

\$24,000 grant will go to SCSU diversity plan

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A \$24,000 grant will jump start St. Cloud State University's long-term plan to make the campus more inclusive and fight real or perceived discrimination.

Moving ahead with this plan also means a campus committee known as the Independent Review Committee has been dissolved.

The committee was formed in December 2002 to study and formulate a diversity plan from four reports that examined the climate at St. Cloud State. Committee members included faculty members, students, employees and administrators.

The diversity plan includes workshops for faculty members and recommendations from President Roy Saigo and the campus committee.



Roy Saigo

Contributed to diversity plan



Michael Spitzer

SCSU can get ahead of game

accused of anti-Semitism and other forms of discrimination during the past three years. University leaders have said they're working to provide a more welcoming environment.

"We have an opportunity to be ahead of the game because issues surface more openly on our campus, and we can address them more directly," said Michael Spitzer, provost and vice president of academic affairs. "We want to address these conflicts before they

St. Cloud State has been

See SCSU, 6A ►

SCSU

get to the point where they're harmful."

Moving forward

The Independent Review Committee submitted its preliminary report in May. Its members asked the university for more time to complete their work. A final report wasn't completed by the latest deadline Sept. 30, so the university will use the committee's preliminary recommendations, Spitzer said.

"The committee's purpose was to look at that series of reports," he said. "They've done that, and we'll move forward from here."

The grant from the Otto Bremer Foundation will pay for anti-racism training for faculty members, Spitzer said. It is renewable for a second year if the university can provide a satisfactory progress report, he said.

The university will use the money to offer workshops and ongoing training opportunities during the school year, Spitzer said.

Campuswide effort

Employees with ideas for workshops or training that can support the university's plan are encouraged to share it with St. Cloud State leaders.

Diversity recommendations, plans for SCSU

Some recommendations and plans from St. Cloud State University President Roy Saigo and the Independent Review Committee:

■ Information about what to do when facing harassment or discrimination should be readily available to all members of the campus community.

■ Allegations of anti-Semitism, discrimination and retaliation at St. Cloud State should be thoroughly investigated. Problems should be identified, and solutions should be implemented.

■ All members of the campus community should be free to celebrate recognized religious or cultural holidays according to their custom.

■ St. Cloud State should establish an office to coordinate and oversee issues of campus climate, diversity and social equality.

Most of the workshops will be for faculty members. Attendance isn't required, but people are encouraged to sign up, Spitzer said.

Faculty members who complete 10 hours of training will receive a certificate, which will be one of many factors administrators will consider during personnel evaluations, Spitzer said.

"We're going to keep doing whatever we can think of to promote positive relationships on

■ The university should train administrators, faculty, staff and student workers about specific laws regarding data practices and be candid and clear about investigations within the parameters of data practices.

■ The enrollment management committee, associate vice president for enrollment management and the office of multicultural services will collaborate to develop plans to recruit and retain students from underrepresented groups.

■ The university will publish and disseminate a policy on civility, with standards that apply to classrooms, meetings, other public forums and campus e-mail. Disciplinary measures will be defined.

■ Administrators, department chairs and student leaders will participate in training to deal with conflict.

campus," Spitzer said. "We hope to have extensive faculty involvement."

University leaders hope to foster inclusiveness on campus, Spitzer said.

"The hoped-for outcome is that the campus is regarded as inviting and welcoming to people of all backgrounds," he said. "And a place where the free exchange of ideas can take place without anyone feeling threatened or harassed."

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