

Diversity Council
October 25, 2007
Minutes

Present: E. Abercumbie, C. Berryman-Fink, L. Bilonis, G. Dent, S. Downing, K. Faaborg, M. Hall, M. Leventhal, M. Livingston, B. Marshall, R. Martin, M. McCrate, D. Meem, D. Merchant, C. Miller, E. Owens, N. Pinto, J. Radley, K. Simonson, M. Spencer, M. Stagaman, G. Wharton

Absent: E. Akpinar, C. Collins, G. Hand, J. Heisey, A. Ingber, A. Leonard, L. Mortimer, B. Rinto, K. Robbins,

Opening

C. Berryman-Fink opened the meeting welcoming new member, Deb Meem, a professor in the English Department. She is representing the LGBTQ community.

Chief Diversity Officer Report

M. Livingston reported on the visit he, C. Berryman-Fink and B. Marshall had with Dr. Mac Stewart, Special Assistant to the President & Vice Provost, at OSU. He is Vice Provost for Minority Affairs, but it is not specifically stated. They do have a dedicated budget of \$200,000+ for a Diversity Lecture Series. However, a budget outside of this has not been established for diversity work. Dr. Stewart is a founding member of a national Chief Diversity Officers association and he has learned that most of his colleagues have been assigned this additional responsibility (diversity) and they identify a portion of their home budget and staff to utilize for their diversity work. He does not have any dedicated staff at OSU for his diversity work. M. Livingston believes it would be beneficial to spend additional time with M. Stewart in his role as a founding member of this national organization. There are several questions that remain after the visit which will be forwarded to Dr. Stewart. One of which is the relationship between diversity and the many offices at OSU. Their diversity plan identifies offices that are to be held accountable; it would be helpful to know how the accountability is measured. Also, how do they build the relationship across the university. C. Berryman-Fink was most impressed with three items: 1) accountability component which involves the Provost and the deans; 2) communication piece – the council visits with the deans and a quarterly newsletter is produced; 3) the majority of the council is comprised of faculty members and Faculty Senate also has their own diversity committee. The college reports can be viewed on the OSU web site. G. Wharton asked how OSU integrates Affirmative Action into the diversity plan and if alignment of these two offices is addressed. M. Livingston replied this is conspicuously absent and stated he would add this to the list of questions.

M. Livingston reported H. Kegler from RWC called to his attention there is no representation on the Council for branch campuses. He will discuss this with C. Berryman-Fink and B. Marshall.

Given OSU's visit and learning that other institutions around the country are all on the threshold of this initiative, ranging from small minority focus (race and ethnicity only) to more

elaborate programs, M. Livingston emphasized that we need to gain a sense of what UC is all about.

At the end of the last meeting, people were telling stories of their respective units. It may be beneficial for all to share with the Council what your respective units are doing going forward.

Diversity Council Chair Report

C. Berryman-Fink reported meetings with the various governance groups are being scheduled (Student Senate, Graduate Student Assn., Faculty Senate, Deans). If there are other groups you want to schedule, please notify K. Ogden.

A letter to the senior leadership of the university (Cabinet and Deans) has been drafted which asks for them to identify initiatives that are currently underway or are in planning stages that are considered part of the diversity initiative. The goal is to use this as baseline information to learn of current initiatives and/or ones in the planning stages.

T. Perzigian shared a position description from Akron for the Associate VP for Inclusion and Equity and CDO. They place heavy emphasis on inclusive excellence and curriculum and learning outcomes. This language could be used when creating the Council's brand identity.

Affirmative Action Report

G. Wharton reviewed the report which was distributed with the agenda. This information was presented to the Board of Trustees and is done on an annual basis. The report captures the university's progress of a one year period as well as a ten year period. He highlighted some of the categories in his presentation, showing both increases and decreases. He would like to emphasize with the units the importance of creating diverse pools in their searches. His office is looking at the retention of diverse employees as well.

Enrollment Report

C. Miller distributed data on enrollment and asked all to spend time with the report as it was too lengthy to review entirely at the meeting. She highlighted four trends: 1) with the change to the admissions criteria, most diverse groups increased except for African Americans; 2) full freshman class even with closing baccalaureate admission 6/1 and closing CAT admission 8/1. She noted applications at the end of summer tend to be heavier from African American students; an Admissions rep is now encouraging CPS students to submit their applications earlier and the numbers already reflect an increase for '08 applications. 3) Two years ago the Cincinnati Scholars class had 95 (9%) students of color; the 2007 class netted 142 students (11%). The increase was in all diverse groups. UC needs to be an attractive institution to diverse academically talented students. 4) Retention is up among students of color in almost all colleges.

As part of the integrated enrollment effort in setting targets with the deans, they will be asked to include goals for gender and students of color.

M. Livingston met with staff in CAT and W. McIntosh (Dean of Business) who have specific ideas of initiatives they want to implement. He asked them to put their ideas in writing and he will bring these proposals to the Council for consideration in the action plan.

E. Owens recommended consideration be given to include in the council membership the head of procurement. As discussions begin to move in that direction, it will make the transition much easier if this person has been part of the process.

The Council broke into smaller groups and C. Berryman-Fink asked them to address factors that both advance and hinder diversity.

Reports from Discussion Groups

S. Downing reported the following advances: 1) used the President's theme of workable urbanity (recruitment location) that creates opportunity to mix with those different from us, 2) tap into our staff with talent, 3) people, 4) options – how do we create a package with these different options to recruit students and staff with curricular, activities, etc., 5) intellectual knowledge and how do we incorporate and make it more practical and applicable where it's not just inside your mind, 6) how can we learn from industries and take advantage of their best practices, 7) look at what works and replicate it in other areas. Hindrances: 1) City of Cincinnati is not welcoming, segregated, historical racial tension, 2) change resistant, 3) people/structure/practices, 4) lack of institutional plan, but we're moving forward, 5) regional location – recruitment, 6) caveman caucus/perception of non-Ohioans, 7) lack of leadership – across the board.

M. Stagaman reported the following advances: 1) visible commitment to diversity, 2) natural leadership of university, 3) the millennial generation sees and embraces diversity, however, it may just be a talking point and they may not necessarily be "walking the walk", there seems to be a lack of activism, 4) need to use the success of programs like E3 as a model. Hindrances – 1) lack of early exposure and understanding among children. This should be a shared value in our community. By the time students get to college age, they are not cognizant; we need to reach back in the K-12 system to make them our allies. 2) general lack of commitment to inclusion in community, 3) degree to which diversity is not embraced as a value (no sense of crisis).

D. Merchant reported what helps advance diversity: 1) sufficient interest, 2) using language draws people together, 3) money (when you have it) to support and reward, 4) being open to concept of inclusion, 5) having diverse groups in the population, 6) creative, constructive pressure (strategic leadership), 7) implementation of programs that support/educate regarding diversity. Hindrances: 1) Lack of money – money influences, 2) when diversity is viewed as depreciating the educational structure rather than enhancing, 3) Often or potential for factionalism, 4) use of word "diversity" suggests divisiveness, 5) the word "diversity" has been used for a long time and people become desensitized, 6) when the paradigm changes, people don't know where to tread, 7) if the numbers don't match there will always be a sense of a persistent problem.

Now the legal culture is narrowing the path. The matrix is changing and people are afraid they will be scrutinized. Even though we are making progress, the numbers still don't match

what is in our community. Individual experiences – if you come from an experience being around a diverse culture, you are more likely to be open to diversity in the community and pushing the issues. However, if you have a very limited exposure or experienced friction, you will likely be more hesitant.

G. Wharton reported on hindrances. 1) There is a lack of institutionalized diversity and lack of ownership. We say we value diversity but do we really do that and how do we take ownership? 2) How do faculty see this effort and what motivates faculty to address diversity? They have a different take on this. What does social responsibility mean to them? How does it benefit them? How do they engage in their curriculum? 3) Equal Opportunity's approach is to provide information on how to better recruit. Maybe we should approach it with a values theme and how it benefits them. Discussed how other companies look at diversity. They were forced to address it as a compliance issue but then realized they benefit from diversity. We need to begin valuing diversity starting with the faculty.

Wrap Up/Homework

C. Berryman-Fink distributed three scenarios on how to organize the Council into subcommittees. She asked all to review and provide feedback prior to the next meeting. The Council needs to begin moving forward with its work.

She asked Council members to review the recommendations from the Task Force and identify the top five priorities. Keep in mind items that can be acted upon immediately, what can be done at no or little cost, and identify items of high importance that could be done quickly.

Also, any thoughts on the progress of the Council's work is welcome.

Minutes approved by C. Berryman-Fink and M. Livingston.

NEXT MEETING: November 8, 2007, 10:00 AM

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