Cultural Diversity Committee
Meeting of November 12, 2008
Minutes

Present: Eric Blacknall, Annette Butler, Douglass Covey, Doris Derby, Florian Enescu, Christine Gallant, Mary Anne Gaunt, Shif Gurmu, Robin Huff, Olga Jarrett, Gabe Kuperminc, Kathryn McClymond, Cora Presley, Alaycia Reid, Kenée Stephens, Leslie Taylor.


The meeting began at 10:05 a.m. The minutes from the September 10 meeting were approved with the following corrections: Eric Blacknall’s name was added to those present, and the spelling of Kenée Stephens’ name was corrected. The minutes were approved as corrected. The minutes from the October 10 meeting were next approved.

Christine Gallant gave an overview of the university’s need for greater accessibility for its disabled students, faculty, and staff, and greater awareness of their problems. She said that she would like to make this need for greater accessibility one of the main initiatives of the committee this year, and reported on actions of the Disability Initiatives Subcommittee (DIC). New members included Mary Morris, Director of the Regents Center for Learning Disability, and Marty Waterfill of Facilities.

Leslie Taylor reported that the GSU Accessibility Map has just been added as a link to the Office of Disability Services. The complete document is 23 pages in length; the first page was distributed for review. This page described what units and departments were in the buildings, with descriptions of the facilities that were accessible for those with disabilities. She also read an email from a student who expressed his appreciation of this Accessibility Map. Leslie noted that the Map should be posted on the general GSU website by Spring 2009.

Since Susan Easterbrooks, chair of DIC, was absent, Christine reported on the activities of the two ex officio DIC members on the Major Repairs and Renovations to Facilities Committee (MRRF). MRRF and Facilities together determine which repairs to recommend for the allocation of funds from the Regents every year. There is one large fund that is used for all campus repairs, and another smaller fund for Regulatory funding (ADA-repairs and those to meet city and state legal codes). This year for the first time, MRRF is using the DIC Allocations Priorities Policy that was approved last Spring. MRRF/Facilities has met to draw up its preliminary list for general repairs, and on November 24 will present its preliminary list for regulatory repairs. On Dec. 4 they will finalize the lists.

Christine brought before the committee a recommendation from the DIC that this statement for students with disabilities should be added to all syllabi: “Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Office of Disability Services in Suite 230 of the Student Center. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of Disability Services of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which an accommodation is sought.” After discussion, the committee voted to approve the statement. It will be sent on to the Faculty Affairs Committee for their further review.

Christine next discussed her proposal that the Senate through its committees institute a University Policy on Accommodating the Disabled. It would centralize information about the various accommodations and policies we have at present and recommend what still needs to be done. She asked for committee
brainstorming on this idea. Leslie Taylor spoke in favor of such a policy. The committee suggested that she approach the chair of the Senate Executive Committee, Paul Alberto, to ask approval of such a policy and to appoint a special Senate committee to draft it.

**Subcommittee Reports:**
Annette Butler reported on the Committee on Diversity Questions at Peer Institutions. It has not yet met, but she has just sent all members a list of the questions that they should send to the institutions that she has assigned to each member to canvass. She will seek to find a meeting time in January to discuss the results.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

**Minutes Submitted by:**
Eva Hill, Administrative Assistant