



Board of Trustees

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee

June 11, 2025, 10:30 a.m.

Minutes

Conference Rooms A & B, University Hall

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing will also take place at the following link: <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/live>

MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee Chair Tessa Lucey, Vice Chair Michael O'Rourke, Secretary Melissa Alvarado, Trustee George Gilmer, Trustee Gloria Williams and Board Chair Ali Salehi, ex-officio member.

Also present and participating were Westfield State University President, Dr. Linda Thompson; Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. William Salka; and Director of Belonging, Inclusion, and Learning, Jenyka Spitz-Gassnola.

Committee Chair Tessa Lucey called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m. and a roll call was taken of the committee members participating as listed above. It was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded.

MOTION made by Trustee Williams seconded by Trustee Gilmer to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2025, meeting. There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE**, motion passed.

Belonging, Inclusion, and Learning Update

Dr. William Salka introduced Jenyka Spitz-Gassnola, the Director of Belonging, Inclusion, and Learning. Ms. Spitz-Gassnola provided a recap of programming and campus engagements since the last meeting.

Spring 2025 Highlights Recap

- Sankofa celebration on April 24:
 - 200 guests.
 - Honored ancestral and generational resilience, student success, and community strength.
 - Honored founding members of the Sankofa Fund and alumni at Westfield State University.

Academic Year Accomplishments

- Aligned office with institutional priorities.
- Introduced unified language and launched an official logo.
- Built relationships with campus unions and administration.

- Secured external partnerships.
- Office became a trusted partner in capacity building and training.
- Led and took part in over 10 inclusion and access related trainings across campus.
- Supported more than 30 events uplifting culture and community voice.
- Hosted 20+ external speakers and creatives.
- Team engaged in 10+ professional development opportunities.
- Produced three major newsletters.
- Improved marketing and social media presence, reinvigorated Instagram.
- Updated website to be more user friendly and informative.
- Made equity work more visible and engaging.
- Created spaces and events that have become touch points for reflection, celebration, and dialogue.

Preparation and Alignment for the Upcoming Academic Year

- Reviewing this past year's programming to understand impact.
- Acknowledgement that we embraced opportunities to learn and evolve
- Documenting internal processes to improve continuity.
- Co-designing fall 2025 initiatives with student leadership and campus partners.
- Updating training content and creating new workshops on topics like cultural humility.
- Trainings with student leaders over the summer.
- Exploring new tools to manage projects more effectively and meet timelines.
- Goal: To enter the fall ready, responsive, and rooted in purpose.

Investing in Longer Term Growth

- Exploring restorative and transformative justice frameworks to support student conduct and community accountability.
- Considering and framing a future launch of an Emerging Leaders program.
- Designing learning modules to center institutional history and cultural awareness.
- Assisting in the creation of a cross-campus Council for shared decision making.
- Staying connected to statewide networks to stay ahead of policy changes and to thoughtfully incorporate best practices into program development.
- Planting seeds for institutional transformation and growth.
- Ensuring work is sustainable and deeply rooted.

Measurement of Success

- There will be a creation of a cohesive strategic plan with key performance indicators for the upcoming year to measure student engagement.
- Future plans to measure student engagement to better understand which constituencies are attending events and what areas of interest students are gravitating toward, so we can tailor meaningful content that resonates with each group.

Climate Survey

- It's important to get a sense of the campus climate.
- Conversations are happening around using the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).
- Short, accurate surveys are needed to set a benchmark for measuring progress.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

- NSSE is a good survey, typically offered to freshmen and seniors.
- The last time it was administered was during the pandemic so the data was skewed

- It's time to reinstitute the NSSE, but input is needed to ask the right questions and avoid over-surveying students.

There being no further business,

MOTION made by Trustee Williams, and seconded by Trustee Alvarado, to adjourn. **ROLL CALL VOTE** passed motion unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:53 AM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- a. Minutes of April 22, 2025
- b. Belonging, Inclusion and Learning Presentation

Secretary's Certificate

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Westfield State University Board of Trustees Governance and Nomination Committee meeting held on June 11, 2025.



Melissa Alvarado, Secretary



Date