President’s Commission on Diversity
Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2009
Tuesday, 10:30-11:30 am
CSU 202

President’s Commission on Diversity (PCD) Members
Present: Kelly Biers; Matthew Carlson; Kellian Clink; Linda Duckett, co-chair; Michael Fagin, co-chair; Jessica Flatequal; Thomas Gjersvig; Jeffrey Halbur; Linda Hanson; Jesus Hernandez Mejia; Missy Manderfeld; Srinivas Rao Mallela, graduate assistant; Kelly Meier; Ricardo Muggli; Amy Mukamuri; Julie Snow; Amanda Timmer, graduate assistant; Melissa Van Winkle; Wanda Viento; Ryan Yunkers

Regrets: Reggie Edward; Doris Hill; Jerry Robicheau

Others Present: President Richard Davenport

Proceedings:

I. Meeting Called to Order. Meeting Agenda Approved.
   - We briefly discussed upcoming diversity events.
     - Linda D. and Mike asked the Commissioners to nominate students for diversity awards.
       - The nominations should include the nominee’s name and a statement about the nominee.
       - Winners will be recognized on April 29, 2009 at 3 pm in Ostrander Auditorium.
     - Kelly told us that the last diversity dialog will be held on April 21, 2009 from 10 am-11:30 am in CSU 201.
     - Mike shared that this evening at 4 pm Christina Garcia would be speaking about the Impact of Latinos in America Today.
     - Julie passed out posters to promote guest lecturer, Dr. Anita Silvers. Dr. Silvers will present two lectures:
       - Thursday, April 23, 2009 at 7 pm in CSU 253-5
       - Friday, April 24, 2009 at 9:30 am in CSU 253-5

II. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND OPENING REMARKS
   - Linda D. and Mike welcomed President Davenport and the Commissioners introduced themselves.
   - President Davenport began by discussing the budget situation.
     - He said that an email memo regarding this issue would be sent out.
o He gave us some numbers and information regarding the budget:
  ▪ 62 positions have been targeted for possible layoffs
  ▪ They are trying to keep instructional cuts at a minimum in an effort to add to the recruitment and retention of students.
    • He added that if enrollment slips, then the University faces more layoffs.
    • President Davenport is looking ahead and wants the University to continue to grow in all areas.
    • MSU is currently ahead of other universities in the MNSCU system.
      ▪ He reminded us that we are to put together reductions of 10% in our budgets.

o President Davenport stated that he plans to keep diversity in tact.

o He also stated that MSU, Mankato was named the number one program for Diversity Incentives by the Office of the Chancellor.

o President Davenport said that he loves to be challenged and he wants to know how he can help and wants to encourage our efforts.

III. ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT-- STUDENTS

• Underrepresented Students and Enrollment Management, Recruitment and Retention (charges 7 and 8)
  o We discussed the concern about graduation rate gaps including a discussion about the gap between the sophomore and junior year retention.
  o President Davenport suggested developing a mentorship program.
    ▪ We discussed various ways that this could be implemented including peer mentors or faculty/staff mentors, and perhaps a training session for the mentors.

• Diversity Summit (charge 1)
  o President Davenport asked that we start planning this event.
    ▪ Mike said that he would help find a date to put the sub committee’s plans in motion.
    ▪ We discussed whether this would be a faculty/staff event, a student event, or both.
• The President said he would like to have both events.
  ▪ The committee has a great list of facilitators and speakers.
  ▪ The intent of the Summit would be to immerse the attendees into diversity.

• Honors Program and Convocation Requirement (charges 4 & 10)
  o We discussed what activities could be included and the possibilities of combining this requirement with the Purple and Gold courses.
    ▪ Perhaps the Commission could review events and publish a list of approved diversity events.
  o Attendance could be tracked using a scanning device to keep the information into a database.

IV. RECRUIT, HIRE, and RETAIN—EMPLOYEES
• Maverick Alliance (charge 5)
  o We discussed what should the requirements of this position be.
  o It is our hope that this position would be a resource to fill faculty positions and help in getting a diverse qualified pool of candidates for positions.
  o Perhaps this position could be funded through a reallocation of funds.
  o Linda H. said that this is a long-term project.

• Collaboration with Workplace Environment Committee (charge 6)
  o We discussed the Great Place to Work (GPTW) Benchmark Survey and the feedback from these surveys.
    ▪ Jeff talked about green areas (areas in which we are successful), yellow areas (areas that we need to watch), and red areas (areas that we need to focus on). He also discussed how we would continue working on these areas.
  o We discussed the Core Values Survey and the great response that was received.
    ▪ The original list of Core Values was scaled down to 4 – 10 values. A report on this will be forthcoming from GPTW.
    ▪ Diversity was the number one response from this survey.
V. **UPDATES**

- Diversity Grants and Diversity Awards (charge 3)
  - Julie said that this was the second year of distributions.
  - She shared information about distributions and the award winners as well as the presentations they made.
  - We decided that we would like to continue this in the future.

- Website and National Best Practices (charges 2 & 9)
  - We are a leader with our website, but there are improvements that could be made.
  - We would like to be a resource and possibly the leader in diversity.
  - Kellian suggested that MSU could be the place for those interested in various diversity topics, like Purdue’s OWL website is a national resource.
  - Perhaps this could be a MNSCU pilot project.

VI. **RESOURCE ALLOCATION**

- We expressed concerns about the budget, changes, and layoffs.
  - This is the time to be talking about these issues and it is beneficial to a community as a whole to understand the budget, ask questions and get perspectives.
  - It is important for us to work together to achieve goals.
- President Davenport alleviated the fears of budget cuts, especially to areas with already small budgets. He has no intention of damaging growing areas.
- He stated that he wants diversity cuts to be minimal, if at all.

VII. **FINAL WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

- President Davenport is proud of the work that we do and appreciates our focus and direction.
- He intends for the Diversity Commission to continue and he wants the Commission to continue to report to the President.
- He is willing to listen and hears what we have to say.

VII. **THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.**
REGULAR MEETINGS, Spring 2009

Tuesdays, 10:30 to 11:30

April

- 21  CSU 204—final reports due
- 30  CSU 238—summary of year’s work