

# PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION FOR INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

## OPEN FORUM

October 18, 2018

On October 18, 2018, the President's Commission for Inclusive Excellence hosted an open forum in the Livak Ballroom in the Davis Center.

15 people attended, including undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff.

Members of the President's Commission for Inclusive Excellence in attendance were Alan Maynard (Chair and Faculty Representative), Paul Suk-Hyun Yoon (Vice-Chair), Cathy Rahill (Staff Representative) and Sefakor Komabu-Pomeyie (Graduate Student Representative).

### Themes

1. *Inclusive Excellence at UVM* a.k.a. The Framework
  - a. Questions about what emerged as differences among the various campus departments
  - b. The exercise created a sense of accountability
  - c. Questions about who will monitor the Action Plans
  - d. The time period to finish the framework was a bit too short
  - e. One college used a survey to complete the inventory
  - f. Many colleges are now following up on their Frameworks by creating a strategic action plan around diversity
2. The Role of the President's Commission on Inclusive Excellence
  - a. Interviewing senior level candidates for positions at UVM
  - b. Supporting the changes made to the D1 and D2 curriculums
    - i. D1 and D2 issues
  - c. Advising the President
  - d. ADA task force – accessibility
  - e. Campus Climate Survey – spring 2019
  - f. Listening tours
  - g. Paul explained the role of PCIE – non-governing, we are an advisory committee. We create recommendations and provide an end-of-year report to the President.
3. Presidential Search
  - a. There was a comment that there needs to be accountability around diversity issues with the transition to the next President



- b. What are some of the questions that will be asked of the presidential candidates? PCIE will be meeting with the candidates and have drafted questions which ask for a demonstration and a commitment around diversity and equity issues.

#### 4. Student Activism

- a. Q - Last year was the most student activism in the 16 years that I've worked here. What are the takeaways for the commission? A - We want to tackle some of the issues that were raised. We are more involved in interviews. We need to understand the history of the issue. The activism helped light fires under leaders here and supported change. Hope we can move forward to make change without having it be conflictual.

#### 5. Faculty Issues

- a. We need faculty involvement. I don't see outreach to faculty groups. The organizational structure creates obstacles at UVM. It's great to have a strategic plan however it rests with leadership. Faculty don't sometimes support strategic plans. We need more training for faculty to understand these issues. Faculty have roles to fill and they may not see inclusive excellence as part of their charge. Faculty senate need to be engaged in these issues – and they aren't.
- b. I'd like to see more support from the University to support efforts like Pablo Bose's initiative. The announcement suggested that faculty had to volunteer. That is not a commitment by UVM. If UVM is going to support faculty for this, they need to provide workload release. It has to go beyond Pablo. With the faculty, fellows' program – the criteria where you had to be an instructor of a D1 class. There should be commitment from faculty to participate. You have to be careful with trainings for faculty. There is no training that fits for everyone. Trainings need to be tailored for different people.
- c. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> time I've heard about the faculty fellow program. It keeps coming up. When we are hearing this from faculty – UVM needs to move on something. Let's take a chance on this. Faculty should get some sort of compensation to serve on the FFP... and some people are feeling excluded.
- d. If something is going to prioritized, then something else needs to give. We need to have action – needs to involve more than just the people who show up. People are working hard and not getting what they need. CNHS has provided many surveys – asked faculty what they want, and they are providing trainings.
- e. Sustainability Faculty Fellows program – help faculty members include sustainability in their courses. Have a cohort of others to work together - interdisciplinary team. It started with financial incentives and then it went away. We use STARS – sustainability tracking and rating system. Are there incentives for faculty programs? They want money or SOMETHING. Student demands wanted direct support for faculty teaching D1/2 classes. It's a natural cohort.



## 6. Disability Issues

- a. I see a need for an affinity space for students with disabilities. I see an uptick of students with disabilities who want to be teachers. Rare student who is bold enough to talk to faculty. They need a space to speak freely and feel safe. We have students on campus who when they were in high school, they had individual support... now when they come to college, they get a letter. As a professor, I don't know what these accommodations mean or how I can help. We need the university to support faculty. The letter isn't enough. When they need help in a class I'm not equipped. Public school education is ahead of us. The students have had active learning until they come here.
- b. It takes a lot for the professor to understand how to give the accommodations. They usually don't understand, and they really can't give it because they don't understand. Difficult student-faculty relationships.

## 7. Veteran community on campus

- a. Often vets are so misunderstood. They don't get consideration. The needs of vets aren't solely met at the hospital and VFW's – it takes the larger community to help them. The student vet organization is trying to incorporate the campus resources. Upcoming Event – *Take a Walk with a Vet*

## 8. Comment about Professional Development

- a. Why are students required to learn Diversity courses and staff and faculty are not? Senior leadership has had 7 trainings focused on diversity over the past two years.

Link to all the UVM College/Division Inclusive Excellence Action Plans:

<https://www.uvm.edu/advancingdiversity/diversity-action-plans>