

**COMMISSION ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY**  
**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2014**  
**10:30 am – 12:00 pm**  
**GRADUATE LIFE CENTER ROOM B**

**Meeting Minutes**

**PRESENT:** Judy Alford, Aaron Bond, Larry Cox, Raifu Durodoye, Ross Edmonds, Melissa Elliott, Noha Elsherbiny, Jack Finney, Bruce Hayden for (Tom Brown), Paul Heilker, Bradley Klein, Jennifer Nardine, Corinne Noirot, Kristen Houston for (Patty Perillo), Anita Puckett-Dan Thorpe (for Anita Puckett), Amy Tanner, David Travis Jr., Pamela Vickers, Daron Williams, Ayesha Yousafzai

**ABSENT:** Gloria Bensen, Brian Bolton (with notice), Sam Cook, Mary Dunkenberger, Amer Fayad, Lance Franklin, Diana Housein-Salaita, Hal Irvin, Bill Ortega, Paul Winistorfer (with notice)

**GUESTS:** Marcie Bishop, Marcy Schnitzer

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Aaron Bond called the meeting to order at 10:30 am. Members introduced themselves and the area represented.

**II. CONSTITUENT GROUP DISCUSSION**

Bradley Klein explained that a matter was recently brought to his attention as president of the Blacksburg Jewish Community Center by a faculty member who was asked to participate as a presenter in the Virginia Science Festival to be held on the Virginia Tech campus. The festival is scheduled for October 4<sup>th</sup>, which is Yom Kippur, a day of fasting and prayer for Jews. Concerns were discussed by members regarding organizing and implementing such a major event on a religious holiday, given that major religious holidays are posted on the University Faculty-Staff Planning calendar and on the Religious and Ethnic Holidays section of the University Registrar's website.

Bradley wanted to call this incident to the attention of the CEOD to perhaps ponder and suggest a course of action to prevent individuals from having to face these personal conflicts of commitment in the future.

Aaron Bond added that this would be a matter that CEOD would work on this year, and it would be discussed again in the next upcoming meeting.

**III. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION CHANGES-JACK FINNEY**

Dr. Jack Finney spoke with members about the open letter that had gone out to the Virginia Tech community on June 30th, 2014 from President Timothy Sands announcing changes to Diversity and Inclusion.

Dr. Finney added that President Sands had asked Senior Vice President and Provost Mark McNamee to work with the university community to implement a new model of shared responsibility and accountability. This new structure is adapted from best practices at other universities and will be designed to ensure that university leadership and representatives take personal and collective responsibility for inclusive excellence.

David Travis Jr. has agreed to serve as the president's advisor and interim vice provost. David added that CEOD will play an important part and role as we continue to move forward.

**IV. ROLE OF UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE-JACK FINNEY**

Dr. Jack Finney provided members with a hard copy of Virginia Tech's Governance Structures. He added that people who populate commissions should be communicating and reaching out to other commissions, so they can take information back to constituency groups. There was discussion of the roles of commission members in facilitating communication. Aaron Bond and Ross Edmonds noted that commission chairs meet together once a semester, but perhaps should meet more often.

**V. UPCOMING ACTION ITEMS FOR CEOD**

Discuss CEOD membership, mission, and charge.

Discuss religious holiday issue.

Form working groups.

Discuss Gender Identity and Gender Expression in discrimination policy.

**VI. MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 11:40 am. The next meeting will be Monday September 22nd at 10:30am in GLC Room B.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcie Bishop  
Recording Secretary, Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

