



TO: The Oakland University Senate Steering Committee

FROM: Joanne Lipson Freed, Co-Chair, Senate Faculty Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee

CC: Britt Rios-Ellis, Provost

DATE: June 8, 2022

SUBJECT: End of the Year Committee Report

The Faculty DEI committee was first established in AY2019-2020 as an *ad hoc* committee of the Oakland University Senate; it is now, in AY2021-2022, in its second year as a standing committee. The purpose of the committee is to address issues related to faculty diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of faculty life at the University.

Below, we review the Charge of the committee and its structure and function. We then describe the accomplishments of each subcommittee for the past academic year.

Charge

- To advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in an environment of mutual trust and respect at all levels of the institution
- To facilitate opportunities and success for all community members
- To develop and refine metrics that will be used to monitor and evaluate OU's performance on faculty-related diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives
- To develop and implement training
- To research and promote best practices in faculty recruitment and retention
- To regularly conduct policy audits and recommend changes necessary to support a diversity, equity and inclusion in faculty recruitment, hiring, promotion and tenure and opportunities for leadership

Committee Structure and Function

Members of the Faculty DEI Committee are drawn from each School/College within the University, with additional members representing the Provost's Office and Student Government. The committee operates with a subcommittee structure: each subcommittee, comprised of 2–5 members, is tasked engaging the larger University around specific initiatives related to faculty diversity, equity, and inclusion. Below, please find a list of each of these subcommittees, with a summary of their activities for the year.

Subcommittee Accomplishments AY2021-22:

A. Retention and Recruitment: Diversity Advocate Program

- The DA training was offered in multiple formats (both in-person and virtually) throughout the year.
- A total of 15 participants completed the training. (This number is far fewer than in years past, an indication that the program has successfully trained a critical mass of interested faculty.)
- Looking ahead: Feedback survey and focus groups with participants are planned, to inform any future additions or adjustments to the training or the program overall

B. Climate, Recruitment, and Retention Strategies

- Gathered preliminary information about departments' existing DEI recruiting plans; found that few had formal plans in place
- Looking ahead:
 - Considering a possible shift in direction/approach
 - The subcommittee has expressed interest in a possible collaboration with DEI Council running focus groups specifically related to the question of promotion & equity.

C. Policy Audit and Recommendations

- Began a preliminary inquiry into the University's non-discrimination and workplace bullying policies.
- Discussed the development and implementation of an anonymous reporting mechanism for faculty with DEI-related complaints.

D. DEI/SAFE Training for Faculty

- The objective of this subcommittee as originally established was to develop a DEI training for faculty, on the model of the SAFE training currently offered by the Gender and Sexuality Center. However, there has been significant turnover in the membership of this committee, which limited their ability to make progress on this initiative.
- Looking ahead:
 - The subcommittee will re-evaluate its charge and its feasibility in the context of the ongoing COVID pandemic.
 - Moving forward, the Chair(s) should ensure that at least one member of the subcommittee is serving a multi-year term to increase continuity.

E. Strategic Planning, Goals, and Measurement for Faculty Related DEI

- Produced a draft of a strategic planning framework document, which has been reviewed by the larger committee and is currently being circulated to DEI Council and the Provost's Office.
- Looking ahead:
 - Move toward formal adoption of the framework

- Use the framework to identify specific areas or initiatives for which the subcommittee and/or larger committee can take ownership

F. Faculty Review Promotion and Tenure

- Rolled out the RPT Audit Tool, a framework for reviewing tenure and promotion policies and procedures to increase equity and mitigate bias.
- Facilitated conversations using the Audit Tool framework with CAP, FRPC, and other departments/units across campus
- Looking ahead:
 - Solicit feedback on how the tool is being used, and develop a set of recommendations to support implementation,

Future Directions:

In our final meeting for the year, the committee affirmed the importance of maintaining a strong record and document repository on E-space, to maintain the continuity of ongoing initiatives and avoid duplication of past efforts. I have undertaken to bring the E-space up to date, and would recommend that, moving forward, it be integrated more strongly into the committee's day-to-day operation.

After three years in existence, the Committee is at an appropriate juncture to reflect on and possibly re-evaluate its processes and areas of focus. Some questions to consider include

- How to ensure knowledge transfer and continuity of projects/initiatives from year to year as subcommittee membership changes
- How to interface effectively with other committees or offices at various levels across the campus that are also working on DEI issues
- Within the capacious and urgent area of DEI, where is a Senate Committee best positioned to engage? Where will the committee's efforts be most valuable, and what areas/initiatives are strongly tied not only to the committee's mission but also its place within the University's governance structure?

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the entire committee,

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