

Subject: DEI Updates - Summer/Fall 2022

Sent out by email: December 5, 2022

Dear Members of the EMU Community:

With the fall semester coming to an end, I am sharing a few representative highlights of the DEI initiatives that have taken place these summer and fall terms.

The Office of DEI continues to grow - [Dawn Neil](#), MA, began working at EMU as the inaugural DEI coordinator on November 1, 2022. Additionally, Desmone Logan, a graduate student in Biomedicine, joined our office as an Inclusive Excellence Student Leader. She joins Adesola Johnson, an undergraduate Biochemistry(Pre-Med) Major, who joined our office as an inclusive Excellence Student Leader in the Spring of 2022.

Inaugural Lavender Graduation Ceremony, May 6, 2022. We continue to strengthen our school spirit by launching new community rituals and celebrations. About 100 faculty, students, staff, alumni, and community members attended the ceremony. EMU is the first Mennonite Academic Institution in the USA and Canada that has celebrated a Lavender Ceremony. The event was hosted by EMU's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, EMU Student Life, and Safe Space.

Launched EMU's inaugural DEI grant program, the Hertzler-Koshy Faculty Fellowship. This is an opportunity to support faculty/student collaborations that will lead to more diverse curricula with a focus on race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and gender. This grant has been made possible thanks to the generosity of [Jose Koshy '76 and Jean Koshy-Hertzler '79](#).

Launched the second cycle of Inclusive Excellence DEI grants; twelve grants have been awarded. We will share next semester the exciting DEI projects that our community members will develop and implement.

Infusing DEI in the Undergraduate Core Curriculum continues to be a high priority. As part of this effort, the office of DEI put together a working group to develop a 3-credit required undergraduate course titled: Power, Systems, and Justice. The course will focus on race, gender, economic inequality, class, and other dimensions of identity and difference. The course proposal is in-process with the Academic Council (AC) with much affirmation from students and faculty. The AC will be voting on the course proposal at their next meeting in January. If approved, it will be piloted in the fall of 2024 and spring of 2025. It will be fully launched for all students to take it starting in the fall of 2025.

Belonging and Becoming Together (BBT) New Faculty Mentoring Program - Mentoring and supporting faculty is crucial for retention and creating welcoming spaces. This fall semester new faculty were invited to participate in seven 1.5-hour gatherings. This interactive program focuses on identifying the DEI needs of newly hired faculty and how EMU can meet their DEI needs. It is a collaborative effort between the office of DEI and the office of the Provost. We are currently evaluating the feedback received from participants of this program. The plan is to continue to regularly offer this program.

DEI-CTL Story Potluck and Emu Story Hour - The office of DEI and EMU's Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) created a program for faculty development centered around DEI and pedagogy for the 2022-2023 academic calendar year. The program consists of two different types of storytelling that take place during Tuesday Luncheons:

- Story Potluck - At a DEI-CTL Story Potluck, we share stories in small groups around tables—everyone brings a story. Through these stories, we build relationships in general, but more specifically leave with a tangible outcome: strategy or technique useful for application in the classroom, curricula, pedagogy, and how we belong together.
- Emu Story Hour - The Emu Story Hour is designed like the [Moth](#). Faculty share teaching and learning stories with a theme of belonging, the nature of teaching and learning, challenges, and success stories, among others.

Developed and adopted [EMU Land Acknowledgment](#)

These efforts enhance our academic and institutional excellence, support the well-being of our community, and are directly tied to our mission.

Although we should all be heartened by the updates, we still have a long journey ahead.

Looking forward to our DEI work together!

Jackie