

DRAFT

SPECIAL TELEPHONE MEETING

**UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT BOARD OF TRUSTEES
COMMITTEE FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY and INCLUSION**

MINUTES

Meeting held by Telephone

December 4, 2020

Trustees Participants: Andrea Dennis-LaVigne, Andy Bessette, Charles Bunnell, Shari Cantor, Sanford Cloud, Jr., Marilda Gandara, Bryan Pollard, and Daniel Toscano

Staff Participants: Lloyd Blanchard, Eleanor Daugherty, Thomas Katsouleas, Tysen Kendig, Carl Lejuez, Jonelle Reynolds, Rachel Rubin, Jeffrey Shoulson, and Frank Tuitt

University Senate Participants: Maria-Luz Fernandez

Vice-Chair Dennis-LaVigne convened the special meeting of the Committee for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at 11:00 a.m.

1. Public Participation (limited to agenda items)

There were no members of the public who wished to address the Committee.

APPROVAL ITEMS:

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Meeting of June 10, 2020

On a motion by Ms. Gandara, seconded by Mr. Bunnell, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the meeting of June 10, 2020.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

3. Welcome and Introductions of Committee Members – Andrea Dennis-LaVigne, Committee Chair

Vice-Chair Dennis-LaVigne welcomed the members of the Committee and University staff. She raised concerns about how the pandemic and other issues have impacted students both on and off campus. She also emphasized the importance of diversity and inclusion and the work of the DEI Committee in supporting and protecting the University community.

Dr. Tuitt reported on the work being done to assess the University climate and will have data available to share. Questions were addressed related to incorporating diversity and inclusion in the university strategic plan and the need to provide periodic reporting. A commitment was made to also engage with the alumni network.

There was discussion regarding the need to focus not only on recruitment but also retention as well. Dr. Tuitt emphasized that he was not concerned about the University's commitment but rather the capacity to operationalize the goals and aspirations around DEI.

4. ODI Strategic Transition Report – Dr. Frank Tuitt

Dr. Tuitt provided a brief overview of the draft of the Strategic Transition Report. It contains his initial observations about the DEI landscape. He has three goals for the final report: to provide a framework to structure the diversity and inclusion efforts across the University; to highlight key areas for continued development, collaboration, communication, and accessibility. Finally, the draft contains recommendations for reinforcing diversity efforts while also highlighting the work the cultural centers have been doing. Dr. Tuitt emphasized the importance of collective effort in diversity and inclusion efforts, including work with the UConn Foundation.

5. Bias Incidents Update – Dr. Eleanor Daugherty

Dr. Daugherty outlined the University's Bias Response Protocol. This Protocol engages three areas: the police, Community Standards, and the immediate identification of offices and individuals that can support the impacted individuals. She explained how the three areas work together, how the Incident Response team operates, and the challenges the groups face when dealing with actions like graffiti and anonymous messages. Dr. Daugherty emphasized that we cannot just be responsive but instead take a proactive approach to changing the culture. She suggested that more work be done regarding greater transparency and reporting and more training for faculty, staff, and students.

6. Presidential Advisory Council on Campus Policing Update – Dr. Lloyd Blanchard

Dr. Blanchard reported that the Advisory Council on Policing (ACP) has been established to recommend standards and best practices for community policing. The ACP has been charged: 1) to identify an effective model of policing at universities, 2) to identify the needs and prospects for policy changes, and 3) to be a resource for the President and the Associate Vice President for Public Safety.

7. Executive Session (as needed)

There was no Executive Session held.

8. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Bunnell, seconded by Mr. Bessette, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

There being no further business appearing, the Committee meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonelle Reynolds, Ph.D.
Committee Secretary