<p style="text-align:center">**Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee Report**</p>

Committee members:

Denise Taliaferro-Baszile (Educational Leadership), co-chair

Moira Casey, (English/Languages, Literatures, and Writing), co-chair

Fauzia Ahmed (Sociology and Gerontology)

Tim Greenlee (Farmer School of Business)

Nishani Frazier (College of Arts & Science)

Jacqueline Johnson (Miami University Libraries)

Jennie Gilbert (Athletics)

Gwen Fears (Student Life)

Steve Large (Student Life)

Amy Yousefi (Chemical, Paper and Biomedical Engineering)

Courtney Rose (student)

Overview

To provide the best learning and teaching in an increasingly diverse society, Miami University must establish and sustain its values of Love & Honor by welcoming faculty, students and staff of diverse backgrounds and facilitating their holistic development and success. This endeavor means making a demonstrable effort to increase their numbers; to understand their contexts, perspectives and needs in order to retain them; to implement policies and practices that emphasize inclusion and equity and show zero tolerance for discrimination and/or harassment; and to identify and facilitate time-bound metrics and measures of accountability, which hold all units responsible for cultivating a diverse, inclusive and equitable environment. To remain a competitive choice for the next generation of students, staff and faculty, Miami University must attend to these goals with great care and expediency.

The subcommittee expressed grave concern about the multitude of studies and surveys previously conducted under the heading of diversity and inclusion, but without significant follow through, resources or accountability. Consequently, the subcommittee reviewed these former reports in an effort to map a fuller picture of the university's past and present state on diversity, inclusion and equity issues. Although we considered a number of reports dating as far back as the 1980s and as recent as 2018, this current report draws heavily on the following documents: *Report on Women at Miami University (1986*), *Council of Diversity and Inclusion Inventory (2017)*, *Presidential Working Group Report: Committing to a Diverse and Inclusive Community (2018), Farmer School of Business Gender Equity and Inclusion Final Report (2017), One Miami Campus Climate Survey (2018), and Divisional 2020 Diversity & Inclusion Reports (2012-2015).* After a thorough review of previous initiatives for historical perspective, this subcommittee linked ideas, directives, goals and recommendations confidently and enthusiastically to envision a future campus that embraces not just diversity and inclusion, but also equity and justice.

The committee's review of the requested materials revealed key strengths and major weaknesses in the university's diversity, inclusion and equity efforts. While Miami University has dramatically increased its attention to diversity in recent years by gradually increasing the overall diversity of the student population, investing in high-profile diversity programing and encouraging divisions to implement their own diversity initiatives, these efforts do not compensate for the lack of centralized oversight, evaluation and accountability where diversity, inclusion and equity are concerned. Although Miami has invested a lot of time and effort in surveying, identifying, critiquing and emphasizing change in the climate of our campus, there has not been a holistic approach that moves us effectively and efficiently from recommendations to policy to coordinated action to actual climate changes that matter in the everyday experiences of students, staff and faculty. The Council of Diversity & Inclusion (CODI) inventory, for instance, outlines the multitude of initiatives each division invests in to foster an inclusive environment, yet there is no overarching strategy for cross-promoting, sharing resources, evaluating programming or engaging the students, faculty and staff as a whole.

Moreover, without a strategic and coordinated diversity, inclusion and equity plan supported by effective oversight to guide all units across the university, a number of climate issues fester and continue to adversely impact, 1) the overall morale of many students, staff and faculty, 2) Miami's reputation in and among diverse communities, and 3) our ability to prepare a cadre of students who are equipped to meet the challenges of diversity, inclusion and equity, that they will experience in their personal and professional pursuits. While we acknowledge the importance of the work undertaken by the vice president for institutional diversity, it seems unreasonable to expect that one person can accomplish the long list of duties outlined in the job description. It is also unclear whether CODI has the oversight and/or time to dedicate to a more holistic diversity, inclusion and equity approach.

To address the overarching structural issues noted above, we propose five recommendations:
- Establish a Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Leadership Committee
- Structure that committee such that (in addition to student and classified staff representation) it is comprised primarily of persons whose *primary* responsibility should be to oversee diversity, inclusion & equity demographics, policy, programming and evaluation in their respective divisions, units and campuses
- Grant that committee clear and specific auditing, planning, organizing, evaluation and reporting powers
- Direct the committee's attention to key policy and practice issues that need immediate attention

In sections II and III of this report, we elaborate on the above recommendations, and direct attention to significant Diversity, Inclusion & Equity challenges on campus that need immediate attention.

Establish a Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Leadership Committee: Our research in best practices and the recommendations of the various reports listed in the overview suggest that an "overarching entity" might best take the form of a Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Leadership Committee. While we may

consider this representative body a revamping of CODI, it would have more responsibility and oversight. The Leadership Committee would hold academic and non-academic units accountable for implementing the recommendations that have emerged from the various reports and for ensuring a consistent approach to diversity, inclusion and equity across all divisions, units, and campuses. It should report directly to the president but should also be responsible for communicating with the larger university community on a regular basis. The reporting line will both symbolically and practically mean that Miami's commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity is a serious institution-wide effort with a communication flow and accountability process that reaches to people in entry-level positions and to the highest levels of administration.

- **Committee Structure:** The committee should be composed of a representative from each of the six academic divisions, as well as representatives from grouped staff units: Enrollment Management, Business/Finance/Physical Facilities, Athletics, the President's Office, Libraries, Student Life, Advancement, Institutional Technology, and student representation. It is important that these committee members not simply have this assignment tacked on to their existing responsibilities. We are asking that their primary responsibility be oversight of the diversity, inclusion and equity initiatives in their respective divisions or units. Otherwise we risk continued lack of accountability if the representatives are unable to fit this work in with their other responsibilities. One way to do this in an academic unit, for instance, is to appoint an eligible and interested faculty member to the role of Director of Diversity Initiatives, with 50-60% of their responsibilities being in this director role.

- **Committee Powers:** This committee will be the central committee for establishing and overseeing the process by which we move effectively and efficiently toward the implementation, evaluation and feedback on all recommendations of all of the other D&I and related reports. The Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Leadership Committee will have the following high-level areas of responsibility:
  - Completing Diversity, Inclusion & Equity audits of key policy and practice, including the policy library; OEEO structure, processes and reporting; search committee processes; retention strategies and obstacles; evaluation systems (P&T processes, annual evaluations for classified and unclassified staff, teaching evaluations, etc.); reporting systems for discrimination and harassment; disparity in services offered/not offered across all campuses.
  - Deciding on a coordinated approach to Diversity, Inclusion & Equity (there are a diversity of approaches to Diversity, Inclusion & Equity work on campuses across the country) that will guide the development of primary goals and metrics. Proposing policy and/or practice changes to the appropriate leaders and leadership on Diversity, Inclusion & Equity issues at the university.
  - Investigating Diversity, Inclusion & Equity training options and making recommendations where intervention is needed and following up with evaluation and feedback.

- o Implementing a process (or rubrics) for reflective evaluation by all divisions and units and for evaluating the effectiveness of all Diversity, Inclusion & Equity-specific programming (speakers, training, curriculum changes, etc.).
- o Establishing a clearinghouse of best practices compiled across academic divisions and campus units.
- o Providing timely and regular feedback on unresolved recommendations, ongoing Diversity, Inclusion & Equity issues, and progress to the campus community.

- **Key Issues for the Committee to Consider:** In the course of our research, it was clear that none of the reports we reviewed and none of the people we talked with complained about the lack of Diversity & Inclusion programming, curricular and/or co-curricular options on Miami University's campuses. We did, however, hear several complaints about discrimination, harassment and other exclusionary practices that make people feel disregarded. Although some of these criticisms stem from the ignorance of specific individuals (i.e. the student who makes racist comments on social media), other aspects are clearly tied to institutional policy and/or practices that inadvertently allow or reinforce behaviors and actions that communicate a consistent lack of regard. In one example, a student reported an incident of racist graffiti in the online reporting system, and instead of receiving a response that promised to look into the matter, the student was questioned about their racial identity. While we believe the anonymous reporting system is needed, we question whether it is structured and supported in ways that effectively address students' concerns. Are the readers and responders trained? What are the specific steps to bring complaints to resolution? How are complaints against faculty and staff handled? In another set of grievances, faculty and administrators reported filing repeated complaints with OEEO that have not been investigated or that resulted in minimal consequences for the offending parties. While this may indicate a lack of resources, these outcomes may be miscommunicating both the function and role of OEEO. What are the responsibilities of OEEO? What are the processes and procedures involved in bringing complaints to resolution? What data does the office track and collect? Should the office report overall trends in campus complaints to the larger campus community? How do they decide when and when not to investigate a complaint? What are and who determines the consequences of discriminatory behavior?

  Finally, we also learned about a host of other exclusionary policies and practices that disadvantage different groups of people. These include the lack of health care options for regional students; the lack of transportation options for students (first gen, first year, and others who lack their own means of transportation) who are required to travel off campus to sites to complete practicums, service learning, and other curricular and co-curricular activities that not only enhance their college experience but are critical to their post-graduation pursuits; search committee processes that facilitate rather than call out implicit biases; inaccessible facilities; inequitable teaching loads across campus; lack of regard for the hidden labor of women and minoritized faculty; lack of safety inside and outside the classroom for women, particularly

those from international and diverse groups, and inadequate and inconsistent evaluation processes.

No matter how many diverse speakers, race and gender forums, targeted recruitment efforts and Freedom Center events we invest in, if we do not address the underlying policy and practice issues fundamental to the everyday business of the university, we will be increasingly unsuccessful in cultivating a campus community that welcomes, appreciates, and organically attracts and facilitates diversity, inclusion, and equity. To this end, we suggest that the Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Leadership Committee commence with 1) audits of the key policy and practice issues outlined in the various reports and re-emphasized above, 2) determination of adequate and targeted trainings that are not solely relegated to online formats with little or no follow up, especially for faculty and staff, for they are not only more long term in the culture, but also the ones who are to be setting an example for students, and 3) Investigating the possibility of establishing an Ombuds Office with the following responsibilities:

- o Promotion of a civil, inclusive and healthy campus climate for employees and students through informal, impartial, independent and confidential* conflict management services
- o Conflict management education and program outreach
- o Identifying conflict trends and providing systemic feedback to administration (Oregon State University).