

MINUTES

Shepherd University Diversity and Equity Committee February 3, 2021 at 1:10 pm (via Zoom)

Present: Wendy Baraka, Chrislynn Bard, Dr. Jim Cherry, Cynthia Copney, Kay Dartt, Dr. Marie DeWalt, Karen Green, Tammy Gill, Dr. Heidi Hanrahan, Dr. Virginia Hicks, Dr. Chiquita Howard-Bostic, Joseph Jefferson, Annie Lewin, Cecilia Melton, Ben Pigott, Alan Perdue, Alexandra Stevens, Dr. Richard Stevens, Dr. Robert Tudor

Meeting called to order: 1:10 pm (minutes approved)

I. Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan (Presentation) 2021-2022

- A. Current policies and compliance methods should align with the civility code.
- B. The Committee for Tracking and Merging Social Justice and Title IX Policies will continue to develop the policy with accountability measures.
- C. A directory of inclusive events, communities, and programs (with 8 multicultural leadership competencies) to create inclusivity themes; a related bi-annual newsletter may list the events
- D. Improving communication regarding DEI and training/workshops/events
- E. Support for expanding tactics to recruit, enroll, retain and graduate and graduate students (with Dr. Hart, new VP of Enrollment Management); Cynthia Copney/TRIO will share information for upcoming diversity workshop
- F. Support for accessibility initiatives (Fall 2021 committee initiative); trainings and other affordable initiatives will be introduced about accessibility and trauma informed care

II. Policy and Procedure Review Process (Annie Lewin)

- A. The committee is reviewing a first draft of the Policy for Social Justice and Title IX written by Alan Perdue.
- B. They will meet as a committee on February 4 and we will reach out to the subcommittee about upcoming initiatives.

III. Shepherd Respect Training

- A. Dialogue about providing a gift-card as a token of appreciation for adjuncts who complete the training:
 - 1. Adjunct faculty are completing many new trainings without additional compensation.
 - 2. Title IX training is a federal requirement and a mandatory training so no compensation should be provided.
 - 3. Some employees have completed the training/received compensation during documented work hours so, how can we have equity for adjuncts? Adjuncts have been asked to complete a training that was not in place prior to the Spring 2021 contract. Should we compensate them to be fair?

4. The training is for a good cause and everyone should want to do it. I understand the inconsistency but it does not seem right to provide an incentive to complete this particular training. If expect everyone to complete the training regardless of their status at the institution, we should not provide an incentive to one group.
5. Some adjuncts at Shepherd do not have competitive salaries as compared to other institutions. They may also complete a same/similar training at other institutions. At what point should they be compensated for duplicated versions of training? I have an obligation to advocate for my colleagues.
6. Is it fair to do something (gift card) rather than nothing? There are less than 220 adjuncts, which is not the number of adjunct employees who have completed the training.
7. For new hires this semester and onward, this training will be considered as a mandatory training at Shepherd.
8. I support offering adjuncts some kind of compensation.
9. We should recognize and appreciate our employees but I do not like compensation tied with this training. We should hold off on making the training mandatory until the next contract year. There are many struggles with compensating part-time employees for mandatory training. We should have as many people complete the training as possible now by request and add a hard deadline to new contracts. If we want to generally recognize employees for their work, that should be a separate issue.
10. If we add the training as mandatory for next fall, we will not need to provide an incentive.
11. It is dangerous to set a precedent. If we provide an incentive now, will other employees expect this in the future?
12. I am concerned about transgressions among employees who do not feel obligated or who believe the training is not important/necessary without an award.
13. I approve of a gift certificate for those who completed the training before 2021 but we should include the training for the next contract for new hires because it aligns with the University's values. If some employees are not required to complete it by a certain date, they may never complete the training and we cannot have that happen.
14. We can refuse to commit to adjuncts in the fall if they have not completed the training. Adjuncts must comply with the faculty handbook so asking them to complete the training is not out of line. A bigger question is, "should we increase adjunct salaries?" Everyone will have to do a training about confidentiality, security, etc., so faculty training is ongoing. Trainings are not a one-and-done deal. Employees just need to complete the required training programs.
15. This training is being made mandatory for liability reasons. How can we expect our employees to do the right thing if we do not require education or an accountability system? If an adjunct who has not completed the training does something wrong, where do we stand as a University? The training is one of our accountability measures.
16. If adjuncts are required to complete the training at some part of their contractual agreement, the issue of compensation should be off the table.

B. Feedback from the Training

1. The “Power and Privilege” section was adjusted based upon campus-wide feedback.
2. Employees will re-take the training every 3 years. We will apply content from feedback and additional resources to update the next annual version of the training so that it continually aligns with the University’s values and mission.
3. This committee will be asked to review the updates every year.
4. Commitment from the entire group to complete the “Respect Training” in SAKAI by Friday, April 2, 2021.

IV. All Gender Restroom Initiative

- A. Emma Ora Byrd, White Hall, and the Butcher Center have no solution for community-use, single-stall all-gender restrooms. We will explore whether some of the COVID single bathrooms will remain single occupancy after the pandemic in the future.
- B. Jack Shaw and facilities will review the sample signage options to be sure we meet both quality and ADA standards.
- C. M/W signage represent binary gender and the sign without those symbols are all-gender signage or non-binary representative signage.
- D. A map of all of the all-gender restrooms on campus will be generated in the future.
- E. We are in the process of considering whether we should have the same restroom signage across campus for consistency of message (All-gender restroom vs. Restroom).
- F. By failing to use the “All Gender” signs, we may leave the assumption that everyone understands continuums of gender. For right now, it is important to have all-gender restroom signs as a way of showing that our institution recognizes we all genders.

V. Civility Statement on Syllabus

- A. Dialogue about adding a civility clause in with the academic integrity portion of syllabi?
 1. Perhaps it should be added to the syllabus or used to amend the Student Handbook Website.
 2. Academic integrity policies have a specific set of policies structured around academic programs and the Civility Code lists procedures.
 3. We should consider the statement of non-discrimination and civility separate from the academic freedom statement.
 4. This idea should be processed with faculty before anything is added to the syllabi template.
 5. The philosophy behind a liberal arts institution involves challenging idea. Is there space to express one's self without doing harm to other people. Will this statement stop faculty from doing that?
 6. Faculty should discuss the purpose of the statement and present an emphasis that the statement does not take violate First Amendment rights.
 7. The topic was tabled and will be brought back to the committee after further deliberation.