

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, September 21, 2009 – Graduate Life Center – Room C
Meeting Minutes

Present: Kim Beisecker, Craig Brians, Virgilio Centeno, Paul Deyerle, Pat Hyer, Hal Irvin, Meghan Kuhn, Anna LoMascolo, Maxine Lyons, Michelle McLeese, Kevin McDonald, Sue Ott Rowlands, Bhanu Peddi, Ray Plaza, Chris Ramos, Keisha Riley, Edd Sewell (representing Ross Edmonds), Guy Sims, Melissa Simpkins, Maggie Sloane, Christine Snider, Jim Snyder, Elisa Sotelino, Mikhelle Taylor, Ethan Wechtaluk, Dennis Welch

Absent: Shirley Cline, Shivani Handa, Stevan Jackson, Aditya Johri, Brad Klein, Daphne Rainey-Wittich, Amy Sorenson, Ray Williams

Guests: Karisa Moore, Belinda Pauley, Virginia Reilly, Susanna Rinehart

I. Call to Order

Guy Sims called the meeting to order at 10:00am.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the September 14th meeting were approved as amended.

III. Presentation on International Awareness Workshops – Kim Beisecker & Belinda Pauley

Kim and Belinda provided an overview of the International Awareness Workshops. As the numbers of international students have remained general steady over the last few years, there has been an ongoing need to assist and educate staff in learning how to handle the various logistical challenges that many international students encounter during their time at Virginia Tech. To help in this effort the Cranwell Center has developed a series of workshops targeted toward staff members that work with international students as part of their work. These workshops are currently limited to 35 participants and the workshops quickly filled up. Staff members that attend all of the workshops will receive a certificate and t-shirt. In response to a question on the size of the classes, Kim indicated that Cranwell's desire is to keep the class sizes to 35 to allow for good interaction and discussion. Feedback on this effort will be collected and the Cranwell Center will continue to work to educate the campus community on topics related to international students through a variety of initiatives.

IV. Report on SGA Equity and Inclusion Initiatives – Paul Deverle

Paul provided an overview of initiatives that he is looking to institute as SGA's Director for Equity and Inclusion. Among the programs that he discussed were The Forum, the Find Your Voice campaign, Hokies for Equality, and various efforts related to the Principles of Community. Suggestions offered in response to these programs included being cautious about imposing feelings of equality on groups in ways that they might not be comfortable to members of that group. It was also suggested that collaboration with various campus organizations and caucuses would be necessary to fully vet ideas and avoid duplication of efforts. Paul indicated that invitations to become involved have been distributed widely among student organizations and that efforts to encourage participation are ongoing.

V. Resolution on Policy 1025 – Maggie Sloane

Maggie discussed the proposed changes to Policy 1025 and provided the latest version of the proposed changes. In addition to previously discussed expansions of characteristics covered in Policy 1025, revisions are also being suggested in the Procedural section of Policy 1025. These changes affirm the current procedures for requests for investigations as well as the procedures for filing a formal complaint. The appeal process was changed to make it congruent with the processes detailed in the appropriate employee handbook for a particular employee.

A suggestion for including the role of staff in the “Responsibilities” section was made. Additionally, a question was raised on what types of “advisors” were covered under this policy. Maggie responded that the intent was to cover all who work in an advisory role.

Pat informed the group that as the “host” commission for this resolution that it was necessary to refresh CEOD’s approval of this resolution and that a vote on this resolution should be taken at the next CEOD meeting.

VI. Resolutions regarding proposed new seats to CEOD

Three resolutions to add additional ex officio seats to CEOD were presented. These would offer ex officio representation from the Dean of Students Office, Outreach and International Affairs, and the Vice President and Dean for Graduate Education. These three resolutions were presented separately.

Discussion on these resolutions centered-around the potential impact these additions would have on the size of CEOD. There was also discussion on the need for official seats verses inviting representatives from these programs to serve as resources to CEOD. It was noted that the addition of a Dean of Students seat was in response to the Campus Climate Team efforts being taken on by CEOD in the future.

A motion was made to approve the CEOD Resolution A which had been presented at the September 14th CEOD meeting. Resolution A would add an ex officio seat from the Dean of Students Office to the CEOD. Additional corrections to job titles of current ex officio seats were also included in this resolution. This resolution was presented at the previous CEOD Meeting. In discussion, Pat noted that the title of her position did not need to be updated. Maggie also noted a correction to her job title.

After a quorum was confirmed, the motion carried on voice vote with three members abstaining.

Guy suggested that the other resolutions regarding additional seats be tabled as there were suggestions that individuals from these areas could be invited as resources.

VII: Discussion on Task Forces

Guy provided an overview of each CEOD Task Force and requested that the Commission members respond to Perry to indicate that Task Force on which they desired to serve.

VIII: Old Business

Virginia Reilly passed around a complete and corrected version of Policy 4075 which was discussed at the previous meeting. The amended version of Policy 4075 will be voted on at the next CEOD meeting.

IX: New Business/Announcements

Ray passed out a flyer on an upcoming Hispanic Latino Heritage Month event, Tres Vidas, on September 25th. Michelle announced the upcoming Graduate and Professional School Fair on September 28th.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:53pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Perry D. Martin
Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity