

## Diversity and Inclusion Sub Committee

### Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 8, 2016

Roush Hall, Room 331

Chair Gatti called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

Those in attendance were: Chair Bob Gatti, Suzanne Ashworth, Ciara Atkinson, Jennifer Bechtold, Anaemy Danner, Kristy Drobney, Scott Fitzgerald, Cherrelle Gardner, Wafaa Jallaq, Margaret Koehler, Andre Lampkins, Kathryn Plank, James Prysock, Donna Rhodeback, Wendy Sherman-Heckler, and Bill Stoddard.

#### Working group reports:

- Communication and Conversation –
  1. Summary of Common Hour – Sherman-Heckler reported on the meeting of November 3 in which a debriefing of the Common Hour was held. There was a large turnout for the event, 60+ in attendance, with a good representation of the campus community. Acoustics were an issue, however, the meeting was successful and Sherman-Heckler noted appreciation to the participants on behalf of the committee. Another Common Hour is scheduled during spring semester on February 13, 2017. The suggested and most popular topic for this session was a focus on diversity in recruitment of staff, faculty, and students. Lampkins will work on this project with Fitzgerald and Jefferson Blackburn-Smith as part of his fellowship to determine the specifics for this Common Hour.
  2. Web updates – Sherman-Heckler reminded the committee that any errors/typos on the website should be reported. Continual improvements/updates will be made. Initial focus was on the title of the “Student and Community Expectations” section. After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed the title should be changed to “Student Demands Drive Community Standards”, as the students and their list of demands raised as a result of the April rally should be the focus, resulting in a collaboration with the campus community. There was discussion regarding changes in the first paragraph of this section, and it was decided to change said copy to:

On April 4, 2016, Otterbein students rallied to promote increased diversity and inclusion, with the support of faculty and staff. After peaceful demonstrations, students met with university administrators to put forth a list of expectations that addressed campus programming, hiring practices, course content and community events. [Find out more about the students' expectations and how Otterbein is working to address them.](#)

Next, there was mention of changing the copy in the actual “Student and Community Expectations” section on the linked pages. It was decided this information would be updated three (3) times a year. Another revision discussed was the suggested change submitted by Ashworth regarding language

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in the first three (3) paragraphs of the link for the Multi-Year Plan for Diversity and Inclusion. The committee chose to change said language from:

Otterbein has long placed value on inclusion, belonging, community, and opportunity. Our story begins before the abolition of slavery, before the women's rights movement, before equality and inclusion were rights. Founded by the United Church of the Brethren, these values are at the foundation of Otterbein. Any one person seeking a better future has been welcomed since Otterbein's doors opened in 1847.

Since then, talented men and women, students of color, and first generation college students have all found a place to belong at Otterbein. We admitted women at our founding, students of color before the Civil War, and welcomed Japanese-American students who had been sent to internment camps during World War II.

Otterbein recognizes that in order to live up to the standards of inclusion and diversity, we must be strategic, deliberate and diligent in our efforts to actualize a diverse and inclusive community. Simply hoping for the best will not suffice.

To:

Otterbein recognizes that in order to realize the standards of inclusion and diversity, we must be strategic, deliberate and diligent. We need to stay attuned to systems of oppression, hierarchies, privilege, exclusion, silencing, and marginalization. Simply hoping for the best will not suffice.

Otterbein historically worked to be an inclusive, welcoming community. The university admitted women at its founding, students of color before the Civil War, and Japanese-American students who had been sent to internment camps during World War II. Founded by the United Church of the Brethren, these values -- belonging, connection, and opportunity -- are at the college's foundation. Like any university, Otterbein's history is also implicated in structural inequalities and issues that the community has to consistently strive to see, hear, and solve. Equity, inclusion, and social justice are always a work in progress.

There was mention of a change in pictures/displays on the website. Plank will send out information for submitting photographs, snapshots, etc., to be considered.

- Campus Climate –
  1. Knowledge survey – Fitzgerald reported this survey would be offered in January and August of 2017. The pilot requires at least fifty (50) students' participation

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in the initial survey between January 9 and February 24, and 100 or more students' participation in the following survey between August 14 and September 29. Rank and major will be included with registration, and the survey would take 45-60 minutes to complete. Fitzgerald suggested incentives to initiate student participation – pizza to be served, gift cards for completion – with multi-tiered gifts suggested by staff for further incentive. Suggestions to get the word out to students included e-mails, forms of social media, student government collaboration, and possible INST credit for same. Fitzgerald noted proctors will be needed and will request volunteers. There will be webinar training for same in November and December 2016.

2. Climate Survey Executive Summary – Fitzgerald noted this survey information was provided to Scott McLaughlin and that guideposts are necessary to submit for the upcoming survey. Drobney offered comments on statements of concern by participants, in particular, in response to Questions 11 and 12 of the previous survey. Ashworth offered there should be an organized framework, noting strengths should be revealed as well, and information inside and outside of class. Fitzgerald reiterated that suggestions/ideas for guideposts be sent to him as soon as possible.
- Action Implementation –
    1. Academic Department Question of the Year -- Prysock shared after review of the students' list of demands and the multi-year plan, the group chose four (4) specific items to address. Those included:
      - Residence Hall Programming and Initiatives – prepare diversity and inclusion kits for bulletin boards in residence halls and lists of activities for RA's to facilitate in same, and bring speakers to campus to speak in residence halls
      - Gen Ed requirement – since the three-credit model has been approved on campus, recommendations have been made for a diversity class requirement; who will teach it? What recommendations can this committee make for possible impact? What is Otterbein's thoughts on it? Sherman-Heckler made it clear that recommendations must come from faculty committees.
      - Create institutional policies/processes to enhance diversity of faculty and staff – add a diversity and inclusion statement to job descriptions/postings and class syllabi, include students from diverse populations on search committees, and draft a template that includes inclusive language for job postings for employers
      - Ease of access for students with disabilities – what steps has Otterbein taken to accommodate these students? What still needs to be done?
    2. Name change from Office of Diversity – Prysock noted after much discussion and how the office's name would be best represented, the group chose "Office of Social Justice and Activism". The committee was in agreement. Announcement will be made at the end of the 2017 MLK Jr Convocation on January 18.

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3. Peace and Justice Awards – Prysock reported nominations are now being accepted for the awards and information will be on the website. Categories include student organization, faculty/staff, and student.

**Administration and Staff Conference Summary** -- Gatti reported a debriefing meeting was held on October 26 to discuss said conference. From the 50+ evaluations submitted, responses included:

- There was participation in a range of competencies – some knew very little about the content presented and some knew a lot of the content in advance. We expected this range during planning.
- There were issues with the size of the room and audio visual interruptions.
- Participants enjoyed the assigned seating arrangement.
- Breakout sessions were popular; most participants would have liked the opportunity to attend more than one session.

It was decided the conference will be held annually on the Tuesday of fall break. The Diversity and Inclusion Committee will oversee implementation of the conference. Changes may include a preliminary session to be held in Battelle Hall in the morning, a Call for Programs made to the community for suggested topics/themes, and offering multiple breakout sessions.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 24, 2017.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:07 p.m.