

Campus Wide Listening Session

“Lost in Legislation: What we have learned, need to learn and how to move forward.”

April 17, 2024

What we heard

CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS

Speak up

- Remember – if you’re not a person of color – you’re the ones they’re claiming to protect. We need you to speak up!
- If you are a privileged identity, you can use that privilege to say, “this is not accurate, this is not truthful, this is being misconstrued.”
- If you’re the one being advocated for (as in your status of privilege), you need to speak up and say that you’re a better person for learning and standing up for those things.
- As a person of privilege, I’m also being mindful of how I don’t cause more harm or put people / groups at-risk. I keep it in the back of my mind.
- I think speaking out is something I could use some help with clarity on.
 - I have the ability and security to speak out and I do in the spaces I’m in, but that’s often with people who already agree.
- I’m new to UofL and Ky, so I don't know the channels or the ways I can speak up.
- I’m going to go out on a limb and say that I think they are waiting on us as private citizens to share what we would do, share how we have been affected, and help them carry that narrative along...

Attacks on DEI

- Anti-DEI templates are in the hands of the national legislature.
- These are not individual senators pushing this legislation, this is a machine with organizations backing them against DEI issues.
- They don’t care what we do/say, but they do care about what the “machine” puts out.
- For those concerned (about attacks on DEI) – like myself who feared for my job etc. We can’t make progress without the resistance.
 - We shouldn’t wait for the athletes/students to champion causes that we can support, instead of having the support in place before.
 - I was writing on this topic for some recent research; always helpful to know what the other side thinks (especially while you’re trying to formulate an argument).
- What is our playbook? Changing the titles and names of our offices doesn’t work.
- What can we learn from other states going through similar issues? How can we be proactive.
- Take risks AND remain open to feedback, that is a healthy balance. Please remember there is a privilege in being able to get it all right before doing anything.
- How can we use and leverage AI to help fight this disinformation campaign? – how can we leverage our social justice scholarship?

RECOMMENDATIONS

Communication

- Communicate – clear precise communication – where do we stand as an institution; our names are standing with UofL
- Let the folks making decisions on the university's behalf know our concerns? What's the best / most productive ways to do that?
- We want to communicate to the president as the university's diversity strategic plan develops amid the ever-changing political climate.
- The problem is we don't have a clear (university) strategy to respond nimbly or meaningfully
- We can empower ourselves and find spaces where we can speak up. We can work together to create change.
- The fireside chats aren't necessarily building community – it doesn't build trust; it communicates and extracts information. I'll send questions, it'll take three months, and *if* it gets answered it's usually a non-answer.
 - The above is correct...we get non-answers to many of our questions!
 - How do these things impact our institution?

Training and Education

- Invite the future Government Relations team to talk with COSW / CODRE at one of these listening sessions in the early fall, before January 25.
- CODRE and COSW could host legislative teach-ins and create our own pannel table and invite experts to it and create a community that ideates together, bring staff, senates, students, etc.
- Host trainings on what organizing, and activism look like, but without ACTION nothing will happen.
- What current bills are concerns to our work?
- Nothing sould stop us from having internal strategies.