

2019-2020 Term
3rd Session

2019-3-011 SR

In the Iowa State University Student Government Senate

February 5th, 2020

Senator Alucard (for herself, Senator Searles, Senator Conn, Senator Greene and Speaker Culbertson) introduced the following bill

AN ORDER

TITLE: Censuring the College of Veterinary Medicine Administration

WHEREAS: Iowa State University (ISU) is a land-grant institution and was founded on the notion of inclusivity with a long-standing history of diversity, with ISU's College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) founded in 1879 as the country's first public veterinary school. There are currently ~600 DVM students, ~150 graduate students, and over ~155 faculty, and

WHEREAS: There is an overwhelming lack of diversity and inclusion at ISU CVM that has remained stagnant over the years, except in the face of student pressure¹, and

WHEREAS: In a 2017 AAVMC internal report, ISU CVM had 7.4% racially and ethnically underrepresented students in their student population. The U.S. total was 17.4% at that time,² and

WHEREAS: Other leading CVM's have much higher percentages of racially and ethnically underrepresented students. In the same 2017 report, ISU ranked 2nd lowest amongst midwestern veterinary schools. ISU CVM only had a higher percentage of racially and ethnically underrepresented students than Missouri (7.2%) regionally, along with having the 3rd lowest percentage nationally, being above Missouri and Mississippi, and

¹ Olsen, Halee. "Diversity issues in veterinary medicine: why do they exist and what is being done?". https://www.iowastatedaily.com/app_content/diversity-issues-in-veterinary-medicine-why-do-they-exist-and/article_79ae26b8-36bf-11e8-8497-e3b81c068710.html. 2 April 2018.

² AAVMC. "Annual Data Report 2016-2017" [https://www.aavmc.org/assets/site_18/files/data/2017%20aavmc%20public%20data-%20final%2010.18%20\(id%2095283\).pdf](https://www.aavmc.org/assets/site_18/files/data/2017%20aavmc%20public%20data-%20final%2010.18%20(id%2095283).pdf)

- WHEREAS: With the overwhelming lack of diversity and inclusion, there have been documented and reported events of bigotry, racism, xenophobia, and other injustices at CVM, separate from those events that have occurred on ISU's main campus, and
- WHEREAS: In response to anti-LGBTQIA+ sentiment and other campus climate issues, CVM Dean Dan Grooms responded with an email in October 2019 regarding the bigoted behavior occurring on main campus, being one of few Deans amongst the University to acknowledge what was going on. CVM Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs Dr. Jared Danielson and Dr. Monica Howard, Director of Student Programs, initially made a public effort to attend campus climate talks on main campus at the time and continue to be advocates within administration for students of marginalized identities, and
- WHEREAS: A select few CVM student leaders have continued pressing administration in order to try and address prejudiced, bigoted and oppressive behavior occurring on both main campus and CVM, and
- WHEREAS: The topics of concern have yet to be addressed directly to the student body outside one Campus Climate Conversation in December 2019 that involved some administrators and members of ISU PD Engagement and Inclusion team, facilitating discourse about campus climate concerns, and
- WHEREAS: At the above Campus Climate Conversation, the Assistant Dean of Academic and Student Affairs expressed concern for ISU CVM's reputation without addressing improvement efforts to campus climate, emphasizing effects on recruitment and invalidated those impacted by racist behaviors. The Assistant Dean also expressed a desire to 'cover up' racist/bigoted incidents at CVM, as he stated the events could upset people. However, without speaking about bigoted incidents, there is no way to actually address them, and
- WHEREAS: Despite it being a violation of the CVM Honor Code, students, including student leaders of the CVM community, have exhibited extremely prejudiced behaviors; many of which have documentation that can be or already has been provided to administration. Many of these behaviors were racist, xenophobic, transphobic, homophobic, and anti-Semitic in nature, and
- WHEREAS: Recent global events, including the novel Coronavirus of 2019 and the current political climate of the United States has led to more overt prejudiced and bigoted behavior amongst students, and

WHEREAS: CVM staff and faculty have also demonstrated prejudicial sentiments, including transphobic and ableist comments, increasingly as the current academic year progresses, and

WHEREAS: In response to drawing attention to prejudiced and bigoted behavior, tone policing and silencing have been attempted by various student leaders while further derogatory content has continued to be shared, and behaviors have continued, and

WHEREAS: While Dean Grooms has been sent to diversity and inclusion workshops such as White Men as Full Diversity Partners (WMFDP) prior to the start of Spring 2020 semester, and some staff and faculty have completed the professional certificate program through Purdue University Center of Excellence for Diversity and Inclusion in Veterinary Medicine, the majority of administration and staff/faculty continue to be dismissive of feedback from students regarding the behavior and are more complicit in their responses to racism, bigotry, and exclusion of marginalized identities at CVM, and

WHEREAS: The above list is not an exhaustive one of the incidents and efforts occurring at CVM, but it is apparent that despite the effort being made by student leaders and advocates, the administration of CVM has grown complacent in their response to bigotry, and campus climate issues, and

WHEREAS: Research has shown that organizations that implement diversity training in a holistic and integrative way achieve more positive human resource outcomes than those that implement stand-alone initiatives,³ and

WHEREAS: The ISU CVM will be an ISCORE (Iowa State Conference on Race and Ethnicity) champion on March 6, 2020. The Thomas L. Hill Iowa State Conference on Race and Ethnicity (ISCORE) is the university's comprehensive forum on issues of race and ethnicity that provides an ongoing platform of sharing and applying new knowledge through presentations and workshops, and

WHEREAS: As one of two selected colleges to 'champion' for ISCORE, the CVM must lead by example and address current campus climate issues head-on, not their current apathetic response, and

³Alhejji, Hussain & Garavan, Thomas. (2013). A Review of Diversity Training Programmes in Organisations: Context, Design and Outcomes.

WHEREAS: There is nothing specific about how Diversity and Inclusion is being improved at CVM on the CVM D&I web page⁴, despite undergoing an evaluation and receiving a public report of the current diversity and inclusion status on campus by Dr. Hilda Mejia Abreu, Associate Dean of Admission, Student Life and Inclusivity in Michigan State University CVM,⁵ and

WHEREAS: It should not fall on the students exclusively affected by these events to have to advocate for themselves to be in an environment that is safe, respectful, and free of bigotry. Making marginalized individuals the point people for all things diversity is inequitable and puts pressure on an already burdened group of individuals, and

WHEREAS: Racism and bigotry have no place or protection on campus as both violate the University's Principles of Community, and with the prolific and public incidents of prejudiced behavior on both ISU main campus and ISU CVM, action must be taken to address the current climate, and

WHEREAS: Student Government in the past has condemned the lack of response by administrators and associated departments in the face of bigotry and racism, and

WHEREAS: By censuring the College of Veterinary Medicine Administration, this will push forth productive dialogue and force CVM and University action, so be it therefore

RESOLVED: That Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine Administration be censured for these failures, and be it further

RESOLVED: That ISU CVM administration considers the demands presented by students addressed to the administration in response to the current climate, and be it further

RESOLVED: That Student Government recommends the changes stated in the following clauses, and be it further

RESOLVED: That the ISU CVM administration commits to changing the face of veterinary medicine by contributing to inclusive work and learning environments where everyone can reach their full potential, and be it further

⁴ISU CVM. "Diversity and Inclusion." <https://vetmed.iastate.edu/about/about-college/diversity-and-inclusion>

⁵ Abreu, Hilda M. "Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine Diversity and Inclusion - Review." <https://vetzone.cvm.iastate.edu/download/committees/Office-of-Diversity-and-Inclusion-Review-ISU-CVM-July.pdf>

- RESOLVED: That the high expectations for professionalism and respect within the CVM community be applied to all active participants of the college, including students, administration, faculty and staff, and be it further
- RESOLVED: That ISU CVM administration establishes a policy that enforces a consistent response or acknowledgment time for all incidents to impacted parties regardless of the status of a solution, and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the CVM administration mirror the University administration in that further correspondences be direct and specific when addressing attacks upon marginalized communities, and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the CVM administration review existing policies of other colleges and schools of veterinary medicine regarding diversity and inclusion, as well as enforcement of accountability amongst staff, faculty and students, and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the CVM administration implement policies that go above the University's Code of Conduct and actively prohibit forms of hate speech, or any other behavior that may disrupt the learning environment of the CVM, and be it further
- RESOLVED: That Student Government invites the CVM administration to exceed the recommendations proposed by Student Government in this resolution, and continue working with the student population to find further solutions to problems affecting the community, and be it further
- RESOLVED: That this resolution be sent to the Division of Student Affairs, including Senior Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Martino Harmon, nicci port, the ISU Center Director Brad Freihoefer and Assistant Director Cheltzie Miller-Bailey, Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion Dr. Reginald Stewart, Dr. Stephen G. Juelsgaard Dean of Veterinary Medicine Dan Grooms, Dr. Jared Danielson, Assistant Dean of Academic and Student Affairs Dr. Alex Ramirez, Dr. Heather Greenlee, Dr. Monica Howard, CVM Director of Curricular Assessment and Teaching Support Dr. Courtney Vengrin, CVM Coordinator of Admissions Kathy Kuehl, the CVM Admissions Committee, all faculty and staff of ISU CVM, and President of Iowa State University Dr. Wendy Wintersteen.