

Minutes

Wednesday, November 21, 2018

12:00-1:30 pm, University Union, Havasupai C

Skype Phone: (928) 523-0078 (Conference ID#: 5667562)

1. Call to Order
   1. Roll Call and introductions
      1. Dorianne Pollack
      2. Judy Manor
      3. Andrew Iacona
      4. Calvin Legassie
      5. Audra Travelbee
      6. Don Carter
      7. Katie Tolman
      8. Jamie Axelrod
      9. German Fermin
      10. Lauren Copeland-Glenn
      11. Chris Lanterman
      12. Megan Trout
   2. Approval of minutes from October meeting
      1. Herman motioned to approve, Lauren seconded. All in favor? All Ayes, No nays, no abstentions.
2. Update on Diversity Strategic Planning and Taskforces
   1. Each task force has met once so far. Lauren is heading it up. First meetings were an overview in the process, where the plan is at, and specific tasks for each group. Meetings will be held every two weeks. Send Lauren an email if you would like to attend. Notes are available. Prioritization, metrics, and faculty search are the three task forces. Faculty search is interesting because it is required to have ethnic and gender diversity on each search committee which puts a burden on certain faculty and staff. So the group is looking at how to address that. Metrics and prioritization are Monday and Wednesday next week. Faculty search is December 11th. The strategic plan will eventually expand out to staff search but this is not currently required for staff. Prioritization and metrics task force have the most need for more participants.
   2. Diversity Fellow - Chris received an email this morning indicating there is a committee that will look at the applications and looking at the interviews to make recommendations to President Cheng. Chris was invited to participate in the process. Discussion of history of the position and past expression of concerns that there is more need than part-time. The job description is not very descriptive so not clear what job duties will be. One big piece is NAU becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution.
      1. Applicants for the Diversity Fellow are presenting in Faculty Professional Development office at Cline Library on Tuesday 11/27 at 10am (Michelle Miller), noon (Amy Rushall), and 2pm (Rebecca Campbell). They will also be available on Zoom.
3. Diversity Symposium and Future Initiatives
   1. 11/9 there was a diversity symposium. Kathy Mahosky and NAU 4 ALL represented and discussed issues in how we look at diversity and disability at NAU. There is discussion about continuing the symposium series into the spring. Loosely planned to meet on 11/30 to discuss suggestions. Lauren shared about how beneficial it was to represent disability because previously the population has not been included or addressed in the symposium. Audra shared that she expected to hear from ethnic diversity groups but the disability piece really made a big impression on her, and it has not traditionally been included in diversity, which is why she attended today. Disability studies has not received the same attention in diversity discussions. Chris shared that sometimes it is a slow process to frame disability as part of the diversity discussion. Lauren mentioned an idea that could be exciting is being able to create intersectional courses bringing a variety of viewpoints into one course; for example, a course that focuses on criminal justice but bring in disability and ethnic studies. It would be good to move forward with defining diversity on the academic side to include disability in intersectional courses on diversity (required). GLI could take this up. Discussion of possibility of learning community or community of practice on disability and diversity. Learning community is facilitator led, whereas a community of practice is more organic like a work group. Don mentioned possibility of a combined learning community of practice. Lauren shared that students talked and faculty talked at the symposium about why disability studies was important. Curriculum was discussed as well, especially the intersections of diversity. Jamie discussed building resources to disseminate around campus and the possibility of including it as a CDAD goal to help provide resources to allow for the design and implementation of intersectional courses that include disability. At the symposium, Lauren mentioned how the discussions at the table were about curriculum and intersectional courses. Calvin mentioned discussions at the tables were about how siloed the commissions seem with not interacting with each other. Calvin mentioned an idea to have commissions or the diversity fellow bridge by asking commissions to each send a representative to each of the other commissions. Chris discussed it is a good idea to pursue for the spring to discuss with the other co-chairs. Jamie mentioned also resuming the co-chairs meetings. Lauren mentioned that Priscilla is heading this up as it was supposed to be the role of the Chief Diversity Officer. Discussion of the diversity commission mixer. Lauren shared that there were slides up about each of the commission’s meeting times and representatives from each commission. About 50 people showed up. Lauren mentioned that the Center for University Access and Inclusion has an events page that lists all of the commission meetings.
4. DHM Follow Up and Future Planning
   1. Chris shared that it was a good Disability Heritage Month. Good attendance at many events, including scavenger hunt and sitting volleyball. Jamie shared that there was good participation at many events so it would be good to keep the momentum and generating the same level of interest. Jamie mentioned figuring out the STAC funding piece sooner would be a good thing. Also discussed the possibility of “escape rooms” an idea from Central Florida, which are an experience where you go into an environment with a task to solve and you have to discover the clues to escape the room. Chris discussed the idea of doing a virtual scavenger hunt in the spring. Chris welcomed ideas for next year. Don mentioned that there are faculty groups that meet more regularly and perhaps that could be a way to have faculty discuss ideas with more comfort than presentations.
   2. Feedback received about the Mental Health Symposium/Events (see reverse).
      1. The questions received could be guidance for a larger Mental Health Symposium. Calvin mentioned that this topic could be overwhelming in breadth, so perhaps series or individual symposiums could break it down. Chris mentioned that time and resources are constraints. Could you do a themed DHM on mental health or include several events on mental health? Jamie mentioned that there seem to be so many ideas that it could be a monthly event. Working together with Health Promotions, Campus Health Services, the Psychology department, EAW, and educational psychology, we could probably come up with 8 sessions that focus on mental health. Invite the other commissions to sponsor one event, perhaps. Dorianne mentioned the possibility of a disability themed training similar to SafeZone. Lauren mentioned that there is Disability Zone, Inclusion Zone, and Diversity Zone being considered within the diversity strategic plan. Jamie and Chris asked about reviewing the Disability Zone curriculum.
5. Capital Projects on the Horizon
   1. Convocation and basketball arena
      1. Andrew shared that the complication is that the project has recently changed its name to student’s high performance training center, due to funding (some combination of student fees, private funding). It would be athletic focused and adjacent to the dome. The scope will still include looking at making a more accessible convocation space.
   2. Practice field and crosswalk
      1. Andrew mentioned that there is a designer coming on board for a more accessible crosswalk with a beacon (press a button to cross) at San Francisco.
   3. Ice rink and accessible seating
      1. Andrew shared that the project also included a thermal cooling upgrade. However, the return on investment on the chiller is not as good as it could have been. So, the project is slowly “dying”. So, when and if it happens accessible seating will not be left behind. And, it will not include glass/boards at first, just boards as a student recreational ice rink. Future glass and seating will be longer term.
   4. Fencing
      1. Recital Hall and Science building fencing will come down soon. Beaver Street will be addressed over the break but it may extend past.
   5. Campus parking assessment
      1. Included ADA stalls for compliance. The information will be used to improve accessible funding.
   6. Request from President about pedestrian connections and missing sidewalks, including the accessible pathway from Forestry to Engineering. These will be considered for the summer concrete projects.
6. Old/New Business
   1. Tom Uno is retiring at the end of the year. Jamie invited ideas about how to address.
   2. Certificate in disability professional preparation is moving forward, through SBS as disability studies’ home department. Jamie said they are working on catalog descriptions, identifying instructors, and funding.
7. Next meeting is Wednesday 12/12 instead of the following.
8. Feedback on Erin Callinan Presentation:

I just wanted to follow up with the talk/webinar “Beautifully Bipolar: An Inspiring Look into Mental Illness with author Erin Callinan”. I first want to express my appreciation that mental health and mental illness is being addressed – as sadly that’s not usually the case at the university. But unfortunately, when the presentation was over I was left feeling like there was a lot skipped over and completely missed.

 If there is going to be someone talking about these experiences, especially as an educational resource tool for faculty/students - it seems pertinent to have someone who can speak to the interwoven struggles and nuances of having and dealing with a mental Illness. It would be advantageous to have a speaker that represents and can speak to what our most vulnerable students experience. It seems important to have a speaker that represents and speaks to the multiple intersections of identity that complicate the realities of living with and addressing mental illness.

 It’s great that Erin had so much familial and medical support - but that reality is highly unrelatable and unachievable for much of the student population. Many students don’t have familial support, don’t have adequate social support, don’t have access to medical care, don’t have financial stability - and so my question is how can we support them? If we can give advice for helping/supporting students who don’t have those structures of support - then we have the tools to help everyone. But if we only give tools to students who have the privilege of having various architectures of support - then we are failing the needs of many students.

 Some questions that guide my own investigations on what would be important to talk about are:

* What are resources are available for free to learn about mental illnesses?
* If you don’t have access to healthcare – what, if any, are the other options?
* If you don’t have familial/social support - are there resources to help you create structures in your life to help balance that out?
* If you don’t have peer support - are there resources to help you create structures in your life to help balance that out?
* If you don’t have funds for medication - are there any other options? Is medication always the only solution anyway – i.e. how can we prioritize addressing the trauma that can be underlying a mental illness?
* Also - what are the ways class, gender, race, experiencing trauma, etc. influence and mutate the impact of living with a mental illness (on your personal, social, educational, professional life)
* How is mental illness viewed differently if you’re trans, nonbinary, queer, unsheltered, undocumented, a person of color, etc.?
* How is mental health compounded by living under systems which criminalize and oppress your identities?
* Also, how do we talk about the complexities of working/existing/performing in an environment (academia) that can be one of the biggest factors exacerbating or causing a mental illness?
* How do you connect the requirements of staying in college with the needs of managing a mental illness?
* What resources can we give to folks with mental illness’ and those wanting to be a support system for folks with mental illness’?