ECR 2019-07

Committee: Executive Council
First Reading Date: November 13, 2018
Second Reading Date: November 27, 2018
Final Action Date: November 27, 2018
Final Action: Passed

USUSA Student Leader Diversity Training Resolution

WHEREAS the stated role of the Utah State University Student Association (USUSA) Executive Council in the USUSA Constitution is to enhance the quality of student life through student concerns, public relations, and legislative student representation.

WHEREAS the recruitment, retention, and sustainability of diverse demographics to Utah State University (USU) has been a primary focus of administrators, faculty, staff, and student leaders at USU.

WHEREAS the President of USU, Noelle Cockett, has declared the aforementioned focus on diversity to be one of her three primary objectives as Utah State University President.

WHEREAS President Cockett has made significant strides toward accomplishing this goal by implementing and establishing the following university resources, which include but are not limited to: the creation of a Diversity Support Fund, the creation of a fully funded USU LatinX Cultural Center (LCC), and the re-establishment of the Aggies Think Care Act (ATCA) Committee.

WHEREAS President Cockett signed and issued a letter laying out the principles of our Aggie community focusing on diversity, human dignity, and social responsibility.

WHEREAS in this letter she explains, “We believe diversity in our campus community can enhance critical thinking by challenging implicit bias… [and] despite our differences or similarities, all members of our community should feel respected and receive equitable treatment in order to flourish in an academic environment.”

BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED THAT a Diversity Training shall be implemented and mandated for all financially compensated student leaders under student affairs and their associated student leader groups at Utah State University (the training being voluntary for all those leaders who serve in a voluntary, uncompensated capacity) for the purpose of effectively training those student leaders in order to increase understanding of what diversity means, improve student leaders’ communicative proficiency with diverse students, and educate them as to the available resources for those students.

WHEREAS it is the responsibility of the USUSA Organizations and Campus Diversity Vice
President to act as the official liaison between diverse students and student groups, the USUSA Executive Council, and University Administration, as is stated in their charter.

WHEREAS it is also the responsibility of the USUSA Organizations and Campus Diversity Vice President to enhance, improve, and create programming and events to enrich the cultural experience of each member of the USUSA.

BE IT FURTHER ENACTED THAT USUSA Diversity Trainings shall be distributed to all identified student leaders on campus, and any other interested parties, under the direction of the USUSA Organizations and Campus Diversity Vice President.

WHEREAS the USUSA, along with upper administration, anticipate the demographics at USU to be fluid and to change over time.

WHEREAS our sociopolitical climate has proven to both change rapidly over time, and to have a direct affect on the demographics of our student population.

BE IT FURTHER ENACTED THAT USUSA Diversity Trainings may change in general structure and layout over time so as to allow any needed flexibility to the ever changing demographics of the general student population at Utah State University.

WHEREAS the USUSA understands the different purposes and responsibilities that each individual student leader group serves and oversees.

WHEREAS the USUSA hopes to foster a sense of flexibility and self-governance for and on behalf of each of the varying departments, which house, train, and employ student leaders at USU.

BE IT FURTHER ENACTED THAT the USUSA Diversity Training may be adaptable, as it is appropriate, from each differing student leader group to another in order to best serve their purposes and oversight.

WHEREAS the implementation and distribution of the USUSA Diversity Training to every student leader group at USU is a massive endeavor.

WHEREAS without asking an unreasonable amount of work and effort that would otherwise be impractical for the USUSA Organizations and Campus Diversity Vice President to undertake on their own.

BE IT FURTHER ENACTED THAT it is the responsibility of the USUSA Organizations and Campus Diversity Vice President to train their Diversity Cabinet first and foremost, and then implement the assistance of that cabinet in the further distribution of Diversity Trainings for each identified student leader group from one academic school year to another.
Tags: USUSA Constitution, Charter of the USUSA Organizations and Campus Diversity
Vice President, President Noelle Cockett, USU Diversity Support Fund, USU LatinX Cultural Center (LCC), USU Aggies Think Care Act (ATCA), the USU President’s letter on our Principles of Community
Sponsor: Joshua Johnson, USUSA Organizations and Campus Diversity Vice President
Co-sponsor: Sam Jackson, USUSA Student Advocate Vice President
Policy Paper (This bolded section will be filled out by the Administrative Assistant)

Committee: Executive Council
In Attendance: President Jaren Hunsaker, VP Allie Smith, VP Samuel Jackson, VP Bannon Greer, VP Meghan Tatam, VP Joshua Johnson, VP Jenna Stoker, VP Daria Griffith, Senator Kristin Hall, Director Braxton Moon, Assistant Brooke Jorgensen
Result: Passed

History:

This resolution was written on the heels of the 2018-2019 USUSA Organizations and Campus Diversity Vice President, Joshua Johnson, having had the opportunity to create, implement, and then distribute the very first USUSA Diversity Training to roughly 85% of student leader groups at the USU Logan Main Campus. The creation of this training was an initiative lead by then candidate Johnson at the time of running for his current position. This was a result of the disparity between “majority” and “minority” students at USU that he saw while he served as a New Student Orientation leader and Peer Mentor on the 2017 A-Team. After being elected into the position, he began collaborating with Jacob Van den Akker, the Program Coordinator in the Office of Student Orientation and Transition Services, and Charity Van den Akker, the Residence Director of Valley View and Mountain Towers in the Housing and Residence Life department. Over the summer of 2018, VP Johnson, along with the Van den Akker’s, developed and began testing the training on the 2018 A-Team, and the 2018-2019 Residence Assistants. Over time the training has evolved into a purposeful tool and resource for student leaders at USU that can be delivered to those students in 30-45 minutes, depending on the needs and time constraints of the audience.

Purpose:

To implement and mandate the USUSA Diversity Trainings which shall serve for the purpose of effectively implementing an hour-long training for student leaders across campus in order to increase their understanding of what diversity means, improve student leaders’ communicative proficiency with diverse students, and educate them as to the available resources for those students.

Pros:

- Helps teach USU students leaders the following:
  - Intercultural communication skills
  - Interpersonal development skills
  - Diversity
  - Human Dignity
  - Social Responsibility
- Helps to create a more inclusive overall campus
- Helps to strengthen the bonds of the Aggie family community
- Works to combat the distance and disparity all too often felt by diverse students at all levels at this university

Cons:
• Department heads may be hesitant to enforce this mandatory training
• This has the potential to be just one more training that then loses it’s overall purpose and goal
• There may be push back, generally, if the training is misunderstood to be something other than an equalizing and uniting tool for all students at USU