

## Senate Diversity Committee Meeting Minutes October 27, 2015

In Attendance: Manisha Desai, Maria-Luz Fernandez, Diane Lillo-Martin, Willena Price, Pam Schipani, Elizabeth Conklin, Susana Ulloa, John Zack.

Provost Choi began by telling us that the Taskforce was now charged with helping to implement its recommendations and hence would not be disbanded. Among the issues that the taskforce is now working with is the hiring of the CDO as well the other recommendations including the structure of the diversity council.

Among the issues discussed:

### (1) Diversity Office and Search for the CDO.

Committee members asked various questions regarding the structure of the Office of Diversity, the resources that would be provided, the job description for the CDO and the composition of the search committee. Provost Choi indicated that he was not aware of the budget and resources allocated for the office though he knew that the hire would take place despite the anticipated cuts from the state. He also suggested that there might be some realignment that would ensure that we begin to address the recommendations even in the absence of new resources. The taskforce has a draft of the job description which he will forward to us. Vice Provost Weiner indicated that Elizabeth Conklin was on the search committee and therefore we were represented. We, however, feel strongly that we should be able to select a member for participation and as Elizabeth noted she is an ex-officio member of the committee. So I communicated this to Dan and Dana and also asked that the candidates' schedules include time with the Diversity Committee. Members also suggested that the search committee should reflect the diversity we seek.

### (2) Diversity Council

Provost Choi agreed that the size of the diversity council could potentially be unwieldy and so they were hoping to have an executive of fewer members. This is where our input would be especially helpful. Various suggestions were made regarding ensuring that appropriate entities with the appropriate authorities were included and held accountable for various aspects of the diversity mandate such as recruiting and retaining students, faculty, and staff of color, curricular diversity, campus climate etc. Mentoring was noted as a key mechanism that needed to be addressed structurally and included in the council.

### (3) Increasing awareness of and leveraging existing diversity structures and initiatives

There was a great deal of discussion about the role of the Cultural Centers in addressing diversity issues and mentoring students of color and how they are also meant to serve grad

students as well as faculty and staff. Yet, the major perception is that they primarily serve the undergrad population. They have been very successful in doing so and we need to think of ways to translate their success with the undergrad student population to other parts of the community. Note was also made of the Associations of Latino, Asian American, and African American faculty and staff and how their visibility needed to be increased and how they could be used more effectively. Some of these associations are more active than others but all could be better supported to meet their goals.

Many of us noted that the cultural centers budgets had been cut drastically over a number of years so that events that they held to promote networking and mentoring among staff and faculty of color are no longer being planned.

We all agreed that while there had been real and perceptible progress made in recruiting undergrad students of color, much needed to be done for grad students, faculty, and staff, particularly of African American faculty and staff. Elizabeth reminded us how stark the issue is with African American faculty and staff when she indicated that over the past 5 yrs 94 African American faculty and staff had been hired and 92 had left. She was quick to point out that these two groups are not the same individuals and her office is doing more fine grained analysis to look at who the groups were, the reasons they left, etc. She hopes to have a report on this by the end of the year.

We indicated at the end that we would be making a written response to the report and would like to be actively engaged in the implementation plans along with the Taskforce.

Towards that end, could you please send me your written comments on the taskforce report before the next meeting, Nov. 3, 3:00 pm Senate Conference Room, and I will compile and circulate it in time for the meeting so we can move forward towards our written response.