

***Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Alliance***  
***Wichita State University School of Performing Arts***  
**Meeting Minutes**  
NOVEMBER 1, 2020

***In Attendance:***

Sarah Bussard, Cheyla Clawson, Taurean Everett, Da'Merius Ford, Mirta Santana Morales, Emerson Ross, Stacy Salters, Nick Smith, Deiondre Teagle, Vivian Young

***Not In Attendance:***

Esme Banuelos, Aviance Battles, Alicia Sanchez

**Announcements**

- Minutes from last meeting
  - Ross moved to approve; Taurean second; minutes approved
- Cheyla
  - We are going to try using Microsoft Teams because it offers a shared space for all our documents
  - There's a document where you can continue to share your student experiences that you think will be helpful moving forward
  - Next meeting will focus on strategies/ideas to improve the student experience based on themes from the stories shared today
- Stacy
  - none

**Upcoming Meetings**

- Dec 6 – Zoom meeting

**Agenda Items:**

- Summary of all shared experiences as students in order to help the school make changes
  - A professor slapped the back of my neck & asked was my neck because my body type wasn't typical for a dancer
  - Was welcomed with open arms in the dance program & didn't experience any racial profiling
  - Turned a blind eye to many things at WSU & viewed it as a boot camp before starting career
  - Finding good material for juries was difficult
  - Hard to figure out who I was as an artist because I wasn't black enough for some roles or too black for others
  - There were no opportunities to talk openly
  - There was lack of diversity at the school
  - Since the summer & the riots & increased racial tension, there's been a noticeable change regarding instructors reaching out to see if the students are OK
    - Created a polarizing effect with those who didn't reach out
    - Sees a lot of teachers actively staying silent & that hurts
  - It's disappointing & problematic to see the success of some alumni make recruiting easier but to know that things haven't really improved
  - The nurturing aspect of the faculty was always top-notch
  - The school/college operates from the mentality that white is default
  - Never had any problems with the work, but struggled with the social aspect of the school
    - Would have to go outside of the school to socialize
  - Had uncomfortable conversations in the classroom about racism

- Faculty would ask me if it was ok to say things in a certain way & I felt that I was the wrong person to ask as a student or that they should already know since they were the teacher
- I just wanted to do my work & leave rather than engage in conversations
- I had to inform the faculty about racist words & teaching
- No faculty really understood my culture even if they thought they did
- Felt like the faculty operated inside a bubble & didn't mix with other cultures across campus; if they had they would understand more & not come to me with their questions
- Faculty should use the opportunities & experiences that are available across campus to become more culturally aware
- The social aspect was the biggest problem at the school due to the micro-aggressions
- I distanced myself from the department because I felt like no one was going to hear me
- The faculty seemed stuck in a different time period
- I was constantly compared to Julius Thomas III
- I want to be able to sing as my white counterparts because I can
- I didn't feel like I could express myself the way I wanted
- Faculty didn't always teach that there are other places to work other than New York & Broadway
- I found myself educating others
- I have found a lot of luck in the department to be able to play other roles or take a role that wasn't my ethnicity & play it that way
- Faculty doesn't realize their microaggressions regarding race
- Faculty will single out students & tell them they can't get a role like that because of their race
- I had to prove my place in the program with some faculty more than others
- Shared document "Diversity & Inclusion vs Equity & Justice"
  - Document will be in put in teams for all
- One word to wrap up
  - Revamp
  - Reaffirm
  - Connection
  - Energizing
  - Amazed & thankful
  - Backbone
  - Committed
  - Enlighted

### **As May Arise**

- None