University Diversity Council

COUNCIL BY LAWS

Purpose: The purpose of the University Diversity Council (“the Council”) is to support the creation, improvement, and nurturance of the dynamic, creative, and inclusive environment that promotes engaged learning and scholarship and supports the mission and vision of Western Connecticut State University.

A. Powers: The Council shall make recommendations to the President via the Chief Diversity Officer (“CDO”) on the following subject areas (as identified):

1. Educational policy, curricula, academic programs, and academic regulations and standards as related to diversity and inclusivity;

2. University policy, educational policy, curricula, academic programs, and academic regulations and standards as related to inclusivity and diversity;

3. Faculty welfare and/or morale, student life, business and budgetary affairs, and other matters of professional interest to faculty, staff and students related to diversity or inclusivity.

B. Appointments and Terms of Services:

1. Each of the representatives from the membership may serve multiple years on the Council as determined by both the Chief Diversity Officer and President.

2. Appointment will be held for a three (3) year term. Each term may be renewed once. Terms shall be refilled on a staggered basis, with approximately one third of the total to be re-elected each year.

3. Open positions for membership will be advertised at the start of either the Fall and/or Spring semesters of the academic year, and nominations (including self-nominations) will be reviewed by the President, Provost and Chief Diversity Officer, and then brought forward to the Council for approval.

C. Membership: The goal of the Council membership is to engage a wealth of voices and perspectives in order to serve its purpose. Therefore, Council membership will consist of representatives from a broad range of stakeholders throughout the university community and may change depending on the addressed topic and/or interests.

Draft and updates: (First draft) April 18, 2018; Updates made: October 3, 2018; 2nd Update: December 5, 2018
Note: The drafted WCSU University Diversity Council by-laws were adapted from the review of the Inclusivity and Diversity Committee bylaws (for Central Washington University).
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Generally, the Council will consist of the following:

1. Key-Advisor: Chief Diversity Officer

2. University Representatives (8-10):
   a) Ancell School of Business (1);
   b) Macricostas School of Arts and Sciences (1);
   c) School of Visual and Performing Arts (1);
   d) School of Professional Studies (1)
   e) President’s Cabinet/Council (2);
      - President’s Office (1); and
      - Public Affairs/Media (1)

3. Staff Representatives (2):
   - SUOAF (1);
   - NP-3 (1);

4. Alternate Representatives (2):
   - University Representative (1)
   - Staff Representative (1)

5. Student Body Representative(s) (2) (ex-officio members/invited guests)
   - Student Government Association (SGA – student only) representative;
   - Student Life/Diversity (staff/student) representative (includes the Center for Student Involvement; Office of Intercultural Affairs, Office of AccessAbility Services; all-related Student Affairs programs/offices);
   - Residential (student only) representative

6. Local community representatives (2 or more) (ex-officio members/invited guests).

D. The University’s Chief Diversity Officer (“CDO”) serves as a key advisor to the Council. The CDO will:

1. Preside at all Council meetings, at any diversity/inclusivity forum(s), and at meetings or events upon request of the President; and,

2. Serve as an official representative and spokesperson of the Council. In this capacity, the CDO will be a member of recommended/invited University Committees and/or Councils.
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E. **Ad-Hoc Committee(s)**: At the discretion of the CDO, ad-hoc committees are generally created (for a limited period of time) to work on a specific initiative(s) or to perform a specific task(s).

1. Ad-Hoc Committees may be authorized and initiate by either the CDO and/or with the approval by the Council, based on the needs of the Council and/or any University action directed by the President. Any Council member may also recommend the creation of an ad-hoc committee. Upon receipt of a request, the Council will have no later than thirty (30) days to create an ad-hoc committee. The Council will submit the request to the Chief Diversity Officer and/or President for its consideration.

2. The Council has the right to appoint and remove the members of any ad hoc committee(s) with the approval of the Chief Diversity Officer.

F. **Meetings**: A regular meeting schedule will be established to meet once per month throughout the academic year. It will be published on the WCSU Office of Diversity and Equity website and as well as on the Share Point Access system for University Council members. Meeting invites will be sent by either a designated organizer and/or Chief Diversity Officer to Council members and invited ex-officio members and/or guests (as needed). Staff of the Office of Diversity and Equity will participate in monthly meetings, as needed by the Chief Diversity Officer. A designated member of the Council and/or assigned staff from the Office of Diversity and Equity will serve as secretary for the monthly meetings.

The order of business will be as follows:

1. Call to order by the Chief Diversity Officer (or designated organizer).
2. Reading and approval of minutes of the previous meeting.
3. Updates and communications.
4. Reports from ad-hoc committee(s) (if applicable).
5. **Quorum**: A majority of members of the Council will constitute a quorum.
6. Council voting may take place in-person or virtually (online) and at least 50% (quorum) of the Council's voting members must be represented for a vote to pass, unless otherwise determined by the Council. Motions under consideration will be determined by a simple majority.
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G. University Programming:

1. **Diversity Events:** During the academic year, the Council serves as *university representatives*. Council members are mandated to actively promote and/or attend events with the intention of assisting with university participation and/or in-person attendance to university sponsored diversity events.

2. **Diversity/Inclusivity Forum:** The forum is an unofficial open meeting/event to which the invited guests and the university community will be invited. The CDO (and/or an assigned designee) will preside over each forum. A forum may be convened for the purposes of providing the Council with an opportunity to convey information to the university community and/or solicit their feedback. This initiative (forum) will begin in (or around) the 2020-2021 academic year on or around September-October 2020 and will continue (on an annual basis) to address and introduce the university community to the university initiatives on each campus.

3. **WCSU Diversity and Inclusion Awareness Week:** The Council is expected to assist in the organization of a WCSU Diversity and Inclusion Awareness week (beginning in the 2020-2021 academic year on or around May 2020) that is targeted at all members of the WCSU community with specific focus on our undergraduate majors. It is a four (4) day week long initiative to showcase events that promote opportunities to gain diversity skills and knowledge along with a chance to dialogue about diversity and inclusion issues and to share best practices by bringing together leaders and experts from inside and outside the university. The week-long initiative is organized by members of the Council, the Office of Diversity and Equity, members of the Division of Student Affairs and the Provost’s Office. The week-long initiative will offer a keynote speech, an open forum, trainings, panel presentations and a diversity festival in order to provide our students, faculty, staff and the university community with an inspirational and informative week designed to advance their understanding of and appreciation for diversity and inclusion at WCSU.

H. Accountability: It shall be an important duty and responsibility of all members of the Council to attend meetings, participate at university diversity events and be actively involved in the Council for the sake of continuity and representation of the Council.

I. Amendments: These by-laws may be amended by a simple majority vote of the Council members present at any meeting where a quorum is present, and with final approval of either the Chief Diversity Officer/President.

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