

## **MINUTES**

### **FACULTY SENATE – SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, February 9, 2022, 3 p.m.**

**Altgeld Hall 125**

**Northern Illinois University**

**DeKalb, Illinois**

**VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:** Books, Collins, Creed, Fredericks, Johnson, Maki, McConkie, McGowan, Montana, Vahabzadeh

**VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT:** Bohanon, Montgomery

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Boston, Chomentowski, Edghill-Walden, Flynn, Hu, Palese, Valentin

**OTHERS ABSENT:** Staikidis

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee (FS-SJC) Chair **I. Montana** called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

#### **II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM**

A quorum was verified.

#### **III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**B. McGowan** moved to adopt the agenda, seconded by **S. Vahabzadeh**. Motion passed.

#### **IV. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 8, 2021, MINUTES – Pages 3-7**

**B. Creed** moved to approve the minutes, seconded by **N. Johnson**. Motion passed.

#### **V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

## VI. ITEMS FOR FS-SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

### A. Feedback on the Anti-Racist Statement – presentation

Vernese Edghill-Walden  
Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion  
Chief Diversity Officer

Joseph Flynn  
Associate Director of Academic Affairs, Center for Black Studies  
Associate Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Tamara Boston  
Project Coordinator  
Division of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

A brief history on the development of the draft anti-racist statement was presented to the committee members. The draft statement is as follows:

*Anti-racism recognizes the experiences and the impact of racial oppression. Anti-racism is defined as values and actions that promote practices, policies and environments that actively work against all forms of racism. The goal of anti-racism is to create a united and proactive community recognizing all humanity, especially historically marginalized groups. NIU is committed to eliminating racial inequities and marginalizing practices due to assumptions and stereotypes based on an individual's racial identification.*

Feedback was invited, and the resulting conversation included the following points:

- Does/should the statement recognize that institutions perpetuate inequality over time?
- Does the statement provide reassurance that “it’s taken care of,” as opposed to creating a call to action?
- Does the statement close the reader off to the brokenness of racism? NIU’s commitment to anti-racism must be at the center.
- The statement developers valued keeping the statement concise, while acknowledging that addendums can be added later to clarify or elaborate on issues. This is the same model that was used for the NIU equity statement.
- Should the statement include a message that we all must make a choice – am I racist or am I anti-racist? Binaries could have a tendency to eclipse the gray areas, but the language could acknowledge that everyone is in an individual place.

- Suggested edit in last sentence: Move the last sentence to the top of the paragraph. Remove "...due to assumptions and stereotypes based on an individual's racial identification" and add "...recognizing and..." The resulting sentence would be:

*NIU is committed to recognizing and eliminating racial inequities and marginalizing practices.*

- Should the statement define all forms of racism? Can be addressed in the addendum.
- Will the reader understand the efforts of NIU? Similar to NIU's equity statement, this anti-racist statement can be a guidepost for how we move forward, similar to NIU's vision, mission and values.
- Feedback can be submitted at <http://go.niu.edu/antiracism>.

## VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. FS-SJC response to AAEO's feedback to the Ad Hoc Social Justice Committee's draft report

Committee members were reminded of feedback received at its December 8 meeting from Alan Clay, [Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) (ADEI), to the Ad Hoc Social Justice Committee's March 24, 2021, draft report. ADEI feedback to the draft report is now posted in Teams, and committee members are requested to review it and provide comment by Wednesday, Feb. 23 (which is two weeks prior to the next FS-SJC meeting on March 9).

- B. Discussion of FS-SJC prioritized recommendation #1 (ongoing NIU support for the FS-SJC) – Page 8

FS-SJC Chair **I. Montana** reported that Provost Ingram has pledged support for the first three items outlined in prioritized recommendation 1, including graduate assistant and summer salary support. Details are still being worked out.

Regarding the fourth item (\$14,000-\$20,000 annually for five years for anti-racism training), Provost Ingram and Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) Edghill-Walden have pledged their support of the idea of training, but do not feel that [Crossroads](#) has the capacity to provide it. NIU has the skill set, but can NIU build the internal capacity to provide the training? ADEI does not have the capacity. Faculty Academic Cultural Competence and Equity (FACCE) and other [Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning](#) (CITL) trainings are designed for faculty only, but training needs to have a broader reach across all campus community members. Also, the work of the FS-SJC must be in sync with similar work taking place by other bodies across campus in

order to avoid overlap and duplication of effort, including duplicate trainings being offered simultaneously.

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. FS-SJC and NIU leadership meetings

## **IX. REPORTS**

- A. Academic Affairs – Xiaodan Hu for Ben Creed

Working group (WG) members met with the Faculty Senate Personnel Committee (FSPC). WG members are developing focus group questions to ascertain whether the academic colleges are ready to embrace change, and to learn if they are aware of alternate models to what they're using right now, as a way of testing the waters.

- B. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Elisa Fredericks

The WG will meet with CDO Edghill-Walden next week. Sometimes it might feel like we are reinventing the wheel, but new faculty and staff come on board at NIU all the time; so, even if it's been done before, it can and should be accomplished again now.

- C. Institutional Racism – Beth McGowan

The WG has identified these deliverables:

1. Three to five years of training;
2. Developing a set of podcasts with Beth Wilkins, Coordinator of Graduate Career and Professional Development;
3. Creating a sort of resource library to be housed in Huskie Commons;
4. Decolonizing curriculum – met with Baccalaureate Council (BC), Graduate Council (GC) and Provost Ingram. The BC and GC did not embrace the responsibility of mentoring this activity.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

**E. Fredericks** moved to adjourn, seconded by **B. McGowan**. Meeting adjourned at 4:23 p.m.