

**Ferris State University**  
**Academic Senate Diversity Committee**  
**Minutes**  
**February 24, 2004**

Members present: Sandra Alspach, Carolyn Cook, Kevin Miller, Griff McTume, Carole Jones, Clayton Rye, Jaelyn Zimmerman, Tony Baker, and Kim Daugherty.

Also in attendance: Guest Speaker, John Thorp

The meeting began at 11:06 with an update on the possible Sally Hemmings presentation. Dr. Alspach reported that the stipend and expenses for Central Michigan University Professor Sandra Seaton to put on her one-person presentation is \$2,000, a sum that would require a grant or some other funding source. It was agreed that the committee would consider recommending this speaker to the Arts and Lectures Committee. Sandy Alspach reported on her experience with the Sojourner Truth presentation, which was performed on February 18<sup>th</sup>. The artist was struggling with a cold, but the presentation was well done.

Committee members who attended the recent performance of The Vagina Monologues reported on the success of this performance, including an unexpectedly high turnout for the presentation. A significant amount of money was raised for WISE through this event, and attendees reported being impressed by the quality and range of performances.

An update on the success of the National Teleconference was provided. Dr. Alspach also updated the members on future Diversity Committee meetings: Dr. Eisler will address the committee in at the March meeting, and in April the committee will talk with representatives from DSAGA.

After discussing housekeeping matters, the committee welcomed John Thorp, the day's guest speaker. John Thorp reminded members of the upcoming Equity Conference. 17 are planning to attend and other interested members should talk to Dr. Thorp if they are interested.

Dr. Thorp presented members with a handout on the American Democracy Project (ADP) and described this program's mission, history, and some of the ways that university is looking expand its participation in ADP-related activities. Dr. Thorp reported on President Eisler's deep involvement with this organization. A civic engagement inventory is underway and will be a comprehensive review of the school's activities with volunteer-oriented work and civic-directed education. A basic survey has already been produced and indicated that much work needs to be done to bridge the isolated activities that are currently in play on these issues. Dr. Thorp also addressed the consistency of this orientation with the school's mission and its civically minded founder, Woodbridge Ferris. As well, he discussed tie-ins with what the school has already done with Diversity Counts! and how these and other programs mutually reinforce one another.

Dr. Thorp drew the members' attention to a book that President Eisler has asked the community to investigate. *Educating Citizens: Preparing American's Undergraduates for Lives of Moral*

*and Civic Responsibility* presents the philosophical and practical underpinnings of what President Eisler is asking the university to think about as it moves to adopt a more comprehensive stance toward these and other related issues. People who are interested in this text should contact John Thorp for a copy.

Dr. Thorp next updated the committee members on progress with the Jim Crow Museum. Plans are moving ahead to relocate the facility to the ground floor of Arts and Science Commons. The total cost of the relocation of the museum should be in the \$200,000 range. Various funding sources are being developed for this project. The museum continues to attract national and international attention. Most recently John Thorp has been invited to conduct a workshop dealing with the museum's artifacts at the 5<sup>th</sup> annual White Privilege Conference.

Clayton Rye and John Thorp updated the committee with respect to David Pilgrim and Clayton Rye's new documentary, which was recently shown on local public television. DVD's of the documentary are available (contact Ms. Moikeha, Starr 325 for information) and the National Education Telecommunications Association has also agreed to distribute it.

John Thorp spoke about the recent Diversity Counts! Newsletter and encouraged the members to lend their support by submitting to the newsletter or encouraging others to. Currently the newsletter is released once a year, but in years past enough material was available for three issues during the year.

John Thorp entertained questions on these issues. Various concerns were discussed and Dr. Thorp excused himself from the meeting so that he could attend another appointment.

The committee turned its attention to some old business items. Sandy reported that the director for the planned diversity training sponsored by the Woodruff Institute is ill and that therefore the training is on indefinite hold. The members who had planned to attend this training will continue to meet organizationally until the training can be rescheduled.

Kevin Miller reported on the Team Timme travel grant that the committee recently received in order to send members to this June's National Conference on Race and Ethnicity. Currently Karen Nash, Clayton Rye, and Tony Baker are planning to attend.

Tony Baker reported on developments with the Community Studies Institute and the attempts to secure a "learning liaison" to help establish community service projects. Dr. Baker sounded an optimistic note on funding for this liaison position and hopes to have more news in the future. This position would come online this July and would be initially funded for a period of three years.

Dr. Baker spoke at length about the development of a senior-level sociology research methods course, Applied Community Research, which may tie into service learning opportunities and provide the Diversity Committee and other organizations with students who need projects to research. Dr. Baker said he is hopeful that a stipend of \$500 might eventually be made available to enrollees and that projects like the racial climate survey would be ideally suited to the kind of work these students will be required to develop. Dr. Alspach suggested that the Comm 390 class,

Political Communication, will potentially dovetail with this kind of work too and that these students might also get involved in these projects. Cross listing these two courses was discussed.

Dr. Baker also suggested that the committee might sponsor an activity or activities to commemorate the upcoming anniversary of the Brown vs. Board of Education decision.

Jacqueline Zimmerman updated the committee on recent elections to Student Government and developments with student commitments to SG subcommittees. She informed the committee of an upcoming fundraiser with Alpha Zeta Delta with all donations going to WISE.

Carole Jones reported on developments with Circle K. Last year the organization had the greatest number of student volunteer hours logged.

The meeting adjourned at 11:52

The minutes prepared by Kevin Miller millerke@ferris.edu