

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

Minutes

Present: Sam Camden, LaChelle Waller, Ross Edmonds, Susan Willis-Walton, Kevin McDonald, Ann Kilkelly, Kris Tilley-Lubbs, Ray Plaza, Michael Goode, Rick Shingles (for Susan Anderson), Pat Hyer, Jean Brickey, Ruth Grene, Carlos Evia, Ben Dixon, Valerie Harcastle, Linda Woodard, Cynthia Bonner (for Zenobia Hikes), Kim Beisecker

Absent: Marilyn Kershaw, Sumeet Bagai, Maxine Lyons, Craig Brians, Edd Sewell, Angela Kim, Bhavik Shah, Sue Ellen Crocker, Richard Benson, Ellen Plummer, Tina Harvey

Guests: Jennie Reilly, Akilah Chopfield, Laura Gillman, Debbi Morgan

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted.

II. Chair Report

Ray reminded members that the candidates for Director of Multicultural Programs and Services will be on campus this week and next. He encouraged members to attend the open sessions. The Black History Month calendar was also distributed. The Dead Sea Scrolls presentation last Thursday was packed with standing room only. Tonight there is a performance at Gilbert Linkous Elementary School from the artists here for the "Open the Window" program on Thursday evening at the Lyric Theatre. Ann shared more detail about the performance. Tuesday evening at 7:30 p.m. in the Performing Arts Building will be a workshop with Elise Witt. Ben reminded members again about the upcoming Mid-Atlantic Conference on the Scholarship of Diversity.

III. Task Force Updates

A. College Diversity Committee

They are moving forward with the dissemination with the Diversity Monitoring and Assessment System for college diversity committees. In the few days following a similar request will be sent to administrative areas at the vice presidential level. Ray asked if the documents could be posted on Blackboard for commission members to view.

B. Diversity in the Faculty Promotion Process

They have written some draft guidelines and put together some examples. These will be shared with the university-level P&T committee. Broader distribution will occur after that meeting. The task force would like to share the document with the commission before presenting it to the university P&T committee. This will be shared at the February 13 meeting with discussion on February 27.

C. Data and Research Support

This group merged with Policy Integration since there is so much overlap. The staff leadership development program, McComas Leadership Conference, is scheduled for May 4 and they anticipate having some discussion with staff at that program.

D. Policy Integration

There are locations and dates for focus groups for faculty and staff to get feedback on how they use the policies. March 28 or 31 are the proposed dates. They hope to have 55 representatives of

faculty and staff from different levels. It will be called a Policy Improvement/Development Roundtable. The participants will break into smaller groups and task force members will facilitate the small group discussions. In advance, participants will be asked to do some work. They hope to enhance the How to Guide for the Principles of Community. The plan is to schedule the program from 11-3 with lunch provided.

E. Campus Climate

The task force would like to recommend some speakers to come to the commission including Harry Dyer, Betty Fine, and Terry Kershaw to speak about the undergraduate and graduate diversity certificate programs. Rick suggested that brochures and more information on the programs be shared prior to their visit. They also encourage members to click on the Diversity page from the university website to help improve that site. Since Michael Dame is now on campus, he can work with people in improving the website.

IV. Principles of Community

Ray asked members to consider what should be done to recognize the one-year anniversary of the Principles of Community. Valerie suggested that at the start of each class that day faculty share the Principles of Community with students. Rick asked about having the principles in all classrooms. Ray shared that Physical Plant has agreed to post them under the Honor Code in all classrooms. Linda asked about the status of the translated versions. Ray said they are working on some final details but they do have them in 13 different languages. It was suggested maybe there could be a large poster with all the translations. Additionally, certain public locations like Squires would be good places to post these translations. Sam recommended a CT ad. Laura suggested the need to work with student groups to get them to lead teach-ins since some interpretation is needed. Kris reminded members that students must pass the TOFL exam in order to come here, so the interpretations are not necessary. The president could have a statement on the VT homepage. Jennie asked how the Principles are presented at orientation. She also added the possibility of getting Greek organizations and athletics more involved. Ray added that Penny Cook is organizing a women's leadership conference in March and the Principles will be a part of that. Ross suggested having a panel discussion on the interpretations on the Principles.

Announcements

Tom Brown and Rick Sparks will be at the February 27 meeting to share the changes they have made in the orientation program. The meeting on February 13 will again devote the first hour to task forces. BGSO and NAACP are sponsoring Ebony Affair on February 17th. A flier with details has been sent to commission members. Jennie shared that Edd Sewell will be taking Craig Brian's position for the semester as he is out ill.

Meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission