



University Diversity Council

COUNCIL BY LAWS

Purpose: The purpose of the Western Connecticut State University (“WCSU” or “University”) Diversity Council (“the Council”) is to support the creation, improvement, and nurturance of the dynamic, creative, and inclusive environment that promotes engaged learning and scholarship and supports the mission and vision of the University’s Strategic Plan.

A. **Powers:** The Council shall make recommendations to the President via the Chief Diversity Officer (“CDO”) on the following subject areas (as identified):

1. University and educational policy, academic curricula and programming, and academic regulations and standards as it relates to diversity and inclusivity;
2. Faculty welfare and/or morale, student life, business and budgetary affairs, and other matters of professional interest to faculty, staff and students related to diversity or inclusivity.

B. **Appointments and Terms of Services:**

1. Each of the representatives from the membership may serve up to six (6) years on the Council as determined by both the Chief Diversity Officer and President.
2. Appointment will be held for two terms with each term being served for three (3) years. A term is renewed once, to serve consecutively or intermittently at the discretion of the Council member. Terms shall be refilled on a staggered basis, with approximately one third of the Council to be re-elected each year. Council members who miss two (2) Council meetings will receive a first notification about the missed absence. *After two (2) missed Council meetings, the Council member will be formally dismissed and the position will remain vacant until a new appointment is made to the Council.*
3. Open positions for membership will be advertised at the start of either the Fall and/or Spring semesters of the academic year, and nominations (including self-nominations) will be reviewed for recommendation by (either) the Council and final review and appointment by the President.

C. **Membership:** The goal of the Council membership is to engage a wealth of voices and perspectives in order to serve its purpose for inclusion and diversity of the University community. Therefore, Council membership will consist of representatives from a broad range of stakeholders throughout the university community.

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Note: The drafted WCSU University Diversity Council by-laws were adapted from the review of the Inclusivity and Diversity Committee bylaws (for Central Washington University).



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Generally, the Council membership will consist of the following:

1. Key-Advisor: Chief Diversity Officer
2. University Representatives from:

Faculty:

- a) Ancell School of Business (1);
- b) Macricostas School of Arts and Sciences (1);
- c) School of Visual and Performing Arts (1);
- d) School of Professional Studies (1);

Staff:

- a) NP-2 (1);
- b) President's Cabinet/Council (2);
 - President's Office (1); and
 - Public Affairs/Media (1)
- c) SUOAF (1);

Invited Guests (by invitation)

- Local community representatives
- Student Government Association (SGA – student only) representative;
- Student Life/Diversity (staff/student) representative (includes the Center for Student Involvement; Office of Intercultural Affairs, Office of AccessAbility Services; all-related Student Affairs programs/ offices);
- Residential (student only) representative

Diversity Events: During the academic year, the Council serves as *university representatives*. Council members are mandated to actively promote and/or attend diversity events with the intention of assisting with university participation and/or in-person attendance to such diversity events.

D. The University's Chief Diversity Officer ("CDO") serves as a key advisor to the Council. The CDO will:

1. Preside at all Council meetings, at any diversity/inclusivity forum(s), and at meetings or events upon request of the President; and,
2. Serve as an official representative and spokesperson of the Council. In this capacity, the CDO will be a member of recommended/invited University Committees and/or Councils.

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- E. **Meetings:** A regular meeting schedule will be established to meet once per month throughout the academic year. It will be published on the WCSU Office of Diversity and Equity website and as well as on the Share Point Access system for University Council members. Meeting invites will be sent by either a designated organizer and/or Chief Diversity Officer to Council members and invited guests (as needed). Staff of the Office of Diversity and Equity will participate in monthly meetings, as needed by the Chief Diversity Officer. A designated member of the Council and/or assigned staff from the Office of Diversity and Equity may serve as secretary for the monthly meetings, upon appointment.

The order of business will be as follows:

1. Call to order by the Chief Diversity Officer (or designated organizer).
2. Reading and approval of agenda and minutes of the previous meeting.
3. Updates and communications.
4. The Council members are permitted to vote when present (either in person or by Web-ex (online)/telephone) for any scheduled meeting. Council voting may take place in-person or virtually (Web-ex/online or by telephone) with simple majority vote of (at least five) Council's voting members (for quorum*) that must be represented for a vote to pass, unless otherwise determined by the Council. Motions under consideration will be determined by a simple majority.
5. Reports from ad-hoc committee(s) (if applicable).

F. University Programming:

1. **Diversity/Inclusivity Forum:** The forum is an unofficial open meeting/event to which invited guests and the university community are invited. The CDO (and/or an assigned designee) will preside over each forum. The forum may be convened for the purposes of providing the Council with an opportunity to convey information to the university community and/or solicit their feedback. On an annual basis, this initiative will allow for introduction to the university community on all Council/University initiatives on each campus.
2. **WCSU Diversity and Inclusion Awareness Week:** The Council is expected to assist in the organization and implementation of a WCSU Diversity and Inclusion Awareness week targeted at all members of the WCSU community. It is a four (4) day week long initiative to showcase events that promote

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opportunities to gain diversity skills and knowledge along with a chance to dialogue about diversity and inclusion issues and to share best practices by bringing together leaders and experts from inside and outside the university. The week-long initiative is organized by members of the Council, the Office of Diversity and Equity, members of the Division of Student Affairs and the Provost's Office. The week-long initiative will offer a keynote speech, an open forum, trainings, panel presentations and a diversity festival in order to provide our students, faculty, staff and the university community with an inspirational and informative week designed to advance their understanding of and appreciation for diversity and inclusion at WCSU.

- G. Accountability:** It shall be an important duty and responsibility of all members of the Council to attend meetings, participate at university diversity events and be actively involved in the Council for the sake of continuity and representation of the Council.
- H. Amendments:** These by-laws may be amended by a simple majority vote of the Council members present at any meeting.

APPENDIX

Ad-Hoc Committees may be initiate (as needed) by either the CDO and/or with a recommendation by the Council, based on the needs of the Council and/or any University action directed by the President. Upon the recommendation, the Council will have no later than thirty (30) days to create an ad-hoc committee.

*Quorum: A majority of available member(s) of the Council will constitute a quorum.