

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday February 12, 2007

Minutes

Present: Ross Edmonds, Deborah Morgan, Carlos Evia, Linda Woodard, Sam Camden, Sheila Carter-Tod, Maggie Sloane (for Kevin McDonald), Patricia Smith, Guy Sims (for Zenobia Hikes), Mike Taczak, Ray Plaza, Ruth Grene, Elizabeth Sotelino, Jean Brickey (for Maxine Lyons), Brad Klein, Antionette Strotter, Valerie Hardcastle, Ann Kilkelly, Aaren Salido, Rick Shingles, Jack Davis, Pat Hyer

Absent: Craig Brians, Elizabeth Waterman, Saurabh Attarde, Zebib Bahta, Sue Ellen Crocker, Kim Beisecker

Guests: Tony Gambill, Jane Ann Williams, Sarah Wang, Bernice Hausman, Jonathan McCloud, Pat Burton

I. Call to Order

The agenda was adopted.

II. Chair Report

Carlos welcomed Bernice Hausman as a follow-up to her presentation on January 22. She distributed a revised draft of a document from the Committee on Faculty Ethics regarding ethical behavior and the Principles of Community. This draft has been reviewed by the Commission on Administrative and Faculty Affairs and Pat Hyer. The issue is that the Principles of Community are not actionable because they are not policy. Therefore, the draft emphasizes the Principles of Community are grounded in principles of ethical behavior. There were no changes recommended to the document. It will be presented to Faculty Senate tomorrow.

III. Employee Advisory Committee

Linda requested a CEO representative for the Employee Advisory Committee (EAC). This committee will create human resources policies for university staff. This new classification was formed as part of the restructuring act and includes anyone hired on or after July 1, 2006, as well as any classified staff that request a change to university staff status. They have conducted focus groups to gain feedback as this committee gets formed. It will be comprised of 20 staff, chairs of the commissions that work with employee personnel policies, a representative from the employee benefits committee and one from the CEO. Any faculty or staff member interested in serving should let Carlos know. There are several policy or program areas that will not be changed with the authority granted under the Restructuring Act. These include health insurance, retirement, staff grievance procedures, or workers compensation. The EAC will be probably in place for 1 to 1½ years with the earliest implementation in summer 2008. The committee will likely meet twice a month for 1½ to 2 hours. Classified staff will continue to be governed by state regulations and policies. The BOV will have to approve any policies created for university staff.

IV. Commission-Wide Activity

Members were divided into five groups. The first activity focused on the profile development and the second focused on indicators of a diverse campus climate in 2012. A comment was made regarding the lack of a mixed race category. After considerable discussion time within the groups, each group reported out on their discussions. Some common themes included: a top priority must be in shifting the demographics of our undergraduate population, the need to increase pipeline initiatives, increase recruitment and financial aid packages, additional support (academic and co-curricular) for minorities in the science and engineering, and better support for family oriented communities. Also there was concern about the categories since they do not capture everything in terms of diversity. Other feedback included

that Virginia Tech should exceed state and national percentages as a goal in all categories, programs should reflect multicultural thinking, and long term images of campus should reflect multicultural thinking. Additionally, the kind of research and who the university does research with should be broadened. It was suggested that a significant retirement cohort in 2012 will open opportunities. Some questions were also posed including: Should state figures be a target? What is the critical mass of the various groups? In addition to recommending a new student perception survey in 2007 and then in 2012, there are instruments on cultural competence that might be used in our assessment of programs. Finally, one group recommended that the student body should reflect the state in general and then the faculty should reflect that of the student body and knowledge of other cultures among students, faculty, and staff is critical to the creation of a positive community atmosphere. There were still questions about what diversity means and concerns about focusing on numbers since there is more to diversity than race and ethnicity. Broader demographic questions need to be asked. The revised diversity strategic plan should be more conceptually oriented and will have both process and outcome measures. The revised plan will be shared at one of the next two CEOD meetings.

V. Announcements

Belle Wheelan will be speaking on February 28 at 8:30 a.m. in the Multipurpose Room of the GLC as part of the School of Education's Research Symposium. Jonathan McCloud shared that VT International World Cup, an international soccer tournament with over 250 participants from over 50 countries, will occur again this year. There are currently 10 other universities sending teams to participate. Individuals interested in participating or departments interested in funding should contact Jonathan. Carlos shared that the search for the Vice President for Multicultural Affairs is underway and phone interviews are being conducted.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission