

Public Comment regarding the DEI Committee formation:

Esteemed colleagues and representatives of the Academic Senate, I ask that you positively consider the creation of the DEI Committee which has been proposed by Steven Holmes.

The primary ground for my appeal rests in who we are as teachers and educators. Bakersfield College has developed many supports and programs for students and their needs, without which I am certain many students would be seriously challenged to complete their educational journeys. We are all grateful for all the work that is done by everyone: from our program managers overseeing and marshalling those resources to the janitorial staff who ensure that we have a clean and sanitary environment at BC. Everyone has a role which can directly or indirectly aid students in their education.

However, teachers have the unique role and relationship to the student, which everyone acknowledges. It is the essential occupation to any educational institute, as teachers inform and form a student's intellect and soul toward the object of knowledge of which they are stewards. A college would cease to be a college if there were no faculty. Thus, it is reasonable that teachers are those best positioned to have direct knowledge of student learning and the material they are responsible for. It is this reason faculty are encouraged to be aware of as many support services and pass them on to students because they are first point of contact. It is also on this premise the Faculty 10+1 and the practice of tenure exist so that teachers are not forced to adopt fashionable practices, materials, or frameworks of the moment on the basis of public opinion or particular fascination, but may best perform the role to which they have been called as they understand and practice it.

So then, a committee which intends to inform and guide faculty on how to practice their profession ought to be formed of those who best understand the role: faculty. A committee which intends to directly impact course material and format ought to be formed of those members of a college directly responsible for using that course material and format: faculty. A committee whose decisions will shape the minds and souls of youth ought to be composed of those who will be held to account: faculty.

In my estimation, the DEI Committee proposed by Steven Holmes has those considerations in mind and ensures faculty have the privilege and responsibility of caretaking students in matters over which it has jurisdiction. Therefore, I entreat you to vote in favor of the DEI Committee.

Dr. Timothy Plett, Physics Professor, Physical Science Department