

Committee on Diversity
November 8, 2011

Committee Members Present: Lisa Ferrari, Kurt Walls, Megan Sykes, Mark Martin, Susan Owen, Amy Ryken, Pepa Lago-Grana, Czarina Ramsay, Margi Nowak

Guest: Cindy Matern, Associate VP for Human Resources

Attachment: Sample Diversity Interview Questions

The meeting was called to order by chair Ryken at 8:02 a.m. Nowak was appointed as the minute-taker. The minutes of the October 26 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Announcements:

- T Town Transgender Neighbors – a Portrait Exhibition will be available in Collins Library through the end of the semester. For more information see <http://www.southsoundgender.com/t-town/>

Presentation by Cindy Matern: Providing Support for Faculty Who Serve as Diversity Advocates on Faculty Search Committees (sharing some of the strategies found in Cindy's "green notebook" – a work in progress consisting of suggestions, ideas, questions, and concerns useful for finding, interviewing, hiring, and retaining faculty who would contribute to Puget Sound's stated goals involving diversity)

- Cindy's relevant areas of expertise here: what, legally, can and can not be asked of job seekers
- Starting point: clarify the definition of "diversity" the university (and the hiring department) have in mind: "it's not just about skin color!"
- Similar concerns occur when Admissions tries to increase the diversity of an incoming freshman class : what, legally, can and can not be asked of would-be students on the Common Application?
- Relevant considerations here:
 - How do people meaningfully conceptualize and talk about their identity?
 - What factors – including life experience – contribute to enhancing the collective social atmosphere of Puget Sound?
 - Perfectly legal question: "What can you contribute to the diversity of Puget Sound?"
 - Illegal questions: "What is your race? Are you a member of a legally protected class?"
- Diversity-related goals of the faculty search committee:
 - Try to increase the applicant pool; "cast your net widely"
 - Make your chosen candidate feel welcome
- Suggestions to help attain such goals:
 - Make use of the Skype interview room
 - Interview – via Skype – the top 12 people before bringing anyone to campus
 - Systematically review candidates' webpages (which often include multiple links to complete papers, presentations, AV presentations, etc.)
- Final question posed by Cindy (before the meeting ran out of time): How do you know you've been successful? (How best to track results?)
- Final offer by Cindy: she will send committee members a copy of the Sample Diversity Interview Questions (attached)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55.

Respectfully submitted~

Margi Nowak

Sample Diversity Interview Questions

- *Provide the University of Puget Sound mission statement.* How has your experience and background prepared you to be effective in this environment with this diversity value/initiative?
- What do you see as the most challenging aspect of a diverse working environment? What steps have you taken to meet this challenge?
- What kinds of experiences have you had working with others with different backgrounds than your own?
- Tell us about a time you had to alter your work style to meet a diversity need or challenge?
- How have you handled a situation when a colleague was not accepting of others' diversity?
- What does it mean to have a commitment to diversity? How would you develop and apply your commitment at the University of Puget Sound?
- What was/is the diversity value at your current/former employer? What impact did you make on this value?
- What efforts have you made, or been involved with, to foster diversity competence and understanding?
- What have you made, or been involved with, to foster diversity competence and understanding?
- What have you done to further your knowledge about diversity? Have you included diversity in your professional development? How have you demonstrated what you've learned?
- What kind of leadership efforts would you make to ensure a commitment to the University of Puget Sound's diversity value/initiative?
- What strategies have you used to address diversity challenges? What were the positives and negatives?