

## **Minutes of the University Diversity Committee September 26, 2003**

Present: Kris Bartanen, Devon Biggerstaff, Kim Bobby, Julie Christoph, Marie DeBenedictis, Rosa Beth Gibson, Natalie Jones, Mikiko Ludden, David Macey (chair), Blaire Notrica, Susie O'Donnell, David Scott, Carrie Washburn. Guest: Jessica Murphy.

David Macey called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. at the Student Diversity Center. Blaire Notrica welcome everyone to the Center, explaining the move of the Center from 13<sup>th</sup> Street to 15<sup>th</sup> Street (a more visible location) and the facilities available to the twelve student organizations affiliated with the Center.

The minutes of September 11 were approved with the correction of the date and additional comments and amendments. Notrica asked about the status of the draft policy against harassment. Kris Bartanen explained that she and Rosa Beth Gibson were consulting with university legal counsel and that the draft would move along to discussion by the President's Cabinet before consultation with the Diversity Committee and other constituent groups.

Macey noted that the purpose of today's meeting was to work toward a plan for the year's work by the committee. Several members had offered emails regarding various projects and such email discussion was encouraged as a means of communication between meetings. Writers should "hit reply all" for messages to be shared among the entire committee.

Macey summarized Margi Nowak's suggestion that Michael Pavel, a Puget Sound alumnus profiled in the Fall 2003 *Arches*, be invited to discuss campus climate twenty years ago and today. Bartanen offered that Dr. Pavel might be a resource in suggesting more local contacts regarding Native American concerns, particularly if his schedule precluded travel to Tacoma.

Marie DeBenedictis noted that she has been attending Diversity Theme Year planning committee meetings and would be willing to serve as a liaison to that group. The Diversity Committee might consider co-sponsorship of some DTY events.

Gibson brought the committee's attention to the South Puget Sound Higher Education Diversity Partnership, of which Puget Sound is a member institution. Gibson, Kim Bobby and Associate Director for Student Services Yoshiko Matsui represent Puget Sound in this group. SPSHEDP is currently entertaining proposals for presentations (November 14 deadline) for its February 20, 2004 Institute at Pacific Lutheran University. Bobby noted as materials provided by Gibson were circulating, that the Institute is a great opportunity for collaboration, that volunteers to assist with the conference would be welcome, and that we should try to have many attend the conference. Bartanen noted that people may learn more about the partnership at [www.ups.edu/dsa/spshedp](http://www.ups.edu/dsa/spshedp).

Macey noted that David Sousa had suggested an organizational structure for the long list of ideas for projects generated at the committee's opening meeting. A first phase of work could include "analysis and reporting" tasks (consider a "diversity impact statement" and make recommendations, respond to a draft document from the Campus Harassment Policy Work Group, hear from university administrators about benchmarks for recruitment and retention). A second phase of work could include "listening and instigating" (offering insights into campus climate and methods of improvement, facilitating campus discussion of the University Diversity Statement). A third phase of work could address long-term agenda development (consider active roles the committee might take in support of campus organizations focused on diversity, promote interactions between the campus and the Tacoma committee).

David Scott suggested that, as a committee of the Faculty Senate, the committee should be open to input from President Thomas on agenda items of interest to him, but not request a meeting with him in order to gain direction from him on the committee's tasks. Macey offered that he had

contacted the President's Office to learn that, while Ron Thomas' schedule is very full, it is possible to work out a time to meet with the President.

Macey then reported on a conversation among Jane Brazell, Notrica and himself concerning potential agenda items. With respect to charge #3(consider the role the committee might play on campus), Macey suggested that we consider: How do we understand diversity and its breadth? What events do we want to sponsor?

Notrica emphasized the importance of meeting with Yoshiko Matsui with regard to charge #3 (continue discussion with SDC organizations and initiate similar discussions with resident student groups to gain insight into the current campus climate and to hear students' recommendations for improvement, as well as students' perspectives on the role the Diversity Committee might play on campus) and that charge #4 (consider active roles that the committee might take in support of those campus organizations whose goals focus specifically on supporting diversity, including Admission, SDC and its affiliated groups, the Race and Pedagogy discussions, Multicultural Student Services, and Disability Services) offer the opportunity to continue to sponsor events, help educate the campus, and make the Diversity Committee more visible.

Macey suggested that reaching out to community groups (charge #6: consider ways in which to promote interaction between the campus and the Tacoma community and to build stronger relationships with other campuses in the area), particularly given that the committee has no budget, might mean learning how we might assist an organization or gain their assistance; Brazell had suggested TACID—Tacoma Area Council for Individuals with Disabilities—would be an organization with which the committee might be in contact. Natalie Jones noted CIAC's (Community Involvement and Action Center) connection with TACID and DeBenedictis reported that there is a new "serviceship" position in for an Occupational Therapy student to work with TACID.

Macey noted that another opportunity would be to ask for a bulletin board in Wheelock Student Center that would focus on diversity information. Bartanen explained that ASUPS Union Board is responsible for assignment of bulletin boards and that posters suitable for the boards (and sandwich boards) where materials rotates daily/weekly can be brought to the Dean of Students' Office.

With respect to charge #7 (explore the possibility of developing a mechanism for the preparation of "Diversity Impact Statements" assessing the impact of new campus policies and procedures on the climate for diversity on campus), Macey emphasized the importance of the committee as a university, not just a faculty, committee. Bartanen reminded the group that ASUPS has a Diversity Committee and ASUPS By-Laws indicate that one member of that committee is a liaison to the University Diversity Committee. Devon Biggerstaff commented that ASUPS President Darrell Frost did not plan to have the ASUPS Diversity Committee function this year, but noted that he had been attending the ASUPS Student Concerns Committee, that that group was also interested in diversity issues, and that he would be willing to a liaison to there.

The Committee decided, upon deliberation, to defer discussion of the the proposal regarding "psychological differences in learning and working styles" pending clarification of the proposal.

Carrie Washburn asked if there was any feedback regarding other of the committee's charges. Bobby asked whether committee members will continue to have listening sessions with student groups. Jones offered that, with respect to charge #1 (facilitating campus discussion of the University Diversity Statement), the next version of the posters should be brighter. Notrica noted the importance of discussing what the statement is and why it exists. Washburn reminded us of the committee's plan to offer ourselves as resources to residence life student staff as they frame their programming goals and programs, among which is a diversity programming theme. Macey suggested that the Queer 101 workshops offer a format that could be a model for other residence hall programs. Washburn suggested that the Diversity Statement might be a basis for listening

sessions with students who are not involved in SDC organizations. Biggerstaff commented that he hoped the committee would take some concrete action toward this end and that a subcommittee might develop a program idea. Gibson noted that, if a program model was developed, it might also be offered during the staff professional development workshops in January or made available to interested department meetings.

Julie Christoph offered that she had been attending Race and Pedagogy discussions, which suggested that faculty need assistance in incorporating diversity into the curriculum. Jones suggested that there is greatest need for faculty to learn how to address issues that come up in class, rather than to let disparaging comments (e.g., about race) go unchallenged. Christoph noted that for faculty to take on major revisions to courses, some release time or dedicated workshop time would be required. Bartanen and Washburn noted that curriculum development funding might be available for proposals for significant course revisions or summer faculty workshops through the Associate Academic Deans' Office. Jones asked whether faculty might be required to attend diversity training workshops in order for learning to reach those beyond the limited number of faculty who attend diversity discussions. Bartanen noted that mandatory faculty training was unlikely to be perceived as feasible.

Macey suggested that working groups or subcommittees might help the committee to address the many ideas on the table, with the following results:

Liaison to ASUPS Student Concerns Committee: Biggerstaff

Liaison to Diversity Theme Year: DeBenedictis

Liaison to Race & Pedagogy Series: Christoph

Listening sessions with student organizations: Macey, Susie O'Donnell, Bobby

Programs on University Diversity Statement: Notrica, Jones, Gibson

Support of further work on anti-harassment policy: Bartanen should take reconvene the Campus Harassment Policy Work Group

Jones asked how the committee would proceed with respect to open meetings and opportunities for guests to speak, noting Jessica Murphy's attendance at this meeting. Murphy offered her opinion that the University Diversity Statement posters are not sufficiently striking and need to use darker ink to increase visibility. Notrica asked when new posters would be printed. Bartanen explained that significant work had gone into development of the current poster, based on a student design that was shared with the Diversity Committee last spring, and that there was not yet a plan for a new design. Students present suggested that perhaps brighter paper and colors could be used in future printings of the same design.

Macey suggested that the next meeting might focus on additional ways to promote the statement and on the possibility of a speaker from TACID. Some closing comments were offered on the possibility of a larger meeting space being desirable, perhaps Wheelock 101.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kris Bartanen