

Diversity Council Meeting Minutes - November 12, 2018

Attendance: Lisa Cunard, Jerry Jondreau, Audrey Mayer, Mike Meyer, Faith Morrison, Kellie Raffaelli, Brenda Randell, Diane Shoos, Shannon Vairo

1. Review minutes of previous meeting

Meeting minutes were sent out to the Diversity Council mailing list; no corrections were noted. Minutes are now posted on the Diversity Council website and on our Canvas course page.

2. Report from Jerry Jondreau: Can Diversity Council recommend the addition of an element to orientation for new faculty, staff and students regarding the indigenous history of our area, specifically regarding treaties and ceded lands. We spent 30 minutes brainstorming ways that this knowledge could be integrated into the Michigan Tech campus. There is already a recognition statement on the Michigan Tech Diversity webpage: <https://www.mtu.edu/diversity/>. Beyond finding a place during the orientations of new faculty, staff, and students, we offered the following ideas: address it during a module in Global Issues/other Gen Ed courses; add ceded territory statements to syllabi and letterhead; commission a spot on campus where ceded territory and indigenous history is commemorated and provide walking tours with scripts and education for the spot; Kellie Raffaelli is working on a CDI/Housing “connector space” in DHH (Anishinaabe statement above doorway); identify areas on campus where murals and indigenous artists can have space (e.g., wall in Alumni Lounge); drumming at Welcome and Commencement events; add statements acknowledging ceded territory during Welcome message on Sunday for students and parents; invite KBIC to marshal the cardboard canoe race with a birchbark canoe. Involvement by local artists and KBIC members must be funded/supported.

Next steps: Mayer will form an ad hoc committee to identify more activities and to move this initiative forward, tapping the Indigenous Peoples Day group that is already formed for membership. We can also talk with Northern Michigan University and how they increase the visibility of this issue on their campus (e.g., they have a Native American studies program).

3. Report from Carlos Amador: Update on University Senate voting to harmonize diversity training for *all* members of a search committee for deans and chairs. Amador not present, but Mayer reports that she thinks this topic is on the Senate’s schedule.

4. Institutional Equity would like a few volunteers to help them review the faculty/staff hiring process and training. Mayer will follow up.

5. Provost/President’s request for prioritized actions driven by climate study. Mayer had distributed a draft of three priorities for discussion. The provost is requesting metrics, a timeline, and suggested strategies.

The Council endorsed strategies 1 and 2 (supervisor training and improved childcare offerings). There was concern that URM populations were being left out of the actions list due to their needs not being reported through the Climate Study. Raffaelli noted that disability issues are being addressed through other initiatives.

The Council agreed to shift the priority for access and disability down to #4 on the list, since there are many new programs that are actively addressing these issues. Instead, we added

“develop cultural competency on campus” into the Priority #3 slot, and discussed strategies to address the “lack of sense of belonging” and hostility on campus that is a large driver of our lack of positive climate for many groups, including URM and also including other affected groups. Please see the revised (v4) draft of our “priorities and recommendations”.