



NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

Commission on Ethnic Diversity (CED)

General Meeting

Monday, March 6, 2017

12:30-2:00 pm, University Union, Havasupai C

Meet-me line: 523-9119

Co-chairs, Tia Truss (Tia.Truss@nau.edu), Gerald Wood (Gerald.Wood@nau.edu)

Meeting Minutes

1. Introductions

- Tia Truss called the meeting to order at 12:32 p.m.
- Commissioners introduced themselves.

2. Update on university strategic plan (mission, vision, core values, strategic goals)

- Commissioners spoke about a meeting they attended to edit the university strategic plan. They spoke. In the strategic plan, how is student-centered learning defined? The mission statement and goals section of the plan drops off and is not specific to NAU. Commissioners spoke about the diversity section of the plan. Is the diversity section only specific to Native Americans? What about everyone else? The mission statement is watered down. There is an issue concerning the mission statement of the plan. There are language issues. The plan does not mention collaboration and engagement with students.
- Commissioners read and discussed the plan for ten minutes. Commissioners commented. There are too many core values and strategies in the plan. There is disconnect from the mission and vision and goals. The plan does not capture the NAU we know. It lacks power. The word ‘student’ is not in the mission statement. The plan is incredibly generic and flat.
- Commissioners offered suggestions. We should highlight that students drive this institution. They are the ones who innovate. We must use the words ‘Northern Arizona University’ in the mission statement. The vision statement is not really a vision statement. It is written in the past tense. A vision statement should show the institutions long-term goals, and not just talk about the accomplishments of the institution. Some sentences are hollow—e.g. “Our graduate students guide our world to a more vibrant future.” And it’d be nice to know where NAU is going. We should reference President Haeger’s strategic bulletin on diversity. This plan is much more specific. We need creative writers with historical knowledge to guide the strategic plan writing process. There are many experts on campus that can help with this. There is no mention in the plan about how diversity is promoted. What about NAU as a Hispanic serving institution? And global diversity?

- Commissioners referred to the University of Oregon’s strategic plan. Commissioners further discussed the plan. We are not wrong to mention that our students make up specific populations, like Native Americans and Hispanics. Commissioners referred to Arizona State University’s mission statement. NAU’s strategic plan vision statement is bizarre, abstract, and dishonest. NAU is not renowned for its diversity. It does not connect to cultural vitality.
- Commissioners discussed the importance of a strategic plan. Its mission and vision attracts students to the institution. It drives us and holds people accountable. Students and faculty and staff look at it and ask themselves, why do I want to come to NAU to learn, teach? Who will be my colleagues? Who is the audience of this strategic plan? This vision statement should really be future oriented. We want to be a Hispanic serving institution. It needs move us at NAU forward, rather than keep us in the same place.
- Commissioners talked about input process. The inputting process needs to be more engaging. Commissioners talked about the conflation of strategies and goals.

3. Follow up with Dr. Anderson on black face incident

- Commissioners discussed meeting with Dr. Anderson. We learned some ways to address similar issues—e.g. the BEST team provides resources, first respondents-type roles, training available, can reach out to H.R. and EMSA to start discussions on providing diversity trainings, perhaps, providing a ‘my student body’ training on diversity. It may be smart to think about these issues as retention issues.
- We can push for change by way of changing policies, policy recommendations. Freedom of speech needs to be applied broadly in our classrooms. Zero tolerance? It may be smart to document patterns of behavior, of discrimination. From there, we can act on behavior. There is a tendency to defer responsibility. The institution must explain—why do these incidents occur over and over?
- Commissioners posed questions. How do we address the problem that the university seemingly does not care? Do we address the public? How are we going to protect people? This is not an isolated incident. There are numerous incidents, thus, the university is doing something wrong.
- The primary issue is that we react to such incidents as if they were isolated incidents. They are not isolated incidents. We then forget these incidents. We must shift the culture. Perhaps, shift the culture through small group discussions. Interactive discussions. Freshmen orientation is a great place to start in shifting the culture. Is residence life holding diversity trainings? They are working actively on the structure to move forward. There is no structure for trainings as of yet, but they are building it this year.

- Broad question—how much training is provided university wide? RA, bias incident, BEST trainings.

4. Update on diversity commission co-chairs meeting

- We are coming up with a list of concerns. The university strategic plan must align with the diversity strategic plan. We must work in solidarity with other commissions. CED can reach out to academic units for support and mention that CED has accomplished many goals—women and gender studies, Latin American studies, ethnic studies. We must outreach as CED.

5. Announcements (please send to add to agenda or bring fliers)

- Diversity awards are due on April 1, 2017. The diversity awards dinner is on May 2, 2017. Nominations of students, staff, faculty, and community members or groups.
- People can check the student affairs website for information on various convocations, such as the Hispanic convocation.
- April 20, 2017 is the next CED mixer. Information following.