CUNY SPH
**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH & HEALTH POLICY**

<u>**SPH - Committee for Equity and Inclusion**</u>
**Minutes of the Meeting**
**February 8, 2021**

**Members:**

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| Co-chairs: | Himani Sharma; Sasha Fleary |
| Student members: | Alanna Cruz; Craig Rijkaard |
| Faculty members: | Andrew Maroko; Levi Waldron; Marie Sillice; Victoria Ngo |
| Staff members: | Daneen Anderson-Mercer; Michelle Finn; Paulo Lellis; Toya Cox |

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The meeting was attended by all members.

**<u>Dean's Charge:</u>**
Dean Ayman El-Mohandes gave the charge to the Committee. In 2018, an ad hoc Campus Climate Committee had been formed to address the staff's growing concerns about equity and inclusion.

By 2020 summer, following the national racial equity movement, a Committee that would prioritize EDI at the School was proposed. The Committee would be an advocate for and steward the EDI initiatives at the School. To ensure that the Committee had the appropriate authority and place in the School, the Committee would be an elected body of faculty, staff and students and be incorporated in the Governance Plan of SPH.

The charge to the Committee is to align its goals with SPH's mission, vision, and strategic plan, identify needs and bring about impactful change in all areas of the School.

The Committee's programs, initiatives and activities should focus on developing and providing innovative and relevant professional training and development opportunities. EDI competencies should be embedded in curriculum, and in professional and career advancement opportunities for both students and faculty and staff.

The School will be supportive of any resources needed to fulfil goals.

**<u>Minutes of January 11, 2021 meeting</u>**
The meeting minutes were accepted.

**<u>Election of Chairperson:</u>**
- Paulo presented the timeline and process for the nomination and election of the chair of the Committee.

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- Sahana presented the option of having co-chairs (one faculty and one staff) or have chairpersonship in rotation (a faculty chair for the first 3 years followed by staff chair for the next).

- Sahana shared a draft of Chairperson duties and noted that all administrative tasks related to the chairperson duties would be undertaken by her in her role as ex-officio member.

- Andrew noted that having co-chairs would be helpful as shared responsibility would also build consensus on managing and coordinating diverse goals and activities.

- It was agreed that the Committee would have co-chairs represented by one faculty and one staff member.

- Paulo will work with IT to set up Qualtrics for the nomination and election of co-chairs.

## Mission Statement:
- Toya and Daneen developed the Mission Statement and provided it to the members for their review.

- Sasha provided extensive and valuable input.

- Himani noted that the draft Mission Statement represented the Committee and she was in agreement with the statement as is.

- Sahana will distribute the Mission Statement once more for final feedback. It is expected that the Mission Statement will be adopted at the March meeting.

## Discussion related to setting goals:

## CEPH Requirement # G1
Sahana informed members that Robyn (Gertner) has requested time to present and discuss the CEPH Accreditation requirement # G1 – Diversity and Cultural Competence.

Andrew noted that it is important to review existing and available data and information on the aspects included in G1.

It is expected that Robyn's presentation at the March monthly meeting will respond to the members' questions and help to provide direction.

## Trainings
Andrew noted that the Dean had mentioned professional development and trainings as a key focus for the Committee. He stated that the Committee needs to identify the broader systemic EDI issues at the School and focus on bringing about change at the systemic level.

Victoria noted that the Committee should identify these issues, look for relevant and existing data, and focus on specific tasks that could be undertaken by the Committee to address the issues.

Sasha added that there is work being done at the individual and unit level (e.g., Teach-in Collaborative) and the information and knowledge about such programs and initiatives may be helpful in identifying related opportunities.

Marie noted that it is important to define equity and what it means in the various areas before the Committee can address any problems or issues, *e.g.,* defining equity in curriculum, defining equity for students in admissions and retention, defining equity in student services.

Levi noted stating that the Committee must identify the specific issues so that the goals are clear.

Sahana suggested that since SPH has never undertaken a comprehensive campus climate survey, the knowledge and information about EDI needs and gaps are mainly anecdotal. A comprehensive survey focused on identifying EDI issues/concerns/needs would establish a baseline for the Committee to establish specific goals and targets, aimed at systemic changes and knowledge and awareness building trainings for faculty, staff and students.

Sahana noted that Goal 6 C of the Strategic Framework has been specifically attributed to the Committee.

**DropBox:**
Sahana requested Michelle to set up a DropBox for the Committee to use. The Dropbox will be used to share files/information/data.

**CEI webpage:**
Himani noted that it would be better to wait for the Mission Statement to be approved and the Chair to be elected before we begin the process of setting up the webpage.

**Creating a "safe space"**
Toya suggested that the Committee support the creation of safe space where SPH faculty, staff and students could discuss current equity and inclusion concerns and issues in an informal manner. She said that very often, many of the issues are often uncertainties, doubts, questions and concerns about a particular behavior/situation and do not fit into the formal complaint procedures.

Sahana will share the Campus Inclusion – Concerns Form which has been developed for use at 2 other schools for further discussion.