



# MINUTES

## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Leadership Team

11/16/2021 9:00 AM | *Meeting called to order by* Ms. Connie Cooper

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### In Attendance

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Chair Connie Cooper, Cheryl Bardales, Elizabeth Beard, Lynette Burlew, Donald Collins, Paul Coreil, Nina Cox, Shelly Gill, Destiny Harrison, Sheila Hudson, Bryan Jackson, Daniel Manuel, Jessica Ringo, Rafael Romero, John Rowan, Nathan Sammons, Deron Thaxton, and Mary B. Trueting.

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### The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM

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#### **Welcome and Introduction:**

- Connie Cooper made opening remarks and thanked the leadership team members for agreeing to work on expanding the university's vision for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Connie then asked the members of the committee to introduce themselves.
- Connie called attention to the current Diversity Statement posted on the Academic Affairs website and expressed the need to have the statement in mind as the team moves forward.
- Connie established that leadership team meetings will have a comment section in which the public can express comments and concerns.
- The leadership team elected the Vice-Chair to be Shelly Gill and the Secretary to be Destiny Harrison. The Vice-Chair will be responsible for aiding Connie in keeping the trajectories of the team moving forward. The Secretary will be responsible for keeping meeting Minutes.

#### **Current Objectives**

- Connie introduced six committees related to goals that the former Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council proposed and needs that Connie saw. The leadership team also decided who would chair those committees: Connie for Diversity Roadmap Steering, Daniel Manuel and Connie (Co-Chair) for Campus Climate, Cheryl Bardales for Institutional Infrastructure, Nathan Sammons for Access and Success. Ethan Lipsey for Education and Scholarship, and Bryan Jackson for Student Voice. The rest of the team members will choose a committee to join at a later date. Upon the suggestion of Shelly Gill, the team agreed that faculty, staff, and students external of the team should have the opportunity to join a committee as well.
- Connie suggested the creation of a Charter and website so that people can be cognizant of what the leadership team is working on. She also brought up a bias reporting tool going on the website. Deron Thaxton mentioned the usage of Ethics Point and routing all bias reports to Connie directly.
- The team spoke about possible programming and events for various history and heritage

months. Nathan suggested a series of seminars during Black History Month and exhibits placed in high traffic areas highlighting transformational individuals in history. The team agreed the same could be done for Women's History Month. Nina Cox suggested doing something for International Woman's Day like inviting community members to campus to speak about their experiences. Shelly expressed that she would like to see a revamp of the "Talented Tenth" Program which would invite local high school students of color to campus for dinner with current students. Destiny suggested conducting "The Hangout," an event that was postponed due to inclement weather during Black History Month. Sheila Hudson stressed the need to make these events accessible to online students. Connie mentioned a program that could honor community trailblazers, possibly at the "MLK Luncheon" or as a fundraiser that would use the accrued funds to become scholarships for underrepresented students. The scholarships could then be named after notable alumna (such as the first female student that graduated from LSUA).

- Connie is conducting an internal assessment of the university using the Association of American Colleges and Universities Inclusion Excellence Design. This assessment will be key to developing the future Roadmap.
- Connie also informed the team about upcoming programs, initiatives, and professional development opportunities. Daniel will be conducting "Safe Space" trainings in the near future.

#### **Meeting Conclusion**

- Connie reminded the team that feedback is important and thanked the team again for being present.

Respectfully submitted by Destiny Harrison

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The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>.

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