

Senate Diversity Committee Meeting

Minutes of November 19, 2014

Senate Office

10-11:30 AM

In attendance: Michael Bradford, Sandy Bushmich, Elizabeth Conklin (ODE) Casey Cobb, Manisha Desai, Alice Fairfield, Maria Luz Fernandez (Chair), Katherine Johansen (ODE), Fred Kyeremeh (ODE), Diana Lilo-Martin, Timothy Lim, Margo Machida, Huong, Nguyen, Shayla Nunnally, Willena Price, Hanna Prytko (ODE), Pamela Schipiani, Bill Stawley, Susana Ulloa

1. The meeting was focused on the diversity among the permanent staff. Elizabeth Conklin had a PowerPoint presentation with very comprehensive data collected by her office. This is a new document recently created by ODE, which covers information on staff diversity as of August 1, 2014. This document does not include special payroll or students. Approximately 95% of university employees are represented by labor unions.
2. The allocation of staff is not as straightforward as is the case of faculty who are primarily assigned to a Specific department or Schools/Colleges. The Staff were distributed in: President's Office, Provost Office, Schools and Colleges, Regional Campuses and Students Affairs. Of the total staff, 58.4% are female and 15.2% minorities.
3. Recently, there has been stronger hiring of African Americans, Hispanics and Asians. Because of individuals leaving UConn, however, the overall staff diversity percentages do not change significantly over the years. There is not a mechanism to address this problem; the main focus is currently on hiring. Exit interviews would help to understand these issues.
4. In the case of African Americans, staff and faculty have decreased in numbers although the student population has increased. It is notable that faculty and staff follow the same trends. There has been an increase in black females at the Executive level as well as increases in white females and a decrease in white males. One observation is that white males have particularly stronger numbers in higher-level jobs, which tend to correspond with higher salaries. In terms of the administration, it is male-dominated, same for the athletics department and the UConn Police.
5. Trends have been maintained the same from 2004 to 2009 and 2014. Diverse hires in the lower levels depend on job classification. For example, custodians, mechanics and cooks constitute a more diverse pool. Some of the custodians are not captured in the data because they are not considered University employees.
6. Several strategies were discussed to increase staff diversity at UConn including training of search committees, and the need to obtain more information on why individuals leave UConn. It was discussed the efforts of search committees to diversify the pools since the composition of the pool matters for the final offer. The general consensus was that things need to change because a different outcome cannot be expected when the same mistakes are made.

7. Finally, the students in our committee brought up the recent issues that occurred on Campus and shared that some under-represented groups have very alarming stories. Students were told that there are support groups on campus to help deal with these issues.
8. For the next meeting, it was proposed whether the Task Force for Diversity could give us an update on what is going on. Also, retention ideas will be shared among committee members.
9. The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am

Respectfully submitted

Maria Luz Fernandez, PhD
Chair, Senate Diversity Committee