

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, January 23, 2006

Minutes

Present: Sam Camden, LaChelle Waller, Sue Ellen Crocker, Ross Edmonds, Susan Willis-Walton, Kevin McDonald, Ann Kilkelly, Kris Tilley-Lubbs, Anna LoMascolo (for Ellen Plummer), Ray Plaza, Michael Goode, Rick Shingles (for Susan Anderson), Pat Hyer, Jean Brickey, Ruth Grene, Carlos Evia, Zenobia Hikes, Ben Dixon, Maxine Lyons, Richard Benson, Valerie Harcastle, Debbi Morgan (for Linda Woodard)

Absent: Marilyn Kershaw, Sumeet Bagai, Kim Beisecker, Craig Brians, Edd Sewell, Angela Kim, Bhavik Shah

Guests: Jennie Reilly, Akilah Chopfield

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted.

II. Chair Report

Copy of brochure developed by Carlos' class on the Principles of Community and how students and student organizations can use them was distributed. It will be mailed later this week to all student organizations.

III. Post Event Update - Diversity Summit and MLK Planning

A. MLK Celebration

Sometime in the next few weeks the planning committee will get together to reflect on the activities and develop an open call to recruit members for planning the 2007 celebration. They will also be preparing a report for the BOV. Ray asked for feedback on the events. Many suggested that there needs to be more description on events so people better understand what is happening. It was also recommended that a new podium and other improvements to Burruss Auditorium be put forth. There was public acknowledgement of Ray and his work. Ben shared some of the responses including money for the MLK memorial that have been received by the Office for Multicultural Affairs. The breakfast was really a wonderful event with the community involvement. There was not a big turnout for the community service projects on Monday, but Tuesday through Friday the projects were in Squires and many more participated. The question was raised as to whether or not the university needs to depend on a donor each year. It was suggested to attempt to involve corporate donors. The student response was really positive, but it was difficult for students to attend activities during the day because of classes. Many were pleased to see Virginia Tech doing something proactive. Ray is working on getting a copy of Jesse Jackson's speech and transcript. UPN taped it and aired it multiple times.

B. Diversity Summit

Ray began with thanks to Valerie and the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences Diversity Committee for sponsoring the poster session prior to the summit. It was well received. The summit was very well attended. The feedback was that there were really too many activities – it would have been better to have one less activity. Students did an excellent job in spearheading the activities. The committee will evaluate this year's summit to aid in the planning for next year. Many participants liked the action piece. The challenge is incorporating activities for both those who have been before as well as those who attend for the first time. It was suggested to consider having role plays next year as part of the activities. Conversation then extended to whether there needs to be another summit or how we can use existing events to keep the momentum and focus. Michael suggested having some existing events be tied

more closely together like the diversity summit, face-to-face, and campus climate check-up. Ann recommended the commission practice the activity at a meeting. Ben suggested that since next year is the 10th summit and we can plan something special around that. Jennie asked that disabilities be worked in as part of diversity.

IV. Task Force Updates:

A. College Diversity Committee

This group is working to reactivate diversity committees and is creating a diversity monitoring and assessment system. This system will begin in the colleges but will migrate to administrative offices. The goal is to have diversity committees in every college and every major administrative unit with focus on a common agenda. They are looking for committees to be doing something in the areas (climate, recruitment, education and training, outreach). Part of the process will be two annual reports – one reflecting on what was done last year and was it successful according to metrics and the second being prospective – what is the plan for the coming year and how will it be measured.

B. Diversity in the Faculty Promotion Process

This group is looking at how P&T guidelines could be better communicated with faculty. In the area of student evaluations of teaching Terry Wildman is about to launch an effort to revise this process which will include electronic surveys.

C. Data and Research Support

There is a February 1 meeting where a summary on exit survey data on the staff end will be presented. Terry is working on cleaning up some of the data and evaluation related to students. The alumni survey is on hold while Terry works to revise the survey, etc.

D. Policy Integration

This group is meeting today and are working on conducting focus groups with staff.

E. Campus Climate

The group hasn't met recently. The Safewatch site is up and running. They will be working during the semester and will do a beta test of the site during the semester with Carlos' class so that by the end of the semester edits can be made to the site. Tom Brown's area is ready to respond. Student Affairs will be responsible for the press releases on this.

Announcements

Black History Month Events (for calendar: <http://www.mcp.vt.edu/BlackHistoryMonth%201/Black-History-Month-1.html>.) are now available on-line. Additionally, the 3rd Annual Mid-Atlantic Conference on the Scholarship of Diversity is February 2-3. Part of Mid-Atlantic Conference will be an ADVANCE track. Additionally there is a performance, "Open the Window" at 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 2 at the Lyric. Tickets are available from the UUSA Ticket Office. Ray asked if the commission should we do anything special for the 1st anniversary of the Principles of Community on March 14. Members should think about that and come prepared to discuss it at the meeting next week. It was suggested to devote one hour of next week's meeting to task forces. The first hour will be for task forces, so the commission will officially start its meeting at 11:00 a.m. Kevin shared that there is a design team developing a conflict resolution program if CEOD members are interested in joining the design team they should contact Kevin. March is Women's Month and individuals are encouraged to submit event proposals. The revision to the How To Guide for the Principles of Community will be on the website shortly.

Meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission