

EQUITY, ACCESS & DIVERSITY COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting
November 3, 2014

[These notes 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 notes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

In these minutes: [Faculty of color hiring initiative; Martin Luther King Day community service drive; review of strategic planning principles document]

PRESENT: Geoff Maruyama (co-chair), Deena Wassenberg (co-chair), Susan Seltz, Teddie Potter, Ellyn Woo, Irene Duranczyk, Judith Katz, Naty Lopez, Richard Graff, Priscilla Flynn, Rebecca Dean

REGRETS: Andra Fjone, Kimberly Hewitt

ABSENT: Katrice Albert, Christopher O'Brien, Tyler Lande

GUESTS: Michael Goh, assistant vice provost, Office for Equity and Diversity; Amber Cameron, associate director, Public Engagement Initiatives; Nina Shepherd, public and media relations coordinator, Office for Public Engagement

1. Faculty of Color Initiative

Wassenberg and Maruyama welcomed Michael Goh, assistant vice provost, Office for Equity and Diversity. Goh discussed hiring initiatives for minorities and under-represented faculty, and said his role was to ensure faculty diversity. Goh said he believed diversity efforts had to be college-led and within the missions of the colleges. To that, he noted creating a more diverse staff and student body in turn creates a place that is more inviting to diverse faculty.

Goh went on to discuss how the current strategic plan calls for diversity, and cited the wording in the plan: "aggressively recruit, retain and promote field shaping researchers and teachers in our process of improving diversity". He said that now the administration was challenged as to how to effect this. There has been an increase in minority faculty at the University in the last 13 years, with a gain of 188 faculty of color. However, while there is an increase in Asian-American representation, African-American, American Indian, and Chicano/Latino representation of faculty is very flat.

Goh said he was working on developing best practices in recruiting and hiring faculty of color, and had honed in on these key principles:

- If hiring minority faculty is to be successful, the composition of the search team matters: it is integral to countering implicit bias
- Public institutions have a good faith obligation in affirmative action; additionally, as a land grant institution, a legal mandate for diversity is implied
- Search teams must examine position descriptions and how they signal faculty of color are wanted and needed at the University

- Relationships matter: deans communicate with other deans, search committees contact departments that graduate doctorates in areas which may have large numbers of under-represented minorities and create connections

Goh said Provost Hanson had expressed interest in search committees having charges that included these elements. He added the paradigm needed to be changed from a rather passive approach to a more dynamic model of recruiting and retention. There also needed to be active ways to help faculty of color succeed. Goh said he wanted to respect the integrity of search committees' processes, and sought ways to educate them and provide resources that didn't cause pushback. While trying to be creative in their approaches, Goh said they were also aware that "money talks" and there is often not enough funding to support initiatives.

Maruyama said the faculty of color in his department are aggressively recruited but not retained, and noted that it is cheaper to keep a faculty member than replace them. Maruyama wondered how faculty can be retained when there isn't money to do so, and said there was a need to align resources with priorities.

Wassenberg and Maruyama thanked Goh for the information.

2. Martin Luther King Day community service drive

Wassenberg and Maruyama welcomed Amber Cameron, associate director, Public Engagement Initiatives, and Nina Shepherd, public and media relations coordinator, Office of Public Engagement.

Cameron said they wanted to update the Committee about the status of the University's Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Community Service Pledge Drive. She provided background, saying it was inspired by the national MLK Day of Service. At the directive of the Committee, a university-wide community service pledge drive was developed to promote volunteer opportunities for faculty, staff, students and retirees. Cameron said that not only did the initiative bring people together to address critical community needs, community service strengthened the University's commitment to a public engagement agenda.

Shepherd said that despite increased marketing tactics in 2014, there was a decrease in participation across campus. She discussed marketing tactics in 2014, which included:

- All staff and faculty mass email to Twin Cities and Rochester campuses
- Announcements in "Brief"
- University homepage "Spotlight"
- University event calendar listing
- Announcements on web site home pages of Office for Public Engagement, Office of Human Resources, and Office for Equity and Diversity
- Office for Public Engagement mass email and "Engaging U" newsletter
- Announcement in University Relations-managed Twitter account
- Created and customized mass email for partner units
- Created videos with key faculty, staff and students with strong commitment to volunteering

- Page on the University web site: <http://mlkservicedrive.umn.edu/>

Shepherd noted a significant challenge was sustaining an information campaign over five months when there were limited means of communicating the message. The committee discussed the service day, and using the MLK holiday as a University-sponsored volunteer day. Shepherd said this had been discussed but there were many issues that prohibited it. Their office does not have the resources to operationalize it, there are attendant insurance issues, University policy prohibits employees using paid time to volunteer, and there is a major expense of keeping buildings open on a holiday. The committee suggested there might be a branding problem as “pledge drive” suggests donating money rather than community service or volunteering.

Shepherd said the Office for Public Engagement was working on a new initiative. It would be an annual MLK Fellows program, a week-long experiential intensive in which University faculty, staff, and/or students would travel to meet participants in the civil rights movement to discuss the movement and current equity and justice issues. The trip cost would approximately \$1000 for each individual, and would be covered by the individual, a department sponsorship, or a fund established by central office or unit. Shepherd said they were still working on the bring-back component upon individuals’ return, whether it is forums, classroom discussions, or the like.

Wassenberg and Murayama thanked Cameron and Shepherd for the information, and said the Committee looked forward to more information on this idea.

3. Strategic planning principles document

Wassenberg distributed a draft of a document that outlined the principles of the Equity, Access, and Diversity committee as relates to the Strategic Plan. The intent is to present the document to the Provost and Faculty Consultative Committee for consideration as the Strategic Plan moves toward implementation and action steps.

Committee members spent considerable time discussing wording and verbiage, with Murayama recording proposed changes. Deena said revisions would be made and the document would be sent to the committee again.

Hearing no further business, co-chairs Wassenberg and Murayama adjourned the meeting.

Mary Jo Pehl
University Senate Office