

## **Minutes of the Diversity Committee Meeting of November 1, 2007**

Present: co-chairs Nila Weise and Mike Valentine, Heather Ahuero, Kim Bobby, Heather Clifford, Kate Cohn, Monica DeHart, Judith Kay, Janet Marcavage, Paula Meiers, Nancy Nieraeth, Margi Nowak, Carrie Washburn, Stacey Weiss

**Nila Wiese called the meeting to order at 8:03.**

**The minutes of the previous meeting were approved (motion by Judith Kay, seconded by Monica DeHart).**

### **Announcements:**

- Judith Kay announced the upcoming (11/8/07 in Kilworth Chapel) performance of “An Evening with Madame F”: a Kristallnacht commemoration by Claudia Stevens, a former concert pianist turned dramatic artist, about the women who served in the Auschwitz orchestra.
- “The New Orleans Monologues” opens Friday, November 9.
- Kate Cohn announced upcoming events associated with the Save Darfur Coalition: speeches by two Darfuri refugees in Kilworth tomorrow at 4 p.m., torch parades and speeches at 2 p.m. downtown on 17<sup>th</sup> and Pacific.
- Heather Ahuero announced the 11/13/07 observance of a transgender day of remembrance.

### **Update on Faculty Senate meeting (Nila Weise)**

- Several committee members attended last Monday’s Faculty Senate meeting to talk about concerns and role of the Committee on Diversity. Conversation was good, hope is that it will be ongoing.
- Faculty Senate added the charge we requested regarding changing our bylaws and welcomes our proposed changes to bylaws. The Senate will work the draft language we submit into an appropriate form.
- The Senate is acting on changing our membership to include the Chief Diversity Officer; they have drafted the language for this change and will discuss it at the next Senate meeting.
- It was noted that we are one of only two Senate committees that don’t have an adjudicatory role. Suggestion was that we identify some activities and include them in the bylaws as annual charges.
- The committee was reminded that the Faculty Senate cannot address our relationship to administrative vice presidents and how we “assist” in those areas, but Chief Diversity Officer can act as liaison; her role on campus and relationship with the committee gives authority to requests we might make in administrative areas.
- The Faculty Senate didn’t discuss the retention report we submitted last year, but it will be on the next meeting agenda, and we were encouraged both to air the report to the full faculty and consider establishing the report as a regular duty in our bylaws. Weise suggested that we may want to discuss this more before we air the report to the full faculty, first discovering

- Why are we giving it to the whole faculty (purpose of distribution)?
- Why were we asked to do this report initially?

Stacey Weiss can explore these questions and report back to the committee from the Senate.

- The Senate wanted to know “who is BHERT?” We discussed using BHERT as a way to take action (advertising idea: BHERT the character), and Bobby suggested that we can leverage the question to improve understanding of BHERT’s role.

### **Bylaws Changes Discussion (all)**

- Agreed: we have the Senate’s attention now; let’s take the time to draft Bylaws changes.
- Method suggested: brainstorming discussion in the committee, then appoint a subcommittee to draft changes.
- Washburn reminded us of the timeline: bylaws changes require some time for Senate to review, then two reads by the faculty (there are only two more faculty meetings in spring term, one in February, one in March), and finally to Board of Trustees in May.
- Decision: we will provide our draft to the Senate by the end of fall term.

### **Brainstorming Discussion about Other Regular Business (all)**

- As a faculty committee, we should focus on faculty. Two areas where we might place particular emphasis are an annual development day for faculty on diversity and emphasizing faculty hiring (e.g. conducting workshops on faculty hiring). [This year’s faculty development workshop sponsored by Julie Neff-Lippman occurs January 17 and 18, 2008. Can we ensure that someone from the committee is on that planning group each year?]
- Bobby suggested an annual event, right before LogJam, where we reflect as an entire campus on diversity. Such an event would remind us of diversity as a campus core value and create culture change.
- Question: if we continue to act as liaison for student groups representing diversity, is that the best use of our energy?
- With the Senate’s support, we could create liaison roles to other faculty Senate committees, to create threads of connection, collaboration, and conversation.
- We could establish annual goals for diversity and report on outcomes to Chief Diversity Officer as part of larger campus-wide progress (Diversity Audit).
- We could sponsor a faculty mentoring program, focus on retention of faculty from historically underrepresented populations, and work toward ensuring that evaluation and faculty reward systems are supporting faculty diversity.
- We could create awareness of the “whole person” in our hiring processes—assist candidates from underrepresented populations to connect with people in the community during their candidacy.
- We could continue our outreach with accepted students of color.

- We could create a small summit with the Race and Pedagogy Initiative, gender studies, African American Studies, Latin American Studies (either regularly scheduled or on an ad-hoc basis).
- We could publish our agenda to other committees' chairs (Weiss suggested we might meet with other groups as we're redrafting our bylaws).
- We could build mechanisms to support the Chief Diversity Officer as she leads the campus in carrying out the Diversity Strategic Plan.
- Considering a scorecard approach, we could identify for the campus areas of achievement and make recommendations regarding areas needing improvement.

De Hart suggested, in defining our annual activities, we should look at what these ideas tell us about our role; separating those items under Faculty Senate purview from the things we will do to support Cabinet/Jones Hall may help us prioritize.

Subcommittee identified: Kim Bobby, Nila Weise, Mike Valentine, and Judith Kay  
Subcommittee will draft suggestions and circulate for feedback, bringing a next draft back to the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 by co-chair Weise.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Nieraeth