

**MINUTES**

Wichita State University – **President’s Diversity Council (PDC)**

DATE: December 7, 2016

TIME: 9:30a –10:30

LOCATION: Morrison Hall Conference Room



**PRESENT:** Stephen Arnold, Tracia Banuelos, President Bardo, Mehmet Barut, Traniece Bruce, Deanna Carrithers, Jaya Escobar-Bhattacharjee, Judy Espinoza, Marche Fleming-Randle, Jean Griffith, Aaron Hamilton, Alex Johnson, Danielle Johnson, Krishna Krishnan, Rhonda Lewis, Gergana Markova Rick Muma, Douglas Parham, Sarah Sell, Lyston Skerritt, Natasha Stephens, Johnnie Thompson, Janet Twomey, and Russell Widener

**NOT PRESENT:** Alex Chaparro, Riccardo Harris, Kennedy Musamali, Quang Nguyen, Alicia Sanchez and Robert Weems

- I. **Welcome** – President Bardo welcomed President’s Diversity Council members and provided several university updates. President Bardo addressed the recent elections and indicated that the university would continue to pursue the current strategic direction and address challenges as they arise. He encouraged the Council to continue to do the important work of providing a high quality educational experience for students. President Bardo indicated that WSU would continue to serve the mission and purpose of the university and promote an environment of inclusion. He reiterated the core values of the university remain the same.

During his update, a question was raised regarding the university’s position regarding DACA. President Bardo indicated that he had conducted research and would support students within the laws of the State of Kansas. He indicated strong support for students while reiterating the importance of following laws and regulations of the State of Kansas.

In addition, President Bardo highlighted the need for university support for the Urban League. He highlighted university support that has already been provided in addition to asking members to contact Dr. Fleming-Randle if they are interested in supporting the initiative to assist in strengthening the organization.

Lastly, he indicated employees earning 90K or less would be eligible to receive a one percent raise in January. Despite recent budget reductions, the President stressed the importance of supporting the employees on campus and this increase was intended to provide as much relief as possible given the current fiscal climate.

- II. **Climate Survey Update** – Dr. Rick Muma provided an update regarding the climate survey. The climate survey was conducted campus wide for all faculty, staff and students to better understand the perceptions and opportunities for improvement for students regarding the campus experience. The survey included diversity related

topics and results would be used to identify successes and opportunities to enhance the student experience. Dr. Muma thanked PDC members that served on the committee and indicated he looked forward to exploring the results.

As the committee reviews the results, President Bardo and Dr. Muma indicated that the number of respondents was low. As such, the data would be examined carefully to identify areas for improvement while cautioning against overgeneralizations.

- III. **Strategic Enrollment Management and Retention Discussion** – Dr. Fleming-Randle welcomed Stan Henderson, ACCRAO Consultant, to discuss WSU Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) processes and address questions of the Council. First, he highlighted his passion for addressing issues of diversity and inclusion by describing his personal and professional experiences that developed the foundation for his understanding. He shared that these experiences led him to this field and was exciting about supporting the WSU community.

As he continued, Stan stated that successful SEM processes required strong leadership at all levels of the WSU community. He indicated that each interaction with students resulted in a positive or negative impact on the student experience. As result, the SEM culture must be instilled at all levels of the organization. This means that customer-service and organizational learning must permeate all levels and the WSU community must be intentional in developing this focus area.

As a part of the discussion, Stan highlighted the efforts of the College of Engineering. He indicated there was support from all levels and thanked Janet Twomey for her leadership within the College of Engineering. It was stated that multiple sessions had occurred and faculty and staff expressed enthusiasm regarding strategic changes to address internal challenges.

The discussion continued with several questions directly regarding the student experience including the subject of first generation students. Because first generation students are the first in their families to attend college, additional support is needed to help both the student and families understand the significance of education. SEM plans and processes should ensure the system addresses potential questions and barriers. Also, he highlighted the significance of recognizing distinctions within subgroups while not isolating or calling attention to a group in a manner that promotes isolation.

Another discussion topic raised included the how to discuss diversity with groups on campus that have different challenges. A Council member noted that it was challenged to get others to communicate and participate in conversations related to diversity. It was noted that there was resistance and requested strategies to overcome these barriers. Stan indicated that often it takes multiple conversations to make progress. For many, diversity and inclusion are uncomfortable topics and the

discussion has to be framed appropriately to invite dialogue. He acknowledged that the work of diversity and inclusion was challenging and multiple attempts including a variety of communication techniques would be necessary. Additionally, several initiatives on campus including HR Service Standards were being launched and these efforts would support the overall strategy of promoting diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organization.

Lastly, Stan indicated that there had been a rich discussion with challenging questions and looked forward to supporting the efforts of the PDC and encouraged Council members to let him know how he could provide further support.

- IV. **Closing Remarks/Adjourn** – Dr. Marche Fleming-Randle thanked everyone for their participation and wished everyone a happy holiday.
- V. **Adjourn** – Dr. Marche Fleming-Randle indicated the next PDC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 11 at 9:30a in the Morrison Hall Conference Room and adjourned the meeting.