**D R A F T**

**Diversity Initiatives**

January 2017

**Faculty of Color Mentorship**

This mentorship program for Faculty of Color is a cross-institutional effort to expand the system’s ability to retain and provide support for faculty of color moving through the tenure-track process.

This program is not intended to replace mentoring programs for faculty of color on individual campuses. It is designed to give faculty members of color opportunities to build early relationships with other faculty of color, experience support from a faculty member of color from a different institution and provide cohort support among faculty of color working through the tenure processes at their institutions.

Professional development topics and activities include faculty of color identity development in the classroom, navigating barriers and challenges unique to faculty members of color in higher education, reflection of interpersonal connections with colleagues across race and ethnicity, mentor/mentee training and expectations.  Quarterly convenings for mentors and mentees are planned for the pilot cohort in 2016-17.

Although the project is for current faculty of color, utilizing a mentor program can positively impact future recruitment and hiring of diverse faculty and have larger impacts related to improving the cultural climate of our institutions.

**Diversify Faculty Hiring**

The goal of this effort is to expand colleges’ capacity to recruit and hire a more diverse faculty by:

* identifying diversity-equity-inclusion competencies that can be part of faculty positions that serve increasingly diverse student populations;
* exploring collaborative recruitment efforts on behalf of multiple colleges for a range of faculty positions;
* identifying effective practices used in the system and offering training and professional development for college faculty and staff involved in faculty hiring.

This work is going forward under the guidance of the Instruction Commission and its Equity and Inclusion Committee. This year, the focus will be to:

1. Work on developing a common competency profile for instruction related to diversity, equity and inclusion.
2. Work on developing knowledge, skills, and abilities helpful for faculty that align with academic clusters or metamajors.

The intent is to provide tools for colleges to utilize in job announcements and to pool efforts on recruitment and staff training for those who wish to participate. A group of instruction vice presidents and human resources directors has volunteered to begin work on identifying diversity-equity-inclusion competencies for inclusion in job announcements.

**Bias Response Training**

The Student Services Commission received a letter from the Multicultural Student Services Directors Council addressed to WACTC offering support and clarification on best practices preparing for and responding to bias incidents on campus. The letter offers support from the Multicultural Student Services Directors and makes the following recommendations consistent with nationally recognized law-enforcement and anti-bias groups:

1. A well-trained Bias Response team should be operational on campus before incidents occur.
2. The Bias Response team should be composed of representatives from multiple departments involved in disciplinary as well as therapeutic responses, including vice president for student services, security, office of diversity and equity or multicultural services, Title IX coordinator, counseling, instruction, human resources, college relations, and student life.
3. The bias incident must be acknowledged by the college so that campus community members as well as immediate victims feel heard and to avoid loss of safety and trust in the institution. Harm can spread quickly to people who identify with the targeted group, and to people who identify as members of other targeted groups.
4. Bias incidents should be reported with as much transparency as possible.
5. Bias incidents must be handled in a timely way. A campus has a greater chance of growing closer as a supportive community if bias is handled swiftly and effectively.

The Commission reviewed the letter at its recent summer commission meeting and offered the following responses:

* WSSSC members endorse the content of the letter along with the five recommendations contain within.
* WSSSC members will initiate a conversation at the cabinet level regarding Behavioral Incident Response Teams.
* WSSSC members will work with MSSDC members to identify specific best practices appropriate for their campus.
* WSSSC members stand ready to support this work and any other recommendations WACTC may have.