

Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee meeting held Monday, March 7, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom - APPROVED

The VSCS Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee met on Monday, March 7, 2022 via Zoom.

Committee Members present: Shirley Jefferson (Chair), Ryan Cooney, David Durfee, Bill Lippert, Jim Masland, Mary Moran

Absent: Karen Luneau

Other Trustees Present: Lynn Dickinson

Presidents: Joyce Judy, Pat Moulton

Chancellor's Office Staff: Donny Bazluke, Network/Security Analyst
Kellie Campbell, Chief Information Officer
Wilson Garland, Director of Transformation Projects
Kathryn Levasseur, Director of Government & External Affairs
Jen Porrier, Administrative Director
Kathryn N. Santiago, Associate General Counsel & System Investigator
Sharron Scott, Chief Financial and Operating Officer
Meg Walz, Director, Project Management
Sophie Zdatny, Chancellor
Yasmine Ziesler, Chief Academic Officer

From the Colleges: Jae Basiliere, Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, Northern Vermont University
Mary Brodsky, Executive Director Human Resources, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Community College of Vermont
Sarah Chambers, Coordinator of Instructional Technology, Castleton University
Tajae Edwards, Student, Castleton University
Ana Gaillat, Dean of Academic Affairs, Vermont Technical College
Jenny Gundy, Coordinator of Teaching & Learning, Community College of Vermont
Elaine Harvey, Director of Student Engagement & Persistence, Northern Vermont University
Kyla Leary, Student, Vermont Technical College

Kathleen Mason, Coordinator for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion,
Vermont Technical College
Kevin McGreal, Student, Community College of Vermont
Hannah Miller, Co-Director, Inclusive Childhood Education
Program, Faculty, Northern Vermont University
Patricia Shine, Faculty, Northern Vermont University
Sabra Anne Snyder, Office Assistant, Northern Vermont
University
Devyn Thompson, Student, Northern Vermont University
Beth Walsh, President, VSCUP, Northern Vermont University

1. Call to Order

Chair Jefferson called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. and welcomed David Durfee, a new legislative trustee, to the Committee.

2. Approval of October 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Trustee Cooney moved and Trustee Masland seconded the motion to approve the October 15, 2021 minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Update from the VSC DEI Transformation Work Group

Chair Jefferson invited Jae Basiliere, Northern Vermont University's Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, to provide an update on the work of the DEI Transformation Workgroup. These efforts are to ensure that DEI is being taken into consideration as part of the ongoing transformation work. Dr. Basiliere shared a presentation that can be found [here](#). Dr. Basiliere answered questions from the Committee about the trainings they have been providing to the transformation teams on how to incorporate DEI practices into their design work and make data informed decisions.

4. Presentation of proposed VSCS Diversity Statement by VSC DEI Transformation Work Group

Dr. Basiliere presented a draft VSCS Diversity Statement. The group seeks to develop a system-wide statement that represents the values of the institutions and serves as a check point to anchor back to when doing transformation work. The draft statement has already been reviewed by and preliminary feedback has been received from the Council of Presidents. The next step is for the draft statement to be shared with the college communities to receive additional feedback and build support for the statement. Mary Brodsky, Executive Director of Human Resources and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Community College of Vermont, added that the importance of receiving feedback from all groups is critical as the intent is to have this document be the "north

star” of the system’s institutions. Trustee Lippert suggested incorporating a tone reflective of members of the VSC striving collectively to move forward together and that this work is iterative. Dr. Basiliere agreed that part of the work is to model how to make a mistake, to recalibrate, and to grow.

5. Update on processes for data systems and pronouns

Dr. Basiliere shared that part of the DEI Transformation Work Group’s work is seeking to define which data points the VSC needs to collect and why so that we can determine what data is currently being collected, how we are using it, and any gaps in the data. One of the transformation projects is focused on Colleague, the VSC’s primary information system. Part of this work will involve taking steps to ensure that pronouns are stored correctly to avoid misgendering. Work on data definitions will also enable the VSC to better use its data for training purposes. This work covers all of the system’s institutions, including the Community College of Vermont.

Kellie Campbell, Chief Information Officer, congratulated Dr. Basiliere and NVU faculty member Pat Shine, both of whom will be receiving the Dr. Wanda Heading-Grant Award for Justice awarded by Vermont Women in Higher Education

6. Update on Initiatives related to equitable hiring practices

Chancellor Zdatny shared information on the current posting for the Chief Human Resource Officer position. This position will provide leadership and coordination with the institution’s Chief Diversity Officers and system leadership to implement strategies to build a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce. The job description also seeks candidates who will demonstrate commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and the prohibition of harassment and discrimination in the workplace. Once hired, the CHRO who take the lead in hiring a Chief Diversity Officer for the new university. Associate General Counsel Kathryn Santiago shared that the Employee Services Transformation Subgroup is looking to make sure that the VSC engages in equitable hiring practices.

7. Update on proposed anti-racism pledge from Student Diversity and Inclusion Task Force

The members of the Student Diversity and Inclusion Task Force joined the meeting and introduced themselves: Devyn Thompson from NVU-Johnson, Tajae Edwards from Castleton University, Kevin McGreal from Community College of Vermont, Kyla Leary from Vermont Technical College, and Sabra Ann Snyder from Northern Vermont University. The team shared an update on their progress with the anti-racism pledge. The group has developed a website and the goal is to have a soft launch of the pledge before the end of the current semester, with an official launch at the beginning of the next academic year, facilitated by a Canvas pop-up announcement. The team is open to receiving feedback and suggestions. They hope to receive as many signatures on the pledge as possible once it is launched.

8. Other Business

There was no other business.

9. Comments from the public

Andrew Clark asked whether equitable hiring practices are antithetical to finding the strongest candidates. Hannah Miller, Co-Director Inclusive Childhood Education at NVU, responded that equitable hiring practices are intended to find the best candidate by eliminating biases that might shrink the pool or prevent high-quality candidates from being seen due to personal biases that limit recognition of what other people might bring to our institutions. Equitable hiring practices assist in hiring the best possible candidate, rather than preventing the strongest candidates from being hired.

Chair Jefferson adjourned the meeting at 4:19 p.m.