Cultural Diversity Committee
Minutes
August 22, 2003
2:10 pm – 3:00 pm

Present: Cathy Brack, Kyle Bruner, Barry Chung, Doris Derby, Christine Gallant, LaLoria Konata, Chuck Marvin, Lois Mohr, Linda Nelson, Cora Presley, Joe Rau, Fernando Reati, Hazel Scott, Susan Talburt, Sally Wallace, Leslie Williams.

Absent: Valerie Fennell, Chip Gallagher, John Peterson, Geoff Haydon.

After members introduced themselves, the meeting opened with the election of this year’s chair. Cora Presley was unanimously elected Chair.

The April minutes were approved as read.

Susan Talburt gave a progress report of her Subcommittee on the Campus Attitude Survey. They met twice over the summer, and are working on their proposal to submit to the Provost. Two members, Brian Dew and Chip Gallagher, are working on designing the survey; and they have been reviewing similar surveys of 13 other urban universities to see what is relevant for GSU. The Subcommittee is also using the Report of the Committee on Lesbian and Gay Concerns, “Enhancing Diversity: Toward a Better Campus Climate,” from Pennsylvania State University (1992), and the Rankin Report, “Campus Diversity Climate Assessment” (2000), that seems to be the standard in the field. Susan hopes to be able to get support for two GRAs from the College of Education to assist in the survey. The rest of her Subcommittee then will review the proposal before submitting it to the Provost. She is not sure whether her Subcommittee will be administering a paper survey or an online one, though it inclines toward a paper one for the sake of confidentiality. It depends upon the capabilities of the Office of Institutional Research.

Next there was discussion of the next secreatarial assistant for our committee, since the one that the English Department has supplied will no longer be available this year. Cora said that Senate rules state that the highest ranking persons on a committee are responsible for this, and since she is Acting Chair of the African American Studies Department, she would find a student assistant to handle this. Joe Rau stated that he too is chair of the Department of Cardiopulmonary Sciences, he too could assist with this. (Note: after the meeting adjourned, Linda Nelson said that her Office too could assist with this.)

Next Hazel Scott discussed a major University System initiative coming for GSU: the African American Male Initiative (AAMI) from the Board of Regents. The Provost has asked her to form a committee to implement AAMI, and wants it to work with the Cultural Diversity Committee. Hazel said that committee liaisons are needed. The committee will also include students, staff, faculty, and Lovell Lemons (Director of Community Services). Christine Gallant volunteered as a liaison, and said that while John Peterson could not come to our meeting today he had indicated that he was also interested if Hazel wished to contact him. Kyle Bruner also volunteered. Several names were suggested for Hazel to contact: Dr. Al McWilliams in the Department of Educational Policy Studies, and Drs. Makungu Akinyela and Akinyele Umoja from the African-American Studies Department.

The committee then discussed other issues for the coming year. Barry Chung said that the Department of Counseling and Psychological Services thought that one project for our committee should be the accessibility of the campus buildings for the disabled. Cora said that this would be a good project for us, especially with
our expanded definition of “diversity,” and asked Barry to coordinate our efforts. Cathy Brack volunteered to work with him on this also. Christine noted that after our committee reviews the situation, we should also involve the Planning and Development Committee since “maintenance of facilities” is one of their committee duties, and this issue is also a legal one under the Federal Disabilities Act.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.