

Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee (EAD)
September 24, 2018
Minutes of the Meeting

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these minutes reflect the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration or the Board of Regents.

[**In these minutes:** Welcome and Introductions; Committee Orientation; Committee Discussion of Proposed Administrative Policy: *Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Names, and Pronouns*; Lactation Support]

PRESENT: Teddie Potter (chairing), Jonathan Gerteis, Oscar Garza, Jeremy Jenkins, Tayler Loiselle, Tina Marisam, Deena Wassenberg, Marcella Windmuller-Campione

REGRETS: Keisha Varma (chair), Rafael Contreras-Rangel, Priscilla Flynn, Nan Thurston

ABSENT: Diane Cilengi, Caleb Pedersen

GUESTS: Sara Benning, Sarah Keene, and Mikaela Robertson, members, Lactation Advocacy Committee

OTHERS: Virajita Singh, assistant vice provost, Office for Equity and Diversity (for Michael Goh); Julie Reuvers, deputy chief of staff, Office of the President

1. Welcome and Introductions

Professor Teddie Potter, chairing in Professor Keisha Varma's absence, called the meeting to order, and members introduced themselves.

2. Committee Orientation

Amber Bathke, senate associate, University Senate Office, provided an [overview of University Senate governance and orientation](#).

3. Committee Discussion of Proposed Administrative Policy: *Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Names, and Pronouns*

Potter then turned the committee's attention to the [Star Tribune article](#) that came out over the summer on the proposed administrative policy: *Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Names, and Pronouns*. Tina Marisam, director, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, explained that staff from her office as well as the Gender and Sexuality Center for Queer and Trans Life, had consulted many groups about the proposed policy, and, by and large, had received positive feedback. Some issues that arose, she said, were:

- The perception that the policy called for disciplinary action for accidental misgendering. Marisam assured members that the intent of the policy was not to punish people for mistakes or lack of awareness; disciplinary action would only be invoked, she said, when

misgendering rose to the level of discriminatory harassment (intentional, pervasive, etc.). She added that some changes had been made to the draft to clarify this point.

- The concern that asking people to use specified pronouns constitutes compelled speech and infringes on free speech. Marisam said that the Office of the General Counsel had weighed in on this, and they do not see it as a free speech issue. A FAQ was added to the policy to address this concern.

Potter asked whether the roll out of the policy would involve an education component. Marisam said that there would, adding that the policy is still in consultation; they are trying to set up a meeting with senate leadership to work through some of the challenges. Virajita Singh, assistant vice provost, Office for Equity and Diversity, commented that her sense is that there is broad support for this policy in senate committees.

4. Lactation Support Policy

Next, Potter welcomed Mikaela Robertson and Sarah Keene, members of the Lactation Advocacy Committee (LAC). Robertson and Keene provided a [handout](#) summarizing the reasons they are advocating for a University-wide policy in support of breastfeeding. Amber Bathke, senate associate, University Senate Office, summarized the discussion from the last [EAD meeting of the 2017-18 academic year](#), when the committee had agreed to partner with the LAC in advocating for such a policy. She then shared the draft [resolution](#) that Varma, and the LAC had worked on over the summer. Robertson added that four of the Big Ten institutions have breastfeeding support policies, and two others are in the process of developing one. Members asked about specifics of the policy; Robertson clarified that at this time they are only advocating for a policy to be created; if the administration agrees to do so, she said, the assumption is that the draft policy would make the rounds for consultation at that time. A voice vote was held and members voted unanimously to approve the resolution.

Hearing no further business, Potter adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office