

Diversity Committee Minutes  
November 4, 2004

Members Present:

Julie Christoph, Nancy Bristow, Terry Beck, Becca Herman, Devon Biggerstaff, Jim McCullough, Yoshiko Matsui, Carrie Washburn, Danny Gibson

Visitors: Melanie Reed and Paula Meiers

The meeting was called to order by Julie Christoph at 8:02 a.m. in the Diversity Center. Julie Christoph asked for a motion to approve the minutes. They were approved.

Diversity Announcements

Becca Herman reviewed the calendar of diversity events.

Old Business

The role of Diversity Committee in the "Demystifying Diversity" program scheduled for January 10-11-12 was discussed. Julie will respond to an inquiry concerning a 1 ½ hour session lead by Diversity Committee.

The response team subcommittee will work to integrate activities with the campus crisis protocol. There is a need to develop sustainable response team development procedures. This will provide trained people to respond to issues during the early weeks of the semester rather than several weeks later.

Yoshiko reported on reforming student groups. Students of African Descent is considering holding a social event in a more relaxed setting to encourage participation. Participants have discussed conducting a workshop to build on comments from alumni. There is a core group of interested people, but it may be useful to conduct a survey or determine interest issues by other means. CHispA is trying to develop as essentially a new group. Terry asked about student responses and Yoshiko reported that many students did not know the groups had not been meeting. Carrie suggested that there is an ongoing problem of maintenance of strong leadership in diversity student groups.

Carrie reported on interest in a stand alone survey on campus climate to be conducted next fall by Institutional Research. This will be developed by Randy Nelson but may be delayed by the OIS programming queue.

Race and Pedagogy is planning a conference for sometime in the future.

There was a discussion of how to develop effective liaisons with student groups. It was suggested that diversity committee members meet occasionally with groups to demonstrate a link with the faculty and support for their activities. Since each group has an advisor, the role for diversity committee is to show support not to run the groups. Julie asked if there was some way to identify the most in need groups. There was discussion of the relationship with religious groups and it was decided that diversity committee would develop liaison with groups associated with multicultural student services and not with religious organizations. A sign up sheet for liaison interest was circulated.

Admissions discussion

The committee was joined by Melanie Reed and Paula Meiers from Admissions. They initially discussed the "phone project" and thanked the faculty for calling all admitted diversity students. They indicated that some students might prefer email contact and discussed approaches for improving recruiting contacts.

The prospect group is large, perhaps too large for faculty involvement early in the year. African American students are a focus and admissions called more than 125 students who self-reported themselves as African American. In the future faculty contacts will be supported by mailings, including post cards, and brochures explaining UPS interest in contact with applicants.

There has been no negative feedback on phone calls but admissions is trying to develop closer contact with students as they make their choices. There is an effort to reach students of color through fairs in this region and on the West coast. The admissions counseling staff this year is more diverse and is focusing more on Pierce county applicants through efforts with schools and churches.

Nancy indicated that faculty are very interested and willing to support admissions activities in this area. The question was raised whether it was better to make general calls or focus on specific questions. There is a lot of information available to faculty when they call applicants and admissions is working to make this more easily available. Nancy stated that we should emphasize academics as an important dimension of UPS and this would be enhanced by more faculty involvement in recruiting. The academic flavor of UPS is important and faculty calls are valuable in this regard. Admissions will send a brochure to candidates explaining the calling process, but early in the season, the applicant pool is too large.

Admissions will develop materials to solicit faculty involvement in recruiting. It was suggested that this be a topic for a chairs meeting to indicate administration support for this kind of service by faculty. Faculty should be shown that diversity recruiting is a valued service activity.

Terry said that we should also try to reach parents of applicants as they may be influential in choice. Churches may be an effective way to reach parents.

Theater is working with admissions to recruit students of color and show an area outside of sports where student interest might be developed. Similar programs in other areas are encouraged. In any case, administrative support is essential.

Meeting adjourned at 9:04.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim McCullough