

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, November 2, 2009 – Graduate Life Center – Room B
Meeting Minutes

Present: Craig Brians, Jean Brickey, Virgilio Centeno, Paul Deyerle, Ross Edmonds, Pat Hyer, Hal Irvin, Brad Klein, Meghan Kuhn, Anna LoMascolo, Kevin McDonald, Michelle McLeese, Sue Ott Rowlands, Ray Plaza, Keisha Riley, Guy Sims, Maggie Sloane (represented by Dale Robinson), Christine Snider, Jim Snyder, Amy Sorenson, Elisa Sotelino, Mikhelle Taylor, Ethan Wechtaluk, Dennis Welch

Absent: Kim Beisecker, Shivani Handa, Stevan Jackson, Aditya Johri, Maxine Lyons, Bhanu Peddi, Daphne Rainey-Wittich, Chris Ramos, Melissa Simpkins (with notice), Ray Williams (with notice)

Guests: Virginia Reilly

I. Call to Order Guy Sims, Chair of CEOD, called the meeting to order at 10:00am.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the October 19th meeting were approved with changes as distributed before the meeting.

III. Update on Black Alumni Reunion at Virginia Tech – Laurie Brogdon

Laurie Brogdon, Director of Multicultural Alumni Relations, provided an update on plans for the upcoming Black Alumni Reunion in March of 2010. These reunions have been occurring every three years after the first formal reunion was held in the 1980s. The planning for the upcoming reunion has been guided by surveys of Black Alumni, and some key goals for the 2010 reunion have been established. Central to these goals is a desire to build an event that invites collaboration between alumni, faculty, staff, students, and administrators. Laurie reported that with previous reunions there had been a disconnection with the reunion and ongoing work at the university. With the upcoming reunion, efforts will be made to connect alumni to mentoring opportunities with students, networking opportunities with other alumni, discussions on university changes, and to educate alumni on opportunities for giving to the university.

Laurie indicated that alumni from the mid-1980s and before tended to connect very well. More recent alumni tend to be less engaged with the institution and with other alumni. The Alumni Association is utilizing various methods of social-networking to better connect with more recent graduates. Currently, Virginia Tech has 1300 black students and 6300 black alumni. The Alumni Association hopes to get 1000 alumni to the reunion. The university has 205,000 total alumni.

Pat commented that the hiring of Joyce Williams-Green was instrumental in helping with getting larger numbers of African-American students to the university in the 1980s. Guy asked Laurie if there was a rationale for having a reunion every three years and Laurie responded that the extreme effort that it takes to coordinate a reunion makes it difficult to do more frequently. In reviewing the Reunion events, Dennis and Brad suggested that the Reunion be attentive to making all religions welcome at the event.

IV. Policy 4075 – Jennie Reilly

Jennie presented a resolution for revisions to Policy 4075 which currently covers accommodations of employees and applicants with disabilities. The revisions to this policy were previously presented to CEOD and the purpose of these revisions was to include students in the policy language, as well as to clarify the roles and names of the offices that assist in providing accommodations to individuals at the university.

Pat made a motion to approve the resolution. Michelle seconded the motion. The motion passed on voice vote.

V. Old Business

Paul provided feedback on The Forum. The event went very well with several key questions related to campus life discussed with administrators. A tandem event "Extreme Campus Makeover," has also helped provide data on student attitudes towards diversity. Paul and SGA are working to share feedback collected in these efforts.

VI. New Business

Ray announced that he is working with Laurie Brogdon on a Hispanic/Latino alumni reception in Northern Virginia.

Paul announced that SGA will be conducting a networking event with black faculty and students in November.

Brad discussed the recently announced grants related to student diversity and asked for assistance in identifying possible students who could assist in the efforts of the Campus Diversity Integration Task Force by perhaps providing network analysis on the extent to which various diversity efforts collaborate on campus. Sue suggested a possible connection to the Undergraduate Research Institute in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:49a.m. and Task Forces convened.

Respectfully Submitted,

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