

Report to Faculty Senate From Graduate Council Regarding Ongoing Concerns with Accountability for OCMS DEI Question Classroom Implementation

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Graduate Council would like to make the Faculty Senate aware of a topic of discussion that the 2020-2021 Graduate Council returned to repeatedly that we feel merits a broader conversation. The topic of discussion is the issue of where does the accountability lie for the implementation of new course and program proposal elements related to DEI. Since Fall 2016, new course and program proposals have included two questions that ask for explanation about the inclusivity of the course content and teaching methods:

- How is the course content inclusive and relevant to a diverse and evolving student body?
- What pedagogical methods and/or approaches will be used when teaching this course to facilitate an inclusive learning environment?

Although Graduate Council ensures that all proposals that are recommended to the Faculty Senate include good faith answers to these questions, and recognizes that many faculty are engaging thoughtfully in DEI implications for pedagogy and curriculum, GC members have repeatedly raised questions about whether what is represented in the OCMS proposal is actually an accurate representation of what will be implemented in the classroom, both immediately and over time. In addition, another issue that exacerbates the issue of accountability is the reality that many programs have many courses taught by adjuncts and there is no financial support for professional development with adjuncts to ensure DEI commitments in syllabus and ongoing diversification of course materials occurs.

To provide more context for the GC effort to support the OCMS DEI questions, in early 2020 the Graduate Council worked with the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee to draft and distribute a [memo](#) sent to all Departmental Curriculum Committee Chairs, Department Chairs and Program Directors. This memo requested for their committees to more deeply interrogate the DEI responses on proposals under review. Moreover, the Graduate Council has developed a ReImagine grant proposal to request funding for the development of a training module that will prepare course and program proposers to better engage with the two DEI questions. This proposal has been made in concert with the Office of Academic Innovation and the University Library, and requests an additional amount of funding to supplement the already promised \$2000 from the Office of Global Diversity and Inclusion for the project. The Council understands that its work is focused on shifting the culture at PSU to be more inclusive, and believes that this training is only one small step within the Council's scope that can contribute to the work of the University as a whole.

Since the issue of accountability for classroom implementation of the OCMS proposal DEI questions extends beyond the scope of the Graduate Council, as well as its Faculty Senate parallel, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, the Council requests that FS Steering

consider whether the question merits a broader discussion. GC is aware of related work that is taking place on the FS committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the University Promotion & Tenure Guidelines.

We ask FS Steering to consider the proper forum for continuing discussion and documentation of this important issue.