

## **EQUITY, ACCESS & DIVERSITY**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING**

February 17, 2014

[In these minutes: Income-Based Diversity Discussion continued; Question development for Vice President Albert; New Business.]

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

**PRESENT:** Geoff Maruyama (chair), Shakeer Abdullah, Irene Duranczyk, Andra Fjone, Priscilla Flynn, Michael Goh, Victoria Interrante, Judith Katz, Jeremy O’Hara, Deena Wassenberg, Ellyn Woo

**GUESTS:** Rachelle Hernandez, Associate Vice Provost for Enrollment Management; Patricia Jones Whyte, Director, Office for Diversity in Graduate Education

**OTHERS:** Avery Musbach (Guest of Victoria Interrante), Michael O’Day for Kim Hewitt

**REGRETS:** Neil Anderson, John Andrus, Katie Ballering, Richard Graff, Tenzin Khando, Susan Seltz

**ABSENT:** Parker Bluhm, Christopher O’Brien, Jacquelyn Rupp

### **WELCOME**

Professor Maruyama called the meeting to order and asked for introductions.

### **INCOME-BASED DIVERSITY DISCUSSION CONTINUED**

Members reviewed the response the committee constructed for the SCC on the topic of income-based diversity. Members made the following suggestions:

- Define the term “need-blind” within the statement. This term means that admission is not based on the ability of the student to pay. Ms. Hernandez added that it is important to use the term because it is universally used, but agreed that clarification would be helpful.
- Professor Maruyama explained that the Fisher case establishes the need for universities to decide what is best for admissions practices from a local perspective; there is not a single solution for all institutions.
- Ms. Hernandez explained that free and reduced lunch is self-reported information and so is the FAFSA. This makes using family income as a proxy for race unreliable.

- Professor Maruyama commented that many universities have a culture of affluence and this creates a difficult setting for low-income students.
- Assistant Vice President Abdullah noted that a series of Critical Conversations are sponsored by OED and the participants include faculty, staff, and students.
- Professor Duranczyk stated that, in her perspective, a holistic review of 45,000 applicants per year would be very difficult. Professor Maruyama responded that norming processes take place to ensure that reviews are reliable. Ms. Hernandez stated that students must first demonstrate academic strength and the secondary factors are considered next as “tipping factors.” She continued, that there is no automatic admission and the norming processes change each year based on the pool of applicants. The holistic review process is reviewed monthly with the Office of the General Counsel (OGC). The audit process was recently completed to ensure that the holistic review is being applied carefully.
- Professor Duranczyk stated that the University should examine the atmosphere of the University to ensure students of color succeed here. The problem is not always with the student and there are larger institutional barriers present.
- Ms. Hernandez emphasized that students of color and low-income students are very strong academically. The holistic review allows for factors other than test scores to give context to a student’s performance.
- Ms. Hernandez explained that the yield rate of low-income students who are admitted is difficult to track because family income does not have to be reported. Students in the President’s Emerging Scholars Program do have a higher yield rate and they have additional financial incentives throughout their academic careers.

Members agreed that the culture of the University needs to be examined, not only the students that are admitted. Professor Maruyama stated that graduate admissions would be discussed in April.

### **PREPARATION FOR VICE PRESIDENT ALBERT AND VICE PROVOST MCMASTER**

Professor Maruyama began the discussion and explained that if members have questions for Vice President Albert, they can be raised at the meeting and after via email. Members raised the following questions:

- Professor Duranczyk attended the Forum on Campus crime and Safety and she would like to know Dr. Albert’s perspective on the forum. Students raised concerns related to racial profiling and she would like to know if there is plans being developed to handle this issue.

Members then discussed the following questions for Vice Provost McMaster:

- How will the program, Retaining all Our Students, impact the culture of the University?

- What are the goals of the campus wide curriculum council? Professor Maruyama noted that this might not be on topic for the meeting.
- Professor Wassenberg commented that it is not clear exactly what is not welcoming about the University culture. Before it can be determined how to fix the issue, the issue must first be defined. What positive factors exist that contribute to those students that succeed? Have successful students been asked about their success?

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- At the Crime and Safety Forum, students asked that race not be identified on the crime alerts. Professor Duranczyk noted that the same crime alert was reported the next day in the Star Tribune and race was not included. The behaviors are more important than physical descriptions.
- Dr. Whyte noted that it is important to consider the message that is being sent to the broader community in the communications and efforts that are made in response to crime and safety issues.

In the interest of time, Professor Maruyama adjourned the meeting.

Jeannine Rich  
University Senate Office