

Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee (EAD)
April 14, 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:** YOU@UMN; Draft Administrative Policy: *Campus Public Art*; Resolution on Arrested Student Protestors; Resolution on Mitigating Bias in Faculty Tenure/Promotion Process]

PRESENT: Ross VeLure Roholt (chair), Tracey Anderson, Noro Andriamanalina, Caroline Bender, Miguel Fiol, Jeremy Jenkins, Anna Horning Nygren, Barbara Peterson, Ashok Singh, Virajita Singh, Weihong Tang, Nan Thurston, Simon Tran, Aleeya Verdi, Matthew Verkuilen, Stuart Yeh

REGRETS: Vincente Diaz, Joseph Gerteis, Josephine Lee

ABSENT: Thu Danh, Veronica Fisher

GUESTS: Annie Counihan, student senator; Lisa Lemler, associate director, University Recreation and Wellness; Julie Reuvers, assistant to the vice provost and dean, Office for Student Affairs; Paige Rohman, senior assistant to the vice president, University Services; Marlo Welshons, assistant to the provost, Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost

1. YOU@UMN

Professor Ross VeLure Roholt, chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed Julie Reuvers, assistant to the vice provost and dean, Office for Student Affairs and Lisa Lemler, associate director, University Recreation and Wellness. Reuvers and Lemler were present to consult on and raise awareness about a new platform, [YOU@UMN](#), designed to support and foster student wellness. Reuvers and Lemler provided an [overview of the tool, the consultation process, and the plans for rolling it out](#).

Tracey Anderson thanked Lemler and Reuvers for taking a broad, systemwide approach. She asked how they are identifying resources on the system campuses. Lemler said that the work group has representation on each campus, and are leveraging ongoing partnerships to populate campus content.

Stuart Yeh asked whether this would be a good place to put information on how to find teaching assistant positions. Funding for graduate school is a source of stress for graduate students, he said, and they often find it difficult to navigate and search for positions. Reuvers said linking to a central repository for this information from the platform was a good idea.

Members thanked Reuvers and Lemler for their time and their work on this project.

2. Draft Administrative Policy: *Campus Public Art*

Next, VeLure Roholt turned the floor over to Paige Rohman, senior assistant to the vice president, University Services; and Marlo Welshons, assistant to the provost, Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost; who were present to consult on the draft Administrative Policy: [Campus Public Art](#). Rohman explained that Board of Regents policy stipulated that the University would have an administrative policy on this, but as of yet one did not exist. In addition, he said, the public art on campus says a lot about the institution's values, and a strong administrative policy is important to provide guidance and ensure that those values are upheld. The policy applies to commissioning, siting, and installing works of art funded by the State of Minnesota in connection with major campus construction projects that are governed by Minnesota Statutes: 16b.35 Art in State Buildings. It also serves as a framework of best practices for art that is similar in installation or intent.

Anderson noted that the draft policy included a section about decommissioning public art. She asked if this applied to situations of problematic content (such as statues of Confederate generals, etc.). Welshons said that this is out of scope for this policy and would align more closely with Board of Regents Policy: *Namings*. This policy covers uninstalling or decommissioning art for more mundane reasons, such as construction, maintenance, artist request, etc.

VeLure Roholt remarked that he appreciated the emphasis on collaboration and accessibility. He asked whether there are audio components and other aspects beyond the visual. He also wondered how the University could become a conduit, given the public money, for underrepresented artists across the state. Finally, he suggested setting aside a portion of the funding to invite student work.

Welshons and Rohman thanked members for their feedback, and the committee thanked the presenters for their work on this important policy.

3. Resolution on Arrested Student Protestors

Next, VeLure Roholt welcomed Annie Counihan, student senator from Duluth, who was present to solicit feedback on a [resolution](#) regarding student protestors who had been arrested. Counihan explained that the resolution called for the expungement of student records for being arrested for breaking curfew in protest, as well as advocated for students from other campuses to be able to access services from Student Legal Services in some way. Members suggested specifying that it applies to students protesting within the scope of certain criteria. Members also noted that the two main requests in the resolution seem like two separate but entwined issues, and suggested perhaps split into two resolutions.

4. Resolution on Mitigating Bias in Faculty Tenure/Promotion Process

Finally, the committee turned its attention to a [resolution on mitigating bias in faculty tenure/promotion process](#), drafted by Stuart Yeh.

Anderson commented that bias in promotion and tenure is a frequent topic of discussion in the Academic Freedom & Tenure Committee (AF&T), on which she served in the past. She said that it seems what the resolution is really asking for is for units to revisit their 7.12 statements and maybe the University-wide 7.11 statement. She added that there are times when not granting tenure or promoting is the right decision, and it would be incorrect to imply that all such

instances are a result of bias. Yeh agreed, stating that the issue comes into play when the criteria stated in the 7.12 are interpreted too narrowly or arbitrarily reduced to one portion of a broader requirement. He added that the suggestions in this proposal is to convert the criteria in the 7.12 statements into something that can be more objectively evaluated, such as with a Likert scale. VeLure Roholt noted that there are some ways in which departmental bias ease can be mitigated by bringing in a process of review that allows for some external eyes right on the work.

Members wondered if work like this had been done or was ongoing elsewhere at the University, in the interest of not overlapping or duplicating work that should rather be built upon. Yeh stated that the plan is to undergo the full consultation process in the fall, during which hopefully it will be discovered if such work is underway or has been tried, and how the proposal can build upon previous efforts. He noted that meetings with AF&T, as well as other governance committees, were in the process of being scheduled.

In the interest of time, VeLure Roholt adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office