

## **DEI Faculty Senate and SLT Presentation**

### **Context:**

This is a follow up to our Report and recommendations on DEI issues affecting our campus currently. Our committee reviewed several Statements, Demands and Recommendations issued by various affected constituencies since 2016 and we are struck by the consistent themes, issues, barriers, and problems repeating themselves for several years in almost exactly the same way, like Groundhog Day. The Committee noted with concern that the incident on September 30 is not at all isolated. It is an incident that fits into a larger pattern. In essence, it manifests what has been going on for over a decade, way before the current administration. We are particularly concerned that the central administration has not adequately addressed Rebecca Tsosie's 2019 DEI Assessment presented to President Robbins and then-incoming Provost Folks, which issues clear recommendations based on a detailed articulation of both best practices and practices that do *not* work. In light of the DEI Assessment and the president, provost, and Senior Leadership Team's completion of the USC Equity Institute's training arranged by Rebecca Tsosie and Nolan Cabrera, the Committee is extremely concerned about the recurrence of unresolved DEI structural issues triggered by incidents almost on a yearly basis.

**Below are the most common recurring key issues from various student groups that have remained unresolved since the findings of the Task Force in 2016, and which the 2019 DEI Assessment reiterated:**

- In terms of **Financial and Human Resources**, we must increase our diversity and inclusion budget and increase diversity emergency funds for each resource center, increase support for native programs, and increase scholarship funds for students of color. We must also create separate funding streams from ASUA to support PAC programs
- In terms of diversifying **Human Resources**, we must increase the amount of black academic and financial advisors. And we must accelerate our hiring of faculty of color. And in the name of Mental Health Advocacy, we must provide CAPS staff with training to improve BIPOC services
- For improved **Academic and Training Support**, we must create a cultural competency curriculum, provide Cultural Competency Training as part of Freshman orientation, provide Cultural Competency Training for HR and Residency Life, and provide divergence Programs or create an institutional re-education program for students and faculty who have perpetuated racist practices.
- In terms of **Campus Representation, all marginalized groups must be represented in SLT positions**. We must increase underrepresented faculty, administrators, and students. We must expand and renovate of ALL Cultural Centers. We must expand our number of all-gender bathrooms.  
In the name of **Administrative Accountability**, we must track a transparent list of microaggressions on the part of administrators. **Apologies must be issued for these microaggressions**. Instead of moving on from such harmful acts, administrators must demand they be fully addressed and rectified, including through removal of culpable personnel from their positions of responsibility.

**These are the questions we have for the SLT:**

- What is the plan and commitment to address these same perennial DEI issues?
- Can the President and Provost please share with us what they have been doing for the last 2 months to address these issues?
- What can we as the faculty senate do to support you?

**The committee recommends the following approach to resolve these issues:**

- Collective engagement (commitment and involvement) of all stakeholders (SLT, Faculty, Staff, students, and communities).
- Facilitation of dialogue to discuss policies, structures and best practices that foster an environment of civility and mutual respect as well as issues affecting diversity from an overall university perspective
- We propose a summit that brings people across campus together to reflect on what happened and ways to move forward.
- We recommend internal DEI hires for all top positions and looking for qualified and trained personell from with from within.

**Suggested Solutions:**

- Resources should be channeled towards the creation of de-escalation teams and practices.
- In place of the current structure that gives ODI responsibility with no authority, we recommend an Independent ODI that is separate from the SLT, and which functions as an independent voice.
- Create better structures and systems that allow students, staff, and faculty to come forward and talk about these issues without feeling threatened or in danger.
- Create structures and an environment that allows us to be proactive and not reactive
- We also recommend that Senior Administrators return to their commitment to DEI training, particularly the program offered by the USC Equity Institute, and to redouble their efforts to learn from institutions that are doing better than us on these issues.
- Allocate resources towards researching the structure of institutions with successful DEI units.
- Divert our available resources to finding someone internally for campus DEI administration. Someone already trained and with an understanding of DEI issues. Someone with institutional knowledge and a understanding of the issues we face and what we need to do to resolve these issues.

In conclusion, the DEI committee is willing to work with other related Faculty Senate Committees (APPC and SAPC) and come up with a de-escalation white paper in the spring.

The DEI committee wants to be constructive and break the cycle. What do we do collectively in the current moment to come up with long term solutions so that we don't have same issues FIVE years from now?