

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, September 17, 2007

Minutes

Present: Ann Kilkelly, Rick Shingles, Sam Camden, Guy Sims (for Zenobia Hikes), Sue Ellen Crocker, Patricia Smith, Brad Klein, Kevin McDonald, Ross Edmonds, Maggie Sloane (for Kelly Oaks), Jean Brickey, Ray Plaza, Ruth Grene, Sheila Carter-Tod, Elizabeth Gilboy (for Jack Davis), Kim Beisecker, Linda Woodard, Dennis Welch, Toni Stroter, Elisa Sotelino

Absent: Daphne Rainey, Mikhelle Taylor, Pat Hyer, Carlos Evia, Paul Davis, Ingrid Ngai, Deborah Morgan

Guests: Julie Walters-Steele, Judy Ridinger, Amy Adams Hogan, Pat Burton, Jane Ann Williams

I. Call to Order

The agenda was adopted as amended.

II. Presentations

- A. Staff Diversity Guidelines – Amy Hogan reviewed the draft document created by the taskforce last year. The hope is that this document will provide guidance for employees and supervisors regarding what activities are appropriate. If individuals have comments on the draft document, they should send them to Alicia. This needs to be finalized before the end of October so that it can be used in the next performance planning period for 2008. There was considerable discussion regarding the need for education and training regarding this dimension for supervisors. Other concerns were raised, including the need for accountability. Some members shared that even though there are still areas in need of work, this is a good start and more guidance than supervisors and employees have ever had, so it is a step in the right direction. The taskforce will meet to continue to revise the document and will present it again at either the first or second meeting in October.
- B. Exit Survey – Virginia Tech did not previously have a regularly administered survey so this is an attempt to have something comprehensive and far reaching. Amy shared a draft of the exit survey to be administered to every faculty and staff member who leaves the university. The group has worked on this for the past nine months during which time they consulted individuals at VT as well as researched what other universities have in place. She emphasized that this is not a climate survey although some information will be obtained relating to climate both in the university and the local community. Members were asked to review the document so that it can be discussed at the next meeting.

III. Taskforce Review

It was recommended that Ruth send out a brief description of each of the taskforces so that members can determine which one they want to work with. The four taskforces for this fall include education, the language issue, diversity summit, and diversity in evaluations. Ruth would like a balance of faculty, staff and students on each taskforce, so members may not get their first choice.

IV. Constituent Reports

Sheila reported that the Black Caucus is waiting on the implementation team to determine priorities so they can collaborate with them. They have met to discuss the possibility of collaborating with OMA on a Black Constituency Conference in the Spring. Ray shared that the Hispanic Caucus was very busy after April 16 since they lost two students from that community. Members of the caucus handled the Spanish press and media in the aftermath. They are providing support to students affected by natural disasters in Central and South America. Hispanic Latino Heritage Month began September 15 and on September 25 there is a lunch with the caucus. In the spring there will be the first Hispanic Alumni Reunion Weekend following the 7th International Conference on Latin American Theatre Today. A question was raised regarding where/how to find a calendar with religious holidays on it. Kevin responded that there is a good calendar on the Office for Equal Opportunity website but unfortunately it cannot yet be integrated into the university calendar. It was suggested that such a calendar be an easy link for faculty through faculty access.

VIII. Announcements

Patricia Smith announced that the Tunnel of Oppression will be on campus in the Slusher Complex on Wednesday and Thursday of this week from 2:00 – 8:00 p.m. It is a multimedia exploration focusing on awareness, education and opportunity. More information will be sent to members on this program.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen
Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity