

Diversity Committee Minutes
April 2, 1997

Present: (in alphabetical order) Flo Ariessohn, Kevin Barhydt, Kris Bartanen, Terry Cooney, Rosabeth Gibson, Rafael Gomez, George Guilmet, Henry Johnson, Pat Krueger, George Mills, Freeda Savage, Margaret Setchfield (chair), Mark Shapiro, Carrie Washburn, and Carolyn Weisz.

The meeting convened at 4:10 p.m. on 4-2-97. The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Terry Cooney was asked what steps were being taken to hire faculty of color. He noted his recent acquisition of the position and deferred the question to Kris Bartanen. She noted that a search workshop for department chairs was held September 9th, 1996. Several of the items on the Chair's checklist included diversity issues. The list was distributed to the Committee.

Rosabeth Gibson stated that we ask Department search representatives to look at the application materials to identify possible people of color. She noted that Human Resources looks at the aggregate data from voluntary gender/race forms sent to candidates to see trends by discipline. Department representatives do not see the voluntary forms, but, the Academic Vice-President would have access to self-identification data.

Terry Cooney responded to a question sent to him by the Committee concerning whether or not the nature of candidates' undergraduate experience (liberal arts or not) counted in the search process. He stated that experience at a liberal arts college is a factor, but, far from determinative. He noted that we desire in candidates a deliberate and conscious choice to spend a career at a liberal arts college. He also stated that perceptions of the quality of the candidates' institutions clearly matter. And, quality of institutions varies by discipline.

Henry Johnson asked if additional efforts could be made to hire ABD's of color. Terry stated that ABD's are potential candidates, but, the faculty code would have to be changed to hire early in the doctoral process because of the timeline for tenure. Terry further noted the problems of completing a doctoral program while teaching full-time. He stated that partial teaching loads for a while is a potential option. However, the candidate would have to show a serious commitment towards this institution.

George Guilmet asked if the nature of our curriculum was a problem in attracting faculty of color. Terry noted that he supported an American Cultures component of the core in 1990. He also pointed to the cyclic nature of interest in ethnic studies programs. When he came to UPS there was an Ethnic Studies program with courses in Black Studies, Asian Studies, and American Indian Studies.

Carolyn Weisz asked if the lack of demand for ethnic studies courses was controlled by the amount of combined core and major requirements. Carrie Washburn and Terry both observed that our curriculum is flexible to such interests even within the core. Thus, the Diversity Committee might try to foster the development of diversity courses.

Terry stated that if a sizable cadre of people of color faculty in a given area is a test for accepting a job, smaller colleges like ours are at a disadvantage compared to graduate universities with research institutes and ethnic studies programs.

Pat Krueger asked whether further support for the search process or release time for the faculty on search committees were possible. Terry stated that there were 16 searches this year. Thus, release time would be impossible given the consequences on teaching responsibilities. However, some other support of the search process might be devised.

Kris Bartanen observed that job descriptions should be written as broad as possible so as to include the interests of people of color. Terry noted that departments tend to push for an ideal of what they want which narrows the job descriptions. However, deans tend to look for flexible people and criteria that can fill as many needs as possible. Rosabeth Gibson stated that broad job descriptions are good because if one strays too far from the description in hiring, one must open a new search.

Kris asked the Committee to help increase the salience of diversity issues across the curriculum as the faculty is currently constructed. She noted Committee members should do what they can to support diversity efforts as currently established; for example, attend presentations and encourage students to sign up for courses.

Carrie Washburn noted that the diversity of content of our curriculum has grown considerably even though the number of faculty of color has not. Kris stated that departments are now asked the following question during curriculum reviews: what have you done to diversify your curriculum?

Terry discussed the departmental weighing of ethnicity and gender in the search process. He noted that departments take these into account although they are not the only criteria. He and Kris encourage departments to take a second look at applicant pools to reevaluate candidates of color.

The meeting ended at 5:30 p.m. The last two meetings of the year are scheduled for April 9th and 23rd at 4:00-5:00 in HO 303.

Respectfully submitted,

George M. Guilmet