

CFAES DEI Action Council Meeting
January 11, 2021
2:30-4:00

Minutes**Attendees**

Kathy Lechman, Victoria Abou-Ghalioum, Laura Akgerman, Kayla Arnold, Pam Bennett, Lisa Bielke, Josh Blakeslee, Steve Brady, Joyce Chen, Rachel Cornell, Alia Dietsch, Kelly Elisar, Suzanne Ferencak, Warren Flood, Carri Gerber, Whitney Gherman, Brandi Gilbert-Hammett, Monica Guisti, Bryan Harding, Misty Harmon, Gonul Kalentuc, Elliott Lawrence, Farnaz Maleky, Laquore Meadows, Zeke Miller, Michelle Pham, Brian Raison, Krista Scott, Regan Tell, Tracy Robinson, Nicole Wakely, Seth Walker, Frances Whited

Unable to attend

Shanvanth Arnipalli, Everly Jazi, and Kira Jones

Welcome and Charge

- Dean Kress and Senior Associate Dean Kitchel joined for the first 20 minutes to deliver the charge to the council and to express their support. Dean Kress expressed her thanks to the members of the Council and indicated that the DEI Action Council was complimentary to the other Councils in the college and part of the shared governance that has been implemented during the last several years.
- It is the Dean's hope that this council serve as catalysts to foster inclusiveness within our college along with dialogue and educational opportunities. Additionally, she expects this council to advise on moving the college forward in the realms of diversity, equity, and inclusion.



- The Council is to provide recommendations, identify issues, develop goals, engage in difficult conversations, and advise the Dean on matters related to DEI.
- We are also a voice to her. She wants to hear the voices of the members of this council. She encouraged council members to reach out to her at Kress.98.
- Dr. Kitchel expressed his appreciation for serving on the Council and encouraged us to respect, listen, and encourage each other.

Introductions-name, role, where are your from and why are you part of the council

We had a lot of ground to cover in a very short period of time. Therefore, the purpose/mission, vision and principles of engagement were drafted prior to the meeting. All are open for discussion and edits. Suggested additions are highlighted. If you have other suggested additions, please send those to me.

Purpose/Mission of Council:

Kathy prepared the initial draft, and it is open for feedback and edits. Suggested additions are highlighted.

- To create and develop a welcoming and inclusive environment for faculty, staff, and students.
- To challenge racism, sexism, queerphobia and all other isms that impact those who make up the protected classes of the University. Protected classes include age, ancestry, color disability, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, and protected veteran status
- To identify, develop, and implement programs, policies and practices the demonstrate the importance of and our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- To support DEI initiatives in the college
- Serve as a sounding board
- Act as catalysts to effect change within CFAES

Vision

Kathy drafted this vision, and it is also open for discussion and edits Exemplify a college-wide culture where diversity, equity, and inclusion are embraced, practiced, and celebrated. All members of the CFAES community are supported in developing to their highest potential.



Principles of engagement for the Council-these are also open for discussion and edits

- Respect
- Active listening
- Engagement
- Open dialogue
- Safe space
- No judgments
- Transparency
- Others

Values-traits or qualities that are important to the organization/group

- Civility
- Listening
- Respect
- Diversity
- Transparency
- Others

Menti was used to gather feedback on the following questions-

Highlights = either duplicates or statements that are complimentary to each other.

What do you see as needs for CFAES related to DEI?

- Conversation/action
- Sharing the work
- Capacity
- Resources
- Training for our staff and volunteers related to DEI curriculum
- I think the committee is a great start
- Consistent DEI experience at Columbus, Wooster, and statewide
- Training for employees
- Processes for collecting reg data for volunteers
- Being good examples for our students
- Clear expectations of folks wo work for or represent the university where DEI issues are concerned
- Better support of minority members of our community
- Training for interested community members that engage with the college
- Bring racial inequality issues awareness to rural county Extension offices
- Consistent interpretation as to what is required
- Integrity to follow through and support stated mission
- Accountability



- Faculty and staff to embrace diversity and actively work to improve it
- Vision into action
- Advising students on all things DEI
- A need to acknowledge issues that are an inherent part of the American experience for minority groups. Most especially racism and police brutality
- Transparency in the hiring/promotion of individuals-reasoning
- CFAES needs to recruit more diverse staff and faculty and needs to be better at RETAINING those diverse staff and faculty and do better at PROMOTING those diverse staff and faculty
- Thought provoking and educational training
- Commitment
- Accountability for faculty, staff, and students who do NOT uphold CFAES and DEI standards
- Discussion groups
- Open and honest conversations
- Providing ample support for underrepresented graduated students needed for retention and success in higher ed
- Improved DEI education for students as well as faculty and staff
- More diversity in leadership
- Awareness
- Make DEI one of our core values
- A need to promote student and staff diversity
- Awareness of all DEI groups-ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, identity and disability
- Increase transparency and accountability
- A structured method of consequences for behavior that is harmful for the community
- Collect information in real time about the concerns and issues

What are the obstacles that exist within CFAES related to DEI?

- Lack of consistent information
- Unclear guidance
- The college is very large and spread out throughout the state
- Time
- Entrenched culture
- Deeply rooted traditions, bias, structure
- Sometimes old habits die hard in this college
- Lack of diversity on the Wooster campus
- SEIs
- Accountability of staff, students and faculty supporting the DEI mission through words and actions
- Focus on traditional ag, which generally has non-diverse stakeholders



- There is always so much to do-better prioritization of DEI efforts
- Lack of transparency
- Implicit bias
- A primarily non diverse faculty, staff, and students
- Not enough accountability for folks who do not support DEI
- People feel DEI is forced (sic) as opposed to working toward acceptance
- Unawareness by Extension staff about racial inequalities and a lack of desire to fix if they feel it does not affect their immediate communities
- Lack of training and will among leaders
- Not being able to aware (sic) of the situation in real time/Communication issues
- Traditional roles
- Bad habits/worldviews that are not conducive to change
- Institutions that are supported by inherent biases especially in leadership and HR functions
- Many people view it as a side item and not a priority
- Longstanding traditions/lack of willingness to get on board with DEI efforts
- The lack of diversity in CFAES Leadership-both in terms of actual minority representation and lack of diversity in thought. Also there doesn't seem to be a real desire to make any diverse hires in CFAES leadership
- DEI is not well defined to the majority of personnel in CFAES
- Privilege
- Appearance of differing rules for faculty vs staff
- Nuanced perspectives on DEI that more than just bringing on diverse faculty and students (e.g. Retention, support, long term systemic change)
- Retaliation from peers (e.g. gossip)
- Lack of diversity in applicants for many positions within Extension
- Lack of desire to change
- Lack of consequences for bad actions
- Limited options for conflict resolution
- We are still a part of a wider university so only have so much latitude
- Unclear actions to take, and unclear outcomes (people are "afraid" of change when outcomes are unclear)
- Lack of real desire to hire and retain minorities in the college

What are the opportunities that exist within CFAES related to DEI?

I lost the chat but there are several that I did remember

- Having an office



- Leadership support

If you have additions, to this question, please send them to me via e-mail



Work Groups if you would like to work on a second work group please e-mail me

Professional Development Meeting 1/26/21	Recruitment and Retention of Students (Undergrad and Grad) Meeting 2/5/21	Departmental Audits Meeting 2/3/21
Steve Brady	Lisa Bielke	Seth Walker
Elliott Lawrence	Frances Whited	Victoria Abou-Ghalioum
Brian Raison	Regan Tell	Joyce Chen
Laura Akgerman	Ezekiel Miller	Rachel Cornell
Kelly Elisar	Kayla Arnold	Farnaz Maleky
Suzanne Ferencak	Michelle Pham	
Whitney Gherman		

Diversifying the Curriculum Meeting 2/1/21	Climate Surveys Meeting 2/5/21	Recruitment and Retention of URM Faculty and Staff Meeting 1/29/21	APT & POA Review Meeting 1/27/21
Alia Dietsch	Misty Harmon	Tracy Robinson	Carri Gerber
Pam Bennett	Gonul Kaletunc	Brandi Gilbert-Hammett	
Krista Scott	Bryan Harding	Josh Blakeslee	
Warren Flood		Nicole Wakeley	
Everly Jazi			

Other suggestions

Centralized Graduate Student Orientation

Goals-desired outcome/wants

- Establish an academic and work environment where faculty, staff, and students feel included and valued.
- An increase in the numbers of students from historically underrepresented or underserved populations
- Increase number of faculty and high-level staff from historically underrepresented or underserved populations
- Faculty and staff actively engage in development opportunities



- Support new faculty to ensure tenure and retention
- An employer of choice