



Board of Trustees

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

April 25, 2023

Minutes

Scanlon Banquet Hall A

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing also took place on YouTube.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee Vice Chair Chris Montemayor, Trustees George Gilmer and Dr. Gloria Williams, and Board Chair Dr. Robert Martin, ex-officio member

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Secretary Melissa Alvarado

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Committee Chair Madeline Landrau

TRUSTEE GUESTS PRESENT: Trustees Theresa Jasmin, William Reichelt, and Ali Salehi

Also present and participating were Westfield State University President Dr. Linda Thompson, Vice President for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Dr. LaRue Pierce, Veteran and Military Services Associate Justin Marques, Director of Banacos Academic Center Sarah Lazare, and Assistant Director of TRIO Student Support Services Program Charlotte Capogna-Amias.

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 PM by Committee Vice Chair Montemayor and a roll call was taken of the committee members participating as listed above. It was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded.

MOTION made by Trustee Williams, seconded by Trustee Martin, to approve the minutes of the November 30, 2022, meeting. There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE** passed motion unanimously with Trustees voting in the affirmative: Alvarado, Gilmer, Williams, Montemayor, and Board Chair Martin.

MOTION made by Trustee Alvarado, seconded by Trustee Williams, to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2022, meeting. There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE** passed motion unanimously with Trustees voting in the affirmative: Alvarado, Gilmer, Williams, Montemayor, and Board Chair Martin.

MOTION made by Trustee Williams, seconded by Trustee Gilmer, to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2023, meeting. There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE** passed motion unanimously with Trustees voting in the affirmative: Alvarado, Gilmer, Williams, Montemayor, and Board Chair Martin.

Student Voices

As a follow-up to the April 25 meeting where Dr. Pierce stated that students did not feel safe or heard, he introduced the following five BIPOC students who shared their experiences at Westfield State with the committee.

- Iyana Gordon
- Hyacinth Osei
- Rodney Duteau, the Vice President of Student Equity in the SGA
- Naomi Britto
- Joseph Bonilla, president of the Class of 2026 and Vice President-elect of Student Equity in the SGA

Discussion followed on the need to focus on the culture of the campus and using learned experiences instead of training to teach about bias and diversity. The students are excited that they can help make campus culture better through the collaboration which took place at the Student Leadership Summit.

Hidden Diversity

The University must broaden its resources to create a more equitable University to provide support to underrepresented members of the institution. Colleagues who support students from different areas on campus shared the resources they provide to students.

- Ms. Capogna-Amias of the Campus Pride Committee
 - Education – LGBTQIA+ training is offered in the fall and spring semesters and at summer orientation for RA's, orientation leaders, counseling center and student affairs staff
 - Advocacy – gender inclusive restrooms
 - A new committee to develop policy and protocol for name changes in all University systems
 - Programming – rainbow graduation and pride events in surrounding communities
 - Overnight travel and study abroad processes to keep students safe
- Mr. Marques of Veteran and Military Services
 - They are connected to entire University to support veterans and families of veterans
 - Staffing the Military Community Excellence Center
 - Examples were given of successful initiatives and future plans
- Ms. Lazare of the Banacos Academic Center
 - Currently serving 931 students
 - Learning Disabilities Program, Disability Services, Academic Strategies
 - Shared outcomes for students in the learning disabilities program

First-year student Trevor Pluff spoke about issues and complications of intersectionality.

The following three items were tabled until the June committee meeting.

Preferred and Chosen Name Committee

BEST-Responding to bias incidents

Motion: Committee Charter

Trustee Gilmer stated that the JEDI program needs to be supported and cemented in the campus and requested the following:

- Investigations of complaints concerning public safety staff.

- The training given to student public safety officers and how retention is affected by those students.
- To hire diverse public safety staff.

There being no further business,

MOTION made by Trustee Williams, seconded by Trustee Gilmer, to adjourn. There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE** passed motion unanimously with Trustees voting in the affirmative: Alvarado, Gilmer, Williams, Montemayor, and Board Chair Martin.

Meeting adjourned at 2:44 PM.

Attachments presented at this meeting: Draft Minutes of November 30, 2022; Draft Minutes of December 20, 2022; Draft Minutes of February 7, 2023; PowerPoint Presentation; Draft Committee Charter; Motion – Committee Charter.