

[In these minutes: Discussion with Vice President Katrice Albert, Review of retreat, Discussion with Liz Eull and Jon Steadland]

P&A CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING SEPTEMBER 15, 2014

[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 view of, nor are they binding on the Senate, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.]

Present: Katherine Cramer (Chair), Sherri Boone, Ety DeVeaux, Sandra Ecklein, Kevin Haroian, Candice Kraemer, Marilyn McClaskey, Cynthia Murdoch, Susanne Vandergon.

Guests: Katrice Albert.

1. DISCUSSION WITH VICE PRESIDENT KATRICE ALBERT

Katrice Albert, Vice President for Equity and Diversity, joined the meeting to discuss diversity topics. One of which is the Greater than 7 event that is being sponsored by her office. This is a seven day conversation at the end of September and beginning of October. 40 programs have already been created as ways to have people interact and have longer conversations about diversity. The kick-off is at Northrop and features a poetry slam and dance crew. The capstone experience is on October 1. She invited anyone to submit additional events if they see an opportunity that is missing. She said that P&A can be involved by attending the OED certification training workshops during the Greater than 7 event.

She then discussed diversity is in the strategic planning process. The Strategic Plan talks about solving the grand challenges in the state, one of which is the achievement gap which involves race. She sees diversity as woven throughout each of the four pillars of the plan.

Vice President Albert stated that she has been at the University for about one year. The vision framework for her office was last updated in 2011. While it is still relevant, it is being worked on so that it is in-line with the Strategic Plan.

The campus climate work group started last spring and worked throughout the summer. A website will be launched in a few weeks and will include tips on how to make campus space more respectful and have the University be a better community. The final report being made to the President will focus on how to enhance the campus climate and be a major component of operational excellence.

Q: Will results from the engagement survey be used for the campus climate work?

A: Results from the engagement survey serve as a benchmark and provide thoughtful ways to engage units and employees in the campus climate work.

Q: What else can the P&A Senate do to help her unit?

A: The two OED representatives on the P&A Senate connect those activities and her staff, and drive information down to all P&A in the unit.

Q: It is hard for the University to recruit diverse staff and there is not a culture for it here. How can the University change its culture to hire and retain diverse staff at a professional level?

A: These discussions are happening at the highest level. The campus climate webpage provides simple things that can be done to build community and help to retain staff.

Members made the following comments:

- Climate software was used at a library in Maryland to assess their diversity climate
- Certification training should be highlighted at the next P&A Senate meeting
- Certification requires a high time commitment and is not possible for every employee

2. CHAIR'S REPORT

Katherine Cramer said that she met with Professor Rebecca Ropers-Huilman, Faculty Consultative Committee Chair, and Bill O'Neill, Civil Service Consultative Committee Chair, to discuss planning for Senate Consultative Committee meetings. She has attended the following events:

- August 25 interviews for the Benefits and Compensation Director
- September 3 Strategic Planning listening sessions
- September 11 Regents Faculty and Staff Affairs meeting where employee engagement was a topic
- September 12 Regents meeting where the Strategic Plan, biennial budget, and capital plan were discussed

3. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES AND DISCUSSIONS OF WORK PLANS

Benefits and Compensation

Marilyn McClaskey said that the Benefits and Compensation Subcommittee received an update on the job family study and heard about upcoming changes to the health benefits plans.

Professional Development and Recognition

Etty DeVeaux said that a brown bag topics list has been created for the year and work is started on planning a spring forum.

4. REVIEW OF AUGUST RETREAT

Members made the following comments regarding the retreat:

- Round tables were hard for some of the large subcommittees; breakout rooms would be helpful
- More should be done for new members – spend more time on obligations (subcommittee service and reports to unit) and have a reminder at the first meeting
- Units seated together was helpful
- PPT was very useful
- It was hard to bring the group back together after lunch; instead each chair should deliver the same closing message during their subcommittee meeting

5. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Etty DeVeaux and Cynthia Murdoch were nominated for the OCR Panelist Roster.

6. APPROVAL OF SENATE AGENDA

The agenda was approved as amended.

7. DISCUSSION WITH LIZ EULL AND JON STEADLAND

Katherine Cramer said that she and Susanne Vandergon had a meeting with Liz Eull and Jon Steadland in August. One topic discussed was the President's appearances at various governance group meetings. She then asked them to come discuss the same topic with the committee.

Liz Eull said that her office evaluated the time spent by the President at governance meetings, as well as the time commitment for all the participants. They then discussed the most effective venues for communication with the President, which was determined to be the consultative committee meetings as intimate conversations can take place. The various Senate meetings usually are only a Q&A session, of which many questions are better addressed to vice presidents. Therefore, starting this year, the President will meet annually with each of the consultative committees and then answer questions from the broader groups at the University Senate meetings. However, if an issue arises during the year, time will be found on the President's calendar for him to meet with the affected group.

Members made the following comments:

- There are few opportunities for staff to interact with the President
- Staff should be told that anyone can attend a University Senate meeting
- Committee conversations are very helpful
- Some staff will see this as another way the P&A are not being included
- President at Senate meetings is symbolic
- Decision can be re-evaluated if there is an issue this year

8. OTHER BUSINESS

With no further business, Katherine Cramer thanked the members for attending and adjourned the meeting.

Becky Hippert
University Senate