Faculty Senate Routing Form
(action/proposal attached)

I. Item Title: Resolution Creating a joint Task Force on Racism

a) Brief Description: Forms a Task Force, jointly with Staff Senate and SGA, to address racism on campus

b) Initiated by: Kathleen Brennan, David McCord and Vicki Szabo

II. Faculty Senate Action: ☒ approved ☐ not approved ☐ other date: 4/27/2016

Comments: 

____________________________________________________

Vote: ☒ Vote by Ballot: 26 Ayes; 0 Nays; 2 Abstentions

FS Secretary signature: Henderson date 5/6/16

III. Provost: ☐ for information ☐ Recognition of Receipt

☐ for action............ ☒ approved ☐ not approved

Comments: 

____________________________________________________

Person responsible for Implementation:

Provost signature: John A. Mollen date 5/6/16

IV. Chancellor: ☐ for information ☐ Recognition of Receipt

☐ for action............ ☒ approved ☐ not approved

Comments: 

____________________________________________________

Chancellor signature: David J. Bolder date 6/6/16

Once finalized copies will be returned to the Provost Office's representative who will scan and distribute electronically to:

Chancellor
Provost
Chair of Faculty Senate
Secretary of the Faculty Senate
Associate Provost (for catalog and handbook)
Associate Dean of Graduate School (for catalog)
Others (i.e. person responsible for implementation)
Proposed Resolution to the Faculty Senate: Campus Racism and Formation of Task Force

Whereas, racism, whether intentional or not, is a nationally pervasive issue and is so on our university campus, like other campuses across the country, both historically and currently;

Whereas, WCU has recently experienced a surge of racism, hate speech, harassment, and intimidation in numerous forms and venues;

Whereas, campus response thus far has been focused on increasing open dialogue regarding civility, but has not directly addressed the problem of racism, hate speech, and intimidation;

Whereas, the Student Rights and Responsibilities in the Student Handbook states that students will "Live and learn within an environment that values freedom of access, and does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, political affiliation, or veteran status," while also valuing student engagement "in a learning environment that promotes and values freedom of expression;"

Whereas, the Student Rights and Responsibilities in the Student Handbook also states that students have the responsibilities to:

- Adhere to the expectation that no Student shall threaten, coerce, harass or intimidate another person or identifiable group of persons, in a manner that is unlawful or in violation of a constitutionally valid University policy, while on University premises or at University-sponsored activities based upon the person’s race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, political affiliation, or veteran status. (UNC Policy Manual 700.4.2)

- Adhere to the expectation that no Student shall engage in unlawful harassment leading to a hostile environment. Unlawful harassment includes conduct that creates a hostile environment by meeting the following criteria: It is: (a) Directed toward a particular person or persons; (b) Based upon the person’s race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender-identity, creed, disability, or veteran status; (c) Unwelcome; (d) Severe or pervasive; (e) Objectively offensive; and (f) So unreasonable that it interferes with the target person’s employment, academic pursuits, or participation in University-sponsored activities as to effectively deny equal access to the University’s

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1 Historical context: http://soh.omeka.chass.ncsu.edu/exhibits/show/nubianmessage-1990s/nubianmessage-ncsuracism/nubianmessage-racismcontext/
http://www.thenation.com/article/blackballed-lawrence-ross-review/
http://college.usatoday.com/2016/02/26/racism-on-college-campuses-students-on-where-we-are-now/
https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-campus-racism-just-wont-go-away/2016/02/19/cdc30a6-cab9-11e5-a7b2-5a2f24b02e9_story.html
resources and opportunities. (UNC Policy Manual 700.4.2)\(^4\)

Whereas, the faculty, staff and students must take steps to maintain the campus atmosphere of free expression but to eliminate speech and actions that amount to hate speech or harassment;

Whereas, the Student Rights and Responsibilities does not include hate speech in its definitions or anywhere in its content: "Hate crime: an offense that is committed because of the victim's race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, political affiliation, or veteran status. Conduct that may not rise to the level of a 'Hate Crime' may still constitute harassment."\(^5\)

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate, in partnership with the Staff Senate, and the Student Government Association, will form a joint Task Force on Racism;

In addition, Dr. Kathleen Brennan, Chair of Anthropology and Sociology, will serve as Chair of the Task Force;

In addition, membership – three faculty members, three staff members, three students (graduate and undergraduate), in addition to the Chair - will be appointed by the Faculty Senate leadership, in partnership with Staff Senate leadership and incoming SGA leadership.

In addition, the Task Force will be charged with research and response leading to the formulation of suggested revisions to the Code of Student Conduct and the Community Creed to specifically address hate speech, racism, and other issues; potential curricular responses; potential mandatory coursework or workshops; or additional actions necessary to improve conditions for our campus community.

In addition, the Task Force will look holistically at Faculty and Staff handbooks to consider more formal means for addressing diversity among these campus groups.

In addition, the timeline of activities of the Task Force will span the 2016-2017 academic year.

In addition, the Task Force Chair or proxy will remain in dialogue with the Faculty Senate, the Staff Senate, the Student Government Association and the Chief Diversity Officer throughout the Fall and Spring terms.

\(^4\) https://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/Catamount_Code_Final_Document.pdf
\(^5\) https://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/Catamount_Code_Final_Document.pdf