

**Year-End Report:
Senate Diversity Committee 2021-2022**
Submitted by Committee Chair: Professor Ajit M.W. Chaudhari, PhD

Committee Members:

Member	Source	Term Expires
Jane Jackman	Faculty Council	2022
Ajit Chaudhari	Faculty Council	2022
Donna Ford	Faculty Council	2023
Tanya Menon	Presidential	2023
Mohamed Yousif	Faculty Council	2024
Niru Nahar	Faculty Council	2024
Rachel Childers	Faculty Council	2024
Lisa Florman	Presidential	2024
Preetham Kastury/ Lauren Dahler	USG	2022
Sally Ross	CGS	2022
Anthony Long	IPC	2022
Ramsey Piazza	Staff (USAC)	2024
Derek West	Staff (USAC)	2023
Sara Childers	Staff (Presidential)	2022
James Moore III	Provost/Designee (Non-Voting)	
Linette Hillis	AVP OHR/Designee (Non-Voting)	
Russell Hassan	Prior Year's Chair (Non-Voting)	

The duties and responsibilities of the Senate Diversity Committee are as follows:

The committee shall study issues that relate to the implementation of the university nondiscriminatory policy. It shall recommend policies that foster an environment of civility, tolerance, and mutual respect. It shall perform the following functions with appropriate administrative support from the office of academic affairs and the office of human resources.

1. *Study and evaluate issues affecting diversity from an overall university perspective.*
2. *Be informed on external requirements on the university affecting diversity.*
3. *Advise the president, the executive vice president and provost, the associate vice president for human resources, and the vice president for student life about the institutional climate, policies, and priorities for ensuring justice, fairness, and equitable treatment to all members of the university.*
4. *Educate and inform the university community on issues of diversity, including the letter and spirit of all Ohio and federal rules regarding members of protected classes.*
5. *Oversee administration of university affirmative action grants and awards.*
6. *Report annually to the university senate.*

The committee held virtual monthly meetings from September 2021 – May 2022. In addition, discussions and documents were shared asynchronously over the committee’s Microsoft Teams channel. Meetings typically featured lively discussions with guests on issues and challenges the university faces. At most meetings, guests presented initial remarks and committee members provided feedback for the guests to take under consideration for their future work. Some meetings were devoted to committee discussions of important priorities and the development of recommendations or memoranda to share with university leadership. The committee is very thankful to all of our guests for taking the time to engage with us.

September 9, 2021: This meeting featured introductions, a review of the previous year’s annual report, and discussion of the committee’s priorities for the 2021-2022 academic year.

October 21, 2021: Guests from the Office of Human Resources’ Career Roadmap team including Rob Prisbrey, Lisa Kennedy, Kalkidan Tefera, and Christine O’Malley presented and discussed the motivation and structure of the rollout of the Career Roadmap initiative.

November 18, 2021: The first half of this meeting featured a discussion of the impacts of public safety measures on students, prospective students, & families of students. David Roy, Khadijah Jones, and Eric Hildebrandt from the Undergraduate Admissions office and representatives of USG (Anna Shulman, Kelsey Lowman), CGS (Sally Ross), and IPC (Anthony Long) provided their perspectives. The second half of the meeting featured a discussion of land acknowledgments and other initiatives to support Indigenous communities with Steve Gavazzi from the Stepping Out & Stepping Up project and Madison Eagle from the Multicultural Center.

December 9, 2021: This meeting focused on the current status and potential changes to promotion and tenure processes for faculty. Guests included Helen Malone, Vice Provost for Academic Policy and Faculty Resources & Darryl Hood, Amy Ferketich, and Alison Norris from the College of Public Health.

January 20, 2021: Provost Melissa Gilliam presented her vision for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. Guests Gina Sanchez, Rachel Applegate, and Margaret Ferguson from Indiana University Purdue University in Indianapolis (IUPUI) Faculty Affairs presented on the IUPUI experience with developing a DEI path to promotion & tenure. Vice Provost Helen Malone also attended. At this meeting, Tanya Menon was elected chair for the 2022-2023 academic year.

February 10, 2022: Meg Daly, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education, joined for a discussion of the potential impacts of the new General Education requirements on faculty and instructors from minoritized groups.

March 10, 2022: Alan Kalish, Assistant Provost, and Colette Dollarhide joined for a discussion on the limitations of student evaluations of instruction and their use in faculty promotion & tenure.

April 11, 2022: The committee discussed potential recommendations to improve the faculty promotion & tenure process and to support Indigenous communities at Ohio State.

May 12, 2022: The committee discussed potential recommendations to improve the faculty promotion & tenure process and to support Indigenous communities at Ohio State.

In addition to these meetings of the full committee, a subcommittee including Ajit Chaudhari, Ramsey Piazza, Lisa Florman, and Rachel Childers reviewed nominees and selected [recipients of the Distinguished Diversity Enhancement Awards](#) in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources: The Todd Anthony Bell National Resource Center on the African American Male, Sandra Dawkins, Thomas Magliery, Bismarck Odei, and Tabitha Willis.

Derek West represented the Senate Diversity Committee on the University Senate's Furlough Policy Working Group, which was formed to create a permanent policy for furloughs that would replace the temporary policy created during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ajit Chaudhari and Sara Childers held meetings with other stakeholders in April 2022 to discuss opportunities to provide more resources on campus to counteract anti-Semitism.

In May 2022 the committee received a request from the Post Doctoral Association Advocacy Committee to add a seat on the committee for a postdoc representative. The committee was generally favorable of adding such a seat, but it needs to be codified in the Bylaws of the committee to take effect.

During the 2021-2022 academic year the Senate Diversity Committee focused on seven key issues of concern and opportunity for the university: (1) Support for Indigenous communities, (2) Equitable faculty promotion & tenure, (3) Honorary degree nominations, (4) Flexible work policies, (5) Career Roadmap, (6) Harassment training for protected groups, and (7) Anti-Semitism. Each issue is discussed in more detail below.

1. Support for Indigenous communities: In April 2021, a proposal had been brought to the committee to create an official land acknowledgment for the university. Through the course of the 2021-2022 term, the committee heard from several individuals who attended committee meetings or provided written materials from the perspectives of faculty, staff, students, and Indigenous communities outside of Ohio State University. These diverse groups' priorities vary widely, but the most common request was to have "Nothing for us without us." Moreover, all groups agreed that an official land acknowledgment by the university would be performative and meaningless at best, or damaging at worst, without being accompanied by concrete actions that include allocation of resources. To increase representation and foster further progress, the committee recruited a faculty member from

the Indigenous Advisory Council to nominate to the Senate Diversity Committee. The committee was generally in favor of sets of draft recommendations from the Native American Indigenous People's Cohort (a student group) and the Indigenous Advisory Council (a faculty group).

2. **Equitable faculty promotion & tenure:** The committee spent several meetings creating and reviewing a list of inequities experienced by faculty from minoritized groups at the university. The committee also heard from guests from IUPUI and the OSU College of Public Health on changes they've made that could potentially be applied university-wide at OSU. The committee is continuing this work in Summer 2022 with a plan to release a set of recommendations to the Provost by Fall 2022.
3. **Honorary degrees:** With encouragement from the Honorary Degrees committee, the Diversity committee examined opportunities to support nominees and submit nominations of individuals from minoritized groups and who are earlier in their career. The committee feels it is important both to diversify the ranks of honorary degree recipients, and to become more pro-active in awarding honorary degrees to those who are deserving but haven't already been similarly acknowledged by other universities around the country. The committee supported nominations of three individuals with either local or national impact on marginalized and minoritized communities. As of June 2022, one of these nominees, Freeman Hrabowski III, was awarded an honorary degree from OSU at the Spring 2022 Commencement.
4. **Flexible work policy:** At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, everyone at the university was working remotely. A silver lining of this necessary pivot was that many employees across the university learned that they could be similarly productive and promote safety or work-life balance by working remotely at least part of the time. As the university has transitioned back to in-person work, policies allowing flexible work have been implemented in all units, but these policies are not uniform and they are subject to the potentially arbitrary judgment of individual managers. To create the most productive and supportive work environment for every employee at the university, the committee felt that it is critical to develop more consistent policies and in particular a uniform, consistent appeals process for employees who wish to challenge the denial of a flexible work arrangement. The committee submitted this request to the Provost and to the Senior VP of Talent, Culture and Human Resources.
5. **Career Roadmap:** The committee supported the stated intention of the Career Roadmap Initiative to create a foundation from which to support equitable pay and opportunities for advancement across the enterprise. However, potential unexpected consequences remain a concern for the committee especially when the supervisor and employee do not fully understand their rights and responsibilities as active participants in the process. Specifically, an employee challenge to the proposed mapping must include written documentation explaining the reason for the challenge. Employees who have a positive, supportive relationship with their supervisor can collaborate with the supervisor to compose a challenge, but employees without such a relationship face a daunting task where they don't understand all the potential nuances of the system. The committee recommended that the Office of Human Resources provide additional channels to employees outside of their organizational structure to provide additional advice and support.

6. Harassment training: The university currently requires training regarding definitions, prevention, and reporting of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. This training is most commonly accomplished through the online training entitled “Report = Support.” The current training has multiple limitations that could be improved: (a) parts of it may be triggering or offensive to some audiences, and (b) it only applies to one protected class, i.e. sex. The committee recommended to the Office of Institutional Equity remedies to these two limitations. First, the committee suggested regular auditing by members of diverse groups to identify triggering or offensive components. Second, the committee requested an expansion of this required training module to address all protected classes, not just sex. Such an expansion would be consistent with the recent policy change by OIE that expands mandatory reporting to alleged discrimination based on any protected class, not just sex or gender.
7. Anti-Semitism: In response to incidents of anti-Semitism on campus and nationwide, it is important for members of the university community to have resources available for education and training to reduce anti-Semitism. During several meetings, potential resources were explored that already exist on campus, that could be provided to the university community by external parties, or that could be created by individuals in the university community. Some of these resources would be non-specific, focusing on civil communication and concepts such as bias and microaggression. Many of these already exist on campus provided by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Office of Institutional Equity, Office of Human Resources, and individual colleges. Other resources focusing specifically on anti-Semitism, Judaism, and the experiences of Jewish communities need to be created or curated by those communities. An ad hoc group of stakeholders was formed in April 2022, and this group should be engaged again to create a set of recommendations to university leadership and to individual contributors so that these resources are available, accessible, and well-known around the university community.