

Diversity Committee Meeting Minutes  
October 23, 2009

In attendance

Dahl-Veenstra, Drakos, Ferrari, Hong (secretary), Lago-Grana, Nowak, Owen, Rocchi, Sousa

Chair Owen called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm.

Owen made the following announcements:

- 1) The Board of Trustees meeting (Bobby was unavailable in today's DC meeting, so no announcement yet on approval of DC as a standing committee which reports to The Faculty Senate).
- 2) DAC update: Hans Ostrom & Jeff Matthews, who work directly with the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer, will come to the DC meeting on 11-06-2009.
- 3) Race and Pedagogy Sub-committee on teaching set up tentative dates (01-15-16 or 01-22-23) for the January program, depending on the schedule to be confirmed with guest speaker Professor Jennifer Eberhardt from Stanford.
- 4) Race & Pedagogy Kick-off (CWLT) date announced: Wed. 10-21-2010.

Considering different branches of UPS diversity organizations, Sousa suggested that we need a "map" to show the structure of organization and the relationships of its parts and positions. Owen agreed that such an organization chart will be necessary, and agreed to compile it.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved without amendment.

In regard to the request from Sub-committee on teaching/Race & Pedagogy "Small Group", such as the incorporate/design assignments that students could develop/share at the 2010 Race & Pedagogy Conference, the committee discussed strategies for collecting related information quickly before pre-registration, including the offering of courses next term to present related issues to the students. Owen solicited ideas from the representatives of the Student Diversity Groups.

Drakos reported that Professor Ostrom had offered to write a letter addressing the issue to the faculty, and she would write a follow-up letter to the student body. She agreed to cc the letter to the committee when it is done. Rocchi said that faculty should encourage students to know about the event beforehand in their race-related courses. In the two sessions of his contemporary French literature classes, for example, students are engaged in exploring a variety of issues related to race and gender. Sousa added that faculty should encourage students to apply for the university summer research grant.

Owen thanked Drakos for writing the letter. She mentioned that two students of the Student Diversity Center Governing Council would present their collected data in the DC meeting on Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> regarding the possibilities for coalition building among student diversity groups. Dahl-Veenstra said that they would discuss the issue in the next Governing Council meeting. In answering the question about the structure of Governing Council, Dahl-Veenstra introduced that its role is to do correlation of student clubs. Representatives of 10 to 20 clubs meet for an hour

each month, coordinating the use of activity spaces of other groups/clubs. There is a lot of overlapping, and how the Council advertises itself can be discussed. Drakos added that the Council has been putting more effort to facilitate conversation on general topics. Owen welcomed students' suggestions for the DC to see how we can facilitate the Governing Council to generate some dialogue, a campus wide discussion. Drakos agreed that a cohesive environment will have everyone work together in the Council and Chair Owen or other DC members can come to talk about certain issues.

Rocchi mentioned that Soule, one of the student representatives, could report his concerns that a lot of the students still feel left out or marginalized by the C.A.I.R. document. Drakos noted that other student diversity group leaders are also working on similar issues. Owen stated that coordination always involves problems but she expressed tremendous faith in working any problem out. Rocchi added that in his class 12 out of 20 freshmen students are involved in diversity activities, and that their roommates are involved in coordinating activities. Owen observed that this can be a base for solutions. She was open to concerns and suggestions.

As for the event calendar, the committee confirmed that December 4<sup>th</sup> would be the date for the last DC meeting of the Fall 09 term.

Sousa expressed concerns about student retention, which has drawn certain interest lately. Drakos said that Dean of Students Sagawa is on the retention task force. The current retention rate was near to that of last year. Several committee members raised questions: 60% is important, but is this rate consistent? What is the proper way to keep a high retention rate? Can Associate Dean Sarah Moore and Academic Advising Director Jack Roundy come to talk to us about the issue?

The meeting adjourned at 1: 45 pm.