

**OFFICIAL MINUTES
BACCALAUREATE COUNCIL
Sixth Meeting/ 2019-2020 Academic Year
February 13, 2020**

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Voting Members: A. Ferguson (BUS), S. Ehsani (BUS), R. Caughron (EDU), L. Hedin (EDU),
Present J. Ryu (EET), L. Guo (EET), S. Daskal (LAS), I. Gomez-Vega (LAS), J. Wolfskill
(LAS), J. Hathaway (VPA), J. Siblik (VPA), W. Finley (Libraries), C. Maher
(Advisor)

Ex-Officio Non- O. Ghrayeb (Vice Provost), E. Armstrong (Director, Military), J. Montag
Voting Members (Registration and Records), C. Garvey (Admissions), K. Saalfeld (Transfer
Present: Center)

Guests: Vernese Edghill-Walden (Senior Associate VP for Academic Diversity/Chief
Diversity Officer), Tamara Boston (Project Coordinator, Academic Diversity,
Equity, and Inclusion)

The Baccalaureate Council (BC) meeting was called to order by Vice Provost and Chair Omar Ghrayeb.

- I. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** –Caughron made a motion, seconded by Wolfskill, to APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR THE February 13, 2020 BACCALAUREATE COUNCIL MEETING. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Halverson announced that the minutes from 12.12.2019 had been **approved by quorum** via email and have been uploaded in the BC TEAMS site for review and retrieval.
- III. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - A. Halverson introduced Iris Gomez-Vega who is sitting for David Gorman, representative from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Gorman is on sabbatical for Spring 2020 and Gomez-Vega will be his designee for the semester.
 - B. Eric Armstrong is replacing Michael Zajac as the designee for the Associate Vice Provost for Student Affairs.
- IV. **DISCUSSION AGENDA** – Caughron made a motion to move forward to the discussion items, seconded by Gomez-Vega. **The item was APPROVED unanimously.**
 - A. Item CHHS19.20.10.01 – is a Limited Admission policy change in ACT or SAT test scores requirements with student impact. As such, it was requested by CHHS that this be approved for the 2020-21 catalog. It will be added to the 2020-21 catalog to mitigate any impact.
- V. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. Dr. Vernese Edghill-Walden, Senior Associate VP for Academic Diversity/Chief Diversity Officer, was the guest of the BC to present; “Conceptualizing Equity at NIU.” The purpose of this presentation was to review and solicit feedback on a proposed institutional equity statement. Tamara Boston, Project Coordinator, Academic Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, was also present for the discussion. The definition of equity versus equality ensued with discussion of the goals of NIU’s

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statement. Edghill-Walden laid out the scholarly history of defining equity and its impact on institutions of higher education.

Wolfskill was asked by Edghill-Walden to introduce his suggestion, from a previous discussion, for revision to the proposed policy. Wolfskill recommended adding the wording of identifying barriers not just eliminating them; as many across campus might be unaware of what a barrier looks like. Edghill-Walden discussed why helping stakeholders identify barriers will increase the utility of the statement. One facet in the process of conceptualize equity is to make it operational. Edghill-Walden has been presenting Wolfskill's suggestion as an example of how the University community is collaborating to make a strong working statement.

Caughron felt that an equity statement should not just be looking at developing underrepresented populations but all students. Edghill-Walden explained the rationale behind including the language of underrepresented students in the official equity statement and why the Committee on Academic Equity and Inclusive Excellence feels this is necessary. The rationale is linked to addressing historical barriers that have adversely and disproportionately impacted these underrepresented populations. There is both national and internal NIU data to support the inclusion of this language.

Gomez-Vega suggested the need for looking at barriers within NIU curriculum not just with financial or institutional barriers. With 20 plus years as an instructor, Gomez-Vega provided narrative about how her Latinx students have felt disenfranchised by a dominant Euro-centric curriculum within her department. Gomez-Vega sees this as an often ignored barrier to student completion.

Edghill-Walden thanked the committee for the discussion and asked all of those with feedback to provide this at the website provided in the presentation materials. This community feedback is important for success in creating equity for all of NIU's students.

VI. ADJOURNMENT – Caughron made a motion to adjourn and Hathaway seconded. The motion was **APPROVED unanimously** and the BC adjourned at 1:07 p.m.

The next meeting of the Baccalaureate Council is March 19, 2020 at 12:30-3:00, HSC University Suite

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Halverson
Curriculum Coordinator/ Catalog Editor

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