

Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee 2023-2024 · End of Year Report to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee Andrea Garavito Martinez and María del Mar González-González, Committee Co-Chairs

Submitted by Andrea Garavito Martinez and María del Mar González-González, Committee Co-Chairs
May 21, 2024

I. Committee Accomplishments

Comments on and responses to [charges](#) for 2023-24 are in *italics*.

1. Advise standing faculty senate committees to ensure EDI lens is applied to policy/program language and creation, review how the implementation of policies may inadvertently impact particular communities in an adverse manner, and evaluate progress on a yearly basis. *This year we worked in collaboration with SBBFP on two efforts - Faculty FMLA/Parental Leave and AFR.*

A. Faculty FMLA

During the end of the spring 2023 semester, a survey on FMLA was conducted to gather information on how leave was being granted among faculty. During fall 2023 this data was used to generate a report to reveal any possible issues or biases in FMLA implementation at WSU. Members of the committee shared these findings with the Deans Council, Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FS EC), and the full body of the Faculty Senate (FS). (For meeting dates see: [II. B. Additional Meetings](#)). (Please see the Appendix for a copy of the report).

Steps and Recommendations: Members of the EDI committee also held conversations with General Counsel Stephanie Hollist and worked with Valerie Herzog to recommend that FMLA/parental leave be changed from 12 weeks to 16 weeks to better align with academic semesters. A conversation was also held on the concept of equitable expectations of faculty members across colleges upon return (i.e., teaching, advising, research, or service load). Some colleges have created their own “best practices” on parental leave options for faculty. However, there are some concerns about HR “not approving” such agreed accommodations between the Deans, Department Chair, and Faculty members. Further discussion between Deans, HR, and the Provost is needed on how to best support faculty taking parental leave that is equitable.

B. Faculty AFR

At the end of the fall 2023 semester, we received faculty concerns regarding the CSBS updated Annual Faculty Review template. The concerns were about major changes from the previous template, including an added section and new requirements. Several meetings were held with faculty senate executive committee members and Valerie Herzog, the committee has recommended exploring the idea of a basic university template to be created for all units which could be tailored to meet the needs of specific colleges. This would ensure uniformity and equity throughout the review process across colleges. It was also recommended that

faculty be allowed to review and vote on any AFR form changes moving forward since we found that this isn't consistent across units. This will increase transparency and shared governance.

2. Collaborate with the University Administration – Academic Affairs and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Division on Goal 1- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion of the WSU Strategic Plan, specifically work with the EDI Division and President's Diversity Council to provide units with guidance and support on how to effectively complete the equity-minded audit with attention to accountability and execution.

At the end of Spring 2023, then FS EDI Co-chairs Azenett and Kathleen inquired about the Equity Audit timeline and template. In the Summer of 2023, Andrea met with President Mortensen and Adrienne Andrews to receive more information on the timeline and provide feedback on the form. After the departure of Adrienne Andrews in early fall 2023, Dean Wendy H. stepped in to lead the equity audit process. Feedback on the template was given by the EDI Committee members. Some members of the FS EDI committee have been part of their individual colleges' EDI committees and have provided guidance and feedback on their Equity Audit reports.

Steps and Recommendations: Members of the EDI committee also held conversations with the Provost and President's EDI Committee regarding the "next steps" after the Equity Audits are completed. Due to HB 261, Goal 1 of the strategy will be revised. The Administration will establish an advisory committee/task force and the EDI committee has requested to be part of this committee/task force.

3. Advise the Executive Director for emerging Hispanic Serving Initiatives (eHSI) and support strategies developed to meet the eHSI designation as it relates to faculty and Curriculum.

Unfortunately, we did not have formally scheduled meetings with Yudi Lewis, the Executive Director to provide an update on initiatives related to faculty and curriculum. Next year, we recommend inviting Yudi and possibly the Provost or President to FS EDI Committee meetings, preferably at the beginning of each semester. We also recommend requesting an annual report on WSU's eHSI effort status in particular related to faculty and curriculum.

4. Consult with Human Resources and the Office of Equal Opportunity to create and support initiatives that advance inclusive recruitment, hiring and retention, promotion, and salary practices from historically marginalized groups.

Recruitment, Hiring and Retention

Summarize notes [LINK TO DOC](#)

5. Collaborate with the Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning to ensure their faculty retention initiatives are inclusive of faculty from historically marginalized groups including supporting initiatives focused on inclusive teaching principles (i.e., ACUE).

Andrea met with Brenda Kowalewski and Nicola Corbin to discuss current initiatives and events that support faculty from historically marginalized groups along with professional development opportunities for faculty related to EDI topics. Continue to inquire and collaborate with Nicola and Brenda.

6. Establish standards for holding the work of the WSU Administration accountable to EDI initiatives, through monitoring, regular critical evaluation, and recalibration as Necessary.

Throughout the year, we ensured to provide critical feedback to the Administration regarding clear communication, transparency, and shared governance. In the fall of 2023, we met multiple times with the administration regarding the Division of EDI organization chart, transparency in the hiring process of positions in the EDI division, and the WSU response to bias incidents. By the end of the semester, the FS EDI committee was included in all communication (emails) related to changes in the Division of EDI or other EDI-related issues. The Co-Chairs of the FS EDI Committee worked closely with Lais Martinez, Interim VP of EDI.

7. Work in tandem with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and President's Council to stay engaged and informed in national and state trending topics on DEI within higher education. This includes working with Utah Council of Faculty Senate Leaders (UCFSL) and faculty governance structures to meaningfully engage and inform faculty on national and state efforts that could impact them.

Andrea served as the Chair of the President's EDI Advisory Council and ensured to brief the FS EDI Committee on discussions related to national and state trending topics on EDI within higher education and also proposed "Anti-EDI" legislation. She worked closely with the Legal Council, President Mortensen, Lais Martinez, and Jessica Oyler to understand the potential impact of the proposed (and later passed) legislation. In Spring 2024, after the passage of HB 261 and HB 257, we provided feedback and counsel to the administration on what could potentially impact faculty from marginalized backgrounds. We have recommended including a member of the FS EDI in the discussions related to the restructuring of the Division of EDI, Chief Diversity Officer Roles and Responsibilities, and CETL's role in supporting faculty from marginalized backgrounds.

8. Explore potential equity issues in various areas associated with exit interviews and surveys. Currently, exit interviews and survey data exist but next steps need to be outlined and implemented.

Similar to No. 4. See notes [LINK TO DOC](#)

9. Explore adding a member from the Staff Advisory Council as an Ad-Hoc member of the EDI committee.

For the 2023-2024, we tabled this charge and moved to revisit it in the next academic year.

II. Meetings and Attendance

The EDI Committee held 7 regular committee meetings during the 2023-2024 academic year.

A. Committee Members & Attendance

Name	Sept 22	Oct 27	Nov 17	Dec 13	Jan 26	Mar 22	Apr 19
*Nicole Beatty, LIB	X						
S Kathleen Cadman, HP	X	X		X	X	X	X
Azenett Garza, SBS	X		X	X	X	X	
María del Mar Gonzalez-Gonzalez A&H (co-chair)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Andrea Garavito Martinez, ED (co-chair)	X	X	X	X	X		X
*Ernesto Hernandez, LIB			X	X	X	X	X
Wendy Holliday (Admin)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Joe Limas, EAST	X		X	X	X	X	
Richard Price, SBS	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ryan Ridge (FS EC liaison)	X			X	X		
Valentinas Rudys, B&E	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Katrina Twing	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Adrienne Andrews (ex-officio)							

**Nicole Beatty replaced Enrique Hernandez during a portion of the Fall 2023 semester.*

Note: Co-Chair María del Mar González-González was on maternity leave during the majority of the fall semester. During that time, she remained active in her assigned role on the committee attending all regular meetings. She did have to scale back on additional meetings due to a lack of childcare during her leave.

1. Guests:

October 27, 2023 - Provost Rovi Krovi, General Counsel Stephanie Hollist

November 17, 2023 - Lais Martinez, Interim VP of EDI

January 26, 2024 - Lais Martinez, Interim VP of EDI

B. Additional Meetings

October 10, 2023: The FS EDI Committee organized a meeting with President Mortensen and invited the President's EDI Advisory Council, and Student Access and Success (SAS) EDI Committee to discuss the next steps after VP for EDI Adrienne Andrew's departure

October 24, 2023: Andrea and María del Mar met with Meagan Thunnell (HR) to discuss Unconscious Bias training and Outward Inclusion, Search Advocates, Exit Interviews

November 9, 2023: Andrea and María del Mar met with the Faculty Senate EC to discuss concerns regarding New CSBS AFR

November 15, 2023: Andrea, Azenett, and Valentinas attended Deans Council to present on FMLA survey findings

December 4, 2023: Andrea, Azenett, and María del Mar met with Valerie Herzog (SBBFP) to discuss the proposed PPM language for AFR and FMLA/Parental Leave

December 7, 2023: Andrea and María del Mar presented New CSBS AFR concerns to FS EC

December 14, 2023: Andrea and María del Mar attended the Faculty Senate where Andrea shared the FMLA survey findings with the FS body.

December 18, 2023: Andrea and María del Mar met with Provost Krovi and CSBS Dean Julie Rich to discuss faculty concerns and provide feedback on the newly created CSBS AFR

January 12, 2023: EDI Partners Forum: Building Bridges for Transformational Changes at WSU

February 22, 2024: Andrea and María del Mar met with Provost Krovi to discuss concerns about the VP of EDI no longer serving as Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) due to the restructuring of the Division of EDI. Other concerns included continued support from Academic Affairs on EDI issues, particularly faculty recruitment and retention. [LINK TO DOC.](#)

March 25, 2024: Andrea, María del Mar, and Wendy H. met with Pres. Brad Mortensen, Provost Krovi, Faculty Senate Pres Jason Francis, and Fac Sen VP Amy Buckway to discuss faculty concerns about the newly announced Building Puentes initiative.

C. Meeting Agendas & Minutes

[September 22, 2023](#)

[October 10, 2023](#) (Joint-EDI meeting with President Mortensen)

[October 27, 2023](#)

[November 17, 2023](#)

[December 13, 2023](#)

[January 26, 2024](#)

[February 23, 2024](#)

[March 22, 2024](#)

[April 19, 2024](#)

III. Outstanding Committee Members

Ernesto Hernandez Jr., Valentinas Rudys helped craft a report and presentation on the FMLA surveys, Azenett Garza and Kathleen Cadman (HR Exit Interview, FMLA), and Wendy Holliday (Equity Reports).

IV. Subcommittees or Special Assignments

- A. *President's EDI Advisory Council* – Andrea served as the Chair for 2023-2024
- B. *Exit Interviews* – Azenett, Kathleen, and Andrea attended these meetings with HR and SAC
- C. *FMLA/Parental Leave* – Azenett, Kathleen, Andrea, and Valentinas worked with Valerie Herzog and presented to the WALT Team
- D. *AVP of Student Success Search* – Wendy H. is serving on the AVP search this summer 2024 in a duo-role representing Deans and Faculty Senate EDI Committee
- E. *Annual Faculty Review (AFR)* – María del Mar and Andrea met with university stakeholders including Valerie Herzog, Stephanie Hollist, Dean Rich, Provost Kravi, and the FS EC to discuss concerns and recommendations for the AFRs
- F. *Equity Audits* – Dean Wendy H. led this initiative. She ensured to bring back information and input to the EDI committee
- G. *Campus Climate Team (CCT)* - Andrea initially served on the team and helped to get it started. She left CCT due to time constraints. Azenett joined and served on the CCT.

V. Charges to carry forward to next year

- A. Advise standing faculty senate committees on what it means to apply an “EDI lens” that is aligned or in compliance with HB 261. While the term “EDI” is no longer used, it is important to continue to apply a *critical lens* to policy/program language and creation, review how the implementation of policies may inadvertently adversely impact particular communities, and evaluate progress yearly.
- B. Explore alignment with other campus EDI committees which will be changing their names due to [HB 261](#) going into effect in Fall 2024. The proposed name changes for “SAS Student Success & Transformational Impact” (formerly, SAS EDI Committee) and SAC is considering the following: SAC Staff Development, Support, and Success, SAC Peer Support, SAC Peer Engagement, and SAC Development and Success. SAC has not voted on a name change. Need to check with the faculty senate executive committee to see if a motion needs to be made to change the name.
- C. Collaborate with the University Administration – Academic Affairs and Student Access & Success and other WSU stakeholders on the revision of *Goal 1- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion* of the WSU Strategic Plan, specifically working with the new AVP of Student Success (former VP of EDI) and the new advisory (previously President's EDI Advisory Council) to

provide guidance and support on how to comply with HB 261 and meet the needs of historically marginalized groups.

- D. The Executive Director for Emerging Hispanic Serving Initiatives (eHSI) has been moved to duo-report to the Provost and President. This committee needs to continue to advise both the Executive Director and Provost and President. Unfortunately, we did not have scheduled meetings where Yudi Lewis, the Executive Director attended to provide an update on initiatives related to faculty and curriculum. Next year, these meetings need to be scheduled to invite Yudi and possibly the Provost or President.
- E. Consult with Human Resources and the Office of Equal Opportunity to revise the “Exit Interviews” Survey to track and understand any unintentional impact of HB 261 on staff and faculty departures. This includes advice on continued initiatives (Search Advocates) that seek to advance inclusive recruitment, hiring and retention, promotion, and salary practices from historically marginalized groups.
- F. Continue to collaborate with the Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning to ensure their faculty retention initiatives are inclusive of faculty from historically marginalized groups including supporting initiatives focused on inclusive teaching principles (i.e., ACUE). This includes intentional conversations around the unintended impact of HB 261 on faculty retention and more information and guidance on academic freedom and free speech.

VI. Recommended New Charges

- A. Establish a working relationship and collaboration with the new Associate Provost Roy Kwon and Associate Provost Brenda Kowalewski who will oversee equity issues concerning faculty recruitment and retention. Invite for quarterly updates on these initiatives.
- B. Collaborate with the administrator and grant program manager of *Building Puentes* to ensure there is faculty representation and input in the program’s design and implementation.

VII. Suggestions for the Committee

- Better communication with College-level EDI committees
- In previous years there has been a discussion about having a member of SAC be part of the EDI committee. It would be beneficial to have a member of Faculty Senate EDI, SAC EDI, SAS EDI, and possibly a college EDI committee member to all be part of the President’s EDI Advisory Council to increase alignment and communication (note: all EDI committees and advisory will be renamed to comply with HB 261).

NOTES:

[FAQ HB 261](#) (WSU)

President’s email: USHE Guidance on HB 261 May 10, 2024