**Diversity, Human Resources and Professional Development Task Force Recommendations**

Taskforce Members:

Co-Chairs: Dr. Edil Torres Rivera (Professor, Latinx Studies)

Dr. Voncella McCleary-Jones (Associate Dean CHP/ School of Nursing Chair)

Linnea GlenMaye (Assoc. VP for Academic Affairs); Judy Espinoza (Finance & Admin); Jessica Provines (Student Affairs); Gery Markova (Academic Affairs); Tom Aldag (Research-Innovation); Katherine Holmgren (Foundation); Christine Taylor (Office of the President); Michael Irvin (Office of President); Alex Johnson (Athletics); Judy Mount (WSU Tech); Shelly Coleman-Martins (StratComm); Molly Gordon (General Counsel); Jessica Skladzien (General Counsel); Katie Givens (Diversity & Community); Deanna Carrithers (Diversity & Community), Jozie Caudillo (SGA #1); Sajani Jiten (SGA #2); Maribel Sanchez (SGA #3); Yulissa Hernandez (SGA #4); Angela Linder (USS Senate #1); Sandra Goldsmith (USS Senate #2); Lisa Clancy (UP Senate #1); Heather Perkins (UP Senate #2); Jolynn Dowling (Faculty Senate #1); Ron Holt (Outside member #1)

**Summary:**

The group met seven times from February to May 2020. The meetings lasted from 1 to 2 hours. The attendance ranged from 12 to 15 members and was very consistent in terms of the members participating in the meetings. The group did not reach consensus however; a potential structure is outlined below. Nonetheless, the group organically moved to the product that is below.

**Introduction Statement:**

Wichita State University’s dedication to being the essential educational, cultural and economic driver for Kansas and the greater public good can only be fully realized if it is intertwined with a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.  It is essential to the mission of the university as an educational institution to ensure that each member of the Wichita State community (faculty, staff and students) has full opportunity to thrive in its environment, for the university believes that diversity is key to individual flourishing, educational excellence and advancement of knowledge.

As such, while there are many excellent diversity and inclusion initiatives occurring currently at

Wichita State, especially related to students, title ix/eeo compliance, and the community, there is no university-wide strategic focus (a lack of collaboration/coordination on university-level priorities) to build a **culture** that values transparency, accountability, and communication around issues of diversity and inclusion.

**Structure:**

* + Creation of a new division: Workforce Diversity, Human Resources and Professional Development – (See below**a**)
  + A divisional budget must be developed and fully funded to ensure the opportunity to achieve organizational objectives (See Organizational Chart in attachment)
  + Vice President hired to develop strategic direction and provide operational leadership of this new division.

**Process:**

* Formalize a Wichita State University definition of diversity
  + Definition of diversity per the Wichita State University Diversity and Inclusion committee: Diversity in its most simple form can be defined as "all the similarities and differences amongst people." Diverse groups may include but not exclusively age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, pregnancy, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, military/veteran status, first-generation and socioeconomic status.
  + Develop a strategic, comprehensive diversity recruitment and retention plan – By college (employee focused) with applicable metrics
  + Implicit bias training – For all employees, and search committee members
  + Recruiting reps to assist colleges on all aspects of the recruitment, selection and onboarding process–
  + WSU to prioritize diversity hires
  + Recommend a salary and equity study (specific to gender and race) be conducted when the market-based pay transition has been completed.
  + Develop and provide executive development opportunities, such as a leadership academy.

**Culture:**

Establish Supportive and Welcoming Climate

* + Operationalize recommendations from the university campus climate survey
  + Align decision-making with university leadership priorities and strategic plan
  + Communicate academic units’ policies and expectations clearly and early (part of an ongoing evaluation process – every two years)
  + Create opportunities for faculty to participate in academic unit governance
  + Increase support for the President’s Diversity Council and other inclusive excellence initiatives on campus
  + Establish and promote mentoring for faculty and staff (formal and informal)
  + Connect faculty and staff to campus and community resources both within and outside the academic unit
  + Facilitate networking opportunities for faculty and staff
  + Consider leaves and other policies on an individual basis to best meet faculty needs (e.g. - sabbatical for junior faculty seeking tenure)
  + Establish an ongoing assessment for success of program at the academic unit as well as at the university level
  + *\*Note: Adapted from Colombia University “Guide for best practices in faculty retention”*

**Proposed Organizational Structure** - Division of Workforce Diversity, HR and Professional Development, reporting directly to the President with the following functional components\*\*:

1. Human Resources
2. Workforce Diversity
3. Professional and Leadership Advancement

* Human Resources
  + Provides the primary leadership on human resources for WSU’s nearly \_\_\_insert#\_\_\_ faculty members, staff and student workers;
* Provides the long-range strategic vision for building an integrated human capital strategy for the university, balancing the overall needs of the university with the unique needs of different colleges/schools, divisions and units.
* Provides leadership on and implements strategies to create a diverse and inclusive workforce at WSU;
* Lead efforts to bring excellence and consistency in the human resources enterprise across all departments and academic units;
* Supports the faculty and staff throughout their experience at WSU from recruitment to retirement by:
  + creating an environment that values and supports diversity;
  + providing strategic leadership on workforce analytics;
  + recruiting, hiring and retaining top performing talent that will support university priorities;
  + offering a comprehensive and competitive compensation and benefits program;
  + providing professional employee relations services;
  + providing retirement plan administration;
  + prioritizing continuing education, professional and leadership development, work life balance and organizational health; and
  + designing and implementing policies, processes and programs, in compliance with applicable laws.
* Workforce Diversity
  + Provides institutional leadership by promoting a learning, living, and working environment in which we encourage full participation of all members of the WSU community.
  + Using data collection and workforce analysis, design and deliver innovative strategies to achieve inclusive excellence in the university’s systems, structures, and culture.
  + Design trainings to develop an inclusive university environment and workforce.
  + Develop, implement, and evaluate initiatives that lead to greater diversity and inclusion throughout the WSU workforce, including a Diversity Recruiter.
* Professional and Leadership Advancement
  + Provides professional and career development programs
    - Offer workshops and opportunities for employees/staff to enhance their skills for their current role and further their career goals through experiences, exposure, and structured learning.
    - Programs for employees to further their growth and development including, Grow Your Mind, Manage Your Performance, Engage with a Mentor, Plan Your Next Move, Foster Positive Relationships, and Build Resiliency. Opportunities may change annually based on the needs of the University.
  + Provides leadership development programs: The most important influence on an organization’s health and productivity is its leadership. Newly promoted managers may face some challenges that come with the new responsibilities and expectations of their new role. Ensuring employees get a strong start is critical to the long-term success of their college/school or unit and the university.
* A new supervisors professional development program to provide employees with under 2 years of supervisory experience the skills and competencies needed for their role. Supervisors who have employees that meet the eligibility criteria may nominate them for participation in the program as well.
* An executive leadership development program for executive managers who are already regarded as highly effective and who are being prepared for greater leadership roles. The program will enhance the leadership, motivation, and relationship building competencies needed to transition to new roles for leading others within the university.
* An academic leadership program designed to help department chairs and other academic leaders critically examine the role of the department chair. The program will be designed to develop the knowledge and skills needed to lead and manage academic departments.

\*\*All areas will work with the Chief Diversity Officer in collaboration with Diversity and Community Engagement, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, to develop a university-wide strategic focus on building a culture that values transparency, accountability, and communication around issues of diversity and inclusion. An on-going assessment process/system using metrics and a reporting process/system will be necessary and vital to the success of this work.