

Senate Diversity Committee Meeting

Minutes of October 30, 2014

El Instituto Room 240

9:00 AM-10:30 AM

In attendance: Sandy Bushmich, Casey Cobb, Manisha Desai, Alice Fairfield, Maria Luz Fernandez (Chair), Katherine Johansen (ODE), Margo Machida, Huong, Nguyen, Shayla Nunnally, Mark Overmyer (Guest and Director of El Instituto), Gene Salorio

1. The main purpose of the meeting was to have a conversation with Mark Overmyer, the Director of “El Instituto” who was invited to be part of the newly created “Task Force for Diversity”. Last year Mark was the Chair of the “Diversity Strategy Planning Committee”. This committee met with representatives of various constituencies in Campus including Union representatives, Centers and other groups with the purpose of compiling information for the drafting of the Diversity Strategy plan in which a number of us participated. The Committee wanted to provide to Mark our collective thoughts on diversity issues so that he could bring that information to the “Task Force for Diversity” committee.
2. Among the things that we discuss was a big concern with *retention* of under-represented faculty. We understand that the main focus of UConn at this time is *recruitment* of a diversity pool of faculty. However, the Committee strongly believes that retention is an issue and that some pro-active actions should be taken by the Senate Diversity Committee to decrease the number of diverse faculty who leave the Institution.
3. After Mark and Shayla, who was also invited to be part of the Task Force for Diversity, left the meeting at 9:25, the Committee discussed several other issues.
4. The Committee thought that in order to increase retention, we should research on what our Aspirant and Peer Institutions are doing in order to successfully retain diverse faculty so that we could be better informed on how to proceed and be successful ourselves.
5. Casey Cobb briefly mentioned his ideas on a Social Tech Park, in which Researchers, Students and Staff would partner with Social Agencies to develop new products of solutions to social problems. He also said that he submitted a pre-proposal to the Provost Competition. Casey will share more of his ideas in a future meeting.
6. Katherine Johansen who was representing ODE in the absence of Elizabeth Conklin shared with us some information on the staff diversity and on the recent hires and retention of diverse staff. She brought with her a very thorough document compiled by ODE that mimics the Faculty Document that has been discussed in our committee in the past. It was proposed that in the next meeting Elizabeth Conklin will share with us some of specifics of this document with the Diversity Committee.
7. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am

Respectfully submitted

Maria Luz Fernandez, PhD
Chair, Senate Diversity Committee