

Academic Senate Diversity Committee

April 30, 2018

1 Members (College, years remaining)

- Anuli Njoku (CHP, 3)
- Shelby Kelsh (PHR, 3)
- John Scott Gray (OPT, 1)
- Felix Bollou (BUS 3)
- David McCall (RSS, 3)
- Nathan Leatherman (CET, 2)
- Mike Mendenhall (EHS, 1)
- Anil Venkatesh – Chair (AL, 3)
- Heather Symon-Bassett (L/C, 3)
- Kristin Conley (SR, 1)
- Eric Warner (CAS, 2)

2 Objectives

1. Serve as a liaison between organizations promoting campus diversity and inclusion, and the Academic Senate
2. Demonstrate leadership by guiding the Academic Senate in its response to current diversity related issues
3. Collaborate with FCTL to support training and development initiatives that focus on diversity and inclusion
4. Serve, in partnership with University Archives, as a repository for diversity and inclusion initiatives generated by faculty, staff, and students

3 Committee Activities

- The committee has focused on its role as a liaison between organizations promoting campus diversity and inclusion and the Academic Senate. In the fall, we met with Paul Zube from the College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office, who informed us of work he has done on publicizing events around campus. Paul's work provides a simple framework that could be adopted to better promote diversity and inclusion related events at Ferris.

In the spring, we met with Kaylee Moreno, executive director of the Center for Latin@ Studies at Ferris. Kaylee reported on quantitative evidence for success of the Promesa programs run by her center, which have bolstered enrollment of hispanic students at Ferris and supported those students through graduation with a very low dropout

rate. She also noted that Ferris students in the Promesa program are expected to contribute volunteer hours at several other diversity-oriented divisions on campus.

Recommendation: Continue to host members of the community at our meetings in order to learn of diversity and inclusion initiatives and connect those initiatives to the Senate. Also pursue the possibility of expanded “student work exchange” programs such as the one in progress between the Center for Latin@ Studies and the Office of Multicultural Student Services.

- Three committee members have led workshops at Endless Opportunities, a youth mentoring program based in Grand Rapids. In the fall, Anil led two workshops on credit card math and financial literacy. In the spring, Anuli led a workshop on the public health implications of tobacco use, and Mike led a workshop on the history of relations between police and African American communities and the racist practices implemented by so-called “sundown towns.”

Recommendation: Expand this type of community outreach and get Ferris education students involved. Also pursue mentoring opportunities local to Big Rapids.

4 Next Year’s Goals

- Safe Zone Training for committee members
- More committee involvement from Student Government
- Expanded community outreach through mentoring with a focus on Ferris student involvement