

Diversity Committee Meeting  
April 18, 2011

Committee Members Present: Kim Bobby, Lynnette Claire, Pepa Lago-Grana, Mark Martin, Czarina Ramsay, Susan Owen, Amy Ryken.

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM.

1. Announcements

Czarina announced the recipient for GLBT Leadership Scholarship (sophomore Jason Rison).

Coming up is the showing of the movie Crash, to be followed by a discussion (this event is in response to the recent campus presentation "Color-blind is not racist"). The Crash event is co-sponsored by SSSJ and the Chief Diversity Officer. Susan added that a student of hers has been working on film criticism of that particular film, and will do a presentation later on.

2. Student narrative

Kim read a narrative that highlights the culture of inclusive learning on campus from a perspective of a student. The student described growing up with limited exposure to religions, and at UPS encountered other religious backgrounds. This narrative highlighted the curriculum as a site for possible diversity initiatives, a welcomed reaction coming from a student.

3. Approval of minutes

The minutes from the March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting were approved without corrections.

4. Annual Report to the Faculty Senate

After discussing whether to include in the report some suggested charges for the Senate to consider, the committee approved the report to be sent forth to the Senate.

5. Recruiting faculty of color discussion

Previous to the meeting, Amy sent several articles and informational documents to all committee members, relating to the recruitment of faculty from historically underrepresented groups. The committee engaged on a flowing discussion of some relevant issues:

- Some disciplines struggle more than others to find minority candidates. In sciences there are organizations dedicated to promote hiring of underrepresented scientists. In other disciplines it is easier to find candidates of color.
- Dialogue needs to be started among departments so information and best practices can be shared. A search profile must be created before search begins. Departments need to identify challenges and write a report. At some

institutions (PLU) they have department ombudsmen; in other institutions they bring someone from the outside to do that.

- Kim shared that despite offering to serve as a resource to searching departments, the reaction from chairs and faculty members has been mixed. She affirmed the need to be more purposeful about it, and to include other groups (such as parents) in the process. Mark suggested that some departments might feel defensive when their pool of applicants is not very diverse, but sometimes it is just the nature of the position or the available candidates. For Amy, the problem lays in the fact that the process is sometimes viewed as individual rather than group work. According to Lynnette, when doing group work, it is better if individuals within the group are designated with a particular role, results are more efficient. But the same person cannot be in the same role always, have to switch up the roles.
- The goal is not simply to have a diverse faculty, but to state the fact that there is a value in having a diverse faculty. For Kim, these are not two different processes, but they complement each other, work hand in hand. Even with federal mandates, there are ways institutions are able to skirt the issue and don't diversify. It is more successful if the impulse comes from inside rather than from a mandate. For Amy, referring to one of the articles, how the institution frames the issue is important: institutional conceptualizations of diversity often focus on adding more faculty of color, but a different way to look at it is to change institutional culture and re-think curriculum. For Lynnette, having a policy in place is one thing, but the reality, how it happens, what resources are there to make it happen, is more difficult. Even bringing the whole person to the interview and pulling all the stops doesn't pay off sometimes.
- Kim and Czarina described the job of the Diversity Advisory Council being used in a training context, such as for new staff orientation. Also mentioned was the Consortium for Faculty Development, the commitment it required from the institution, and what departments are willing or able to give up in exchange.

#### 6. Next meeting

May 2 was set as a tentative date for our last meeting if issues were left unfinished. Given that the annual report is ready to be submitted to the faculty Senate, it was decided that the May 2 meeting was not necessary. Thanks were profusely offered to Amy for a superb job as committee chair the 2010-2011 academic year.

#### 7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50

Respectfully submitted,

Pepa Lago-Graña

August 1, 2011