

EQUITY, ACCESS & DIVERSITY
MINUTES OF MEETING
APRIL 10, 2006

[In these minutes: Announcements, Strategic Positioning Projects]

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

PRESENT: Naomi Scheman, chair, Patricia Jones-Whyte, Audrey Boyle, Geoffrey Maruyama, Anne Phibbs, Benjamin Clarke, Jooinn Lee, Lee Penn

REGRETS: Hawona Sullivan Janzen, Don Cavalier, Julie Sweitzer, Claire Walter-Marchetti, Ruth-Ellen Joeres, Margaret Moss

ABSENT: Jennifer Gunn, Joanna O'Connell, Si Chen, Catherine Hernandez, Cathryn Watson, Andrea Williams

I). Professor Scheman called the meeting to order.

II). Announcements:

- Professor Scheman reported that she attended the March 23rd FCC meeting to provide the committee with an update on what the Senate Committee on Equity, Access and Diversity (EAD) has been doing with respect to strategic positioning, and to learn what it can do to be even more involved. Professor Scheman emphasized the need for diversity to be at the core of the University's strategic positioning initiative, and to deal with it specifically, especially if the University expects to be one of the top three public research universities in the world. Members of the FCC suggested that diversity might be better addressed at the implementation level than at the general level of strategic positioning. While acknowledging the likely truth of that advice, Professor Scheman conveyed her concern that it left the University with the problem its been facing: how to get serious, substantive commitments to the value of diversity, including recognition of what implementing such commitments would mean in practice into the University's self-conception as expressed in strategic positioning.
- On a separate issue, the Senate Committee on Equity, Access and Diversity may want to weigh in on the new Senate structure as it relates to what items of business are brought to the University Senate versus the Faculty Senate. Professor Scheman believes the issue revolves around equity in terms of job classifications, but volunteered to gather more information and report back to the committee.

- A Minnesota Daily reporter, newly assigned to the higher education beat, contacted Professor Scheman to see if the committee had any items of interest to share. Professor Scheman indicated yes, and, as background information, suggested the reporter visit the committee's website to get an idea of what the committee has been working on this year. Professor Scheman has not heard back from this reporter, but plans to follow-up with her.
- A member suggested comparing the various college compacts, which will include sections on diversity, public engagement, pre K-12 and international university, with their corresponding task force reports to ensure their objectives coincide. This approach would stress the importance of consistency to all parties involved.
- Dr. Nancy "Rusty" Barcelo has been hired as the new Vice President for Access, Equity and Multicultural Affairs and Vice Provost.

III). In terms of next steps that EAD should take in order to have an impact on the strategic positioning process, Professor Scheman suggested the committee continue to outline principles of diversity, while reflecting upon how the process has been going so far. She specifically suggested developing a list of suggested, exemplary pilot projects that would embody a commitment to diversity. Or, in other words, projects that would institute forms of engagement that would make the vision outlined in EAD's early documents, Risk Assessment (<http://www1.umn.edu/usenate/ead/eadwhatislost.html>) and A Blueprint for Transformation (<http://www1.umn.edu/usenate/ead/eadblueprint.html>), more tangible.

Members spent the remainder of the meeting brainstorming how diversity should look at the University and identified specific themes for projects that the University could undertake as a means to promote diversity. Pilot project ideas included:

1. Make the University of Minnesota a 'green' campus. Such an endeavor would require University constituency groups and the community at large to work together to achieve this goal.
2. Develop a list of non-traditional/alternative criteria for predicting student success and include in Metrics and Measurements ways of tracking the predictive value of such criteria. The suggestion was made to invite Vice Provost Craig Swan to a future meeting to further discuss this idea. As follow-up to shifting admissions criteria, EAD recommends a project to mainstream throughout the undergraduate colleges GC's practices of developmental education, on the grounds that (especially, but not solely) non-traditional students (such as those who have entered the University through GC) would be more likely to succeed with more holistic pedagogies, which would have the further advantage of opening spaces for the diversity of students' experiences and perspectives to inform, and potentially transform, student and faculty work.
3. What does it mean to be a University of Minnesota graduate? Start a conversation-among present and former students, faculty, staff, and members of the community-about the meaning of a degree from the University of Minnesota. In particular, are there, or should there be, differences between the meaning of a

- U of M degree now compared to in the (relatively recent) past? And, is there a difference between a degree from the U of M and various other schools?
4. The concept of 'six degrees of separation' with a community perspective. The value of diversity will be fully realized only when people who might appear to share very little actually engage in sustained conversation, enriching and challenging each other's views of the world. Hobbies, families, neighborhoods, schools, faith communities, research projects and findings, as well as mundane tasks and annoying problems, all provide opportunities for engagement across lines of difference and would ground a commitment to responsibility placing university research and teaching in respectful relationship to the needs and knowledges of diverse communities.

IV). In light of time, Professor Scheman adjourned the meeting and encouraged members to attend the upcoming strategic positioning open/public forums.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate