

Diversity Council Meeting Minutes: January 21, 2020

In attendance: Joe Cooper, Anna Eliis, Audrey Mayer, Harley Merkaj, Brigitte Morin, Faith Morrison, Cyndi Perkins, Kelli Raffaelli, Diane Shoos, Shannon Vairo

1. *HHMI “Driving Change” Letter of Intent*

Mayer has been asked by the Provost to submit a “Letter of Intent” to the HHMI program “Driving Change”, which funds programming for increasing diversity and inclusion among students in STEM fields. Mayer provided a brief description of the program and asked for volunteers to provide feedback on the letter (which will be finished by January 31st). The Letter of Intent is due February 7th. If Michigan Tech is selected to continue on to the final round, full proposals will be due in Spring 2021 after a “self-study” is conducted, following HHMI methodology.

2. *Restructuring the Diversity Council into three Diversity Boards (students, staff, faculty)*

Our main topic of discussion was the shift to a three-board structure for the Diversity Council, splitting it into three Diversity Boards (one for students, one for faculty, and one for staff), which would ease the scheduling burdens that the full Diversity Council has experienced and increase input from the individual constituents. We discussed a draft structure for the boards and amendments to the structure to make it more representative and transparent. All three boards will ultimately report to the VP of Diversity, and likewise bring information and requests for recommendations from the VP of Diversity back to the boards.

We also discussed the idea of having an annual “congress” of the membership of all three boards, to retain the feedback mechanism that the current board serves. We also discussed the need or utility of incentives for participation (either for individuals or groups to encourage representation).

A revised draft of the three-board structure will be sent back out to the Diversity Council for comments, and then decided on at the next Council meeting in February. Our goal is to encourage the formation of preliminary boards in the latter half of the Spring 2020 semester, so that the board structure and membership can be ready to start in Fall 2020.

3. Kellie Raffaelli updated us on the “Children in the Workplace” policy. The policy has been updated (to allow for children in certain places) on some websites, but not others, leading to confusion about the policy and its implementation. Raffaelli is following up with HR to make sure that the policy is consistent everywhere, including in their emails out to the Michigan Tech community on snow days.