Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity  
Monday January 22, 2007

Minutes

Present: Ross Edmonds, Deborah Morgan, Ann Kilkelly, Carlos Evia, Sue Ellen Crocker, Linda Woodard, Sam Camden, Sheila Carter-Tod, Maggie Sloane (for Kevin McDonald), Patricia Smith, Jack Davis, Guy Sims (for Zenobia Hikes), Mike Taczak, Ray Plaza, Linda Woodard, Ruth Grene

Absent: Craig Brians, Elizabeth Waterman, Saurabh Attarde, Aaren Salido, Zebib Bahta, Maxine Lyons, Kim Beisecker, Valerie Hardcastle, Brad Klein, Pat Hyer, Rick Shingles, Antionette Stroter, Elisa Sotelino

Guests: Bernice Hausman, Jane Ann Williams

I. Call to Order
The agenda was adopted.

II. Chair Report
Carlos opened the meeting by sharing that the only thing the President asked him at the commission chairs meeting was the status of the diversity strategic plan. The revisions to the diversity strategic plan must be a priority for CEOD this semester. There is a taskforce working on this document, but it needs to become a priority for the entire commission. Ray shared that next Monday everyone will receive a copy of what the taskforce has put together so far. The goal is to present to the BOV in the summer. Before then, it needs to be vetted among various groups throughout the university community. The biggest issue is the measurement of the tasks. There needs to be an annual assessment as part of the revised plan which means there must be measurable tasks and realistic time frames. The new vice president will have an opportunity to review the revised plan and possibly provide some feedback/changes. It was requested that the document be shared prior to Monday’s meeting so that members can review it ahead of time and be prepared for the discussion.

III. Questions from the Committee on Faculty Ethics
Bernice Hausman presented a document on behalf of the Committee on Faculty Ethics (CFE), a subcommittee of Faculty Senate. Faculty Senate asked for statement from CEOD and CFE about dealing with faculty behaviors that contravene the Principles of Community but don’t violate university policies. CFE is appropriate body to deal with behaviors that are not covered by the Office for Equal Opportunity or other policies. The point was raised that Staff Senate will not deal with staff conduct issues and also some concern regarding how AP and special research faculty will be dealt with when they violate the principles since neither group is part of Faculty Senate. It was determined that there needs to be more time to rework the document, so it will be put on the agenda for the February 12 meeting and in the meantime, members are tasked with sharing the document with their respective constituent groups and sharing feedback and recommendations with Carlos. There was consensus about the need to ensure that it can be applied institutionally with consistency.

IV. MLK Celebrations
Ray shared that it was successful week but there were some continuing challenges since it was the first week of classes. There was approximately 1600-1700 for keynote speaker, Yolanda King. A number of individuals did not have an opportunity to attend in part because the confirmation of her as the keynote occurred so late. In response, there will be an encore showing of her presentation. The Community Breakfast was well attended with 260 participants. Service activities occurred throughout the week and staff were encouraged to use their community service hours by participating in the activities. There were
two MOSAIC interest sessions and about 125 at the literary event with Nikki Giovanni and Lerone Bennett. The forum with the Taskforce on Race and the Institution only had about 30 participants but there was some good conversation. The week concluded with the Diversity Summit. There will be some reflection meetings to determine what to plan for next year.

Ruth provided an overview of the Diversity Summit. There were three activities. The first was a myth and reality activity dealing with English language and its usage (grammatical and mainstream). The second was the “Classified” performance in which theatre students told stories of students from VT dealing with issues of diversity. It really moved the participants and was very powerful. Finally, participants played the World Trade Game which everyone seemed to enjoy. It was highly interactive. It was suggested that more time needs to be spent with pulling it together at the end. Additionally, there was a real need for trained facilitators. The identification and training of facilitators needs to happen in advance of the summit. It was suggested to do the facilitator training at a CEOD meeting. Members need to understand this is an expectation of their role.

**V. Announcements**

Ray shared that VP search applications close this week. The search committee meets next Monday and as of last week there were 55 applicants. The committee hopes to do on-campus interviews either right before or right after spring break. The Taskforce on Race and the Institution will release the interim progress report at the end of this week. The report is currently over 100 pages. Feedback will be gathered once it is released. The recommendations are preliminary at this time. There are interest sessions for the MOSAIC theme housing community and members will be sent a frequently asked questions document. The hope is to have 200 students by fall 2007. Instructors are needed for the class. Interested individuals should contact Alicia.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m. for taskforce work.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission