

MINUTES

President's Commission on the Status of Women

January 30, 2019, 3:00 pm

Konza

Welcome and Introductions

Members present: Kiley Moody, Kristin Tobias, Barb Wells, Debra Wilcox, Felisa Osburn, Wendy Barnes, Christie Launius, Sara Thurston, Clara Valadares Kientz, Hannah Heatherman, Sarah Reznikoff
Visitors present: Bryan Samuel

Overview of charge and purpose of the Commission

Reviews the roles, needs and opportunities of women, students, faculty, unclassified professionals, and university support staff at K-State and makes recommendations for change where appropriate.

Dr. Bryan Samuel visit

Dr. Samuel made a proposal to President Myers to bring PCSW in line with other commissions currently working through the Chief Diversity Officer that look at issues and concerns and report to the President and his cabinet. He recommended he be the liaison for the President's office, as he believes it is central to inclusion. We are awaiting President Myer's decision. Dr. Samuel will update us once the decision is made.

Salary compression for female faculty was also addressed. Dr. Samuel shared a group, which includes Tonya Gonzalez, has been formed to evaluate where we stand on salary. One suggestion has been to conduct a comprehensive survey or study to figure out where we are and what our baseline is -- his understanding is that this hasn't been done since about 2010. The Provost's current plan is this project will fall under the new Associate Provost for Institutional Research. Once the individual is onboarded the prospect of undertaking the process of conducting a salary study will be addressed.

Another topic under discussion is the climate survey. It is recognized there were several different categories in the 2014 climate survey, to include pay, benefits, communication, inclusion, and professional development. The large number of categories was confusing. Dr. Samuel shared it has been decided to do a new survey, which will probably be sent out every three or so years (industry standard is 3 years). Prior to embarking on the survey, it is important to get a strong understanding of what change, growth, actions, and/or activities have taken place since the last survey. He has been meeting with various Affinity groups and others to gather the information. It is recognized all action items currently under discussion are employee issues - how people are paid, their benefits, parking, etc. – with the exception of inclusion and communication. The discussion is not centered around "I feel safe, or welcome, or comfortable," all of which are at the core of a climate survey. Upon completion of the work with the focus groups the gathered information will be presented to campus, to include: what was found, where we think we are institutionally, where progress has been made since the 2014 climate survey, where we need growth and/or improvement, and whether we will do something institutionally or with a consultant. Dr. Samuel acknowledged there are benefits to each. An institutional survey money, but we survey ourselves, making the data less reliable. Another question is how are we going to address students? Many of the previous categories are not relevant students, so what is the best way forward as it relates to students?

Dr. Samuel and his office are also examining each unit and department for accessibility. They will be examining who is and is not following the provided guidance on the accessibility template?

A third KSUnite is being discussed, the planning team meets this Friday to begin discussing how to go about it.

On March 18 at 3:30 in the Alumni Center, Dr. Samuel will be delivering the first State of Diversity address. He believes it is a good opportunity for campus to be informed or updated on progress toward the accomplishment of diversity goals from the 2025 strategic plan. Specifically, three goals where we have made progress, three where we have challenges, and four additional goals, which may not be elaborated upon. Other topics being presented are the university commitment to diversity and inclusion, an update from the various divisions and colleges, and how we stay in touch with people that graduate and move away from the state?

After updating the Commission on his plans and ideas, Dr. Samuel asked for questions from the gathered members.

Clara Valadares Kientz inquired as to the timeline for reporting back from the climate survey groups, specifically the timeline for releasing the information.

- Dr. Samuel's response: The team is working on it "aggressively," it is a five-phase plan and currently they are in phase one. Then they will streamline the data, figure out how to report it, and get it out; hopefully it will be done by the end of the semester, but that is not guaranteed.

Wendy Barnes asked if he wants to meet with the PCSW as a focus group.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He had not thought of it, since the PCMA is the leading group for working on diversity & inclusion. He believed women's concerns were something other entities might discuss and was hoping that would be caught/reflected in other levels during meetings.

Clara Valadares Kientz stated the PCSW has met and discussed these issues and it would be helpful for us to discuss our questions/concerns with him. She shared the 2014 survey only asked one or two questions relating to sexual harassment in the workplace. We would be interested in incorporating more questions into the next survey regarding women's feelings in the workplace and sexual harassment.

- Dr. Samuel's response: Some institutions do a separate survey for that topic.

Sara Reznikoff felt that should be a separate survey. She then asked if it was possible to have a focus group look at the survey before distribution to see if it addresses everything, including various microaggressions.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He stated the first step would be to figure out who needs to be on the committee, what questions should be asked, are we asking the right questions, and are they being reviewed by a large representation of different populations at the university. Microaggression would be in the new climate survey. He further stated one of the main concerns with the 2014 survey were the questions about sexual assault and harassment were not done well. He provided a few examples. He further explained the feeling was the questions did not cover the full experience and were not explicit enough to constitute sexual harassment. He shared an example from his previous institution. His point is he knows there are concerns those questions were not done very well, and as an institution we might be talking about several surveys, to include Climate Survey for institutional climate, Employee Engagement & Satisfaction survey for employees, Sexual Assault/Harassment>Title IX survey for the campus. He then indicated a broader conversation needs to be done to assess need and speed.

Felisa Osburn inquired as to doing a Climate Survey that allowed people to express specific concerns that led to the other surveys he mentioned. Her concern is if there are too many surveys people may not care anymore, so maybe a climate survey is what indicates that certain surveys need to be done further.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He understands and appreciates her concerns, but sometimes people may have inclinations and be more interested in filling out a particular survey instead of a generic one. As an example, he shared his previous institution had a 34% response from the climate survey, but the Title IX survey response rate was higher. They

learned specific information they may not have received by putting multiple tools in one survey, such as not all perpetrators of sexual harassment/sexual assault are males, instead they found that men were also being harassed.

Felisa Osburn then inquired as to how certain departments and employees, such as facilities and grounds who have limited access to computers, gain access to computers and engage in the survey?

- Dr. Samuel's response: This needs to be addressed. He met with the Director's today and they discussed communication and how messages are received. We tend to think K-State Today, or websites are sufficient for reaching the masses, but there are quite a few employees for which that is not true. We have to think about that and the issue has been brought up.

Kiley Moody remarked it has been discussed in previous PCSW meetings about the lack of training for some faculty/staff to do sexual harassment training, has this been talked about at all?

- Dr. Samuel's response: HCS is developing supervisory foundation training, trying to ascertain what training would look like.

Wendy Barnes stated she felt the most valuable time that could happen would be during new faculty/staff orientation.

- Dr. Samuel's response: It is important to have it at orientation. They have been thinking about revamping onboarding. Shana Leigleiter is looking at fine-tuning it. It should be starting soon.

Wendy Barnes further stated she is bothered on a lot of levels that we require students to do ASAP training, but we don't require faculty/staff at any point and it should be required at least on a yearly basis.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He shared his previous institution conducted orientation over a period of six to seven months and said it people had a better memory of sessions and it worked very well.
- Dr Samuel then asked if there were any questions we had for him. If he could do anything for us what would it be.

Clara Valadares Kientz stated she wanted to go back to the discussion on the climate survey. She shared the CARE recently released a sexual violence climate survey for students only. Incentives included. However, there is concern about the lack of a similar survey for faculty/staff, and that conversations regarding sexual harassment and violence against women are not being had as much at this university. Tarana Burke spoke and she called us out as a university and said she looked at our website, KSUnite and there was nothing about assault or gender-based violence, and she inquired as to when would KSU start having those conversations? She said she would like to see more action being taken, since we are lacking in several areas when it comes to faculty/staff.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He said Polina Nations presented at the subcommittee meeting and asked it to be included in next KSUnite and it received unanimous support -- will happen in 2019.

Christie Launius stated that as a newcomer, it was her understanding that what is now the CARE office used to be The Women's Center and was a much larger entity. Coming from another institution that had both, she views it as a loss and as creating a gap in services/programming for students/faculty/staff on campus.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He had been told that gender studies operates for that purpose. Christie Launius said they are solely an academic unit. What she is referencing is a unit housed in student affairs, a physical location for students that provides co-curricular programming and support. Different from what is done in the classroom. She said in her experience, without such an entity, there is a gap in programming that can educate students and increase literacy around gender issues. It can provide services in addition to the CARE office. For instance, bring in lectures, have panels, support student research. Wendy Barnes remarked we used to have that, but there was conversation about it not feeling inclusive to the entire campus community, even though its main purpose was to provide somewhere for women to feel safe and have a space to go to. From what I understood at the time, they

decided to change the name and narrow the scope of the services to make it more inclusive to the entire campus community. Clara Valadares Kientz added that the biggest change was the CARE office became a support/educational office for those who experience violence. It shifted away from the aspect of social justice issues related to gender.

- Dr. Samuel's response: We have an advocacy center but don't have the capacity to expand co-curricular? He asked what it would take to get that.

Clara Valadares Kientz stated the office would need more staff solely focused on educational support and research. Ideally 3-4 individuals able to maintain that focus. Felisa Osburn added that the old Women's Center was very visible at orientation and other functions, and when they went away, it did leave a gap. Wendy Barnes commented about the impact of their well-attended educational event. There was a huge sense of loss when it was dissolved, it felt like there was a lack of visible support for women on campus.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He stated we have an academic unit that conducts research and teaching, we previously had a Women's Center that has transitioned into something more focused on advocacy and working with survivors, but less able to do educational support and research, programmatic events and initiatives that would encompass the co-curricular sphere? Maybe we're talking about appropriately resourcing that unit, is that right?

Clara Valadares Kientz said it would change the whole mission of their office, since currently it is to provide direct services to survivors of violence. You could change it to include the new pieces.

- Dr. Samuel's response: To do so you would need human and fiscal resources.

Christie Launius said on plenty of campuses there has been controversy that does a Women's Center serve all students. I would say the best ones do great programming about masculinity and healthy relationships and have focus groups for men and mixed gender groups as well. The best ones have evidence-based outcomes, and they can say we've moved the needle on this or that issue because of the programming we've done. She stated she was a proponent of it. Wendy Barnes added that a member who was absent brought up late last semester inclusive safe spaces for transgender women. Her exact question was: "How are we ensuring that areas meant specifically for women are inclusive and safe for transgender women as well? How do we address that?" Dr. Samuel asked if it would be okay to say both transgender women and men to be more inclusive. Someone else suggested the term transgender individuals. Dr. Samuel acknowledged he recognizes the Commission's emphasis is on women. Wendy stated the member was not able to be present, so she does not want to assume any meaning, but did want to share what she said. Sara Reznikoff recommended we could maybe be more general and use non-binary terminology. She also asked about salary compression and shared a personal example about her mom's experience as a professor who would come home with a raise couple of years because departments would get reviewed and fix salaries. She stated she does not feel like anyone is looking at our salaries.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He agreed and shared that according to the Associate Provost, that has not happened in at least the last decade. The plan is the new Associate Provost for Institutional Research will have that as a priority.

Sara Thurston thought it would be beneficial if the President put the PCSW under him. He responded it fits the realm of diversity and inclusion. She then added it might provide a broader aspect of all diversity pieces on campus.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He believes it would provide more knowledge or understanding about what's happening in different areas. One of his biggest challenges is to have something happening in one of those and someone in his position be unaware of those changes.

Clara Valadares Kientz shared that we've talked for a while now about the sexual violence policy during our meetings. We met with President Myers a couple years ago to discuss our concerns and were told that he was going to make an announcement or review the things we discussed, and we haven't heard anything back. Dr. Samuel asked what we wanted from the policy. She further stated she would like to see a review of the policy and a potential revision. She also said a lot of survivors have felt like they did

not receive justice from the university. Dr. Samuel asked if that was due to a lack of OIE review. Felisa Osburn said one of the things we talked about with President Myers was the possibility of the victim and accused being in the same space at the same time, via the classroom or crossing on campus and how she would feel unprotected or any of the other emotions she would have.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He said there are some federal policies and expectations as to how we deal with these issues. He said he could certainly figure out what's happening here and stated he would talk to the General Counsel to see where this issue stands.

Clara Valadares Kientz commented she feels the pendulum has swung the other way now as it relates to Title IX enforcement and rules, where there is too much leverage for the accused and they end up remaining on campus, so survivors are forced to continue seeing their rapist or abuser on campus.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He shared his understanding was if a person is found to violate policy regarding rape or sexual assault, the institution can remove the person from campus.

Clara Valadares Kientz stated she thinks universities are now fearful of finding the accused responsible because they can sue the university. She added many universities are functioning under fear of being sued. Sara Thurston asked if it had something to do with on-campus versus off-campus, where the violation occurred. He responded that Title IX protects you both on and off-campus as the educational environment extends to off-campus. Sara added that in the past incidents have involved individuals who live off-campus, and it's not an event. Clara Valadares Kientz agreed. Sara Reznikoff asked if this isn't why we have the new structure to student organizations, pointing out that they are either with a department or not affiliated with K-State. Discussion then ensued about the incident a few years ago that seemed to spur the change.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He asked if it was still an educational environment. (After a bit more conversation about the purpose of the two different organizational types) He said he will ask about the sexual violence policy and what is and is not covered.

Wendy Barnes recommended looking over the DSO/ISO policy as well. She provided examples of how the policy change has impacted both students and advisors. She further shared there were several meetings held over the summer of 2017 and many questions were asked, with many of them remaining unanswered, even within departments. Many questions were about liability. Dr. Samuel stated he is aware of faculty that serve as advisors of ISO's. Sara Thurston commented if it is not part of their job it is their personal liability and if something happens at an event, it is their responsibility. Wendy Barnes further stated they can do it after hours, just not during their contracted work time.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He asked if an ISO is personally liable for anything that occurs at their events. (Sara Thurston confirms liability). He wondered if individuals would hesitate to advise ISO's as a result.

Sara Thurston stated many groups no longer have advisors. She shared her department's experience. The DSO's have advisors; but the ISO's have no staff to devote to the organizations if the department is going to be liable for the activities. The group informed him about the change in funding policy and how it is now managed by the departments. They explained advisors would rather pay than have students pay, since we are used to the reimbursement process. It was shared how this changed from the past when students could pay, and the organization treasurer would write them a check. Wendy Barnes shared more information about how the policy affects an organization and the oversight the department has over the student organizations. It was agreed it happened quickly and advisors were not included in the information about the changes. Accountants were also not informed. More discussion about the different types of accounts ensued. Dr. Samuel asked who led this change. No one knew. Members shared the timeline of change and how it impacted everyone. Dr. Samuel recapped the issues presented during the meeting and stated he was unsure as to what he could do regarding the DSO/ISO policy. More discussion regarding the change in policy and how it occurred was then discussed.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He asked if we are supporting DSO's, since they do not engage in activities with a potential for sexual assault. (More discussion ensued about the difference between the two and the role of the advisor) The challenge he has is that it seems that in

some ways, we want these organizations or we need them, we have this many organizations and we claim them, and in some ways we want individuals like us to advise these organizations, but yet we have a practice that says if you do it then you do it at your own risk. Which pretty much reduces the pool of willing participants.

Sara Thurston stated there was also talk of personal liability insurance for ISO advisors.

- Dr. Samuel's response: He asked if that would help.

Wendy Barnes explained there was discussion about it. The previous SGA president mentioned there was talk about getting personal liability insurance for ISO advisors. Final discussion shared a few remaining thoughts and the meeting adjourned.

Project updates for 2018-2019

All tabled until next meeting due to Dr. Samuel visit and discussion

Other items of discussion

All tabled until next meeting due to Dr. Samuel visit and discussion

New Items

All tabled until next meeting due to Dr. Samuel visit and discussion

Next Meeting

February 20 at 3:00 pm in Union 204

Adjourn