

CALS Academic Planning Council
6201 Microbial Sciences Building
November 7, 2023, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Attendees: Samer Alatout, Francisco Arriaga, Bradley Bolling, Todd Courtenay, Glenda Gillaspay, HuiChuan Lai, Patrick Masson, Ivan Rayment, Sean Schoville, John Shutske, Daniel Smith, William Tracy.

Not present: Sheldon Du, Mehdi Kabbage, Zhou Zhang

Ex Officio: Irwin Goldman, Louis Macias, Paul Mitchell, Troy Runge.

Guests: Diana Franz Anderson, Tom Browne, Rosalia Gittens, Mandi Moy

The meeting started at 1:00 pm.

1. October 3, 2023 meeting minutes for approval

Minutes were approved and will be posted on the APC website.

2. CALS ODEI Updates

Louis Macias, the Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, opened the discussion by introducing the CALS ODEI team:

- *Erica Flyte, Executive Assistant, an honorary team member.*
- *Tom Browne, Senior Assistant Dean, leads Climate and Outreach Engagement Efforts*
- *Rosie Gittens, Community Development Manager, responsible for the Learning Hub, Learning Opportunities, and Consultation.*
- *Mandy Moy, Community Impact Manager, responsible for Communications, Assessment and Data, and DEI Professional Development Requirement.*

Next, members of the ODEI team introduced themselves and briefly described their work.

How DEI works

All organizations have tensions between local units (in our case Departments, Centers, etc.) and central units (the college). Out of these tensions stem undesirable outcomes including misunderstandings, frustration, confusion, misalignment of goals, etc. The challenge is to bridge the gap between both ends by providing support and advocacy. ODEI engages with the local unit to learn themes and bring them to central administration. These lead to changing policies, developing best practices, etc.

ODEI website - aims to build a relationship between our office and other units. It contains information about consultation, climate, learning, DEI jargon, etc.

Learning Hub - an interactive database that offers curated content for faculty, staff, and students. It was created in response to requests from the CALS community to have a more centralized location to access DEI resources and training. Content is curated to align with the identified learning and since it is updated frequently feedback is encouraged.

DEI Consultation - a consultation service for faculty, staff, and students on a broad range of emerging challenges and opportunities. ODEI seeks to be a partner and resource for CALS community members to expand their understanding of DEI and integrate DEI concepts into organizational practices and policies.

Climate Response Team - ODEI website aims to be a one-stop-shop for folks to self-navigate and find the necessary forms for reporting incidents or inquiring about consultation. Climate Response Team is a partnership between ODEI, Academic Affairs, and Human Resources to support CALS faculty, staff, and students with climate-related inquiries.

The goal of the ODEI is to become more proactive, develop skills and awareness before an incident, such as Hostile and Intimidating Behavior, occurs.

DEI Professional Development Requirement - the requirement was recommended by the Equity and Diversity Committee and approved by the Academic Planning Council in 2021. The plan to launch in January 2024 has been put on hold by the dean.

2023 Summer Developments related to DEI

State budget and the attacks on DEI

The state legislature passed a budget that calls for a \$32M budget cut to UW System, which includes a pay plan increase for all state employees. The budget proposal also calls for the elimination of 188 DEI jobs throughout UW System (113 here at UW-Madison).

The governor vetoed the second provision.

The Joint Committee on Employment Relations (JCOER) segregated the University of Wisconsin employees from the rest of the state employee workforce when voting for the pay plan increase. The latest update is that the governor has filed a lawsuit challenging this action.

SCOTUS decision around affirmative action

The decision eliminated the consideration of race as a factor in college admission. Data from 10 states that have implemented this policy (UCLA for example) for a while show a precipitous decrease in African-American and Hispanic student enrollment and a marginal increase in Asian students.

Moving forward, it is important to ask questions and avoid overinterpretation, signal the values, and pay attention to communications from the ODEI.

Questions from the council

Q: Are we set up for the impact of the Supreme Court decision? Are we expecting to see similar structural issues to the institutions already implementing the policy?

A: I think we are. The effects will not be seen this year, but student enrollment next year will be very telling.

Q: Other than surveys, are there other tools to measure the temperature of the climate? And are there ways to differentiate between a competitive workplace and real climate issues?

A: Yes. we did a conflict resolution session at one of our departments and we talked about psychologically safe environment. Such an environment is marked by high intellectual tension and that is desirable. We want high intellectual tension and low social conflict. The goal is to achieve both. In terms of tracking that, we will begin administering the annual CALS climate survey to collect aggregate data this Spring. There are also department-level climate surveys that ask the same questions and, in many ways, become substitutes to having climate conversations.

Q: Are there any ways to track new climate issues that come up and necessitate some sort of quick movement to make students and the rest of the people feel safe? Not only to feel safe but to train people (faculty, staff, students) how to become culturally sensitive?

A: Yes, there is awareness. There are also complexities in providing the necessary support. It is important, however, to ask questions about what we do not know. We are holding strategic conversations about building immediacy in the data to respond to issues sooner and therefore we think more frequent climate surveys are necessary.

3. College Updates

Dean Gillaspay began discussing the list of topics previously emailed to council members.

Pay Plan Update: *the plan to increase the salaries of UW System employees by 4% this year and 2% the next, is on hold. The upper administration is working on this but there is no timeline, and we must be patient.*

The DEI Professional Development Requirement will not be launched this year before we know more about the pay plan. The team is working hard to make sure that everything is ready, and before launching there will be phased piloting: the first group will be the Equity and Diversity Committee, the second will be the Chairs, and the third pilot group will be the APC. The College may require another vote to make the DEI Professional Development a requirement.

Q: Can you give more information about the timing?

A: Not until the pay plan has been resolved.

Q: Will there be options to fulfill this requirement?

A: The whole project was built based on feedback from students, staff, and faculty. We do not want a single training for all. There will be choices and flexibility.

Faculty Performance Evaluations – these will begin soon. It has been noted that the system is not robust; thus, the college is moving towards setting up an annual faculty performance system and has purchased Digital Measures, a standalone software for this purpose.

This uniform format will allow tracking metrics and produce backend data.

Q: Will this tool, Digital Measures, account for innovation and extension program delivery?

A: Yes, we can program it. We make a document and put it in Digital Measures, and in this case extension folks could be helpful.

Student Enrollment – this year CALS did well. The data shows the number of enrolled students in majors and certificates for each CALS department in the Fall of 2023.

- Animal and Dairy Sciences enrollment increases, mainly due to the new major.
- Microbiology BS moved to a non-shared program (previously shared with L&S) and there is no decline in student enrollment.
- Entomology, Genetics, Biochem, and Soil Sciences were also mentioned for their increased numbers.
- To attract more students, the college is working on making it easier for students to double major.

New CALS Student Recruiting Activity

- The college hired Jane Duffstein at the end of September, and she is tasked with recruiting.

- *Faculty in CALS must be more engaged with student recruitment; their impact on students and parents should not be underestimated.*

Discussion on Departmental Curricular Proposals and Updates

The Council members reported out on departmental conversations around curricular improvements and new program ideas.

La Follette School NOI proposal

Samer Alatout noted that in general this is a good and needed initiative and would help develop a relationship.

Sean Schoville moved to support the La Follette School NOI proposal, and Franciso Arriaga seconded. APC unanimously voted to support the proposal.

The meeting adjourned at 2:47.