

**Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee (EAD)**  
**March 1, 2021**  
**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:** George Floyd Scholarship; Proposal on Mitigating Bias in Faculty Tenure/Promotion Process; Demilitarization Resolution; Letter on Alexander Report]

**PRESENT:** Ross VeLure Roholt (chair), Tracey Anderson, Noro Andriamanalina, Caroline Bender, Vincente Diaz, Miguel Fiol, Joseph Gerteis, Jeremy Jenkins, Josephine Lee, Anna Horning Nygren, Barbara Peterson, Virajita Singh, Weihong Tang, Nan Thurston, Simon Tran, Aleeya Verdi, Stuart Yeh

**REGRETS:** Matthew Verkuilen

**ABSENT:** Thu Danh, Veronica Fisher, Ashok Singh

**GUESTS:** Susan Herridge, manager, leadership development and international travel, University of Minnesota Foundation

**OTHERS:** Brianne Keeney, assistant to the president, Office of the President

**1. George Floyd Scholarship**

Professor Ross VeLure Roholt, chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed Susan Herridge, manager, leadership development and international travel, University of Minnesota Foundation, who was present to seek advice on getting the word out about the Foundation's [scholarship in honor of George Floyd](#). (Herridge noted that there are currently four scholarships at the University in Floyd's honor: the [George Floyd Memorial Scholarship](#) in the Law School; the University of Minnesota Duluth [Scholarship in honor of George Floyd Jr.](#); and the Carlson School of Management [Scholarship in honor of George Floyd](#); and the one through the Foundation, which is systemwide.) Recently, the Foundation approved some funding to match donations to the scholarship. Currently, said Herridge, the scholarship fund is at just over \$100,000; when the match dollars come through, they estimate that there will be at least \$200,000 in the fund.

This year, there are two students who are recipients of the scholarship, one from the Twin Cities Campus and one from the Rochester Campus. The plan is to award two scholarships each year, one to a Twin Cities student and the other to a system campus student.

Members offered the following suggestions for spreading the word about the scholarship:

- Work through to deans to reach faculty.
- Utilize faculty messaging when reaching out to alumni; work with local development staff to identify faculty.
- Encourage groups, departments, etc., to share via social media.

Herridge said that she would provide some information that could be shared via social media in a follow up email.

## **2. Proposal on Mitigating Bias in Faculty Tenure/Promotion Process**

Next, VeLure Roholt turned the floor over to Professor Stuart Yeh, to talk about a proposal he had written to mitigate bias in faculty review, tenure, and promotion processes. Yeh explained that the proposal lays out an alternative way of thinking about merit review in academia and raises issues that are largely unrecognized or unspoken. He invited members to join a subgroup of the committee to focus on this issue and possibly bring a resolution to the larger committee for adoption.

Virajita Singh noted that there is an effort underway to look at department 7.12 statements through an equity lens. Yeh said that he was aware of that initiative, and felt that this was a separate issue. Tracey Anderson recommended collaborating with the Academic Freedom & Tenure Committee (AF&T).

## **3. Demilitarization Resolution**

The committee then turned its attention to continued discussion of the [Demilitarization Resolution](#). VeLure Roholt informed members that he had shared the committee's concerns, especially regarding the reallocation of funding from weapons to scholarships, with the resolution's author, Briggs Tople. VeLure Roholt reported that Tople acknowledged that the administration may choose not to implement that part of the resolution, but that the Office for Student Affairs felt that they could successfully operationalize it. One member suggested that instead of moving funds around, perhaps OSA could be involved with hiring potential officers.

Members expressed the following additional concerns:

- While military grade weapons have no place on a college campus, military grade equipment is more broad and may include things such as body armor, which is for the protection of the officers.
- The objective of having data about when weapons are drawn makes sense, but members were not sure the proposal to implement break seals for weapons when they are drawn would meet that objective.
- There may be unintended consequences for system campuses.

Vincente Diaz commented that endorsing the resolution would be an expression of whether the committee supports demilitarizing the police, not necessarily all the details. Members agreed, but many remained hesitant to endorse the level of detail in the resolution, citing a lack of expertise in such matters. Instead of endorsing the resolution, the decision was made to write a statement endorsing the general principle of the resolution. VeLure Roholt said that a draft would be sent out for committee feedback and an electronic vote.

## **4. Letter on Alexander Report**

VeLure Roholt then shared a revised draft of a letter to the M Safe Implementation Team regarding the Alexander Report, based on conversations at two working meetings of the committee prior to this meeting. The committee went through the draft paragraph by paragraph

and suggested minor corrections and edits, but overall felt that the letter was nearly final. VeLure Roholt said that the minor edits would be made and the letter sent out for further comments, with the intent to hold an electronic vote the following week.

VeLure Roholt thanked members for all of their hard work on these many important issues. He noted that he would like to talk about diversity data from the Student Experience at the Research University (SERU) survey at the next meeting, with the view of possibly advocating for questions to be added to it in that area. He then adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke  
University Senate Office