

## Presidential Task Force for Opportunity and Equity

March 25, 2021

### Minutes

- **Updates – Gen. Burgess was not able to attend the meeting. Dr. Taffye Clayton led the meeting.**
  - Dr. Clayton reminded the committee that there would be no task force meeting on April 1 as that day is a Wellness Day for students.
  - Dr. Clayton announced that at the April 8 meeting she would give a project management and implementation update from the DEI Education and Training subcommittee.
    - Also announced that there may be a faculty recruitment and retainment subcommittee update on April 8 or 15.
    - Dr. Clayton said the Student Retention subcommittee is planning on presenting their findings and recommendations to the full committee on April 15.
    - She said Kim Brown would confirm all of the dates with the committee.
  - Clayton updated the group on the committee on the university's meeting with the NAACP on March 19. She said they had constructive and substantive conversations.
    - Issues discussed were Black student enrollment, the campus climate, racial equity training and building names.
    - She said this will be an ongoing conversation and another meeting with the NAACP will be scheduled soon.
  - Clayton discussed how the task force minutes and how were presented on its website. She announced the task force be sent an anonymous Qualtrics survey link to vote on two options for meeting minutes:
    1. Minutes reported with summaries of what is said – Names and a summary of the comments are reported from the general portion of meeting. Subcommittees minutes will be more general in nature to encourage conversation and sharing of ideas.
    2. Minutes reported verbatim with exactly who said what – Verbatim minutes will include the person's name and everything said by that person will be recorded and reported out. This will apply to all faculty, students, staff and administrators in the meeting.

- **Diversity Statement Approval – Dr. Taffye Clayton**

- Dr. Clayton shared the proposed diversity that had been revised and updated based on input from task force members. She described the statement as a “truly collaborative work product.”
- Dr. Clayton asked everyone to vote via the Zoom chat either “yes” or “no” in the Zoom chat.
  - Members who were not able to attend the meeting were asked to submit their votes via email to Kim Brown.
- Dr. Clayton said the vote would be shared at the next meeting on April 8.

### **Subcommittee Break-outs**

#### **Student Retention**

**Chair:** Dr. Joffery Gaymon

**Members:** Akilah Alwan, Madison Birkhead, Mikayla Brown, Chacolby Burns-Johnson, Angela Cannon, Rick Cook, Oladiran Fasina, Ada Ruth Huntley, Seymour Irby, Ronny Isaac, Lastella Paradise-Watson, Gretel Thornton, Jeffrey Turnipseed and Rett Waggoner

- March 18 meeting with Dr. Katie Boyd, Director of Academic Assessment was rescheduled to 3/24 at 1:45 p.m.
  - Debriefed and discussed Dr. Boyd’s presentation on the first destination survey and high impact practices.
    - Key items discussed were post-graduation outcomes for white and nonwhite students and how it correlates with participation in a HIP.
- Additional discussion began around key take away from the data discovery and content expert presentations. Including Collaboration, Connection and Community
- April 5- Meeting with Auburn Students and Community for Change – Discussion focused on student Advocacy
- On April 8 will have a debrief and SWOT discussion

#### **Equity & Social Justice Center**

**Chair:** Dr. Melody Russell

**Members:** Katrina Akande, Michael Bennett, Michael Brown, Taffye Clayton, Kevin Coonrod, Robin Jaffe, Kimberly Mulligan, Jared Russell, Jailin Sanders, Joellen Sefton, Kamden Strunk, Giovanna Summerfield & Gretchen VanValkenburg

- Two institute leaders from other organizations have agreed to speak with us. They are Dr. Lesley Faracho, University of Georgia Associate Director of Institute for African Studies, and Dr.

Danie Moak, Director of the Center for Law, Justice, and Culture of Ohio University. We hope to meet with them in two weeks. We need to come prepared with questions for them.

- We reviewed the Georgetown University Center for Social Justice Research, Teaching & Service website. <https://csj.georgetown.edu/csiprograms/> This Center provides a good example of things our institute may want to incorporate in regard to faculty, students, community service; funding opportunities, tutoring, internships, as well as a focus on world-wide events; and a community-based learning program. It provides for a high level of engagement of students.
- Rutgers University's Institute for the Study of Global Racial Justice. <https://globalracialjustice.rutgers.edu> This Institute was recently established on a 15 million dollar grant. Has opportunities for visiting professorships and postdoctoral positions. Mention was made that we would like to have a website that compels people to become interested and dig deeper into information on the deep purpose of our institute. Provision of resources to a wider audience. Rather than just looking inward to our university, add externally to the community at large.
- When both of these institution's activities are merged they provide a good template for our work, particularly for student recruitment and scholarly interest. The template provides a mechanism that creates catalysts to help people want to come to Auburn.
- Georgetown motto, "This is on all of us", pulls us in.
- Rutgers has an image that can bring in our art students.
- How do we incorporate all of the things we want? How big of an umbrella do we need to build? We can do this. We know what it takes. We want to make sure we are not creating a competing academic unit to other units on campus. We want to be more local rather than global. This is our story and our piece of history.
- We need to get our vision finalized and things will flow from there. We have the experience to accomplish those things we want. We need to drill down and formulate "who we want to be and what we want to be." We want to be different and avoid redundancy.
- We will continue to gather knowledge and then create and select what we want. We are looking for a sense of place and who we are that is derived from being in Alabama. We are looking to be specific and unique for our area in Alabama and surrounding environs. We can pull from other institutes' doings and incorporate our own creations into our institute. We have a template that the university expects us to fill out and that provides us a guideline. This will help propel us forward.
  - We brainstormed questions would we like to ask of the UGA representative, Dr. Lesley Faracho.
  - What are the challenges and strengths?
  - They have been in existence for 20 years. This brings sustainability to mind. How have they sustained themselves over that time?
  - Conceptual question: how did they come to the scope of their center?

- Based on a 20-year institutional memory, are there things they wish they didn't do or had done?
  - What outcomes have they seen from both students and faculty? Growth in engagement? Sustainable engagement? It was noted that students wish to have a space of their own.
  - How do they measure their success?
  - What are the strategic goals of their institution?
  - What has been the impact, and how did they measure it?
  - How do they report on the projects of the institution?
- One of the institutes we discussed developed out of an academic program that was already in existence. A comment was made that an institute standing alone has a bearing on whether we can offer courses to students.
  - Another member related the following from a model start-up list for an institution: statement of purpose, followed by a mission statement, then activities and list of participating faculty, justification, evaluation criteria and governance structure.
  - Goal: We want to make a good, solid proposal in May.
  - Homework: look at African American Institute Outline in Box.