

EQUITY, ACCESS & DIVERSITY

MINUTES OF MEETING

March 11, 2013

[In these minutes: Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence overview; Letter to President Kaler edits; Future topics discussion.]

[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: Irene Duranczyk (chair), Katie Ballering, Susan Cable-Morrison, Kimberly Hewitt, Judith Katz, Tenzin Khando, Geoff Maruyama, Tade Okediji, Ellyn Woo

GUESTS: Frederick MacDonald-Dennis, director, Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence (MCAE)

OTHERS: Rickey Hall, Michael Reis, Deena Wassenberg

REGRETS: John Andrus, Andra Fjone, Michael Goh, Christopher O'Brien, Jeremy O'Hara, Charmaine Stewart, Dominique Tobbell

ABSENT: Neil Anderson, Mandi Stebbins, Janet Thomas

Professor Duranczyk called the meeting to order and welcomed those present.

Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence (MCAE) Overview

Frederick MacDonald-Dennis, director, Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence (MCAE), presented an overview and opportunities for possible collaboration. He used a PowerPoint to outline the following topics:

- MCAE Purpose
- MCAE Mission
- Our Student-Centered Philosophy
 - He emphasized that students are supported academically and personally.
- Academic Support
 - Student Excellence in Academics and Multiculturalism
 - Seats are reserved in particular classes to ensure that classes are diverse
 - Living Learning Communities
 - Offer eligible students the option to live together in a dedicated area of a residence hall. These areas are sometimes referred to as a "house" and are specifically designed to deliver a variety of educational, social, and developmental programs and services to support students with their transition to the University.

- Individual Tutoring
 - Opportunity for students of color to tutor and be tutored in subjects they excel in or need extra help
- Facilitated Study Groups
- Facilitated Study Groups
- Academic Support Workshops
- Academic and Personal Coaching and Mentorship
- Service-Learning and Community Engagement
 - Multicultural Civic Engagement Program – Requires students to meet with a coach, which helps with student retention and community involvement
 - MLK Celebration- a student panel discussed what social justice means to them. This program is planned to become a signature program of MCAE

Mr. MacDonald-Dennis and members discussed the following topics:

- MCAE-EAD Partnership
 - Faculty Mentorship for PDFMP Program – Mr. MacDonald-Dennis emphasized that they are always looking for faculty to serve as mentors.
 - Helping Students Feel More Comfortable Approaching Professors – Students are often hesitant to speak with instructors and one option to build this relationship is “Coffee With a Prof.” This program does not yet exist through MCAE, but similar opportunities exist with other departments. Members agreed that it is challenging to encourage students to speak with faculty members. It was suggested that the faculty are made aware of this issue in general.
 - Focus on the First Year program was mentioned as an area for collaboration with MCAE. Mr. MacDonald-Dennis added that this program plans to have students meet in person more often.
 - President’s Distinguished Faculty Mentorship Program reaches out to students who were high achievers during high school and they are matched with faculty members that share similar interests. For the first semester the students are paired with graduate students. During the second semester, students are paired with faculty members. Workshops are provided for faculty members and they are asked to expose the students to research in some manner. There are no funds for this research; it is mainly a learning experience.
 - Student Excellence in Academics and Multiculturalism (SEAM) is a program that works with CLA and CFANS. Other departments have developed their own seminars, which decreased the size of SEAM. Professor Maruyama stated that the program was originally intended to help students develop skills and navigate the University. He added that students were scheduled in the same classes to develop a sense of community. Now that more departments have developed freshman

seminars, how has the purpose of SEAM changed? Mr. MacDonald – Dennis stated that MCAE wants to research the current program to develop a plan for the future of the program.

- Inter-group community development is being explored by MCAE to promote understanding of different cultures.

Professor Duranczyk invited Mr. MacDonald-Dennis to reach out to the committee in the future regarding MCAE initiatives.

LETTER TO PRESIDENT KALER EDIT

Professor Duranczyk distributed a draft of a letter that was written to President Kaler. Members agreed the intent of the letter lies in the following sentence:

“We believe, however, that the University of Minnesota should stand with other leading public research universities in favor of admissions policies that are fair to all students, including those who have been historically underrepresented in higher education in the United States.”

Members emphasized that the purpose of the letter is to ensure that future opportunities to assert that the University stands for diversity should not be missed and that race should continue to be a dimension of the admissions process.

Members decided that Ms. Hewitt would edit the draft and it would be sent to the committee at a later date. Members voted unanimously in favor of the intent of the letter.

TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

- Matthew Antonio Bosch, director, and Jason Jackson, assistant director, GLBTA Programs Office, Update: What can the committee do to support their efforts?
- University Services or Facilities Management: Update on gender neutral restrooms
- OIT PeopleSoft upgrade: student’s preferred names and genders used, disaggregate according to race and ethnicity

Hearing no further business, Professor Duranczyk adjourned the meeting.

Jeannine Rich
University Senate Office