

Committee on Diversity  
Meeting Minutes for Monday 26 March 2012

Committee Members Present: Kim Bobby, Westley Dang, Lisa Ferrari, Zaixin Hong, Pepa Lago-Grana, Margi Nowak, Susan Owen, Czarina E Ramsay, Amy Ryken (Chair), Megan Sykes, Kurt Walls

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 am

Minutes for 5 March 2012 were approved with no amendments.

Announcements:

1. On March 23, 2012, BGLAD (our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, & Questioning Student organization) held their 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Drag Show in the UPS Fieldhouse, had 449 people in attendance and raised \$2400.00, the money primarily to be used to support the LGBT Leadership Scholarship that is awarded to a returning student for the following school year.
2. March 26, 2012, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Take Back the Night will take place, an annual program to address issues of gender and gender based violence within our Puget Sound community. Feminist author/activist Heather Corrina will discuss the history and value of this movement and a campus march will then follow.
3. March 27, 2012, 6:00-9:00 p.m. Witney's Lights, a documentary, will be shown about issues of domestic violence awareness/education. Co-sponsored by Greek Life.
4. March 28, 2012, 7:00-8:30 p.m. Stacey Ann Chin, a self-described out-poet and political activist, will speak about her experiences of growing up in Jamaica and the consequences of her coming out.
5. March 31, 2012, 8 p.m. & April 1, 2012, 2 p.m. The Seattle Men's Chorus will present "Come Together, The Music of the Beatles". McCaw Hall, Seattle Center
6. April 1, 2012, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. There will be Green Dot Bystander Training workshop, for a focused and extensive look at power based violence prevention and people's role as bystanders.
7. April 12, 2012, 6:00-8:00 p.m. The Tacoma Art Museum hosts Puget Sound Night @ Tacoma Art Museum. Tours of the Hide/SEEK Exhibit will be offered during that time.

Members of the committee commented on the issues of local domestic violence in relation to those instances of social injustice elsewhere in this country and abroad, such as the shooting of Trayvon Martin in Florida, massacres in the Mideast, the recent shooting in France, etc. One member referred to Eugene Robinson's editorial "Black, and in Mortal Danger on the Street" (the *Washington Post* on 24 March 2012), suggesting that the Florida shooting could have some relationship to the murder of Emmett Till in August of 1955. Such issues are critical, and have mobilized social movements like the civil right movement. Student representatives to the committee briefed us how students use the Puget Sound Facebook webpage to blog about their experience of related issues. Some students post their opinions on the Huffington Post as well.

Agenda Items:

1. Continue Discussion of Diversity and the Puget Sound Curriculum

The committee deliberated on two current institutional approaches (a list of diversity courses and the 5-year departmental curriculum review process) to diversity and the curriculum. Considering how currently departments and programs respond to the question—“In what ways does the curriculum in your department, school, or program reflect the diversity of our society?” the chair suggested three possible alternatives to leaving the question as it is, and solicited pros and cons accordingly:

(a) Add to the campus definition of social diversity, "Characteristics that could cause groups or individuals to be systematically excluded from full participation in higher education, including age, disability, gender, race/ethnicity, religion/spiritual tradition, sexual orientation, job status or socioeconomic class, personal appearance, and political beliefs."

(b) Re-Phrase the Question: How does your department, school, or program engage diversity in relation to recruitment, curriculum, pedagogy, professional membership, and in interactions with students?

(c) Add statements from the campus mission statement.

As one member observed, social diversity issue starts with the definition and ends up with questions. Committee members discussed whether to incorporate more global statements (such as key ideas from the diversity statement: to create respect for and appreciation of all persons; to foster a spirit of openness to active engagement among all; to prepare effectively citizen-leaders for a pluralistic world) would be too vague or not, whether departments would feel under the pressures to apply them, depending on the department's situation, and whether, given the focus of the department, all these will be relevant, or may be irrelevant.

The Chair noted that the paragraph is getting longer when writing down the definition of diversity, and asked whether members of the committee agree to communicate with the Curriculum Committee on these alternatives, and whether to address sameness and difference would make it better or worse. One member expressed her conviction that the rephrased question is good, being respectful yet not apologizing: we want the departments to answer, for the social diversity issue will not go away. Another member agreed that in so doing the departments are given the opportunity to write their answers. The university has so many issues to deal with, and diversity one will be a good place to start.

One member reported that in a Curriculum Committee meeting last Friday, the committee members briefly discussed the Senate charge. The Curriculum Committee sub-committee exploring adding a diversity component to the core has not yet been able to

meet. Members of the Curriculum Committee stated that they welcome suggestions from the Committee on Diversity about how to re-phrase the curriculum review question.

In connection with the spreadsheet of diversity-related courses, committee members considered several suggestions.

Chair mentioned the agenda for the next meeting, including discussion on the draft the 2011-2012 Diversity Committee report to the Senate.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 am.

Respectfully submitted, Zaixin Hong, Art Department