

Meeting Minutes

Equity Council

Friday, May 21, 2010

1:00-3:00 p.m.

Student Senate Chambers, Memorial Union

Attendance: Trish Morokoff, co-chair, Gerald Williams, co-chair, Laura Beauvais, Debra Cohen, Maxwell Edmonds, Michelle Fontes-Barros, Frank Forleo, Ed Givens, Roxanne Gomes, Kyle Kusz, Karol Leuzarder, Ann Morrissey, Amy Olson, Jason Pina, Barb Silver, Melvin Wade, and Andrew Winters.

1) Introductions

2) Minutes of the May 6, 2010 meeting were approved.

3) Announcements:

- a) Equity Council co-chairs met with President Dooley May 13, 2010
- b) Equity Council co-chairs and Equity Council VP Task Force Chair Melvin Wade met with Provost DeHayes May 14, 2010
- c) A letter was sent to Provost DeHayes concerning the URI calendar conflict with Rosh Hashanah

4) Confidentiality:

Trish reviewed the policy for confidentiality at meetings.

- a) No one will speak to the media concerning issues discussed at an Equity Council meeting unless agreed upon at the meeting.
- b) All discussion at Equity Council meetings will be confidential unless otherwise designated.
- c) Minutes will be made public after approval.

It was clarified that if those outside the meeting requested further information they should be invited to attend meetings.

5) VP for Diversity: Follow-up on Equity Council co-chair meetings with President Dooley and Provost DeHayes

- a) Meetings with the President and Provost to present out proposal for a VP for Diversity were summarized.

(a) Specifically, President Dooley said that we had made a strong case for the creation of a senior administrator

who reports to the President and who has a portfolio of community and diversity. He also indicated that if a new division were to be formed (as proposed) that he would want to have this brought before the Faculty Senate.

(b) The Provost indicated that he does not favor combining global and diversity issues in a portfolio for a Vice Provost. He said that we need to think about function before structure. He also indicated that he does not favor the divisional structure and so does not support the creation of a new division for diversity and equity.

(c) There was discussion as to whether a senior administrator could be effective without the structure of a division. A way in which this position could work would be if the CDO reports directly to the President and is acknowledged by the VP's to be responsible for university initiatives for diversity.

b) There was further discussion concerning how the role of CDO would be carried out in the interim, as the position to be proposed would start at the earliest July 2011.

(a) Frank proposed that there be an interim appointment.

(b) Karol noted that it would be discouraging to have to redo work already done by going back to achieve a faculty consensus. Others supported the idea of an interim CDO.

c) A motion was made and seconded that an interim senior administrator who reports to the President on equity, diversity, and community, be appointed with a budget of \$250,000 to be selected from a list of recommendations that the Equity Council submits. After discussion, the motion was unanimously adopted.

It was noted that Roxanne would need a position description and the CV's of candidates.

6) Residence Hall Issues

Roxanne reported on a specific issue that had been brought to her by a student from the LGBT Center. She also indicated that students had reported difficulties in having their issues addressed by RA's.

Andrew read from emails he had received, indicating harassment and poor treatment for LGBT students. There was also

discussion of diversity training for RA's coming up later this summer. A question arose as to the length of the training to be offered.

The Council requested that Andrew bring back recommendations for changes that are needed to address these problems.

6) Search Issues

There was discussion related to diversity in the ongoing search for a new Dean of CELS. This search is being chaired by Ray Wright. There was discussion of whether any of the search committee members had specific training in diversity issues and the desirability of having an Equity Council member or a person otherwise trained in diversity issues on such search committees. It was also acknowledged that the Equity Council should be kept informed of all administrative searches so as to be able to attend meetings with applicants and make recommendations.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.