education during orientations and FYS courses. They also are looking to implement diversity and inclusion education around advising and training with RAs. He noted tapping into CATE training on diversity and inclusion for faculty, in addition to creating opportunities for faculty to obtain the inclusive teaching certificate. STRIDE training may also be an option. To support students, Tyvi Small noted the importance of letting students consistently know we value diversity and their experiences. They are discussing creating orange table talks in partnership with the Office of Communication and Marketing. Tyvi Small also noted the importance of owning and recognizing our areas for growth. He will support our leadership team through diversity and inclusion training and work to hold them accountable to also ensure they are leading with diversity and inclusion. He also mentioned supporting all programs coming out of Multicultural Student Life and various programs that come out of specific academic efforts, such as the Haslam College of Business’s efforts to increase diversity.
ii. Catherine Luther asked how education will be ongoing, rather than administrators completing just one module or training.

1. Tyvi Small responded that education will be ongoing. He noted the Antidefamation league will visit with administrators to host a training on April 25th. He reported having conference calls with many providers to create ongoing, strategic training that builds up. He voiced commitment to consistency and ongoing education. He also noted this is taxing work, so incentivizing faculty and staff to complete training is important.

b. Joan Heminway discussed the variety of issues and incidents our campus has faced and noted the media has not always reported the stories accurately. What can we do to ensure the press gets it right regarding incidents on campus?

i. Tyvi Small responded that we have to tell our own stories. We have been reactive, playing defense, and we need to play offense. He noted the importance of letting people know what we stand for, but also being honest; after multiple incidents, we need to own that this may be who we are, then move forward from that. He discussed his meetings with Interim Chancellor Davis regarding diversity and his trust that there is commitment to improve diversity and inclusion. He noted Interim Chancellor Davis is supporting the Pride Center and currently about 50% through efforts to make the center sustainable. Tyvi Small also reflected on recent visit in Nashville and witnessing the Interim Chancellor standing up for students’ rights, particularly regarding SEAT events. In sum, he noted we have to be consistent in telling our stories in a proactive sense. WE must highlight diversity and weave it into our language across our websites and media outlets. Speak diversity and inclusion every day. He is collaborating with the Vice Chancellor for Communications, Tisha Benton, to create structures to support that.

1. Joan Heminway discussed crisis responses. She suggested responses that detail events or issues impacting faculty, staff, or students should go through faculty, staff, or students before they are published. She noted faculty received the recent report on Sex Week after the media received the report; she noted the campus not having information sooner is a misstep as it prevents media reports from accurately reflecting our experiences. She discussed the importance of language, with an example from a recent listening session where the first amendment was referenced without discussion or explanation around the issues. She noted transparency is needed. She suggested a team for crisis communication may be a helpful addition.

c. Question: I have heard of stories of faculty members here who have been a certain way for thirty years or more. Whether they be misogynists, close minded, or just set in traditions that no longer hold meaning to the current campus. It was told to me that an HR representative stated you probably can’t truly change such a person, but you can make efforts to silence them. What are your thoughts on
eliminating long standing practices and people who aren’t on the inclusion train? How would you suggest we manage up and influence out?

i. Tyvi Small acknowledged these individuals do exist in our community. He noted we have to do so much more education and think about who we empower. He discussed civility training in human resources discusses the importance of how leaders set the climate in our offices, units, or programs. He stated we all have to be speakologists, to voice what is and is not accepted. He also mentioned the importance of creating opportunities for folks to understand the lived experiences of others and hold people accountable when things are said or done outside of our core values; we have to respond and take action when this occurs. He discussed creating a culture that calls out actions against our core values by increasing education on what is and is not acceptable and living it in every area across campus (e.g., the classroom, faculty/staff meetings, programming, etc.). He discussed his experience in the Haslam College of Business with diversity recruitment efforts. He mentioned it starts with the composition of search committees. He noted he has been on every committee in the Haslam College of Business because he is looking through an equity lens. He also voiced the importance of language in position announcements and in what we highlight about our University and community. We need to speak to things that diverse individuals may value. He shared an experience hiring a distinguished faculty in the Haslam College of Business, including his process of ensuring equitable consideration of a woman candidate by speaking up when inequity was at play. He noted, in addition to recruitment, we have to think about retention, and our climate is essential to this point. There needs to be diversity of thought, experience, and identities throughout our community so that minoritized individuals may feel less taxed in their roles.

ii. Hillary Fouts noted the importance of people speaking out, but also noted power differentials create challenges to speaking up in certain contexts. She asked how do individuals in less powerful positions deal with need to speak out when there is not safety to do so?

iii. Lisa Yamagata-Lynch shared her experiences and voiced the importance of empowering each other across our identities and positions of power. She suggested emphasizing an empowering approach to combat inequities.

iv. Amanda Hand stated people with power are often tied to money, especially in scientific community. She noted these individuals have room to be rude, inconsiderate and closed minded, because we do not want to lose the funds they are attached to.

1. Tyvi Small responded Title VI may address this issue. Jenny Richter discussed there is increased oversight on civil rights compliance attached to grants within this. We are now required to report bad behavior of grant awardees, because grant providers do not want to be tied to bad, discriminatory behaviors.

v. Megan Haselschwerdt suggested we quantify emotional labor and include it on dossiers for promotion and tenure. She discussed tracking her time in
the past week spent on activities to support and retain; she noted being around 12 hours since the critical incident last week. She mentioned asking other faculty of color who are in 24-36 hour range. She suggested creating a survey to quantify what faculty are doing and how much time is spent on these invisible types of emotional labor. Then, we may also understand how it impacts research, teaching, and professional service. She noted there is currently no way to show for this work, and it may be why we are losing minoritized faculty.

1. Tyvi Small responded he will chat with faculty affairs in how to implement this. He stated it is a great idea.
2. Hillary Fouts noted agreement, and that this type of support is a burden to bear. She mentioned right now this labor is hitting our communities of color, but it happens across identities as well. She noted we need structural systems in place, because it effects job performance and satisfaction.
3. Lisa Yamagata-Lynch reflected from her background with instructional online design that Elements may be used as a tool to implement this survey.
4. Misty Anderson stated the faculty senate will help. She also mentioned issues around the Bias Incident Report came up yesterday in an open forum. There was miscommunication around Cleary reports versus Bias Incidents reports. Commissioners noted the differences between the two. Misty Anderson asked if we have ways to see the Bias Incident report.
   a. Jenny Richter suggested that a representative from the Commission might join their next bias committee meeting.
   b. Joan Heminway suggested that we receive emails about Bias Incidents just as we do with Cleary reports.
   c. Jenny Richter noted it would be helpful to share the incidents in real time. However, there has been cut back on the number of Cleary report emails, so there may be hesitancy to use email for bias incidents.
   d. Tyvi Small suggested posting information in one location where people can reference it, but not flooding information through email.

VIII. Thank you to Tyvi Small and commissioners. Adjourn.