

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, April 7, 2008

Minutes

Present: Sam Camden, Ross Edmonds, Jean Brickey, Ray Plaza, Hal Irvin, Elizabeth Gilboy (for Jack Davis), Mikhelle Taylor, Rick Shingles, Kelly Oaks, Daphney Rainey, Toni Stroter, Carlos Evia, Brad Klein, Kevin McDonald, Guy Sims (for Zenobia Hikes), Virgilio Centeno (for Elisa Sotelino), Shirley Cline (for Maxine Lyons and Sue Ellen Crockett)

Absent: Stevan Jackson, Kim Beisecker, Patricia Smith, Maxine Lyons, Pat Hyer, Deborah Morgan, Dennis Welch, Ann Kilkelly, Ruth Grene, Sheila Carter-Tod

Guests: Judy Ridinger, Maggie Sloane, Julie Walters Steele, Jennie Reilly

I. Call to Order

Daphne called the meeting to order. She was able to follow up with Natalie Hart, Director of NCAA Initiatives & Diversity Management in the Athletic Department and she will be attending the commission meeting on May 5 to talk about her role and how she might interact with the CEOD.

II. At-Large Openings

Ray shared information on the at-large positions available. There is one vacant at-large seat on CEOD for the upcoming 2008-09 academic year. This is open to all faculty/staff and students. In this position, faculty/staff serve for three years, students serve for one year. There is one vacant at-large Faculty/Staff seat on University Council. This is a one year appointment. There is one vacant at-large Student seat on University Council. This is a one year appointment. To apply, individuals should go to: www.ceod.org.vt.edu. The Priority deadline is Monday, April 28th.

III. Update from Implementation Team Taskforce

Guy Sims reported for the undergraduate group from the implementation team. They focused on access, student success, and climate. They are looking at existing programs and how to better market what we do have and enhance some of these programs. They have also identified a couple of new programs and are trying to develop what funds would be needed to support those. There was considerable discussion about how to better market programs both internally and externally. The university struggles with getting the word out regarding events pm campus. It was suggested that the CEOD could do some assessment of diversity programs next year. That would be an appropriate project for a taskforce.

A long discussion followed regarding training opportunities for faculty dealing with diversity, especially as it relates to classroom issues. It was suggested that a CEUT study group could be formed to look at this issue. Questions arose as to how to attract people who do not self select. There needs to be some incentive for faculty to attend. When there are classroom issues where students may feel they have been discriminated, some will go to Maggie Sloane in the Office for Equal Opportunity. Kevin informed members that a team (five faculty members and one graduate student) from VT is going to the Great Expectations Institute sponsored by AA&CU. They will be working on how to better integrate diversity in the curriculum. Daphney suggested the commission revisit some of these items and determine how to follow up on some of the issues raised at the next meeting. Some might be handled through taskforces.

IV. Announcements

Julie shared that GobblerFest is a new program this fall targeting first year students. There will be a street fair on Friday before the first home football game. Local businesses, university departments, student organizations, and service organizations will all be invited to participate. The idea is to celebrate and build community. This will lead into some late night programs in Squires Student Center that night. They are changing Squires building hours to stay open until 2:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. There will be a concert and pep rally at the end of the festival. Additionally, there will be a Principles of Community Wayne Robinson Faculty/Staff Walk/Run on campus. This coming weekend is Gateway. There are a number of events occurring for Asian Pacific American Islander Heritage Month.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission