

Minutes of the Diversity Committee Meeting of 12 February 2008

Present: Nila Wiese, Mike Valentine, Margi Nowak, Monica DeHart, Yoshiko Matsui, , Heather Ahuero, Lisa Ferrari, Leslie Saucedo, and Judith Kay

Absent: Kim Bobby, Paula Meiers, Nancy Nieraeth, Heather Clifford, Skylar Bihl

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 by Chair Wiese.

The minutes of the previous meeting were not yet available due to illness.

Announcements:

The proceeds from the Vagina Monologues will go to the Pierce County Sexual Assault Center. APASU will sponsor “folding cranes” to commemorate the internment of Puget Sound’s students of Japanese heritage during the Second World War as well as a lantern festival to round out the Chinese New Year on Feb. 22nd from 5-7 in Wyatt.

Old Business

The Faculty Senate encouraged the Committee to move forward with its proposal regarding the formation of three diversity committees plus an advisory board. Questions and comments about the proposal from the Senate included the following:

1. Continue to work concurrently with the staff and student senates to develop their diversity committees
2. Complete our proposal for the standing charges for the new faculty committee
3. Clarify which administrators would sit on the advisory board
4. Complete all of the above by the end of this semester.
5. Concern was expressed about the added level of bureaucracy in this new plan.

No students responded to the Chair’s request for feedback to the proposal. Marcos Goldstein, our liaison from ASUPS, cannot attend meetings this semester. Yoshiko will contact the ASUPS president for new student representatives for the committee. She reminded us that the ASUPS presidency is getting ready for a transition, and we may have to wait until the new president is elected to secure new student appointees. If she is not successful, then she will ask Mike Valentine to contact Mike Segawa.

Nila will contact the staff senate in order to assess their response to the proposal.

New Business

Each committee member should review the November 29th draft of the charges and edit them with the idea of separating out charges that might be directed to either the staff or student senates.

Nila reported that Kim Bobby and she decided to remove the “H” from BHERT, so that people would not mistakenly call the group “Be Hurt.” The new acronym “BERT” should be used henceforth.

Nila communicated Kim's request for volunteers to serve on the group that is updating the poster with the university's diversity statement. Yoshiko volunteered. Yoshiko reminded us that the diversity statement was an initiative of this committee and that over the years, many creative and successful ideas have been launched from this committee.

The Committee then turned its attention to a request from Kim Bobby to develop a tag-line from the proposed "Moment" that she envisions when the entire campus comes together to celebrate and recognize the university's value of diversity. Judith Kay raised concerns about the definition of diversity that was included in the proposal for the "Moment." She argued that there is a difference between the inclusion in higher education and the legacies of systematic mistreatment that might limit individual's full participation in that education. She gave as an example that although female students were once excluded from higher education, our student body now fully includes females. Their inclusion does not mean, however, that sexism no longer poses barriers to their full participation. Yoshiko believes that there is another definition of diversity that the task force developed that might be more adequate and promised to bring that one to the next meeting.

Although the group felt that it needed to know more about the proposed fall event before a tag-line were created, the group agreed that the tag needed to appeal to students and avoid wordiness. Several ideas were proffered: Celebrate Difference; Honor the Other; Setting a Course for the Year; Deepening Puget Sound's Culture of Respect. We confessed our lack of good suggestions.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 by Chair Wiese.