

# Diversity and Inclusion Committee

## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 19, 2019

Roush Hall, Room 424

Chair Gatti called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

Those in attendance were: Chair Bob Gatti, Angel Banks-Price, Ike Canfield, Kristina Escondo, Scott Fitzgerald, Kera Manley, Kathryn Plank, James Prysock, German Vargas, and Jane Wu.

### I. Announcement of New Cabinet Chair, Kristi Robbins – Bob Gatti

Gatti noted the Diversity & Inclusion Subcommittee is to be chaired by a member of Cabinet. Jefferson Blackburn-Smith was first chair and served two years. This is Gatti's third year and Kristi Robbins, Vice President and Chief of Staff, will become the next chair. Robbins will be present at the March committee meeting.

### II. Campus Climate – Scott Fitzgerald

Updates from attending a diversity and inclusion seminar – Fitzgerald chose to start by giving the committee an update on a seminar attended with Key Shakoor. Items of interest:

- Ohio Competes – Otterbein and other businesses are collaborating to require the state to pass a non-discrimination law for the LGBTQIA+ community. Twenty-one (21) counties in Ohio do not have this law. Franklin County, which includes Columbus, does have one.
- Central Ohio Chapter – National Association of Hispanic Nurses – Otterbein has two (2) nursing students who are members and have volunteered to work at the job fairs sponsored by this association.
- Shakoor is working with the Columbus Black Nurses Association, which is a local chapter of the national organization. They are well established in this area and making efforts to promote same. Currently, they are trying to schedule their Ohio Annual Awards Ceremony at The Point.

i. Scorecard update – Fitzgerald noted there are some issues developing this scorecard. There is no ideal model to use when comparing state and local information for an Otterbein template. They vary greatly, as does each county's data on diversity. Using the state model seems to be the best guideline.

Below are diversity comparison statistics from 2017-2018:

	Otterbein	State of Ohio	Franklin County
White	86%	82%	69%
Black or African-American	4%	12%	21%
Hispanic or Latino	1%	2%	4%
Asian	3%	1%	3%
Two or More Races	<1%	2%	2%
American Indian	0%	<1%	<1%
Native Hawaii/Pacific Islander	<1%	<1%	<1%

## **Diversity and Inclusion Committee**

Meeting Minutes – February 19, 2019

Page 2

Student enrollment information from Jefferson Blackburn-Smith is forthcoming, as well as data for Otterbein faculty and staff.

Future goals for this working group will be discussed in the March meeting.

- ii. Action steps for hiring committees – Fitzgerald noted the hiring checklist will be available for each hiring department before posting a position.
  - i. There will be implicit bias training for the search committee before interviews are conducted -- currently, there is an Equity Advocate for faculty with HR and Academic Affairs.
  - ii. Departments are to provide various posting locations for candidates of diversity – this is an intentional practice which requires networking to build relationships.
  - iii. A commitment is necessary from all groups on campus.

### **III. Communication – Will Elkins**

In Will's absence, there was no report on this working group.

### **IV. Conversation and Events – Kathryn Plank, James Prysock**

- i. Common Hour on *West Side Story* – Plank noted two (2) dates have been set for spring events. The dates are March 20, 2019 and April 17, 2019, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., in Roush Hall/ Room 114. Titles for each event are, “Delving into Dialog: Tackling Difficult Topics through Effective, Meaningful Conversation”, regarding productive conversation and will include future topics of discussion with quotes from the campus community and the public, and “Delving into Dialogue: Identity and Representation”, which will focus on *West Side Story*, the performance industry, and aspects of identity and their influence.
- ii. Faculty hiring – Plank reported on a yearly conference where Ph.D./Academic Affairs candidates are invited to attend and build networking relationships at different levels in their respective departments at Otterbein. Equity Advocates are also meeting regularly for feedback to department goals regarding diversity.
- iii. Lynching Series – Prysock reported the Social Justice Ambassadors continue to facilitate the Unpacking Racial Terror in America Series. Remaining sessions are scheduled for March 18 and March 25, 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in Roush Hall/Room 213. Topics may include the endurance of white supremacy and truth and reconciliation.

Other notes of interest:

- Several students that participate in the OSJA (Office of Social justice & Activism) activities dined with Winona LaDuke, the Vernon L. Pack Distinguished Lecturer, and discussed how to be an ally, strategic activism, and relationship-building.

## Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Meeting Minutes – February 19, 2019

Page 3

- Cayla McNeil and Prysock worked with Dr. Kristy McCray to present at a national conference on inclusion within athletics, especially as it pertains to students of color. They will meet with Dawn Stewart, Director of Athletics, to discuss research and ideas for the Athletic Program.
- Prysock is working with some Greek Life chapters to create a diversity component to New Member Education, including Greek Life standards and applicable goals for each chapter.

iv. Campus concerns – Gatti addressed the committee on two (2) letters sent out last semester to the campus community regarding the following issues and also shared with the Athletic department:

- a. Racial incident occurred in fall semester – involved charges and disciplinary action against a student
- b. Vandalism of menstrual product boxes – explanation of vandalism and damage to restrooms. It was noted there has been less damage more recently.

Plank added she, Wendy Sherman-Heckler, Prysock, and Margaret Koehler will be submitting a proposal to take part in the 2019 Institute on Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation (<https://www.aacu.org/events/summerinstitutes/trht/2019>) in hopes of eventually becoming a TRHT Campus Center.

## V. Proposals from the United Methodist Church (UMC) – Bob Gatti

Gatti reported on an issue with the UMC currently in conflict regarding homosexuality. At the General Church Conference held this February, the issue was discussed and plans to address the topic were announced.

Notes of interest regarding background and progress include:

- UMC was formed in 1968 as a merger of The Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren churches. Delegates from different conferences meet as a denomination at a conference called General Conference, every four (4) years.
- In 1972 – the first conference – language was added to the Book of Discipline, which states, “Homosexuality is incompatible with Christian Teaching”. There have been arguments about these words since that time to the present. Some of this division is between the U.S. Church and global members.
- In 2016, the last conference held, there was strong debate among delegates about human sexuality. In an effort to find a solution, the Council of Bishops proposed a plan to move forward – “A Way Forward” – to include a commission made of diverse voices and a special conference to be held in 2019 to try to solve this issue.
- Three (3) plans were considered by the Commission:
  1. Connectional Plan – plan that shifts the current structure of the church into three (3) ideological divisions, including traditional, progressive, and unity conferences. Churches would vote to decide which

## **Diversity and Inclusion Committee**

Meeting Minutes – February 19, 2019

Page 4

conference for affiliation, and all three would share their common missions.

2. Traditionalist Plan – not fully discussed, but proposed by a few Bishops. Only 9 of 32 members supported it, which essentially solidifies the current stance by the church.
3. One Church Plan – plan that was ultimately promoted, seeking to figure out how churches can be faithful to the United Methodists within the ministries and remove penalties for ordaining LGBTQIA+ pastors or performing same gender marriages.

Gatti noted that Larry Brown, Methodist minister and member of the Board of Trustees, and Judy Guion-Utsler, Otterbein chaplain, met and reaffirmed the core values of Otterbein University. The Otterbein Mission and Values Committee have also met and will continue to discuss in future meetings to determine Otterbein's relationship with the United Methodist churches.

There was some discussion as to how this might affect the relationship with UMC community churches and UMC scholarship opportunities for students. More discussion to follow.

**Other.** Gatti asked for other business to discuss. There was none.

The next committee meeting will be Tuesday, March 26, 2019.

Gatti adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.