

Summary from the most recent CASI meeting:

CASI update from meeting on 2/1/2023

Chris Castro (Associate Dean for Inclusion, Equity and Diversity) and Don Gillian-Daniel (Director of Professional Development) came to the meeting to get feedback. Chris mentioned that Don was brought on board to help with the management of the CoE annual DEI requirement for all faculty and staff (along with other DEI-centered community building within CoE). They asked CASI members for feedback/comments/etc. related to DEI work in the college/departments.

- One CASI member talked about how Interpro meetings always include time to talk about a DEI topic.
- Another member commented that students are very interested in equity and social justice projects and through communication we can build and continue conversations.
- A guest asked why “minority” students are always told to join a group (ex. Society of Women Engineers, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers), but white students are not?
- CASI member commented that less physical space means less people in person meeting/conversing in the hallways
 - ME does weekly coffee get togethers for informal discussions between faculty-staff-students
 - Member’s dept is using ME’s as a model to build connections in their department (just started their own “coffee stop”)
 - Chris Castro commented on the power of informal spaces for community development
 - Another CASI member asked how to do these sorts of community building when you have limited interactions with 100s of people in person and via email?
- CASI member said DEI & community involvement/building should be part of annual reviews – for the college, not just dept
 - Another CASI member added that their dept has activities during staff meetings (involvement vs. meetings that just report information)
- A guest asked for CoE to be intentional in giving time to staff for professional development (many feel supervisors are not allowing for this time)
 - There is no requirement to discuss DEI issues – some depts have committees, others only include specific groups (grad students & faculty, for example)

Don Gillian-Daniel said one Goal of the framework is to normalize conversations and make them more comfortable. It is important to recognize someone’s experiences may be different than yours. He mentioned that the only funding at this time (for students) is through the Wisconsin Idea Fellowship.

Subcommittee Reports

- Planning/Tending: Dean's office approved funds to work with Office of Strategic Consulting; working on bylaw updates and upcoming elections; member asked to have CASI mentioned at All Staff Meeting this month
- Communication: will send list of items to update on website to group for approval
- Recognition/Retention: CASI member in talking to people in dept who have left, no pattern was seen; recognition of years of service was brought up as well as asking "what are the benefits" of working in CoE?; WI Idea Seminar (week long camp) – in 10 years only 3 people have attended from CoE (25% of attendees are academic staff); ME Town Hall (~60 alumni) and Lab Tours for Admin/Staff recommended
 - Past camp for kids no longer held due to liability (many more documents to complete and for the Dean to sign)
 - Can CoE create a public space for field trips? (long term goal)
 - CASI coffee & donuts event?

Other Questions

- What is CASI's input to the new building design? Sara H. has been identified as that person, but has not received an invitation to any meetings
- Staff Development & Activities Committee – restart (Zach will lead, Kelly and Jackie volunteered to help)