

EQUITY, ACCESS & DIVERSITY

MINUTES OF MEETING

November 11, 2013

[In these minutes: MLK Jr. Community Service Volunteer Pledge Drive update; Income-Based Diversity Discussion continued.]

[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), Irene Duranczyk, Priscilla Flynn, Michael Goh, Richard Graff, Kimberly Hewitt, Victoria Interrante, Judith Katz, Louis Mendoza, Jeremy O’Hara, Susan Seltz, Deena Wassenberg

REGRETS: Neil Anderson, Katie Ballering, Rebecca Dean, Andra Fjone, Christopher O’Brien, Jacquelyn Rupp, Tenzin Khando, Ellyn Woo

ABSENT: John Andrus, Parker Bluhm

MLK JR. VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY SERVICE PLEDGE DRIVE

Professor Graff updated members after his recent meeting with Amber Cameron, associate director for public engagement initiatives, Office for Public Engagement (OPE). He reported:

- Communications would be widespread and timely using all campus email and social media outlets.
- University Relations and the Provost will be involved in the promotion of the pledge drive.
- CEHD is considering developing a service project within the First Year Experience program and coordinate this with the pledge drive.
- There is currently no budget, however the OPE will allocate funds when needed.

Professor Graff agreed to continue following the progress of this event and report back to the committee. The members expressed that they would like to receive an update on the results of the next pledge drive. This event serves as an outward expression of the University’s commitment to diversity.

REVISIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Ms. Hewitt distributed drafts of the “Administrative Policy on Sexual Harassment” and the “Procedure for Reporting Incidents of Sexual Harassment.” The policy was

created in response to feedback that stated the need for clear guidance on actions to be taken when reporting sexual harassment. The Campus Safety Act of 2013 created guidelines for schools in handling sexual harassment incidents. Ms. Hewitt directed the members to the draft of the procedure:

- The chart is divided between the options for students and the options for faculty and staff. Offices to contact are listed and actions to be taken are explained.
- Members noted that clarification is needed to describe the order in which offices should be contacted when reporting an incident. It is also not clear to the members what actions the offices take.
- It was suggested that an FAQ section could answer these questions.
- Consensual relationships between students and faculty are addressed in the Nepotism Policy.
- The implementation of a recommendation made regarding an incident is often not an issue because of the extensive investigation and transparency of the procedure. The findings are given in advance of a meeting and it is usually the responsibility of the administrator to implement the recommendation.

FOLLOW UP INCOME-BASED DIVERSITY DISCUSSION

Professor Maruyama reminded members that a recommendation will need to be presented to the SCC regarding income-based diversity. He asked members for their thoughts on a recommendation, particularly one that involves action by and responsibility of faculty as well as administrators:

- Professor Duranczyk stated that she does not see a policy change as a necessity, but our recommendations as an affirmation of the University's stand on diversity as a priority.
- Others related: It needs to be made clear that beyond a social justice reasoning, diversity improves the entire University and is in the best interest of preparing the state's workforce in the face of changing demographics.
- Professor Maruyama added that the University needs to clearly state the value of diversity, and this should be tied to excellence and equity.
- Is the University culture responsive and welcoming to diverse populations? Could this explain the issues relating to Pell-eligible students' graduation rates?
- How can diversity training be designed to specific interests of the faculty and engage them in this cause in a lasting way?
- Professor Graff read a portion of the mission statement directly addressing diversity and members responded with the question: How can these values be realized in daily interactions in a meaningful and substantial way?
- When thinking about costs of college and expectations of students about lifestyle, discussion noted the cost of living in attractive properties near campus increase costs of attendance and increasingly are resulting in large amounts of debt, especially for Pell-eligible students.

- Members discussed the closing of the General College and the various positive and negative aspects that were associated with it.
- Professor Maruyama noted that the percentage of students of color in the freshman class has often been substantially higher than the percentage of students of color that were baccalaureate college “eligible” (top half of their high school class, took ACT) in the state of Minnesota. There are successes, but changes still can be made to improve recruitment and retention of students of color.

In closing, Professor Maruyama stated that he would draft a statement for the SCC, distribute it to members electronically, and a vote can be taken to decide if it should move forward.

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

Jeannine Rich
University Senate Office