

Present: Kim Bobby, Sue Owen, Margi Nowak, Pepa Lago-Grana

Chair Sue Owen called the meeting to order at 2:10.

The minutes from the September 11 meeting were corrected ("BURT" – one among many acronyms in the word of faculty committees -- was corrected to BERT) and approved.

New Business:

- review of proposed charges for 2009-2010:
 1. identify and highlight courses that have significant diversity content (as related to Goal Two of the University's Diversity Strategic Plan)
 2. integrate BERT into the oversight of the committee, address concerns about its name (Bias [-hate] Education Response Team), and identify the two committee members who will join BERT (Margi Nowak & ?)
 3. continue to develop and implement a program for including diversity issues as a permanent element of faculty development; continue to assess and refine said program
 4. collaborate with other diversity efforts on campus (including the 2010 Race and Pedagogy national conference to be held at UPS next October)
 5. review the language of the University's Diversity Statement in the light of suggested changes from CAIR (the Coalition Against Injustice and Racism) and present suggestions to the Senate

Discussion:

- 2008-2009 Diversity Committee Chair Judith Kay's thoughts re charge 3: more lead time needed when proposing diversity-themed additions to advisor training
- "framing" whatever presentation(s) the committee decides to develop and implement (charge 3 again), making use of such possible approaches as:
 - focusing on narratives volunteered by faculty as examples of "teachable moments" (either well or awkwardly handled) that have come up (sometimes without warning) in classroom situations
 - sharing student narratives (told, in confidence, by students, to Kim Bobby) that illustrate blind spots in the campus atmosphere in contrast to the aspirational language of the university's Diversity Statement
 - "taking the temperature" of the key elements of campus life by encouraging faculty discussion of such sample questions as "What do you do about/How do you address X?"
 - exploring diversity issues on campus not (just) in terms of problems, but also, in terms of "silences" and "absences" (e.g. asking whose identities, realities, backgrounds etc. are not being heard, seen, or otherwise acknowledged in this setting?)
 - considering how these silences and absences may differ, depending on whether they occur (a) in the classroom, or (b) in one-on-one situations such as in advising encounters

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45.

Respectfully submitted.

Margi Nowak