President’s Commission on Diversity
Meeting Minutes
10-23-07

President’s Committee on Diversity (PCD) Members:
Present: Genine Edem, Graduate Assistant; Linda Duckett, co-chair; Jessica Flatequal; Kelly Meier; Hanh Huy Phan; John Seymour; Julie Snow; Betty Young, co-chair

Proceedings:
Meeting called to order.

I. Meeting Minute Approval:
   o Linda and Betty passed around copies of the 9-25-07 meeting minutes for approval. The meeting minutes were approved and posted on the website.

II. Welcome and Top Ten Most Important Steps for the Upcoming Year.
   o Linda Duckett welcomed everyone, and introduced the agenda, and requested member’s visionary input and suggestions for the next important steps for the commission to go forward with into the upcoming year.
   o What are the specific recruit, hire and retain issues that we can address this year (2007-2008) to hire and retain faculty and staff?
   o Betty Young asked members to continue to think about these priorities and email suggestions to her. The “top ten” will be finalized and presented to the President.

III. Environment
   o Great place to work: “I would like to see Minnesota State Mankato become the overall best place to work in Minnesota. This will not be easy, but it is an admirable goal that needs further defining and support from everyone.” President Davenport in his Expanding Our Horizons of the University speech at the 2007 Convocation Address. http://www.mnsu.edu/president/convocation_2007/
   a. Program review practices, schedule, reports, timelines
   o Asian Pacific Conference is October 25-27. The date set is competing with one MSU's scheduled “no class” days, Friday, October 26th. Many students work or utilize days off from school to visit their family. It is anticipated this may lower the attendance rates as students are not typically on campus during scheduled days off. A calendar that shows all planned activities in relation to MSU’s academic schedules was suggested by Hanh Huy Phan to be placed on the PCD’s website as a central place to look when scheduling and planning for events.
      o Update: PCD Graduate Assistants, Sharful and Chinna, are currently exploring options for placing a calendar on the website that includes diversity related events and correlates them with other competing MSU events and calendars for scheduling and referral purposes.
b. Issues by divisions

c. Toxicity: How do we address it, and change it?

IV. Update on PCD Forums

o Diversity Advertising for MSU: Linda showed PCD members pictures of the new billboard on Lake Street in Minneapolis that is now in place and advertising the university’s commitment to diversity. This is an exciting step in the direction our university is taking! Thanks to Jeff Iseminger’s team in marketing for their great work on this project!

V. Update on Hiring Practices

a. Notice of Vacancy:

o All vacancy notices (for faculty, staff, and other employee positions) will include the following information:
  
  o Qualifications: A demonstrated commitment to fostering a diverse working and learning environment
  
  o To Apply: Submit….. including information on how you value and can contribute to the diversity of our campus.
  
  o In the footer: MSU, Mankato is committed to being an inclusive environment and encourages candidates from underrepresented groups to apply. It is expected that the successful candidate shares in this commitment.
  
  o We are working toward all ads going out with statements concerning diversity on them!

b. Discussions by members:

  i. What does “underrepresented” mean? Does this include veterans? LGBT? Class? Women?

  1. What are the university’s definitions of the various terms? The “legal definitions”? What was the PCD’s definition? Which will the hiring process use?
  
  2. Other terms considered: minorities, people of color, socioeconomic class, people with disabilities, domestic vs. international diversity, Affirmative Action candidates, etc.
  
  3. Should all be listed or grouped in a comprehensive category? If it is one category, will this address candidates that may not be traditionally thought of as a minority or capture expanded categories such as veterans, LGBT, and people with disabilities?

  ii. Diversity as a market condition. Can it be a condition for hire? Is there a commitment to make it “good business” to make money and be successful in a global society?

  1. Should this be a required qualification or a preferred qualification? What are the implications of both? How will it be monitored?
  
  2. When people apply, how will the candidate know the hiring criteria? Will we lose good candidates in the process that we are actually trying to attract? Some
people may not feel “safe” being candid about diversity questions. Can there be a link to a place explaining the importance of the information to the hiring process?

3. What about positions that typically do not draw candidates with liberal arts backgrounds? Hard sciences or entry level positions such as maintenance positions, how will those candidates be differentiated differently with a required qualification of “demonstrated commitment”? It is possible they have the capacity to make wonderful contributions, but have not had the opportunity because of their background or given fields.

iii. What is the plan for new candidates and hires that meet the criteria to incorporate them into the university’s diverse culture and capture their contributions?
   1. Will new hires be included in the selection committees? Junior faculty members?
   2. How do we utilize this new talent and bring them into the insider ring?
   3. How do we assure that diverse candidates are not over exposed, and assure they are selected or utilized for major committees?

iv. The Affirmative Action office will be conducting training on the new hiring processes.
   1. The Affirmative Action office will sign off on finalists. Finalist candidate application materials will have a statement attached that discusses how the candidate meets the diversity criteria.

VI. Other
   a. Meeting Dates & Times:
      o Hanh Huy Phan suggested trying to coordinate the scheduling of PCD meetings with all commission members to see if there is a better available timeframe for all members to meet and participate.
        o Update: An email was sent out requesting the members’ availability for days of the week and times of the day. There was not an identifiable inclusive pattern of availability on days of the week or times of day for all members. PCD meetings were rescheduled on the two days (Mondays and Tuesdays) most often indicated as available by the majority of members. The times of day were rotated (11:00 am or 3:00 pm) to increase the probability of members being able to attend at the particular time on the given day.
      o Upcoming Meeting Dates:
        - Monday, November 12th at 3:00 pm in CSU 204
        - Tuesday, November 27th at 11:00 am in CSU 204
- Monday, December 3rd at 3:00 pm in CSU 204
  - Lunch with the President: Monday, Nov. 26th, 11:30-1:00 pm. Please RSVP to Genine Edem if you have not already done so. genine.edem@mnsu.edu