

MINUTES

Shepherd University Diversity and Equity Committee

September 2, 2020 at 2:10pm (Zoom)

Present: Wendy Baracka, Dr. Jim Cherry, Cynthia Copney, Kay Dartt, Marie DeWalt, Melanie Ford, Tammy Gill, Karen Green, Dr. Virginia Hicks, Dr. Chiquita Howard-Bostic, Annie Lewin, Eric Lewis, Adam Paige, Ben Pigott, Crystal Smiles-Tharp, Dr. Richie Stevens, Dr. Robert Tudor

Annie Lewin called the meeting to order at 2:11pm

I. Introductions

II. Approval of Minutes

- a. Motion put forward by Dr. V. Hicks, seconded by Dr. C. Howard Bostic
- b. Minutes have been approved

III. Election of the Chair

- a. C. Tharp forward Dr. Howard-Bostic, seconded by Dr. R. Tudor
- b. Motion passed; Dr. Howard-Bostic elected as chair for 2020-2021 year

IV. Civility Updates

- a. Dr. R. Stevens – Civility Code is posted all over campus.

V. Subcommittee for Policy and Procedures Review

- a. Subcommittee –Cynthia Copney, Melanie Ford, Karen Green, Annie Lewin, Dr. Robert Tudor

VI. Suggestions about Mandatory Diversity, Equity, and Title IX Training

- a. The following conversation surrounded consideration for the establishment of a mandatory Diversity and Title IX training for Shepherd employees as a component of hiring contract. Trainings would be updated. If employees failed to complete the training by set date, contracts would be in danger of not being renewed.
- b. Dr. Hicks – introduce to Deans Council and have the training as requirement in the faculty annual reporting/review process
- c. M. DeWalt – HR is legally required to have all employees complete a training; however, the Title IX training content is broader.
- d. Track training completions using Sakai.
- e. Dr. Hicks – Ask Laura Reninger if the new training can be incorporated into the new faculty training process.

- f. A. Lewin – all Shepherd employees would complete this training and the Title IX office will follow up with additional comments/questions as needed.
- g. Dr. J. Cherry – How are employees tracking trainings? Is there an employee portal with a list of all the required trainings or a portal to document trainings? Other organizations use similar models.
- h. A. Paige – Shepherd has technology to host an employee portal that includes all trainings modules where employees could see and access all trainings.

VII. Suggestions about Best Practices for Knowledge of Online Technology

- a. Dr. H-B – Should there be a standard education for professors required for online classes and communication to students? Our committee is suggesting to have a required online training. Is it equitable to require the training without instituting a standard of knowledge required to complete the training?
- b. Dr. Tudor – Is technological literacy a requirement to work at Shepherd University?
- c. Dr. Cherry – Hood & Mount St. Mary’s have lectures from their respective IT departments training their faculty basic technology for online courses including learning platforms, and email templates.
- d. Dr. Tudor – Is setting policy the way we correct the technological deficiencies for the small group of people? Senior faculty members not have taught fully online courses. They are currently being coached and provided with teaching support for classes. Setting policy to correct a knowledge gap among a small group of people who may not be as technologically savvy may not be the way to go.
- e. Dr. Tudor – Is this ageism?
- f. DeWalt – We already have online class training requirements for faculty who teach solely online – staff handbook pg. 40.
- g. Dr. Stevens – IT has already created resources for Outlook and Zoom sessions. What are the expectations? How are we setting this? Are we adding new technology? Expectations need to make sure that we have resources to educate.
 - i. Is this topic beyond the charge of our committee?
 - ii. Dr. H-B – Different inequalities such as accessibility issues, or even unequal access to technology seem appropriate. However, we can have our discussion and forward recommendations to another committee.
- h. C. Smiles-Tharp – bringing employees up to the bar is important. We would provide support for our students so we should also set expectations for employees. Also, we are not in compliance technologically and there are hurdles with accessibility.
- i. K. Green – it is not unreasonable for faculty to be expected to have the same skills as students. Email is an accessibility issue and we are limiting student’s interactions with their professors by not requiring our faculty to be able to utilize technology tools. Landline phones in offices have been disconnected to save money and now, email is sometimes the only way to reach employees.

VIII. Update on the All Gender Restroom Initiative

- a. Exploration of single-stall restrooms on campus that do not have “all gender” signs, which are located throughout Shepherd’s campus.
- b. Undergraduate and graduate interns are surveying the campus to update a spreadsheet listing bathroom types; they will photograph restrooms and signage and examine the locks to determine cost measures.
- c. There is a September 16th deadline to complete the survey.
- d. The committee will examine how we would like to communicate with the campus about the initiative? i.e. How will we explain the purpose?
- e. Dr. H-B will establish a collective google doc where committee can write their thoughts on the purpose.
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C8uAV0oxOIhrKPbU_2Nml4B3wEGo5Tf5uYsdxPFYWFk/edit?usp=sharing
- f. Dr. H-B and those interested use info in the Google Doc to communicate our message with building managers and members of each college/division, SGA and groups to explain the purpose; i.e. inclusivity, code of conduct, recognizing identities and give support and resources; promoting a particular set of values through social justice education.
- g. DeWalt –there are sensitivities surrounding this topic and we are starting at a good place by identifying the single-stall restrooms as gender neutral.
- h. Lewin – when it comes to single stalls, there isn’t a lot of controversy but buildings without single stalls are a problem. There will be future issues in buildings where there are no all-gender restroom options.
- i. Addressing the project monetarily is still in the works.

IX. Next meeting

- a. Doodle poll
- b. Good time slot, but see about the slot before or after

X. Diversity and Equity newsletter

- a. See about gathering information and seeing if people are interested.

Meeting adjourned: 3:20pm