

Meeting Minutes: Diversity Committee September 21, 2015

Present: Angela Palmer, Nicholas Campau, Leroy Wright, Mickey Albright, Matt Chaney, Jeanine Ward-Roof, Angela Garrey, Angie Mishler, and Bianca (Vista Representative)

Absent: Renee VanderMyde, Amy Otteson, and Leigha Compson

Welcome:

Leroy welcomed everyone to our first Diversity Committee meeting for the semester. Jeanine thanked the committee for the work that has been done in terms of diversity efforts. In moving forward, Leroy challenged the committee to think about how we move forward from here and how we support the recommendations that came out of our 2014-2015 diversity report.

Handouts:

A portion of the Division of Student Affairs Strategic Action Plan was shared that reflects components of how our Division can support diversity and inclusion efforts through various action steps under initiative 1. Stabilize and optimize our enrollment and retention.

A document that reflects the Division's mission, Philosophy, and Learning Outcomes was shared and Leroy reminded the committee of the four diversity and inclusion targets that we look to accomplish each year. It was suggested that we look at measurable ways to be able to assess these targets.

Culture 365: Matt Chaney shared that his office is trying to infuse diversity throughout the year (365 days) by celebrating different populations throughout the year instead of only during specific heritage months.

Diversity Report: A suggestion was made to highlight signature activities by semester instead of my month over the course of the academic year. The committee will look to enhance the current list of activities/initiatives highlighted by taking an inventory of division wide efforts. Angela Garrey suggested adding our first generation efforts to the list as an ongoing initiative. Leroy asked that the committee members make sure to be mindful in capturing all activities that we promote on campus as a division.

It was suggested that the committee should think about how we can assist in supporting departmental recommendations that came out of this year's report. What is missing from our report? A suggestion was made to possibly mirror the Student Affairs Assessment Report which lists the changes that were made as a result of last year's assessment efforts. In addition, we should showcase our diversity efforts as highlights for the current year similar to how we showcase our assessment highlights. This would allow for accountability of following up on recommendations and ensuring continuous diversity efforts throughout the academic year.

Should we include our challenges in the report or simply work on them throughout the year? Is there something specific that Dr. Pilgrim is looking for in terms of reporting? What are the expectations of HLC in terms of reporting our diversity efforts? Leroy asked the committee

members to forward a list of relevant questions that we might have for Dr. Pilgrim to Angela Palmer.

Legacy of Ferris: Matt would like to see our campus capture the legacy of Ferris students. He knows of several students who are attending Ferris who have had parents attend as well. It was agreed that the term “legacy” would be a different and beneficial way to capture diversity on our campus.

Moving forward: Jeanine would like to see our committee assist in expanding our enrollment reach by getting our current students educated and on board with recruiting and retention efforts. Our current students need to know that they are essential in recruiting and retaining Ferris students, and can do so simply by offering a positive experience to those visiting or attending Ferris.

Matt suggested that this aligns with the College Positive Volunteering Campaign that we have on campus.

Leroy stated that we should help students understand the policy we have in place in order to make a formal complaint in regards to discrimination or biases that they have experienced while on campus.

It is important when recruiting students that we highlight the different services that we offer for our different populations of students. Leroy made a suggestion that the communication center connect with the different populations of students to see how their experiences have been thus far as a student. Leroy and Kristen Salomonson are working on a similar effort.

University Diversity Plan: Dr. Pilgrim would like to speak to each division regarding the University’s Diversity Plan and will be attending our next Student Affairs Diversity Committee meeting held at 10:00 am on September 28, 2015 in room 217 of the University Center. Leroy challenged the committee to think about ways that our committee can assist the University as a whole to look at diversity as an important and impactful piece of our campus.

Specific Goals: It was asked if we should focus on specific goals, keeping in mind specific timeframes for our goals. For instance, maybe we should initiate a civility campaign for our students, and quite possibly tie it into our “I’m a Bulldog” campaign.

Committee Make-up: Angela Mishler suggested that we reach out to the different academic colleges’ diversity committees and invite them to a meeting once a semester. It was suggested to have representation from our veteran staff (Jacob Schrot or Adam Forbes) on committee.

Submitted by: Angela Palmer
Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Student Life