

Committee on Diversity
Minutes of Nov. 9, 2010

Committee Members Present: Kim Bobby, Lynnette Claire, Lisa Ferrari, Nadav Heyman, Pepa Lago, Mark Martin, Susan Owen, Czarina Ramsay, Michel Rocchi, Amy Ryken, Justin Tiehen

The meeting was called to order at 8:34 a.m.

Announcements:

Amy met with Diversity Advisory Council and learned about the need for centralizing information about upcoming diversity events. Members of the committee are encouraged to forward information to Amy about any upcoming events.

Kim distributed a chart which explains the horizontal and vertical structures of the Diversity Advisory Council. She discussed with the committee the goals and responsibilities of the DAC.

Creating a Culture of Learning: Kim read a student's response to questions about experience of diversity at Puget Sound. The committee discussed how interactions in residential settings are important sites for learning about differences in experiences/identities.

Amy read from a student paper written in response to the Race and Pedagogy conference. The student shared his/her perception that a black/white meta-narrative of race dominates this campus in contrast to his/her efforts to negotiate dual brown identities. Czarina responded with the observation that students must learn how to negotiate the intersections of their identity. Kim pointed out that these are the conversations we want to have.

Minutes of Oct. 26, 2010:

Some corrections were suggested by Amy and accepted by the committee. The chart distributed at the last meeting comparing the campus Diversity Statement and recommended changes proposed by the Coalition Against Injustice and Racism were also attached to the minutes.

The committee discussed the preferred procedure for correcting minutes.

The minutes were approved, as corrected.

Committee Business:

Amy distributed a chart titled "Committee on Diversity 2010-2011" which features a side-by-side comparison of the Faculty Bylaws (July 2010) and Senate Charges (Oct. 10, 2010) and highlighted three possible areas of focus for the committee; 1) faculty hiring /retention, 2) supporting campus diversity efforts, and 3) creating liaisons with diversity groups on campus. The committee entered into an extended discussion of H.b.2., the role of the committee in facilitating the "hiring of new faculty from historically under-represented populations and to support better the retention and success of such faculty."

The conversation shifted to a consideration of how the Diversity Advisory Council might be a site where the committee could pull together a wide range of diversity issues, e.g., the Spanish Matters Colloquium, and create a comprehensive list/approach to diversity at Puget Sound. Questions raised included, "What are various departments doing? What is Student Affairs doing? What is Human Resources doing? Pepa and Michel offered their perception that Foreign Language and Culture studies are not perceived as important sites of diversity work.

Amy returned the conversation to the topic of diverse hiring/retention and offered her view that this is the most contentious and most important area of diversity. She asked the committee to consider how we might collect information about hiring practices on campus. Lynnette suggested that we talk to our departmental colleagues and gather information. The committee discussed this matter in some detail, suggesting various possibilities for collecting information about hiring practices.

As the meeting neared conclusion, Amy offered a summary of the committee's suggested actions for supporting H.b.2., to wit,

- Lisa and Kim supervise a new faculty orientation in January 2011 (as they did in 2010)
- Members of the committee talk with our departments about our best practices and potential weaknesses for hiring and retention of diverse faculty
- The committee can make inquiries about transparency on data about hiring at Puget Sound.
- The committee will compose and test questions to be asked about hiring and retention practices.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25. The committee members thanked Mark for providing refreshments.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Owen