

Minutes of the Diversity Committee Meeting of October 18, 2007

Present: Nancy Nieraeth, Nila Weise, Mike Valentine, Margi Nowak, Monica DeHart, Janet Marcavage, Heather Ahuero, Stacey Weiss, Paula Meiers, Marcos Goldstein, Kim Bobby, Judith Kay, Heather Clifford, Carol Lentz

Mike Valentine called the meeting to order at 8:10.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved (MSP).

Announcements:

- Stacey Weiss reported that she summarized our self-report to the Senate. She invited us to Senate meetings, which are held Mondays at 4PM in McCormick.
- Nancy Nieraeth announced that the Race and Pedagogy Initiative Group is having its third book club, reading *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* by Sherman Alexie. Books are free and the group will meet Nov. 30th at noon. The announcement will go out next week.

Discussion led by Mike Valentine: "What Shall we do This Year?"

- Valentine initiated a discussion about the Diversity Committee's charges and our purpose.

***Charge #1.** Continue working with the Office of Admission, the Office of Human Resources, and other appropriate offices and governing bodies in support of efforts to recruit and retain an increasingly talented and diverse faculty, staff, and student body.*

How can we offer to help admissions with retention?

- In the past there has been a calling effort by faculty and students.
- There has been a focused effort in the science area for recruiting diverse students.
- Paula Meiers reported that Fumio Sugihara is a new person in admissions working on outreach to underrepresented students. He joins a group of three other admission staff members working on outreach to underrepresented students. A student staff member will also be hired to work on outreach to underrepresented students once fall travel is over and a staff supervisor is in place.

***Charge # 2.** Continue a program of national participation by sending delegates to gather information at one of the several conferences devoted to diversity issues in higher education.*

- In the past, funding was predominantly used by students for travel and registration to regional diversity meetings and conferences. This diversity committee funding may be designated for any students or faculty to attend meetings, not just diversity committee members.
- Funding was also donated to the Race and Pedagogy Conference in the past.

Charge # 3. *Provide liaisons between the faculty, staff, and student organizations related to diversity issues and continue working with the Student Diversity Center and the Office of Multicultural Student Services to support the work of the Student Diversity Center organizations, Diversity Theme Year, and other existing and emerging organizations and programs.*

- Yoshiko is updating the list of student groups that we signed up to be liaisons for at our last meeting.

Charge #4. *Work with appropriate University groups to promote language in University documents that encourages and rewards greater faculty involvement in creating and maintaining a welcoming and accepting climate for diverse students, staff and faculty.*

- This is a substantial charge that will be discussed throughout the year.

Charge #5. *Support the Chief Diversity Officer in developing and implementing the Strategic Diversity Plan for the Puget Sound Campus.*

- We need to look at the Strategic Diversity Plan with Kim Bobby. She will brief us in areas where the Diversity Committee can be supportive.

Charge # 6. *In collaboration with the Chief Diversity Office and the Dean of Students, constitute the Bias and Hate Education Response Team (BHERT) and forward recommendations regarding its institutional home and the annual process for constituting its membership.*

- Kim Bobby passed out a framework for the core members of BHERT. There is a second ring of individuals who would be called upon when there is a need for a greater perspective.
- Bobby brought up graffiti incidents that have been occurring on campus recently that have become more aggressive. The graffiti has occurred in the library, on computers, and in some of the other buildings. We do not know who is doing the graffiti. Facilities has been cleaning it up. The graffiti incident is something that BHERT can address with an organized group of individuals. Bobby asked for suggestions on who should be asked to serve in this group. Should we have a forum as we did regarding the “thug life” incident?
- A discussion ensued regarding consideration for core group and second ring members of BHERT.

Human Resources: Nancy Nieraeth agreed to serve in the core group

Facilities: We will need to reach out

ASUPS: Perhaps a student who is a member of the Diversity Committee can serve if they wish to do so. Present student members were asked to consider serving.

Faculty Diversity Committee Member: Chairs Nila Weise and Mike Valentine agreed to serve.

Diversity Committee Member: Monica De Hart agreed to serve in the second ring.

Faculty Senate Representative: It was suggested that an invitation be sent to Doug Cannon to serve in the second ring.

Ombudsperon: Grace Kirchner is currently on leave

- We'd like to see some representation in BHERT from outside of the Diversity Committee, to bring more people into the conversation.
- Addressing recent national issues may be something that BHERT can do.
- Bobby reported that invitations to serve on BHERT will be sent out next week.

Charge # 7. *Consult with the Race and Pedagogy Initiative Task Force regarding its suggestions on the diversity work of the campus, including diversity training and advance planning of major diversity events.*

- **The Faculty Senate has struck this charge.** They agreed that Kris would forward the Diversity Committee an invitation to address some of the ideas brainstormed by the RPI Task Force (which she has done), and that these issues could be addressed by the Diversity Committee within the context of their existing charges.
- Valentine will forward these suggestions to the committee and we will be able to prioritize them.

Weise and Valentine encouraged student members to jump into the conversation as we move forward and ask questions about anything discussed at the meetings.

Carol Lentz from Academic Advising attended this meeting as a staff representative. Staff Senate will be determining whether Carol will be the ongoing representative.

De Hart reported that she met with DTY yesterday. They are looking for funds for cultural competency training that we may consider supporting. She also suggested that we could bring training and other diversity activities to the UPS campus. Overall, this will increase our faculty and student participation.

Wiese reported that a Burlington Grant was granted to bring in a speaker.

Nieraeth reported that Human Resources has funding for diversity training.

Bylaws

Valentine distributed a copy of the faculty bylaws so that members can review them before the next meeting.

- Do we want to better define our role through the language in the bylaws?
- How do we want to prioritize our work for this year?

Judith Kay raised discussion about the Senate meeting coming up and consideration about how we want to involve the senate in the conversation regarding the Diversity

Committee's role.

- Issues of the Diversity Committee's purview and accountability were raised in our final report from last spring. The Senate did not address them.
- Do we want some initial direction from the Senate? Should we have a preliminary proposal to take to the Senate?
- There is some momentum now that Bobby was appointed as Chief Diversity Officer, for addressing diversity issues on campus.
- Should we change the composition of the committee?
- Is it a problem where we are located?
- A student member expressed confusion regarding who we are and what we are supposed to.

Wiese, Valentine, and Bobby will meet to discuss some of the committee's concerns regarding our purview.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Marcavage