

## Memorandum for Record

**To:** Faculty Senators, Matt Schroeder, Scott Molitor, Floyd Akins, Malaika Bell, Angela Paprocki, Jerry Van Hoy, Tomer Avidor Reiss, Linda Rouillad, Sammy Spann, Lucas Will, Ashley Westgate, Quinetta Hubbard

**From:** Deborah M. Coulter-Harris, Chair, Sally Harmych (Co-Chair), Barry Schuermann (FSCSA Subcommittee)

**Date:** 5 November, 2024

**Subject:** Report on Student Government Issue #1: Changes to DEI and Minority Scholarships

### Five Issues Discussed

- 1. SG Issues #1: (Changes to DEI and Minority Scholarships)** “Many students are concerned and appear to not know where to get information regarding the direction the University is taking with DEI. We fear that a lot of misinformation will spread as a result of this. We hope that FS can help us gather a consistent statement from administration to spread to the students. Students are also concerned about the funds that are traditionally awarded as scholarships to specific ethnic groups.”
- 2. Proposed Resolution:** Our Subcommittee requested a written statements addressing these concerns from Interim President Schroeder, Interim Provost Molitor, and Malaika Bell. (\*\*Although Malaika did not sign the letter, she called me to say she had no objections to it.)
- 3. Response received on 24 October, 2024.** Read the letter below (see page 2):

October 24, 2024



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**Office of the Provost**

*Interim Provost and Executive  
Vice President for Academic Affairs*

Faculty Senate Committee on Student Affairs:

We appreciate the opportunity to provide additional information about efforts to restructure units into the Office of the Provost and to amend scholarship agreements to comply with the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on race-based admission.

#### Office of the Provost Reorganization

UToledo is working to align student success and faculty support efforts under the Office of the Provost to strengthen collaborations and better support students. A *UTNews* article announcing these changes and others was previously posted during July 2024. Please see [https://news.utoledo.edu/index.php/07\\_18\\_2024/student-affairs-diversity-and-communityoutreach-efforts-join-provosts-office](https://news.utoledo.edu/index.php/07_18_2024/student-affairs-diversity-and-communityoutreach-efforts-join-provosts-office) for this article.

Staff from the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) were moved into the Office of the Provost as part of a larger reorganization that also moved Community Engagement and Student Affairs under the leadership of the Provost. The goal is to incorporate DEI, community engagement and student engagement into our overall Student Success Plan providing support that will increase student graduation and retention rates, enhance our programs for new students by integrating orientation, bridge programs and the first-year experience, and provide professional development and customer service training for front-line staff.

Although this reorganization resulted in the elimination of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion position, we retained our DEI team to continue their work with an increased emphasis on student success efforts.

Malaika Bell will continue to oversee campus-wide DEI efforts, develop and implement programming involving faculty and staff, and lead efforts to achieve our strategic plan goals for a people-centered culture.

Gentry Willis will continue her collaboration with the Office of Multicultural Student Services to provide student programming including the Multicultural Emerging Scholars Program and the Belonging Excellence Program and working in partnership with the Africana Studies program to oversee the Center for Racial Equity and Black Student Excellence.

Danielle Lutman will continue her leadership of the Catherine S. Eberly Center for Women, which has been moved under Student Affairs.

Regina Kynard, the executive assistant to the former vice president and an experienced advisor, is now serving as a program coordinator who will provide expertise and support as we work to restructure and improve advising processes.

The Office of Multicultural Student Services staff will also provide direct support, open communication and mentoring for at-risk students.

We are currently in the process of holding stakeholder meetings to solicit feedback on an initial draft of a Student Success Plan that incorporates these efforts. We have met with Black Student Union leadership and the Academic Leadership Team. We will be meeting with Student Government, Faculty Senate and others soon.

#### Scholarship Awards

The University is responding to two separate issues regarding scholarship funds housed within The University of Toledo Foundation. The first is our inability to award race-based scholarships after the June 2023 U.S. Supreme Court decision and subsequent guidance from the Ohio State Attorney General's Office. The second is our inability to award gender-based scholarships per a Department of Education Office of Civil Rights inquiry.

The University of Toledo Foundation put a moratorium on awarding these scholarships to new students until these issues have been addressed. It is important to note that continuing students already awarded these funds prior to these issues will continue to receive these awards.

We are working with donors to revise race and gender-based requirements and our goal is to resume making scholarship awards from these funds to new students. To date, 69 out of 73 race-based scholarships have been revised and can continue to be awarded, and 6 out of 51 gender-based scholarships have been revised and can continue to be awarded. The lower percentage of gender-based scholarships that have been revised to date is due to the difference in the timing of the inquiry from the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights that was brought to our attention during September 2024.

The University of Toledo remains committed to diversity, equity and inclusion. Our efforts to create programs and initiatives to support underrepresented students, faculty and staff and promote equity on our campuses continue. We have made progress, but more work needs to be done. Student success will always be our top priority.

Sincerely,



Scott Molitor  
Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs



Floyd Akins  
Vice President for Advancement

CC: Mohammed Samir Hefzy, Berhane Teclchaimanot, Karen Green, Karen Hoblet, Sarah Aldrich Renner, Paul Schaefer, Suzanne Smith, Lucy Duhon, Katherine O'Connell