

Diversity Council  
September 20, 2007  
Minutes

Present: E. Abercrombie, T. Barr (guest), C. Berryman-Fink, L. Bilonis, C. Collins, S. Downing, K. Faaborg, M. Hall, G. Hand, J. Heisey, A. Ingber, A. Leonard, M. Livingston, B. Marshall, R. Martin, D. Merchant, C. Miller, L. Mortimer, E. Owens, N. Pinto, J. Radley, B. Rinto, K. Robbins, K. Simonson, M. Spencer, M. Stagaman, D. Walton (for G. Dent), G. Wharton

Absent: E. Apkinar, M. Leventhal, M. McCrate

Chief Diversity Officer Report

M. Livingston opened the meeting thanking everyone for their commitment to addressing issues of diversity at UC. The UC|21 process was to define a road map for the future of the university to be the premier research university of the 21st century. The planning process for UC|21 came up short in the area of diversity. Therefore, N. Zimpher put together the Diversity Task Force last year which was guided by L. Bilonis, M. Spencer and N. Zimpher to advance diversity on campus. This process resulted in 52 recommendations. One of which was the creation of the Diversity Council to serve as a governing body and create a five year strategic/action plan to implement the recommendations and address other matters as the university moves forward in becoming the premier research university of the 21st century. M. Livingston stated it needs to be clear that diversity is not just about race and ethnicity; it is much more broadly defined. Diversity needs to be an integral part of the university with leadership provided at all levels.

M. Livingston reported he was appointed as the Chief Diversity Officer effective July 1 and then introduced his partner, C. Berryman-Fink as chair of the Diversity Council as appointed by N. Zimpher. B. Marshall will serve as an assistant to the Chief Diversity Officer. K. Ogden is assistant to M. Livingston and the Diversity Council. These four individuals will serve as a resource and provide guidance to the Council in their work.

M. Livingston and C. Berryman-Fink have met several times to organize the resource booklet provided to all Council members. When the group meets again in two weeks, all should be prepared to discuss how to organize the Council's time relative to working sub-committees.

M. Livingston, C. Berryman-Fink, and B. Marshall are scheduled to visit Dr. Mac Stewart at OSU on 10/16 to learn about their diversity efforts and how some of their work may be applicable for UC.

M. Livingston verbally requested \$100,000 for the current fiscal year to fund the diversity initiative and was asked to prepare a detailed budget proposal. The Council also needs to prepare a permanent budget proposal for submittal by April 2008 for the '08-09 year. The same time frame will be used in submitting the strategic plan. Many of the recommendations

are revenue neutral and just need to be assigned to the appropriate office and/or individual for implementation.

M. Livingston thanked G. Hand for being the communication guru when addressing diversity issues with the internal and external community. People will likely define the Council's work very narrowly by race and ethnicity. However, everyone should remember it is much larger than that. Council members should be vigilant in spreading this message.

#### Diversity Council Chair Report

C. Berryman-Fink stated she is very honored and pleased to chair the Council and thanked those who served on the Diversity Task Force. She directed everyone to the resource book and walked through the sections indicating many of the documents were in draft format and invited feedback. Several suggestions were given including the Provost Offices appearing consistently in the materials provided. The Provost Offices were clearly identified on the roster, but their involvement could be made more clear on the other two descriptive pieces. Please understand these documents are in draft form and the intent was to illicit feedback which will be reflected in the revised, final documents. These and other changes will be incorporated into the documents and redistributed. If there are other changes, please forward them to K. Ogden.

The meeting schedule for the academic year has been set with the majority of the meetings on Thursday mornings. If this schedule is problematic, please notify K. Ogden. It is preferable not to send subs to the meetings.

Articles in the resource book should be read prior to the next meeting. If Council members find other pertinent information they would like shared with the committee, please forward it to K. Ogden for distribution.

C. Miller reported many students when asked to identify themselves by ethnicity do not complete the information or check "other" because they are bi- or multi-racial. A category(ies) needs to be added to address this deficiency. It was agreed the category schema is flawed, but it is a system that we must work within.

#### Charge from President Zimpher

N. Zimpher provided the charge stating the creation of the Council was one of the multiple recommendations stemming from the Diversity Task Force (DTF). They stressed the importance of establishing such a body immediately to continue the work already begun. Another recommendation that has been implemented is the creation of the Chief Diversity Officer which M. Livingston has taken on in addition to his current responsibilities. She believes this is a wonderful opportunity to create something new and exciting for the university.

She directed the Council to review the DTF recommendations and determine which are revenue neutral and can be implemented now. The Council needs to position the next tier of recommendations by developing a strategic plan with a timeline and an investment plan that

moves the diversity initiative forward. The University's Campaign will be launched in the fall of 2008 and diversity will be part of that plan.

She referenced the Report Card which will be shared with the Board of Trustees at their 9/25 meeting; it is metric driven and a very impressive document. As the strategic plan is developed and implemented, it should be crafted using metrics to measure success. She emphasized the diversity initiative was framed to define diversity in the very broadest sense. She went on to state the University will likely be an early adopter of the voluntary system of accountability which will implement measurement tools at higher education institutions. Cultural competence will be one of the measurements.

M. Livingston stated diversity should be in our DNA. There is a commitment that we make in our work that will bring consistency and focus. We need to understand students who are bi- and multi-racial which may require redefining the metrics. Progress needs to be tracked as the work moves forward – nothing is off limits. What gets measured, gets done. What gets invested will be determined on what's important. Be reasonable in what the five year plan will look like. She ended her comments by thanking all for carrying on the work of DTF.

### Communications

G. Hand was asked how best to proceed with communications. He stated this is a unique opportunity and stressed the importance about the Council proceeds to make the most of this opportunity. It's more than just communication; it's about listening intently. He proceeded to say the Council is building a brand from scratch. The Diversity Council is already beginning to show some branding attributes including the ability to engage the campus, aspects of leadership, communicating success, calling for action. There is agreement that the campus community needs to be engaged and basic information is a good starting point. There are 35 communicators (council members) connected to an audience. They can reach out to the audience and make connections to establish what we want to communicate and we should listen to their diversity interest – what they hope to see from this initiative. We need to be prepared to keep our promise to the constituency across the university.

C. Berryman-Fink asked if we want to begin thinking about formal communication. G. Hand recommended heavy listening at this point. You define yourself or somebody will brand you. This unique opportunity should be treasured and gel in our mind before we go out and start communicating. Before Council members go out, we need to do more talking and listening among the Council first. He also stressed the importance of listening carefully to those on campus.

### Subcommittees

M. Livingston asked for preliminary thoughts on how best to structure the subcommittees. He reviewed the five areas listed on the first page of the resource book (Resource Development/Budget, Five Year Plan/Recommendations, Review of Mission, Values, Just Community, Evaluation/Assessment/Metrics, Communications). Some members felt it would be beneficial to use the five working groups from the Diversity Task Force (DTF). However, doing so would be repetitive of the DTF's work and as L. Bilionis indicated would not achieve the goals outlined in the President's charge. It is possible to use the same original five and

elaborate to include the new dimensions of the Council. With an April deadline in mind, all need to be cognizant that the budget proposal and five year plan should be a powerful, strong statement with a structure that achieves our end result.

C. Berryman-Fink asked all to keep two questions in mind as everyone reads through the resource materials: 1) how best to organize the recommendations to move to action, and 2) how best to build a brand, engaging the internal and external community (listen).

E. Abercrombie proposed for the next meeting holding a discussion with the Council to ensure everyone has the same understanding of diversity and the work to be done. It's important that all Council members are "on the same page" to present a unified front to the community. Assumptions should not be made that everyone has the same understanding. The Council needs to build its own team first. It would not be beneficial to the Council's work to have members that are sending different signals to the community. Diversity training is a possibility. It was agreed the Council needs to "gel" as a team first.

#### Upcoming Events

- African American Alumni Association Reunion - October 11-14
- Ethnic Reception for faculty, staff and students – October 17, 3:30
- Ebrahim Patel will kick off the Children of Abraham exhibit with a lecture on October 17 at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center; exhibit will run through the month of November
- Hispanic Month is in October
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Meet & Greet – September 25, 12-2 pm, 571 SSLC

Any events to be listed on the agenda or minutes should be forwarded to K. Ogden.

NEXT MEETING: October 4, 10:00 am