I. Welcome & Introductions

Associate Provost and Chief Diversity Officer Jabbar R. Bennett welcomed Council members to the fall 2019 meeting.

II. Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Planning Process

Associate Provost and Chief Diversity Officer Jabbar R. Bennett reviewed next steps regarding strategic plan:

- Review of competitive benchmarking – Out of 29 peer institutions, Northwestern is one of twelve universities who have created a diversity and inclusion strategic plan.
- Review of Northwestern's strengths, challenges, and root causes related to diversity:
  - Strengths included, leadership's recognition of diversity and inclusion as being valuable, undergraduate admissions, our top-ranked academic programs, promising opportunities, commitment to academic freedom, credibility, and stability.
  - Challenges included governance and execution, inclusion, and diversity.
  - Root causes and implications were organizational design, inclusion, competencies, and accountability.

III. The Council broke into discussion groups to provide feedback on the strategic planning document/list of recommendations.
Key Considerations
- Clarifying and articulating the university's diversity and inclusion approach (Recommendation 2)
- Establishing material consequences for leaders who are not meeting expectations, including meaningful ways to hold them accountable (Recommendation 4)
- Creating a single university-wide diversity and inclusion engagement and experience survey administered on a regular basis (Recommendation 4)
- Refining and updating Northwestern's overall mission statement – or develop a set of relevant institutional values (Recommendations 2 & 5)

- Responses from breakout groups based on the questions below -

**QUESTION #1 – What questions of clarity do you have about the overall recommendations?**
- What are the metrics we are measuring?
- We need more specifics about what “nurture deep inclusion means.”
- How do senior leaders fit into this plan? How will they set the tone for making sure these recommendations happen?
- How do we hold folks accountable? What does that look like?
- How can we centralize these goals or values at an institution that is so decentralized?

**QUESTION #2 – What is most promising and/or potentially challenging from your perspective?**
- How do we quantify our goals? At what point in time do we revisit our goals and reassess?
- We need more clarity on the timeline of the plan. What does short, medium and long-term really mean?
- A strategic plan like this should only cover about 3-5 years.
- How do we hold faculty accountable?
- Creating a diversity mission plan that is accessible to the public online seems to be a good idea.
- Northwestern could tap in to the resources of staff affinity groups to help foster deep inclusion.
- Challenges may include addressing issues related to environment and climate as well as addressing issues of PELL students.
- It may be challenging to refine and promote a mission statement but this type of statement could also be very promising.
- We need to see ideas related to nurturing deep inclusion come from senior leadership.

**QUESTION #3 – What limitations or gaps do you notice?**
- We need to acknowledge the existing structures in place that are harmful and work to apply mandates to create new structures that serve for a better purpose.
- How can we as a university get a baseline course or training that includes resources to help tackle these issues at large? This course/training could be mandated or strongly encouraged. It would be good to have this course/training online.
- What are the metrics we are using to measure our outcomes?
- How can we make sure our standards are equitable? How can we have campus wide standards while also helping people grow?
- We are unsure about what “nurture deep inclusion” means. It could mean many things.
- The document seems very inwardly focused. We would like to see a document that discusses how we plan to work with our community partners.
QUESTION #4 – What are the keys to success in implementation?

- Nurture deep inclusion seems very tough to pull off.
- How can we hold leaders accountable? Leaders need to set the tone and make sure everyone at the university is involved to further the mission.
- What does a “one-stop-shop” look like? Is it a physical location, office or website?
- We should look at retention for students in addition to staff and faculty.
- Success may look like teaching people about privilege, bias and cultural competence. This training could be made mandatory or required by departments.
- We need to look at space and environment. How welcoming are the spaces on campus? How does that impact the work we are doing?
- There needs to be a sense of consistency and shared responsibility. Faculty need to be aware of what student affairs is doing. We need a sense that all departments are on board with the plan.
- There needs to be alignment within all departments on campus as it relates to these efforts.
- Leaders set the tone – they must help find funding and be genuine in setting the example.
- We must work to tackle the infrastructure in addition to taking bias training.
- University president needs to be held accountable and be part of this process.
- We need to consider our communication plan to be successful. We should let campus know where the university is in the planning process. In addition, we need to communicate the outcome and convey what the final product will be that will be beneficial for individuals at the university.

Comments

Damon Williams: I feel inspired but want to make sure we include the graduate and professional student populations.

Sekile Nzinga: I feel curious to see where this journey will take us, how it will manifest, and how it will impact our individual units.

Gina Logan: I feel skeptical and hopeful. I have concerns about how to include faculty in the classroom and create an inclusive pedagogy. Recruitment is a challenge too. We need to challenge the notion that faculty do not have to do anything. More resources need to be committed to Pell Grant-eligible students.

Crystal Black: I think about the longevity of the plan. I have seen several iterations of this. The university tends to be reactive and hopefully this plan can stick and we extended it into the culture of the future. Until diversity and inclusion is part of everyone’s job description all the time, we will not all be on board.

Aspasia Apostolakis: I like the idea of linking the recommendations with other priorities – excellence is externally linked to diversity, equity and inclusion. We need a list of explicit priorities to tie to this work.

Samir Desai: How do we communicate the work so that it is inspiring and important? We need all 10,000 people at the university to be on board.
**Tahera Ahmad:** I think the plan is great but what is missing is an ethos – what is going to help the university move the culture to be a more inclusive campus? Policy is great, but we need to create a shared story among student, faculty and staff about the definition of inclusion.

**Denise Drane:** We need to think about the metrics (outside of numbers – because using numbers is a privilege) to know if we are actually on the right path.

**V. Announcements**

The Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion congratulated Dr. Sekile Nzinga on recently being named a YWomen Leadership Award from the YWCA Evanston/North Shore. Dr. Nzinga, Director of the Women’s Center, reminded the council of the March 2020 symposium the Center is hosting.

**VI. Adjourned at 4:30pm**