

Diversity Planning Committee Meeting Summary **February 19, 2009**

The following members were in attendance: Mike Berghoef, Mike Cairns, Jim Cook, Deb Cox, Shohred Ferdowsi, Susan Fogarty, Warren Hills, Thuy Karafa, Amanda Karel, Janel Lockwood, Pam Meadows, Mary Murnik, David Pilgrim, Fran Rosen, Gretchen Spedowske, Todd Stanislav, Patty Terryn, Mike Wade, Hurdylyn Woods and Leroy Wright.

Absent: Yolonda Barnes, Marty Bledsoe, Travis Cervandes, Matt Chaney, Don Green, Scott Herron, Sharon Hopper, Russell Leonard Eunice Merwin-Beck, Jessica Mills, Lyle Mourer, Susan Starkey, Paul Sullivan, Kent Sun Luzia Tartari, Robbie Teahen and Troy Tissue.

The meeting summary from January 22, 2009 was approved. Please feel free to send corrections or additions at any time.

Upcoming Diversity Events –

- The Vagina Monologues is tonight, February 19, 7:30pm, Williams Auditorium. Please come. The proceeds from this event go to W.I.S.E., the local women's shelter.
- International Potluck, February 25, International Center, FLITE.
- International Festival, April 19, 1-5pm, Rankin Center Dome Room.
- March is Women's History Month; Mike Wade is looking for ideas.
- Speaker Jean Kilbourne "The Naked Truth: Advertising's Image of Women" will be on the Big Rapids campus April 23, 7-9pm, Rankin Center Dome Room.
- The Office of Multicultural Student Services sponsored many Black History Month activities, including Detroit area Trilogy, February 9; Black History Symposium, February 18; and Ask Your Mama: Twelve Moods of Jazz, March 4.

Diversity at Ferris 2008 –

David will be presenting the ***Diversity at Ferris 2008*** report to the Board of Trustees on February 20, 2009. It is important to remember that this document is an assessment tool describing the University's successes and the areas where improvement is needed. David read a prepared statement that he will present to the Board. In that statement, he listed six recommendations that would, if implemented, accelerate the pace of Ferris becoming a truly diverse institution. Here are the recommendations:

1. A section should be added to the Performance Evaluation for all supervisors and managers for diversity/inclusion related goals and accomplishments.
2. All strategic alignment plans should demonstrate a thoughtful integration of diversity initiatives. Inclusion of diversity initiatives must be a critical criterion for evaluating these action plans.
3. All employees should be *required* to attend trainings, workshops and professional development programs on sensitivity, respectful workplace, the student dignity policy, and the employee dignity policy. Attendance at diversity "training" should be encouraged but *voluntary*.
4. A comprehensive, University-wide strategic plan to improve student retention and graduation should be created and implemented.

5. Voluntary University-wide sessions should be offered to train employees to be “inclusion advocates.” When they serve on search committees they will communicate the university’s commitment to diversity in general and to hiring and retaining a diverse workforce in particular.
6. In their diversity work plans, each academic college should identify at least one new initiative for each of the four goals. The initiatives should be assigned to specific individuals, given time-tables and resources, and implemented.

The DPC offered suggestions about both the prepared statement and the *Diversity at Ferris 2008* document. Also the distinction between dignity/harassment training and diversity training was briefly discussed.

2009 Equity in the Classroom Conference –

Todd Stanislav distributed the conference’s schedule. At this time the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning will be sending sixteen faculty members and Academic Affairs will be sending one staff member. If other individuals would like to attend their departments will need to cover the expenses. The DPC discussed ways that the conference participants can share the information they receive with the Ferris community. Several Ferris faculty are presenting at the conference. Thank you, Todd for your tremendous work with the Equity Conference.

Emerging Issues –

- Fran Rosen and Amanda Karel reported that the Faculty/Staff Mini Grant Committee met in February and approved one grant. The committee suggested that a University-wide notice be sent explaining the deadline and process. There are several grant proposals in the “pipeline.”
- A group met to discuss the possibility of a University Wide Theme. The President suggested that SPARC be involved in the process. David will meet with Robert von der Osten.
- David asked for suggestion for the *Expect Diversity* TV show; he needs guests and ideas. Some suggestions were: International students, interracial dating, partnership benefits, and the various cultural months.
- Mike Cairns reported that Student Affairs is looking for orientation leaders; see Leroy Wright or Sherry Hays for applications.
- Janel Lockwood indicated that the International Center is looking for students to mentor International students next school year.

Old Business

- The OMSS relocation is moving, though slowly.
- An ad hoc group still needs to be formed to deal with domestic partner benefits. David has had several discussions with the people at Grand Valley who developed their partnership agreement. He needs several people from the DPC to meet in Grand Rapids with these activists. At present, the following people will be attending David, Mike Berghoef, Karen Strasser, and Katherine Harris. The goal is to better understand the strategies that they employed.