

**Diversity Committee Minutes**  
**December 4, 2002**

**Committee members attending:** Kris Bartanen, Nancy Bristow, Rosa Beth Gibson, David Macey, George Mills, Randy Nelson, Blaire Notrica, Margi Nowak, Jac Royce, David Scott, eboni treco, Ivy West. Invited guest: Jane Brazell

The meeting started at 3:10 with some announcements.

Bartanen invited members of the committee to nominate themselves for a Campus Harassment Policy Task Force to be appointed by the President that, starting spring 2003, will take comments and recommend general policies for complaint resolution regarding discriminatory harassment; The second session on Race and Pedagogy will take place 12-1 12/9 in Trimble Forum.

Treco announced the play "for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf" is being presented several times this weekend.

Minutes for 11/20 were approved with some minor corrections.

Blaire Notrica suggested that the Diversity Committee should nominate someone for an honorary degree. Nancy Bristow commented that because of the immediate deadline, we could do it in the future.

Bartanen reported that the Faculty Senate supported the idea of ASL (American Sign Language) being the curriculum, but that curricular decisions rest with the Curriculum Committee. At the next meeting, the Curriculum Committee will discuss accepting ASL for the current Communication IIB core rubric and at a later meeting will discuss adding it to the new core curriculum.

Brazell provided the committee with detailed information about ASL and the culture of the deaf community. She indicated that there are three types of signing in the US, ASL, Pidgin and Signing in Exact English. Sign language in German or French is very different with different signs and, not surprisingly, different grammar. The first two have similar signs but different grammar rules while the last has different signs. Cultural elements covered a wide range of items. Deaf people do not enter rooms with closed doors since closed doors are the equivalent of whispering and signal the conversation is private. In a conversation you should keep looking at the person you are talking to since looking away is like turning your back. She mentioned that Martha's Vineyard was predominantly deaf until the early 1900's and cited the book "Everyone Here Spoke Sign Language". The deaf were mostly in mental institutions until the 1930's. The Pacific Northwest is rich in deaf culture. Communication at a distance is impossible in darkness. The deaf will turn the base and volume to feel music, and where in the body it is felt makes a difference to them.

Nowak observed that spoken language works in the modality of time and sign language works in the modality of space and that one objective in understanding is to begin to think like the other side.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55.

Respectively submitted

David Scott