

**Committee on Academic Staff Issues**  
**College of Agricultural and Life Sciences**  
November 15, 2023, 12:00pm-1:00pm  
473 Horticulture Building

Attendees: Eric Booth, Amber Haroldson, Arnoldo Lopez-Hernandez, Stephanie Jones (ASEC), Emily Laabs, Veronica Law, Erin Pierce, Lori Plum, David Sandra, Kristin Schill (Chair), Dan Smith.

Not present: Todd Courtenay, Maddie Koski, Brittany Magrady, Martha Reck, Angie Seitler

Minutes by: Muhamed Sadiku

Attending as public meeting: None

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MINUTES

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*This meeting was called to order by Kristin Schill at 12:00pm.*

**1. Review agenda**

*No changes were made to the agenda. Approved agenda will be posted on the CALS CASI website.*

**2. Consent agenda**

*Minutes from the September 20, 2023 meeting were approved and will be posted on the CALS CASI website.*

**3. ODEI Updates**

*Louis Macias, the Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, opened the discussion by introducing the CALS ODEI team:*

- *Mandy Moy, Community Impact Manager, responsible for Communications, Assessment and Data, and DEI Professional Development Requirement.*
- *Rosie Gittens, Community Development Manager, responsible for the Learning Hub, Learning Opportunities, and Consultation.*
- *Tom Browne, Senior Assistant Dean, responsible for Climate Response, and Outreach.*

*Next, Louis Macias talked about the mission of the CALS Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, their initiatives, and summer developments around DEI as follows:*

- *(How) ODEI works by providing support and advocacy and reconciling the tensions between the local units (i.e., the individual, department) and the central (i.e., college, campus etc.).*

- **The mission of the ODEI** – seeking to cultivate connection within CALS and our broader community by promoting a greater understanding of DEI and expanding knowledge to grow individual and collective capacity leading to measurable change.
- **Learning Hub** – an interactive database that offers curated content for faculty, staff, and students. Content is updated frequently, and feedback is encouraged.
- **DEI Consultation** – a consultation service for faculty, staff, and students on a broad range of emerging challenges and opportunities.
- **Climate Response Team** – a partnership between ODEI, Academic Affairs, and Human Resources to support CALS faculty, staff, and students with climate-related inquiries.
- **DEI Professional Development Requirement** – this requirement was recommended by the Equity and Diversity Committee and approved by the Academic Planning Council in 2021. The plan to launch in January 2024 has been put on hold by the dean.

### Question from CASI members

*Q: Considering various levels of units (academic unit, lab, individual etc.), what is the range that you have consulted?*

*A: Any of them. We worked with individuals (faculty, staff), units, and centers. Our work has spanned the range.*

*Q: What is the relationship between your office and HR regarding the retention of the underrepresented (diverse) groups?*

*A: A lot of that is still being worked out. We are trying to identify the areas where we can establish partnerships between DEI and HR and engage this issue.*

*Q: Could you speak on the challenges and future goals in terms of making the DEI work more cohesive across colleges, given the fact that we have a lot of student crossover?*

*A: There are some resources that need to be school/college and unit specific. But I agree that there are others that need not be CALS specific for example. We need more cohesion, and we must break these superficial barriers. Such conversations are happening centrally.*

*Q: Do you integrate with LaVar Charleston's office and work with him when building the resources, and how much interaction do you have with DEI offices of other schools?*

*A: Yes, there are interactions, and we meet monthly with other schools.*

*Q: Is there any timeline for the DEI professional development requirement?*

*A: Not at the moment.*

### 2023 Summer Developments related to DEI

- *Mid-summer state budget and the attacks on DEI*
  - *The state legislature proposed cutting \$32M system-wide and approximately \$7M for UW Madison. This meant the elimination of 188 DEI-related jobs.*
  - *Budget included a pay plan increase for all state employees, including UW.*
  - *Gov. Evers vetoed DEI related budget cuts*
  - *The Joint Committee on Employment Relations (JCOER) segregated the University of Wisconsin employees from the rest of the state employee workforce.*

CASI 2023-24 meeting materials are in Box at: <https://uwmadison.box.com/s/tdhl6l6mm6y6n1jq3dxih5y8u8szmjf9>

APC agenda and minutes can be found here: <https://apc.cals.wisc.edu/meetings/>

ASEC meeting materials can be found here: <https://kb.wisc.edu/acstaff/>

- *The latest update is that Governor Evers has filed a lawsuit challenging this action.*

- SCOTUS decision around affirmative action

*The decision eliminated the consideration of race as a factor in college admission. Data from 10 states that have implemented this policy (UCLA for example) for a while show a precipitous decrease in African American and Hispanic student enrollment and a marginal increase in Asian students.*

- UW eliminated the DEI statement

*Philosophy statements cannot be required during the hiring process.*

*Finally, the addition of a representative from the ODEI to CASI membership as ex-officio was discussed and consensually agreed by all those present.*

#### **4. College Updates and questions from the committee**

*CASI members are encouraged to attend the virtual **College Updates Series** where Dean Gillaspay offers various college updates, news, and initiatives. These meetings are delivered twice per semester via Zoom (on a Friday at noon). Future dates and recordings are posted in eCALs.*

#### **5. Subcommittee updates**

- a. Awards and professional development

*The subcommittee discussed ways for Departments to increase nominations for CALS awards. Reducing the requirement and making the process simpler, and having more information when evaluating contributions and merits were thought to be beneficial.*

- b. Communications

*No updates. Subcommittee chairs have not been elected yet; Kristin Schill will send out an email asking folks to volunteer.*

- c. Nominations and mentoring

*No updates*

- d. Personnel procedures, compensation, and governance

*The subcommittee met and began the discussion to amend the CASI bylaws. Members have raised questions about the committee's charges and college policies pertaining to academic staff. PPCG also discussed the addition of university staff representatives, university staff policies, and moving from wards to academic titles regarding representation. All the questions have been emailed to the Office of the Secretary of the Academic Staff, and the subcommittee will reconvene on this.*

*The need for a CASI Annual Report and the possibility for the committee to have a virtual meeting option were also discussed.*

**6. Chair updates**

*No updates from the CASI Chair.*

**7. Academic Planning Council report and discussion**

*The list of topics for discussion this academic year was presented by Dean Gillaspay. The ones that impact academic staff include the College Code of Conduct, the University Hiring Initiative, the Capital Campaign for UW Madison, and CALS Majors and Outreach.*

**8. Adjourn**

*Meeting adjourned at 1:07pm.*