Equity, Access, and Diversity Committee (EAD)
January 28, 2019
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:** Update on Lactation Support Policy Resolution; Action on Resolution on Education Around Best Practices for Disability Accommodations and Supporting Students with Disabilities; Campus Climate in the gradSERU and SERU; Update on Draft Policy *Equity and Access: Gender Expression, Gender Identity, Names, and Pronouns*]

PRESENT: Keisha Varma (chair), Noro Andriamanalina, Jeremy Jenkins, Tayler Loiselle, Tina Marisam, Wanda Marsolek, Teddie Potter, Deena Wassenberg, Nan Thurston

REGRETS: Rafael Contreras-Rangel, Marcella Windmuller-Campione

ABSENT: Diane Cilengi, Priscilla Flynn, Oscar Garza, Jonathan Gerteis, Caleb Pedersen, Jair Peltier, Ross VeLure Roholt

GUESTS: Daniel Jones-White, Senior Analyst, Office of Institutional Research; Saby Labor, director, Gender and Sexuality Center for Queer and Trans Life

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

1. **Update on Lactation Support Policy Resolution**
Professor Keisha Varma, chair, called the meeting to order and updated the committee on the progress of the Lactation Support Policy Resolution. She reported that she and members of the Lactation Advocacy Committee (LAC) had brought the resolution to several University Senate governance bodies (the Social Concerns Committee, the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs, the P&A Senate, the Civil Service Senate), all of which had endorsed the resolution. Meetings with the Senate Committee on Student Affairs and the Faculty and Senate consultative Committees are upcoming, and the hope is to bring the resolution to the University Senate for a vote in March or April.

In addition to meetings with governance bodies, said Varma, she and LAC members had met consulted with Jennifer Reckner, chief of staff, Office of Undergraduate Education; Mike Berthelsen, vice president, and Jessica Riles, manager, space planning, Planning, Space, and Real Estate, University Services; Kathy Brown, vice president, Office of Human Resources, Scott Lanyon, vice provost and dean, The Graduate School, etc., all of whom had been agreeable to implementing actions suggested in the resolution.

Varma noted that a previous resolution on lactation support, in 2013, had stopped at the Office of the President after approval at the University Senate.

2. Action on Resolution on Education Around Best Practices for Disability Accommodations and Supporting Students with Disabilities

Next, Varma directed members' attention to the resolution from the Disabilities Issues Committee, *Resolution on Education Around Best Practices for Disability Accommodations and Supporting Students with Disabilities,* that PRofessor Ben Munson, chair, Disabilities Issues Committee, had introduced at the previous EAD meeting.

Teddie Potter suggested that this education could be included in the new faculty orientation. This would send the message that the University considers it important information, she said. Wanda Marsolek asked whether the resolution included anything about spreading awareness that mental health concerns can be considered disabilities. Marsolek noted that many students do not seem to realize this, and therefore do not avail themselves of the Disability Resource Center's services. Varma replied that it was not included in this resolution, but acknowledged the point and suggested that something could be perhaps added to an existing policy to alert students.

Potter pointed out that as an instructor, she often the first to notice a mental health or learning disability, and suggested that the training should make faculty aware of that possibility.

Discussion ensued about teaching assistants. Varma wondered if they should also take the proposed training; Tayler Loiselle remarked that she is a teaching assistant and often does not know about disabilities in her classroom. She understands the privacy concerns, she added, but it is difficult to provide accommodations if she is not aware of the need.

Jeremy Jenkins pointed out that although he is in favor of such training (and more), many people are likely to object to it because they may see it as setting a precedent for more types of training (such as on racial issues and other types of diversity). Deena Wasseberg acknowledged that this is likely, but ventured that ongoing professional development should be an expectation of faculty. Unless required for licensure in their field, most faculty are not required to do any kind of ongoing professional development, unlike K-12 teachers. She said that asking faculty to complete, for example, four hours per year of professional development should not be unreasonable, and that the topic could vary or cycle based on the year to cover a variety of issues. Loiselle remarked that as a student employee in Housing and Residential Life, she had been required to complete professional development every year on similar topics, in order to keep her job.

Nan Thurston commented that the training on preventing and responding to sexual misconduct worked really well for system campuses because it was online, and suggested the training proposed in this resolution should follow that example.

The committee took a voice vote and approved the resolution unanimously.

Tina Marisam remarked that it was nice to see this resolution to coming through governance. She reflected that there has been an implicit understanding that faculty and staff are opposed to more training, but the module on preventing and responding to sexual misconduct was well received and did not support that assumption.

3. **Campus Climate in the gradSERU and SERU**

Varma then introduced Daniel Jones-White, director, gradSERU Research and Development, Office of Institutional Research (OIR). Jones-White gave the committee some background on the [Student Experience in the Research University (SERU)](#), which is for undergraduate students, and its counterpart for graduate and professional students, the gradSERU. He explained that the surveys were developed in the University of California system, and are used at many Big Ten institutions. They are meant to gather data on the student experience of the three tenets of the research university-- research, community service, and learning.

The surveys consist of a series of core questions and several randomly assigned modules, explained Jones-White. Institutions determine which modules are sent to their students, and what percentage of students receive them. The purpose of this design is to gather data about a wide variety of subjects without making the survey too long for individual respondents. A number of questions about campus climate are included in both versions of the survey, said Jones-White. Past surveys can be viewed on the University's [SERU website](#).

When the survey is complete and data has been analyzed, key stakeholders receive access to their several different types of reports through Tableau, allowing them to see aggregated results from their college or unit. The reports allow users to drill down to a certain extent while maintaining confidentiality.

Marisam noted that the gradSERU includes questions on harassment, including sexual harassment, and inquired whether someone with access to that data could drill down to the program level. Jones-White said yes, but clarified that OIR had not released that data because they were concerned it might jeopardize confidentiality. Marisam expressed concern that if the institution has data that shows a "hotspot" for sexual misconduct in a particular department, it could create some obligation for the institution. Jones-White indicated that he would welcome a conversation with Marisam about how to fulfill that obligation without compromising confidentiality.

Varma thanked Jones-White for the presentation and he departed.

4. **Update on draft policy** *Equity and Access: Gender Expression, Gender Identity, Names, and Pronouns*

Finally, Varma turned over the floor to Marisam and Saby Labor, director, Gender and Sexuality Center for Queer and Trans Life, to update the committee on the draft Administrative Policy: *Equity and Access: Gender Expression, Gender Identity, Names, and Pronouns*. Marisam explained that the committee had consulted on the draft policy in the previous academic year, and that several changes had been made since then due to feedback from various stakeholders. This feedback centered around two main themes:

- Questions about how the policy would be implemented. To respond to these questions, a detailed FAQ that answers many of these questions and provides transparency around the University's approach has been created.
- Concern that language in the prior policy draft could generate unease that certain conduct, such as unintentional misgendering, could lead to discipline that is inappropriate or contrary to free speech principles. To address this concern and set a more positive tone in the policy, the reference to disciplinary action that was included in a prior draft has been removed. This does not change the intent, clarified Marisam, as the University still prohibits harassment or discrimination on the basis of gender identity.

Currently, continued Marisam, the policy contained four provisions:
- University community members can specify their name, gender, and pronouns, and University members are expected to use them.
- Privacy: Units must take reasonable steps to maintain the privacy of the names and sexes of University members maintained in University records when they differ from the University members' specified names and gender identities.
- Data Collection: Where possible, a University unit or member who is collecting information about University members' sexes, sexes assigned at birth, and/or gender identities should explain at the time of collection the reason for collecting the information and how the information will be used.
- Programs, Activities, and Facilities: University members may access gender-specific facilities that correspond with their gender identities and may participate in University activities and programs consistent with their gender identities including, but not limited to, housing, restrooms, locker rooms, recreation services and activities, and camp programs. The University must provide facilities that are available to all gender identities.

The plan is to present information on the draft policy at the University Senate meeting in April 2019, and present the policy for a vote at the May 2019 meeting.

Varma asked whether Marisam and Labor felt that removing the references to discrimination and harassment from the policy diminished it. Labor replied that the spirit of the policy has not changed, and that the major stakeholders were supportive of the change. Marisam added that Equal Opportunity and Affirative Action is working on an administrative policy on discrimination, which will include language about all protected identitites.

Hearing no further discussion, Varma thanked Marisam and Labor and adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office