

Centre College Work Plan for Diversity & Inclusion Fall 2018 and Beyond

The College's Work Plan for Diversity & Inclusion not only includes actions agreed to during the conversations with students on May 2-4, 2018 but also other plans and initiatives already in place or planned outside those conversations. This Work Plan, developed at the request of the Board of Trustees following "May 2-4," as it has come to be known, presents four primary themes on which the College intends to take action, to include several underway before May 2-4, as well as several begun in the summer of 2018 and continuing into the 2018-19 session. If you have specific questions, you are invited to contact either Jamey Leahey or one of the College officers listed beside each of the four primary themes.

I. Education & Training (Andrea Abrams, Brian Cusato, Kay Drake, Brad Fields, Randy Hays, Brian Hutzley, Jamey Leahey)

A. This first item may be the most pervasive and important theme coming out of the May 2-4 conversations. While much of it was or is already in play, this work will require additional attention by the College.

B. Training focused broadly on issues of diversity and inclusion for all areas of our campus (faculty, staff, and students), much of which was already in the plans for faculty and staff development.

Andrea Abrams has led the effort to create a "suite" of training options, in cooperation with Brian Cusato and Kay Drake, that will allow faculty and staff to select from a range of educational opportunities based on a preliminary diagnostic survey of areas that would serve each individual best. For students, a combination of efforts has involved ally training and non-violent communication (both efforts coming out of the counseling office), as well as meetings with affinity groups. In addition, residence life has helped coordinate a number of programs led by RAs in September and October that address one or more of the following learning objectives: engage with cultures and perspectives that are different from their own, identify social inequities that target people from marginalized communities, and learn best practices on how to advocate for social justice and inclusion. Also, a three-session set of presentations during orientation was also devoted to diversity and inclusion. Further, the SGA is working with the Diversity Office and others to organize a campus-wide "Building Bridges and Community Day" on November 1, designed to foster inclusive community building, as well as healing and reconciliation after May 2-4.

C. Special attention to education and training for the Department of Public Safety, which has begun this summer and will carry into the 2018-19 session; Sodexo staff, our dining services provider, which has begun this summer and will carry into the 2018-19 session; staff involved in Title IX investigations, which has begun this summer and will carry into the 2018-19 session; athletics staff, much of which was already planned, has begun this summer, and will carry into the 2018-19 session; and faculty and staff, which has begun this summer and will carry into the 2018-19 session.

The entire DPS staff (including its two newest officers) started the academic year with a daylong implicit bias training session. Over spring and summer, DPS co-directors Gary Bugg and Kevin Milby completed their Level One certification through the Association of Title IX Administrators as Civil Rights / Title IX trained special investigators earlier (in April and August, respectively). Kay Drake completed similar training in September. In the area of athletics, the newly

established Student-Athlete Diversity Board, with at least one representative from each varsity team, held its first meeting on September 27. Athletics also completed campus sexual violence prevention training—attended by all coaches and athletics staff, as well as student-athletes—beyond what is mandated by the NCAA, highlighted by three training sessions led by Dr. Kimberly Dickman, a sexual assault program analyst with the United States Air Force Academy. In addition, Centre athletics completed a training session led by Andrea Abrams on racial sensitivity and implicit bias, as well as a two-hour training session on LGBTQ+ issues led by Ann Goodwin and Brian Daniel. While campus dining menu options were some of the very first changes to take place as early as May 4, Sodexo continues to be very supportive of these efforts, particularly in terms of halal offerings and food for religious holidays, and the assistance of Rick Axtell has been especially helpful.

D. Special attention will be given to how we organize the reporting and follow-up on matters related to diversity and inclusion, and the diversity and inclusion staff will stand ready to assist with any and all aspects of this effort, as appropriate.

Regular reporting takes place on a weekly basis by President Roush in his “Week-at-a-Glance” campus email blasts, as well as through newly created newsletters by the Diversity Office, DPS, and Sodexo. May 2-4 items, such as the Work Plan and President Roush’s Open letter, have been added to the Diversity section of the College website. And general assistance is already underway now that the diversity and inclusion staff has been fully staffed, with the arrival of Ashley Oliver as director of diversity and inclusion programming; Jo Teut as assistant director; and Amanda DeWitt as the sustained community dialogue VISTA member.

II. Department of Public Safety & Student Life Matters (Andrea Abrams, Brian Cusato, Randy Hays, Brian Hutzley, Patrick Noltemeyer)

A. Several matters related to the Department of Public Safety having to do with student safety have been addressed this summer, specifically the issue of communicating more regularly with students (planned for fall of 2018) and the possibility of having a person on post at the DPS Office at all times (which was reviewed and set aside for the time being).

Staffing changes due to retirements took place over the summer that resulted in the hiring of two new officers. Creation of a monthly DPS newsletter is complete, with the first issue out in mid-September. Review of the post staffing issue presented too many logistical challenges for this to move forward.

B. A number of issues related to dining services and our current food service provider, Sodexo, were addressed immediately, and Sodexo and the College have committed and/or are prepared to consider implementing others as well. The College will continue to monitor Sodexo’s progress and student response to their good-faith efforts.

The involvement of Rick Axtell and Kendrick Durham has been very helpful, particularly to be sensitive to general food offerings and those during religious holidays. Sodexo has brought in an outside consultant to provide training for all its staff at Centre, and campus general manager Mike Nagorka has continued to work regularly with Rick Axtell to understand dietary needs of our students.

C. The matter of creating an “Intercultural Space” in existing Campus Center space was already in conversation and will be in place by fall of 2018.

Significant work, led by Patrick Noltemeyer, was done over the summer to have the space ready by the start of the new academic year, and furnishings have been made possible by a generous anonymous gift. Once the year started, Patrick, Andrea Abrams, and Ashley Oliver met with students several times to discuss how to make this a space that best serves the needs of our community and recognizes and honors the diverse cultures within it, acknowledging that this is a living and breathing space that remains a work-in-progress that will change over time. It will be dedicated as part of the fall Board of Trustees meeting on October 26, 2018,

D. Plans are in place to be certain that there are, as has been true in recent years, a robust number of convocations related to diversity and inclusion. The prospect of requiring students to attend a certain number of such convocations is being considered through the regular College governance process.

This idea has been an early topic of discussion for the Convocation Committee, which has also consulted the Diversity Committee for advice on how to define “diversity” as it relates to convocations. Work through the College governance process will continue throughout the fall.

E. Working with the diversity and inclusion staff, the administration will seek ways to educate and communicate broadly to students about diversity and inclusion issues—allowing students the opportunity to share ideas and concerns directly with the administration.

With the expanded diversity and inclusion staff now all in place, Ashley, Jo, and Amanda have been meeting with student groups in an effort to listen and learn about concerns. More formally, feedback on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion can now be submitted via an online form located on Centrenet, either anonymously or with contact information for those who desire a follow-up response. All comments will be reviewed by Andrea Abrams and her team for direct action or for routing to an appropriate office for action. A summary report will be compiled each semester.

III. Transparency, Recruiting, & Reporting (Andrea Abrams, Brian Cusato, Kay Drake, Randy Hays, Jamey Leahey, Patrick Noltemeyer, Michael Strysick)

A. The College will continue to be certain it meets its obligation to select the most qualified candidate for openings on the faculty and staff by advertising strategically, conducting open searches, and using the talents of its current faculty, staff, and students to recruit those candidates invited to our campus.

Andrea Abrams will continue the work initiated by Rodmon King to assist broadly with recruitment efforts, though work done last year to create a Greater Kentucky regional Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC) office has shifted, with Kay Drake taking President Roush’s spot on the advisory board and Elizabeth Graves taking Rodmon’s and serving as chair.

B. The College will pay particular attention to being transparent with research efforts related to diversity and inclusion and to sexual misconduct – communicating more regularly with its faculty, staff, and students. Moreover, the administration will conduct and design surveys to be certain the College secures credible information that is valuable to improving the lot of all students.

Centre has conducted two major climate surveys over the last year, including the 2018 Centre Speaks Survey on Sexual and Relationship Violence, completed by students between February 1 and March 15, and a climate survey on diversity and inclusion completed by students, faculty,

and staff this past academic year as well. A preliminary report on the 2018 Centre Speaks survey was shared with the campus community on May 16, with a more comprehensive being prepared for later this fall. At the same time, Centre has contracted with Holly Rider-Milkovich of EVERFI and Cara Tuttle Bell of Vanderbilt University to provide expert third-party analysis and work on assisting with prevention efforts and creation of an action plan. Their preliminary data analysis was presented on September 26 to a well-attended campus convocation audience, which will be followed by additional events, including campus workshops and forums led by Bell in October and November. Diversity and inclusion survey data was initially available late spring for students responses only, with the faculty and staff component only recently received by the College on September 28. The information will be shared in preliminary and comprehensive reports over the fall and into the winter.

C. The College's recruiting practices have been and will remain in line with the spirit and the letter of our desire to have a diverse workforce. Centre's membership in the Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC) will also assist.

As mentioned above in III.A, Andrea Abrams will continue the work initiated by Rodmon King to assist broadly with recruitment efforts, though work done last year to create a Greater Kentucky regional Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC) office has shifted, with Kay Drake taking President Roush's spot on the advisory board and Elizabeth Graves taking Rodmon's and serving as chair.

D. The administration will create survey mechanisms to allow students to provide feedback on diversity and inclusion efforts, and will use these data to inform planning, programming, or specific actions. One new mechanism will be in place by fall of 2018.

A review of possible gender bias in our course evaluations has begun early this fall, involving an ad hoc working group with divisional representation. Related, potential changes to course evaluations, including a question about inclusive classroom environments, are being reviewed by a group that includes division chairs, Andrea Abrams, Beth Glazier, and Sarah Lashley. Also, as mentioned above in II.E, feedback on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion can now be submitted via an online form located on Centrenet, either anonymously or with contact information for those who desire a follow-up response. All comments will be reviewed by Andrea Abrams and her team for direct action or for routing to an appropriate office for action. A summary report will be compiled each semester. An additional bias incident reporting tool, similar to the SMART tool used to report sexual misconduct, is set to go live on October 24, appearing on both Centrenet and the College website (in the Diversity section).

E. To communicate more broadly about actions taken by the administration, the College plans to create new reporting mechanisms, including reports of bias incidents and the outcome of investigations—mindful of student and employee privacy concerns.

The plan will be to report out aggregated statistics to the campus community, though it remains to be seen if the number of reports will allow for the reporting to be twice a year, annually, or bi-annually.

F. The College has moved forward to add an FTE in the Office of Diversity. This appointment is scheduled for completion by the beginning of the 2018 school year.

Adding an FTE took place over the summer, along with general restructuring of the diversity and inclusion staff. The lead position has been changed to an associate vice president for diversity

initiatives, dropping the “academic affairs” component of the title, recognizing this more fully as a chief diversity officer. What was previously a two-year “diversity fellow” position has been converted to a regular full-time position of director of diversity and inclusion programming, and an assistant director has been added. As well, the position of sustained community dialogue VISTA member has been added to the staff. All four positions are staffed as of early October, and a national search is underway for the associate vice president role.

G. The College will create and publish by the fall of 2018 an online reporting tool for bias incidents to be used in all aspects of Centre’s operation, which will be supervised by Dr. Andrea Abrams and a team of other key staff in a position to assist.

A bias incident reporting tool, similar to the SMART tool used to report sexual misconduct, is set to go live on October 24, appearing on both Centrenet and the College website (in the Diversity section).

IV. Directional & College-Wide Themes (Brian Cusato, Randy Hays, Jamey Leahey, Yvonne Morley)

A. First-Year Orientation provides us with a rich opportunity to “start right,” and it will be our plan to be sure that these new students understand the importance of Centre being a welcoming community, open to difference of opinion, accountable, and encouraging – a place where we are able to disagree without becoming disagreeable, where diversity of thought is also welcomed, and where students can challenge and be challenged.

Structured diversity and inclusion training during orientation, spaced over three days at the start of the new academic year, has been added to the otherwise very involved and intentional orientation programming.

B. We have a time-honored tradition for campus-wide events, often including guests who afford us the opportunity to think about diversity, inclusion, freedom of speech, gratitude, social justice, moral and ethical leadership, compassion, accountability, etc. In this next year and beyond it will be important for us to be all the more intentional with these events—being sure that our convocation schedule is one that is “wide” and invites each of us to learn and grow.

As mentioned in II.D, this idea has been an early topic of discussion for the Convocation Committee, which has also consulted the Diversity Committee for advice on how to define “diversity” as it relates to convocations. Work through the College governance process will continue throughout the fall.

C. The College will continue to encourage freedom of speech and expression and, as noted in other parts of this Work Plan, will redouble its effort to provide students opportunities to “be heard.” At the same moment, and in the interest of protecting the institution’s academic and general student life programs, we will work to prepare “standards for engagement” for the members of our community that fit within the College’s tradition for civil discourse. These standards will need to be measured and clear and in line with Centre’s culture where new ideas are welcomed and where all members of the community are treated with respect. They will be intended to clarify what students can expect from the administration and what the administration can expect from students in terms of communication and dialogue. So that members of the Centre College community are fully aware of these expectations and their responsibility to adhere to them, these standards will be in hand before the fall of 2018.

Standards of engagement for civil discourse were shared by President Roush in his “Open Letter” to the campus community at the start of the 2018-19 academic year, with particular detail in point #3.

D. The Trustee Working Group on Diversity will continue its work on a Board Statement on Diversity and Inclusion, scheduled for consideration in October 2018.

A Statement of Diversity, as well as a draft report, will be shared with the Trustee Working Group on Diversity at its October 9 meeting. From there, it will be reviewed by the Honorary Degrees & Nominations Committee, which will bring it to the full board for discussion and approval at the fall meeting of the Board of Trustees, October 25-26.

E. President Roush, working with the Board Officers, will secure professional assistance from a person of proven stature in the areas of diversity and inclusion who might offer advice and counsel as Centre attempts to do those things that put us in position to add quality and strength, since such matters are an important part of college life.

Michael Reed, senior vice president for inclusion and diversity at Bowdoin College, has agreed to serve as a consultant and has already begun work in the early part of the fall semester. A graduate of Williams and Howard, with a certificate from Harvard’s Institute for Educational Management, Mr. Reed served at Williams and Dickinson before moving to Bowdoin.

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