

Diversity Committee Minutes October 7, 2008

Committee Members/ Present: Kim Bobby, David Sousa, Judith Kay, Angelina Nockai, Justin Tiehen, Paula Meiers, Lisa Ferrari, Yoshiko Matsui, Margi Nowak

The meeting was called to order by chair Kay at 8:05 a.m. Nowak was appointed as the minute-taker. The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and approved.

Announcements:

- Nockai announced that the Native American Students Association would be putting up posters next week challenging the celebratory nature of Columbus Day.
Bobby announced:
 - Open Forum (October 8, 1-2 pm, Wheelock 101) on the topic of campus media (recall flyer: “Do you find the articles, humor, and commentaries [in the *Trail*] appropriate? funny? hurtful? representative? inclusive?) – sponsored by BERT (Bias/Hate Education and Response Team)
 - 2008 Seattle Race Conference – Movements for Reparations: Restoring Racial Justice, Building Unity and Healing Our Diverse Communities (October 11, 8am – 4 pm, Seattle Center, Northwest Room)

Kay reported on her meeting with the Faculty Senate concerning the committee’s proposed revision to committee by-laws (Charge #1) and the committee discussed the following:

- Present wording of point b.1: [“The duties of the Committee shall be] 1. To promote the involvement of all sectors of the campus community in the implementation of the University’s intent to develop an increasingly diverse community. “Diversity” shall include areas such as race/ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, and physical ability”
- Problems:
 - does “diversity” have the sub-rosa meaning of “under-represented”?
 - should we be seeking broader language so as not to accidentally exclude types of people (e.g. does “physical ability” exclude people with psychological disabilities?)
 - should we simply cite the language from the Diversity Strategic Plan rather than attempting to name every conceivable category of person who could claim that “people like that” are not systematically affirmed?
 - To what degree do changes in definitions require a change in by-laws?
 - how to change the language consistently
 - finding a definition of “diversity” that work for this particular institution...
- One avenue of solutions to such problems: use (or merely reference) the university’s already-existing documents on diversity issues
- Subcommittee who will work further on further clarifying the language of the by-laws: Bobby and Nowak
- Discussion of the 4th proposed by-law: “Report annually to the Faculty the University’s efforts and results achieved in the following areas:
 - a. Recruitment and retention of faculty members from underrepresented groups
 - Ferrari offered to ask Human Resources and the Dean’s office about data already collected about faculty searches and hires regarding diversity efforts. Does the committee really need to solicit this information from each department?

- b. Progress of those departments completing their five-year reviews toward diversity-related objectives
 - o regarding five-year reviews: ask curriculum committee about incorporating questions re point (b) into departmental reviews
 - c. Campus utilization of the bias-Hate Educational Response Team (BERT)
 - o All present affirmed the value of increasing awareness of hurtful incidents revealed in student narrations as a first step toward affirming the university's commitment to diversity
 - o David Sousa agreed to serve as the Faculty Diversity Committee representative on BERT.
- Final thoughts: think about how we as a committee can contribute to duty #2: "to assist the Dean of Admission and the Dean of Students in the University's ongoing program of recruiting, retaining, and graduating a diverse student body."

Next Meeting:

- Tuesday October 28, 8 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted ~
Margi Nowak