President’s Commission on Diversity
9-25-07
Meeting Minutes

Committee Members:
Present: Jessica Flatequal, Linda Duckett, Betty Young, Michelle Washington Carter, Julie Snow, Tom Gjersvig, Kelly Meier, Calvin Moultrie, Hanh Huy Phan, John Seymour, Michael Fagin, Sharful Alam, Chinna Venkara Swamy Tarra, Genine Edem

Proceedings:
Meeting called to order.

I. Introduction of Graduate Assistants and Members
   Linda welcomed everyone, congratulated them on the excellent work and report last year, and asked members to introduce themselves and discuss what they did over the summer and to share a goal or vision for the future.

   A. Some of the personal goals, suggestions and inputs that members shared:
      • The university as a multicultural place, that is friendly with people smiling and considered a good place to be and work.
      • A place that has adequate tools, spaces and resources to work with.
      • A place where there is discussion on diversity
      • The implementation of the report recommendations.
      • Reminder that there are more than 18-25 year olds that we should consider; there are also 25-70 year old students and graduate students in the campus population. We need to consider growing out graduate population.

II. Report on meeting with President Davenport
   A. The report was presented to the cabinet and was well received. The President is writing a response and a meeting will follow to discuss it.
      1. The President asked the Commission to outline what should be done during the current academic year.
      2. He invited the Commission to expand the report and present to the different bargaining units.
      3. The President and members of the Commission will have lunch with the President, and he will give the new charge to us at that time.

   B. Classified Ads: Affirmative Action hosted a meeting for a various members of the campus community to discuss ads, and how we include diversity in our advertising; there was no statement about diversity in classified ads, but following this meeting, there will be a statement in all classified ads.

   C. DART Team: Diversity Action Hiring and Retention Team
D. **Diversity Commission Member Lists:** Please update, change, add or delete information, spellings, etc. as appropriate for each member, and send this information to Graduate Assistant Sharful Alam. The website will be updated and/or changed with the new information.

E. **Classified Hires:** A question arose about classified hiring and the procedure for disclosing the reason why a candidate was not hired. A suggestion was made for a presidential charge to look at hiring practices specifically.

   1. **DOER Website:** Concerns were expressed about the difficulty of navigation of the website. Clarification of internal openings being filled from within was discussed. There is still a process confusion concerning the posting as to whether the information sent is posted appropriately as candidates do not appear to be addressing the specifics of information sent to be posted. The process of posting is in question.

   2. **Diversity Candidate Hirings:** Is this rewarded or a basis for retaliation?

II. **Institutional Diversity, “Annual Diversity Report At A Glance” report from Dr. Mike Fagin**

A. **College Access Program (CAP) Summer Activities:** Over 80 young people participated in the residential experience preparing for college. They received six credits of general education over the summer.

B. **Goals and Visions:**

   1. **Indian Cultural Center Vision:** Establishment of an Indian Cultural Center, perhaps on the Newman property.

   2. **Multicultural Center Vision:** Establishment of a multicultural center that is the entrance to the campus. It is a place where diverse peoples can be free to express in a diverse space. Moving MSU into a “Center of Excellence”.

   3. **English Language Institute Vision:** Establishment of an English language institute to help people who do not have English as a first language with various supports.

   4. **Pre-Doctoral Fellowships Vision:** Two for each college.

   5. **Institutional Goal:** To work with all constituents to promote an increased learning and better working environment. The creation of a respectful, welcoming learning environment, that promotes respect for differences with honesty and transparency and results in becoming the number one choice of schools to work, study, etc.

III. **Update on Diversity Curriculum Forums:**

   The President’s Commission on Diversity will co-host these forums, to give members of the campus community an opportunity to speak out about the newly proposed diverse cultures requirement. (put website link here)

IV. **Other:**

   A. **Program Review Discussion**
Discussion of what determines a program review, what data is gathered, determination process for the response to data gathered, the access to the information gathered and/or response from review process, and the possibility of it being utilized as a form of retaliation or result of toxicity level in the environment was discussed.

1. Performance evaluations have the potential to be negatively impacted.
2. Dr Fagin is on a committee that is addressing these concerns. He cleared up Program Review Process questions. Changes are on the way to address some of these issues raised.

B. “Make MSU a Great Place To Work” Group was discussed. There are Diversity Committee members in this group.
1. Members discussed the Bullying Survey Committee; they will be looking at bullying in our community. Susan Taylor, Co-Chair of the President’s Commission on the Status of Women, is a member of this group.

C. Congratulations to Dr. Fagin! He is the new VP of Diversity as announced at the city’s Diversity Council board meeting by the president.

D. Happy Birthday Betty Young (9-26-07)! The Diversity Commission would like to see a demonstration of the balloon example for “Turning Up The Heat On Diversity”.

This is an excellent opportunity, and very good use of professional development dollars. Michelle Carter will send out an email with details. The President’s Commission on Diversity may have grant monies to assist with the costs of this in the future.

IV. Upcoming Events
A. Meeting Dates: Meetings of the President’s Commission on Diversity will be set every 3-4 weeks.