Senate Cultural Diversity Committee Minutes
January 12, 2004
12:00-1:15

Present: Christine Gallant, Cora Presley, Leslie Williams, Valerie Fennell, Laloria Konata, Linda Nelson, Lois Mohr, John Peterson, Sally Wallace, Susan Talburt, Joe Rau, Charles Marvin, Chip Gallagher, Doris Derby

Absent: Hazel Scott, Fernando Reati, Barry Chung, Geoff Haydon, Jeffery Benson, Kyle Bruner, Marissa Johnson

1. The meeting was called to order at 12:10 pm and minutes from the November 10, 2004 meeting were approved.

2. Subcommittee Reports
   - African-American Male Initiative
     Hazel Scott, and Cora Presley gave an informal report for the African American Male Initiative subcommittee. The committee has met once since the last Cultural Diversity Committee meeting and reviewed the statistical data on the recruitment and retention of African American males. The Subcommittee plans to invite the directors of admissions and student services to its next meetings for briefings on current practices and policies for recruiting and retaining African American male students.

   - LGBT Climate Survey
     Susan Talburt and Cora Presley reported that she and Susan Talburt met with the Provost to gain his support for the LBGT climate survey. The Provost was very enthusiastic about the survey and committed the funds that were requested. As a result, Susan Talburt has contacted Office of Institutional Research and the survey is currently being formatted for distribution.

   - Disabilities Subcommittee
     Cora Presley reported that she spoke with Marty Fraser, Chair of the Senate IS&T Committee. According to Dr. Fraser, the difficulty in securing software to enable persons with visual disabilities to better access WEBCT is that the software is underdeveloped. He confirmed that IS&T did form a committee to create a policy.

     Dr. Fraser stated that Carolyn Gard, Director of Educational Tech Support, is in the process of formulating a policy. Cora Presley reported that she would contact Carolyn Gard to determine the next steps in solving this problem.

     Christine Gallant proposed that the Carolyn Gard’s report should be routed to the Culture Diversity Committee for its review.

     Valerie Fennell stated we should find a way to convey the disability access policy to the faculty.

     Cora Presley suggested we appoint a liaison to the ADA Committee.

   - Recruitment Guidelines for Underrepresented Faculty
     John Peterson asked Presley to appoint a subcommittee of the Cultural Diversity Committee that could meet with the Colleges and talk with them about how Underrepresented Faculty Recruitment Guidelines are being implemented. The subcommittee would also assist Dr. Peterson in planning workshops for Department Chairs on recruiting underrepresented faculty. Peterson reported that he had not received reports from the representatives of each college on how guidelines for recruitment are being implemented. Christine Gallant was asked to gather the data from the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). She asked the committee senators from the various areas in CAS to contact the department chairs in their areas. She contacted those in Arts and the Humanities, and also the Natural Sciences since there were no committee
members from that area. She did so and sent follow-up emails. The only CAS replies received were from Chemistry, English, Foreign Languages, Mathematics and Statistics, African-American Studies, and Psychology. Lois Mohr submitted her report from the College of Business. The college supports the Ph.D. project to recruit Hispanic, Spanish, African-American & Asian candidates for graduate programs in Business. Gallant informally reported on the status of Health and Human Services. The college has high percentages of minorities, which include 4 black, 1 Hispanic and 5 Asian. Susan Talburt sent a draft of the new College of Education policy on recruitment of minority faculty to Presley. It was to be voted on during the December 5, 2003 College of Education Faculty meeting. The College of Education is the only one without such an approved policy.

Leslie Williams asked what the committee was going to do with the information. Gallant explained that since all the departments have not respondent, then all the departments don’t know about the guidelines. Presley commented that department chairs in Arts and Sciences might be ignoring the guidelines based on conversations she has had with them. Peterson explained that the departments need to respond to acknowledge they are following the guidelines that are University Policy.

Leslie Williams explained that it is an Administrative task to follow up on policy. Peterson suggested that we find out if people are following policy. After considerable discussion of the problems of implementation within and across the colleges of the university, it was suggested that a subcommittee be formed, with Linda Nelson as the chair and the members to include Christine Gallant, John Peterson and Cora Presley. This committee will create a template for educating and preparing the chairs for effective implementation of the policy and present it to then present this template to the Senate Cultural Diversity Committee. He requested that the subcommittee have an updated report available by February and final report by the March meeting of the Cultural Diversity Committee.

Update on Motion on Committee Membership. Presley and Gallant reported that the Senate Statutes and Bylaws Committee has reviewed our motion and will present an amendment to our committee’s membership at the next Senate meeting. The Statue and Byelaws Committee has decided to examine other Senate Committees’ memberships and model them after the proportional representation rule that was included in our original motion.

3. Provost’s proposal on Centrality and Viability of University Programs

Christine Gallant opened the Committee’s discussion of the Provost’s proposal for redirection of University resources. After considerable discussion, the Committee expressed its concern for the RFP process, noting that some key Senate Committees had not been sufficiently included in the process. Committee members expressed concerns that the University commitment to cultural diversity might become a victim of the redirection process. Gallant urged all members of the committee to attend the February Town Meeting with the Provost and President that was convened because of the Senate petition that she initiated.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 pm.