Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity  
Monday, October 30, 2006

Minutes

Present: Ross Edmonds, Deborah Morgan, Ann Kilkelley, Carlos Evia, Elisa Sotelino, Sue Ellen Crocker, Ruth Grene, Linda Woodard, Sam Camden, Antionette Stroter, Kris Tilley-Lubbs, Sheila Carter-Tod, Kevin McDonald, Aaren Salido, Patricia Smith, Valerie Hardcastle, Jack Davis, Guy Sims (for Zenobia Hikes), Rick Shingles, Kim Beisecker, Maxine Lyons, Ben Dixon

Absent: Alexis Bozzo, Craig Brians, Elizabeth Waterman, Saurabh Attarde, Pat Hyer, Mike Taczk, Ray Plaza, Brad Klein

Guests: Jennie Reilly, Sarah Wang, Jane Ann Williams, Terry Kershaw, Hardus Odendaal, Maggie Sloane

I. Call to Order
The agenda was adopted.

II. Chair Report
Carlos opened the meeting by sharing that the Dance of Nations was a huge success and that the first meeting of the search committee for the Vice President for Multicultural Affairs was last week. The chair of the search committee is Jerry Niles. He then introduced the first guest speaker, Hardus Odendaal, a faculty member in the Computer Engineering department. He shared information on the faculty net/club initiative. There is considerable interest in the creation of a faculty club. The biggest resource at Virginia Tech is the human resource but there is a lack of community and engagement among faculty, staff and administrators. Work/life issues are extremely important for the future of Virginia Tech. In response a Faculty Net group has formed with socials once a month. Additionally, the president and provost are supportive of the creation of a faculty club. The biggest resource at Virginia Tech is the human resource but there is a lack of community and engagement among faculty, staff and administrators. Work/life issues are extremely important for the future of Virginia Tech. In response a Faculty Net group has formed with socials once a month. Additionally, the president and provost are supportive of the creation of a faculty club. There is considerable interest in the creation of a faculty club. The biggest resource at Virginia Tech is the human resource but there is a lack of community and engagement among faculty, staff and administrators. Work/life issues are extremely important for the future of Virginia Tech. In response a Faculty Net group has formed with socials once a month. Additionally, the president and provost are supportive of the creation of a faculty club.

The second guest speaker was Terry Kershaw who is the director of Africana Studies. He is the first of many speakers to share what kinds of courses are being offered dealing with diversity issues as well as research and outreach. He shared a handout of the summary of the history of Black Studies/Africana Studies at VT from 1992-2006 as well as the charter for the Center for Africana Studies and Race and Social Policy Research and then answered questions from commission members.

Carlos shared that a memo went out stating an English only policy in a lab on campus. There was considerable discussion about this issue. While the reason behind the policy is makes sense, since there are many issues surrounding English conversation skills for international students, the policy is in violation of the Principles of Community, university policies, and raises legal issues as well. It was suggested that this is both a formal process, through the Office for Equal Opportunity, and a learning opportunity. It was suggested that Carlos work with Kevin on this issue. Kim shared that the ELI classes are very expensive and many students can’t afford to take that class. Tony raised the creation of a team to respond to incidents like this as a possibility for the commission.

Announcements
Ross passed out posters for Revelations.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission