

Diversity Committee Minutes
February 27, 1998

Present: Peggy Firman, Rosa Beth Gibson, George Guilmet, Henry Johnson, Pat Krueger, John Lear, Ben Reuler, Carrie Washburn, Carolyn Weisz

Carolyn Weisz convened the meeting at 2 PM.

Announcements: Carolyn Weisz announced that the University submitted a letter of intent to apply for a grant from the Hewlett Foundation to enhance the theme year. The final proposal is due April 14. The next meeting to work on the grant is Thursday, March 5, at 9 AM, location to be announced.

Carolyn Weisz also noted that the faculty senate has not yet discussed the proposed bylaw change for the diversity committee. Senate members can be contacted if we want this proposed change to move forward.

Peggy Firman presented a written subcommittee summary/report on defining "multiculturalism" or "multicultural education". George Guilmet spoke about the background and history of the term "multiculturalism", and explained that the subcommittee decided to work with an operational definition of "multicultural education" as it relates to curriculum issues, instead of "multiculturalism". The subcommittee determined that the definition should flow from "why" we need multicultural education on campus. U.S. vs. international multicultural education had been discussed in the subcommittee, as well as whether democracy issues were to be included. Carolyn Weisz noted that #3 on the subcommittee handout helped to define categories to be included in the definition. It was noted that the Hewlett Foundation grant proposal topics are very interrelated with definitions of multicultural education.

Carolyn Weisz suggested that the committee should decide if it will be advocating a definite proposal as an outcome of our educational research. John Lear stated that he would like to see a multicultural component in the core. He noted that the theme year proposal could be linked to a team-taught course dealing with multicultural education in some way. George Guilmet stated that focus on one ethnic group or culture in-depth might be more valuable. He suggested that it is too early to make a decision on outcome, and that we should continue with exploration of existing models as planned. Carrie Washburn noted that the new University Mission includes a goal to have students become active citizens, which provides an opening for the committee's work. Ben Reuler noted a concern that one required core course would not be sufficient in a student's education; diffusing issues throughout the curriculum might be more effective. Pat Krueger noted that some of the better curricular models she had looked at so far have used both of these methods together.

Peggy Firman suggested that the subcommittee could combine all three definitions presented on the handout, to give a working definition as we look at curricular models. George Guilmet stated that some definitions used "culture" which we would then need to define; others used pluralism. He noted that a course on history of race and ethnic relations in the U.S. is not a course on "cultures". Carolyn Weisz asked what would be needed to fit the definition of multicultural education. George Guilmet responded that studying understandings of cultures in some depth would be more appropriate.

Carolyn Weisz asked that the subcommittee continue to work on a draft of their definition that we could review at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 PM. The next full committee meeting will be held Friday, March 27, at 4 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Krueger