

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Orientation Session
Monday, September 8, 2003

Minutes

Present: Pat Hyer, Ben Dixon, Ellen Plummer, Bill Greenberg, Mary Madis, Susanna Rinehart, Mike Two Horses, Hayward Farrar, Helen Crawford, Edd Sewell, Jean Elliott, Linda Woodard, William Dougherty, Sumeet Bagai for SGA representative, Lanny Cross, Brandon Bull, Meredith Katz, Lois Berg, Darleen Baker, Laura Hickerson, Peggy Quesenberry, Devi Gnyawali, Amer Fayad, Renia Edwards for Kimberly Philpott, Trey Church, Jean Brickey, Kim Beisecker, Betty Fine

Absent: Valerie Hardcastle, Hassan Aref, Susan Willis-Walton, Ray Plaza

Guests: Diane Bell, Jennie Reilly

1. Introductions

Ben Dixon opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Ellen Plummer then asked that members introduce themselves and the area they were representing.

2. Rationale and Background for CEOD

Ben Dixon presented historical information on the creation of the Commission including the purpose of the commission, the development process, and the charge of the commission (see handout with slides).

3. University Governance System

Pat Hyer provided an overview of the university governance system so that members would know the organizational context in which the commission will operate and how governance works at Virginia Tech. In addition to the handout, Dr. Hyer explained the following:

- The Board of Visitors has legal authority and is appointed by the Governor, each member serving a four-year term.
- No more than three members can live outside of Virginia.
- Six out of 13 members must be alumni.
- The board has fiduciary responsibility for the university and they can hire and fire the President.
- The board has total authority with regards to the faculty — employment, policies, raises, etc.
- The board is responsible for the longevity of the physical plant of the university including the sale and purchase of property.
- Policies related to student discipline must be approved by the board.

The commission reports to University Council. The council is advisory to the President and BOV. The faculty and staff senates play a major role in the governance system by appointing

representatives to the commissions and university council. The same holds true for the Student Government Association and the Graduate Student Assembly.

There are specific guidelines for commissions from University Council's constitution and by laws. The job of CEOD is to focus on policies and issues related to the broad community. While there may be a temptation to deal with individual problems that come to its attention, the CEOD can only address them if they represent a pattern. Individual issues should be dealt with through Personnel Services and the Office for Equal Opportunity.

3. Commission Members' Roles and Service Terms

The typical term for students on the commission is one year and three years for faculty and staff. Since the commission is new, membership terms this year are staggered so that a wholesale change in membership doesn't occur every year.

As members of the commission, individuals are responsible for communicating with whatever group they represent and, in turn, reporting to the commission any issues emerging from the group. The meeting agendas will be sent out in advance; the plan is to have minutes approved electronically. The CEOD was created with a built in review of its membership in every three-four years to ensure that there is appropriate representation of the campus community.

4. University Policies on Equity and Affirmative Action

Fain Rutherford, Assistant Director and Compliance Officer for the Office for Equal Opportunity made a presentation on his role and function in the office. In the compliance area he is responsible for investigating and responding to discrimination or harassment based on race, color, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, veteran status, national origin, religion, or political affiliation. If an alleged perpetrator is a Virginia Tech employee, the Office for Equal Opportunity is responsible for handling the case. If the case involves student to student, then it is handled through Judicial Affairs in the Division of Student Affairs.

The manner in which a case is handled depends upon the wishes of the complainant. The types of cases run from formal to informal with reports from formal complaints being sent to the president.

Kelly Oaks, Equity Manager in the Office for Equal Opportunity, presented on her role in the office. She is responsible for the development and management of the Affirmative Action Plan. Since Virginia Tech is a federal contractor, it is federally required to have an Affirmative Action program in employment. This is to ensure that additional efforts are made to recruit a diverse population, rather than simply relying on the usual methods. We need to make every effort to be inclusive and need to track what happens to applicants throughout the process.

This year the OEO is moving to an on-line applicant tracking process. So, while the current philosophy for faculty searches remains the same, the mechanics will change. The product, People Admin, was created exclusively for higher education. It is hoped that this will streamline

the process. A demonstration is planned for September with the goal of having it in place by October.

5. Organizational Tasks

a. Election of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson

The vote for chairperson will occur at the September 22 meeting. If individuals are interested, they need to let Alicia Cohen know through e-mail (acohen@vt.edu) or phone (231-1820). Individuals can also be nominated (with their permission). These nominations must be submitted by September 17. Students are not able to serve as chair. The vice chairperson may not be determined until spring.

b. CEOD Operating Procedures

A procedure for selecting at-large members was employed this year but needs to be affirmed or changed, and by laws or operating procedures for CEOD need to be developed. A subcommittee needs to be formed to draft these procedures and bring them forward to the full commission for approval. Pat Hyer has agreed to provide leadership to this subcommittee. William Dougherty, Jean Brickey, and Edd Sewell all agreed to serve.

c. Agenda Topics for 1st and 2nd years (brainstorm)

A number of subcommittees have been suggested by the planning group. These include: By Laws/operating procedures, research, education/training, best practices, and recognition. Time was spent brainstorming topics and areas that the commission might focus on. Ellen Plummer volunteered to take the very broad list of topics and areas and try to put it into a more manageable format so that commission members can then do some prioritizing (it is in the pages following the minutes).

d. Next Meeting

The next orientation meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 22, from 9:00 a.m. — 12:00 noon with lunch immediately following. At that meeting Dr. McNamee will present on the current legal environment for diversity activities and share how the university conducted its review of its programs, and how the university is responding to the legal argument of Narrow Tailoring. Additionally, Pat Hyer and Linda Woodard will present various demographic data on Virginia Tech populations.

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Areas of concern identified by Commission members on 9/8/03
as part of the Commission's inaugural retreat.

Commission members will need to prioritize and determine appropriate courses of action. It is important to remember that the Commission's primary role is to address issues of policy.

Concerns articulated by Commissioners appeared to organize themselves around several themes. These themes included how particular policies, practices, attitudes, and behaviors impact uniquely situated communities within the university and surrounding environments. Some policies, such as the university's harassment policy, have the potential for having an impact on all members of the university community. Other policies impact communities differently, such as health benefits for domestic partners, or the implementation of the Patriot Act. Many policies impact particular constituents within the university community, such as promotion and tenure policies that impact teaching faculty, or tuition policies that impact undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. The challenge will be for the Commission to identify concerns that it can appropriately address.

Courses of action for issues and concerns might include:

- referral to another Commission
- addressing the concern in collaboration with another Commission
- referring to the entire CEOD for addressing/disposing
- deferring to a CEOD subcommittee for recommendation
- ignoring the issue altogether
- other?

Guided by the Charge to the Commission and in an effort to guide the initial brainstorming of the Commission, five subcommittees were suggested. The Commission will need to determine if the suggested subcommittee structure is appropriate.

Suggested Commission subcommittees:

1. Operating Procedures
2. Research and Evaluation
3. Education and Training
4. Best Practices
5. Recognition and Awards
6. Others?

The Operating Procedures subcommittee is being led by Pat Hyer and includes Edd Sewell, William Daugherty, and Jean Brickey. This group will develop procedures to guide the functioning and operations of the Commission.

The Commission will need to decide how to best use a subcommittee structure for exploring and addressing selected issues.

Over-arching concerns expressed by Commissioners included:

- What is diversity? What do we mean by diversity? How is the term used?
- Needing to remember that we are all (faculty, staff, administrators) here to educate students.
- Faculty, staff, students, and administrators all need education on how our attitudes and behaviors impact unique communities. All of us play an important role in creating and sustaining a positive campus climate for all communities.
- What do we know about campus climate? Campus demographics? The impact of current policies and practices?
- Benchmarking against similarly situated institutions.
- What assessments have been done? What needs to be done? How have assessments been conducted — do they include qualitative information on the experiences of women and minorities on campus — both in and out of the classroom?

Current Policies / Practices to be reviewed

Harassment

Disability Leave

Tuition — affordability for low-income, geographically diverse students

Patriot Act — impact on international communities, as well as others

Academic policies and practices

Undergraduate Students — advising, testing, absences, recruitment, admissions, retention

Unique communities include: re-entry students, non-traditional students

Employment policies and practices

Partner hires, special opportunity hires

Faculty — Recruitment, search committees, retention, Promotion & Tenure

Staff — low wages, literacy

Graduate Students — Teaching Assistantships, Research Assistantships

Identifying best practices for race-conscious programs

Policies / Programs to be recommended

Media accessibility — captioning, inscription, etc. of all VT media

Domestic Partner benefits e.g. healthcare

Child Care

Elder Care

Policies / Programs for older students and employees

Climate concerns — students, faculty, and staff

Faculty, student, staff attitudes and behavior toward one another based on perceived status in the institution as well as on personal characteristics

Freedom of expression

Blacksburg, Christiansburg climates

Rural / Urban tensions

Tensions around socio-economic class, geographic background (e.g. Appalachian students, faculty, and staff)

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Orientation Session Two
Monday, September 22, 2003

Minutes

Present: Pat Hyer, Ben Dixon, Valerie Hardcastle, Bill Greenberg, Susanna Rinehart, Mike Two Horses, Hayward Farrar, Helen Crawford, Edd Sewell, Jean Elliott, Linda Woodard, Gavin Luter, Lanny Cross, Brandon Bull, Meredith Katz, Lois Berg, Darleen Baker, Laura Hickerson, Peggy Quesenberry, Devi Gnyawali, Susan Willis-Walton, Amer Fayad, Renia Edwards for Kimberly Philpott, Trey Church, Jean Brickey, Kim Beisecker, Betty Fine

Absent: Ellen Plummer, Hassan Aref, Ray Plaza, Mary Madis, William Dougherty

Guests: Diane Bell, Mark McNamee, Ken Smith

1. Briefings on demographic profiles of faculty, staff, and students

Pat Hyer began the meeting with a presentation of key indicators of faculty and students. The data for faculty and students is located at <http://www.irpa.vt.edu/> under VT Statistics. Most of the data presented did not include Fall 2003 since that data is not yet complete, but there were some Fall 2003 projections. The presentation provided detailed information on Tenure and Tenure Track Faculty by gender and race/ethnicity and comparisons with SCHEV Peer Institutions and Top 30 as well as data on Fall 2003 entering freshmen, retention rates by ethnicity of all students, graduation rates, and graduate enrollment figures. Handouts were provided with all the detailed slides and corresponding charts.

Linda Woodard briefly introduced some data on the staff. Staff employment is determined by the state and is the same as it is for all other state employees (except faculty). The state has determined the classification scheme for employees and it is extremely difficult to derive much meaning from the data because of the broad groupings of staff. A more detailed analysis specific to Virginia Tech should be available near the end of Fall semester. Linda also passed out some information she generated from the U.S. Census data.

2. Current Legal Environment for Diversity Activities

Mark McNamee provided some background information on how the university responded to requests by both the Attorney General's Office and the Board of Visitors related to race-conscious programs. A comprehensive review of programs was completed in the spring and summer. This included collecting data, reviewing the information, and making recommendations regarding the activities reviewed. The majority appeared to be acceptable with a few requiring either modifications or being discontinued until alternatives could be implemented. There were five activities that required additional legal guidance and review. Mark then reviewed those five programs along with recommendations for each. He then went on to share how the university will move forward and who is responsible for compliance, monitoring progress, and identifying best practices. The commission is listed as the body responsible for identifying best practices for

improving diversity. Members then provided Mark with feedback on the presentation as it will be a significant part of the Forum for the university community on November 10, 2003. The forum has been scheduled at the request of Ben Davenport, a member of the Board of Visitors who led the subcommittee on Narrow Tailoring. The purpose of the forum is to educate the campus community on what we've done, where we are today, and get feedback on how we can move forward. Commission members did provide specific recommendations including the addition of international events and programs to the slide outlining major diversity-related events.

3. Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the September 8 meeting as presented. The motion carried.

4. Election of the Chair

The three nominees for Commission Chair were Edd Sewell, Jean Elliott, and William Dougherty. Each provided a brief statement after which voting by ballot was taken. Edd Sewell was elected Chair of the Commission.

5. Priority Setting

a. Review of October Meetings Agenda

There was a general consensus that the commission really needs to get something specific done. While all the issues generated at the last meeting are important, some require significant time to have any impact. With that in mind, a number of individuals recommended that the commission pick a few in which there can be a real impact. A number of questions were raised including how the commission interacts with college diversity committees, what issues need to be dealt with by the full commission, and what subcommittees are needed and how will they operate. It was decided that the two October meetings will be spent shaping the agenda for the commission. The two issues that members want a report back on are the Patriot Act — what are the implications and what influence can the CEOD have on it and the Office of Civil Rights visit to campus. Individuals from that office were scheduled to meet with university administrators last week but were forced to cancel that visit due to the hurricane.

b. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 13, from 10:30 a.m. — 12:00 noon in the Executive Conference Room at Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center.

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, October 13, 2003

Minutes

Present: Pat Hyer, Valerie Hardcastle, Bill Greenberg, Susanna Rinehart, Helen Crawford, Edd Sewell, Jean Elliott, Martin Daniel for Linda Woodard, Gavin Luter, Lanny Cross, Brandon Bull, Meredith Katz, Lois Berg, Darleen Baker, Peggy Quesenberry, Devi Gnyawali, Susan Willis-Walton, Amer Fayad, Renia Edwards for Kimberly Philpott, Jean Brickey, Kim Beisecker, Ellen Plummer, William Dougherty

Absent: Hassan Aref, Ray Plaza, Mary Madis, Ben Dixon, Mike Two Horses, Laura Hickerson, Trey Church, Hayward Farrar, Betty Fine

Guests: Diane Bell, Linda Mitchell, Jennie Reilly

1. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion carried.

2. Approval of the Minutes of September 22, 2003

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the September 22 meeting as presented. The motion carried. In the future, minutes will be sent to commission members for their review and electronic approval. Details of this process are included in the operating guidelines.

3. Review of Operating Guidelines

Edd Sewell presented the operating guidelines that were developed by the operating procedures subcommittee. A number of recommended changes were made through the review of the guidelines. There was a motion to approve the guidelines with changes made but it was withdrawn and a new motion was made to wait to approve the operating guidelines until revised ones are sent to members. They will then be approved electronically in the same fashion as the minutes.

4. Election of the Vice Chair

There was a motion to vote on the two nominees for chair who weren't selected. There were no additional nominees. Jean Elliott and William Dougherty provided brief statements after which paper votes were taken. Jean Elliott was elected Vice Chair of the Commission.

5. Committee Structures

There will be a nominating committee responsible for the process of identifying and selecting at-large members. It was recommended that there be both standing committees and committees that

might change based on the issues the commission is dealing with. The first item on the agenda for the next meeting is focal issues and committee structure. Edd recommended that members review the issues identified at the brainstorming session during first orientation. Pat also suggested that the commission might want to consider distributing a newsletter aimed at educating the campus community. This could take the form of a one-page flier with a different focus for each issue. The main purpose of this newsletter would be educating the community and increasing awareness of the commission.

6. Announcements

The commission meeting originally schedule for November 10 has been cancelled so that members can attend the forum in Owens Banquet Hall that afternoon from 3:00 — 5:00 p.m. There is Native American drumming on the drillfield today.

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 27, from 10:30 a.m. — 12:00 noon in the Executive Conference Room at Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen
Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, October 27, 2003

Minutes

Present: Pat Hyer, Valerie Hardcastle, Bill Greenberg, Susanna Rinehart, Helen Crawford, Edd Sewell, Jean Elliott, Martin Daniel for Linda Woodard, Gavin Luter, Lanny Cross, Brandon Bull, Meredith Katz, Hassan Aref, Darleen Baker, Peggy Quesenberry, Devi Gnyawali, Susan Willis-Walton, Amer Fayad, Kimberly Philpott, Jean Brickey, Kim Beisecker, Ellen Plummer, William Dougherty, Mary Madis, Laura Hickerson, Trey Church, Hayward Farrar, Betty Fine

Absent: Ray Plaza, Ben Dixon, Mike Two Horses, Lois Berg

Guests: Diane Bell, Renia Edwards, Jennie Reilly

1. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion carried.

2. Discussion of Operating Guidelines

Edd Sewell said that there were a number of concerns about the last sentences in the operating guidelines which stated, "The nominating committee may add nominations to the list of individuals considered for at-large appointments in consultation with the Vice President for Multicultural Affairs. These nominees should be asked to provide the same information as received from the general call so that the basis for selection is consistent among all possible candidates." After considerable discussion it was suggested that if there weren't adequate individuals to fill a vacated spot, then perhaps that spot should remain vacant for the year. It was moved and seconded to approve the operating guidelines with the last two sentences removed. The motion passed.

3. Focus of Issues

There was a lively discussion about the issues that the commission should focus on. Again, many emphasized the need to focus on things that the commission can actually do. A number of members are concerned about the impact of the Patriot Act. Edd reminded members that anyone can bring a resolution to the commission that can then be voted on and if approved can be forwarded to university council. He suggested that if individuals choose to do this, they should prepare the resolution and have it sent out prior to a meeting so members have a chance to review it before the meeting. The discussion of issues led to the creation of the committees in the next section.

4. Committee Structure

Based on the discussion about issues, Edd suggested that the following committees seem appropriate: Recruitment and Retention, Curriculum, Classroom Climate, Best Practices, and

Community Issues. Pat Hyer noted concern that recruitment and retention is a huge issue and recommended it be separated for faculty, staff, and students. She also suggested that each committee be responsible for finding best practices in their respective area. Susan Willis-Walton suggested that the newsletter still be something the commission considers. Kim Beisecker recommended that each committee be responsible for an issue or item for the newsletter. Others also noted that there is already work being done in some of these areas like the Task Force on Admissions, so that some commission members might join committees or task forces that already exist. Finally, Edd reported that the committee list will be sent out via e-mail and members should respond to Alicia Cohen regarding which committees they are interested in working with. For the area of recruitment and retention, individuals should note if they are interested in faculty, staff, or student recruitment and retention.

5. Next Meeting

The next meeting on the schedule is November 24. Since some people will be gone for the Thanksgiving break, it was decided to schedule the next meeting for Monday, November 17, from 10:30 a.m. — 12:00 noon in Conference Room G at Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen
Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, November 17, 2003

Minutes

Present: Pat Hyer, Valerie Hardcastle, Susanna Rinehart, Helen Crawford, Edd Sewell, Jean Elliott, Linda Woodard, Gavin Luter, Brandon Bull, Meredith Katz, Bev Watford (for Hassan Aref), Darleen Baker, Peggy Quesenberry, Devi Gnyawali, Amer Fayad, Kimberly Philpott, Jean Brickey, Kim Beisecker, Ellen Plummer, William Dougherty, Mary Madis, Laura Hickerson, Trey Church, Hayward Farrar, Betty Fine, Ben Dixon, Lois Berg

Absent: Ray Plaza, Mike Two Horses, Bill Greenberg, Lanny Cross, Susan Willis-Walton

Guests: Diane Bell, Jennie Reilly

1. Adoption of Agenda

Pat Hyer asked that some feedback on last week's forum be added to the agenda. It was added under new business before the presentation by Kim Beisecker. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda as amended. The motion carried.

Old Business

A. Creation of Work Groups/Committees

Pat Hyer raised the question about whether there needed to be a best practices committee since each committee should be researching best practices. There was mixed reaction to this and some felt the best practices committee could do research broadly while the other committees would be more narrowly focused. Another possible focus for best practices would be to work on a document (Ben Dixon has begun the work on this) that supports Virginia Tech's understanding and commitment to the educational benefits of diversity. Pat and Ellen were at a Harvard workshop on the Supreme Court decision where it was suggested that each institution must establish for itself its rationale to support the use of race/ethnicity as a factor in admissions. This document could also serve as a guide for other diversity-related programs. The question was also posed about a policy committee. It was decided that a separate policy committee would not be needed and that policy issues would be referred to appropriate committees. In the case of the workplace harassment policy, some members from this commission as well as other commissions could come together as an ad hoc committee to review the policy and make recommendations before bringing it to the entire commission. If individuals are interested in serving on this ad hoc committee, they should contact either Edd or Alicia. Ben Dixon suggested that each committee have a charge and proposed that the Office of Multicultural Affairs could provide a brief description and general mission statement for each committee. There was also discussion around whether or not there were too many committees. It was decided to send the sign up sheet for committees around the room and if no one signed up for a committee, it would not exist. A motion was made to combine the classroom and community climate committees into one committee. There was discussion about the pros and cons of combining the two which ended

in a vote. Sixteen members were in favor of combining the two committees and nine were opposed. The motion carried.

New Business

A. Feedback on the Forum

The Chair set a time limit on the discussion. There was some discussion about the Roanoke Times editorial which basically stated that the university is facing a BOV and state attorney general who aren't very supportive so that those who are impatient with our progress should remember the constraints placed on Virginia Tech. One member asked why other schools in the state are doing things similar to the programs and activities that Virginia Tech has chosen to curtail or cut. The response made was that the university has been made the "Foster Child." Other schools aren't under the same scrutiny as us. There was a question raised about the Gateway program and why it was cancelled. Pat Hyer said the decision was made at a time when the university was in a tenuous position. The university hasn't made a decision yet regarding the program for this year. It may be reinstated or a similar program may be started. What people need to understand is that it is not optional to defy the Attorney General's Office and we've had to do a lot of compromising. Other feedback shared was that students felt it wasn't focused and they wanted more. Another comment was that it was misleading and there was no constructive information on narrow-tailoring. Some felt that the questions weren't answered and were disappointed that office of admissions was missing from the forum. The question of legacy was raised and the response was that very few decisions are hinged on legacy. There is a need for admissions to be upfront about when legacy plays out. As the time was almost up, Ben Dixon responded that the commission is more likely to get direct feedback from the university if it came up with specific policy or programmatic suggestions that address issues emerging from the many questions being raised by the community. Regarding the concept of narrow-tailoring, it is not clearly defined anywhere. Those who have additional feedback should contact the Provost's Office.

B. Presentation on Patriot Act — Kim Beisecker

Kim Beisecker presented on the Patriot Act and answered questions from commission members. There was a request to provide hard copies of the power point presentation at the next meeting.

C. Resolution on Supporting Civil Liberties

Betty Fine recommended postponing consideration of the resolution to the next meeting on December 8 since there wasn't adequate time. She did inform the commission that the resolution drafted uses as its core a resolution that was passed by the city of Charlottesville. In her opinion it is watered-down and less strong and controversial. The main purpose is education and citizens' views that the constitution should be protected.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is December 8 from 10:30 — 12:00 in the Executive Conference Room at Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center. Edd Sewell has the committee list and will designate some to convene each group. If commission members would like to serve in that capacity, please let him know.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen
Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, December 8, 2003

Minutes

Present: Pat Hyer, Valerie Hardcastle, Helen Crawford, Edd Sewell, Jean Elliott, Linda Woodard, Brandon Bull, Meredith Katz, Darleen Baker, Devi Gnyawali, Kimberly Philpott, Kim Beisecker, William Dougherty, Laura Hickerson, Trey Church, Hayward Farrar, Betty Fine, Ben Dixon, Lois Berg, Mike Two Horses, Bill Greenberg

Absent: Ray Plaza, Lanny Cross, Susan Willis-Walton, Susanna Rinehart, Mary Madis, Peggy Quesinberry, Hassan Aref, Gavin Luter, Ellen Plummer, Jean Brickey, Amer Fayad

Guests: Diane Bell, Jennie Reilly

I. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion carried.

II. Old Business

A. Draft Resolution on Civil Liberties

Betty Fine introduced the resolution and provided some background on its development. Betty, Helen Crawford and Kim Beisecker looked at existing resolutions and decided that the City of Charlottesville resolution was a good model to work from. Copies of that resolution were distributed. There was considerable debate on the resolution. In response to what the resolution might accomplish, members offered that it could help the university become aware of the Patriot Act and remind the university of constitutional rights, raise the consciousness of the university and ask the university to underscore its commitment to constitutional rights, and educate the community. There was concern that while the university should do something, the resolution is political and the commission is not an appropriate body to be passing it. Questions were also raised about the backlash that might occur if the resolution was passed in the current political environment. Some members were interested in knowing how other universities have dealt with this issue. Ben Dixon suggested the format of the statement be changed to a Position statement, instead of a Resolution. There was significant concern that even if the resolution was passed and it went on to university council, the university would be unable to act on it. Finally, it was suggested that the commission needs to be explicit about what its goals are and then decide the most effective ways to meet those goals. Some members are interested in education and others in policies. The question was called to end the debate and a motion was made that the commission adopt the resolution and forward it to university council with a friendly amendment to have members take it back to the bodies they represent and ask them to take action. There were seven individuals in favor, nine opposed, and four abstentions. The motion failed.

Helen Crawford asked that the commission not completely drop the resolution but draft it into a position statement. She asked that the commission consider a position statement under new

business. There was then a request for a revote on the motion which was eight in favor, eight opposed, and four abstentions. The motion still failed.

B. Committees

A list of committees and members was distributed. Edd asked that each committee determine who the chair will be and then begin working as a group.

III. New Business

A. Diversity Summit

Ben Dixon asked commission members for input on what the format should be for the Diversity Summit which is scheduled for sometime in the afternoon on Monday, January 19. A suggestion was made to have a panel as part of the program. Another recommendation was that in the future the commission takes a lead role in the organization of the summit as one way to increase awareness of the commission. In response to the article written by Jeff Corntassel that was distributed to commission members, Michael Two Horses suggested that the diversity summit reflect true diversity and that the university acknowledge that it owes much to the American Indians on whose land the university rests. Six tribes are about to be federally recognized. He was assured that the diversity summit is, in fact, one place where true diversity is present. Diane Bell suggested that some statement be made at the beginning of the summit which recognizes that Virginia Tech sits on holy land and also lists the tribes who originally lived on this land. There was also mention of addressing the fact that many individuals are feeling that Virginia Tech, the administration, and the Board of Visitors will take as narrow an interpretation of the Supreme Court decision and will do as little as possible to promote diversity. The summit might be a good place to try to dispel those ideas. Finally, it was suggested that it might be time to revisit the grading of the university's progress on diversity as was done at some of the first summits.

B. Position Statement on Civil Liberties

Helen Crawford presented a position statement on civil liberties which was based on the previously discussed resolution, with some deletions and changes. After a few other recommendations for changes, a motion was made to vote on the position statement with the changes noted. There were 14 in favor, two opposed, and five abstentions. The motion passed. It was asked that the position statement with changes be sent to commission members.

IV. Next Meeting

There will not be a meeting on January 12 as classes are not yet in session and many members will not be available to meet. The next meeting is January 26 from 10:30 — 12:00.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, February 9, 2004

Minutes

Present: Pat Hyer, Helen Crawford, Edd Sewell, Linda Woodard, Meredith Katz, Darleen Baker, Devi Gnyawali, Kimberly Philpott, Kim Beisecker, Laura Hickerson, Hayward Farrar, Ben Dixon, Lois Berg, Bill Greenberg, Ray Plaza, Lanny Cross, Susan Willis-Walton, Susanna Rinehart, Mary Madis, Jean Brickey, Ellen Plummer

Absent: Valerie Hardcastle, Keohi Council (for Peggy Quesinberry), Jean Elliott, Trey Church, Brandon Bull, Hassan Aref, Betty Fine, Gavin Luter, Sam Cook

Guests: Diane Bell, Peggy Layne

I. Adoption of Agenda

Edd Sewell suggested that the items on the agenda be changed so that the Advance Project Report could occur first. He also added announcements prior to the Advance Project Report. Bill Greenberg suggested that an item for a future agenda be Rules of Procedures in order to facilitate informal discussions before motions are made. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda as altered. The motion carried.

II. Announcements

Amer Fayed graduated, so the Council of International Student Organizations needs to identify a replacement. Kim Beisecker responded that the last four meetings they were scheduled have been cancelled due to inclement weather. Sam Cook will be taking the position left vacant by the passing of Michael Two Horses. William Dougherty has resigned from his position, so the Staff Senate is working on a replacement for him. Peggy Quesinberry teaches during the Commission meeting time this semester, so Keohi Council will be her replacement.

III. Advance Project Report

Pat Hyer introduced Peggy Layne as the full-time coordinator for this 3.5 million dollar grant from the National Science Foundation. The grant is about institutional transformation, with a goal of catalyzing change that will transform the academic environment in ways that will enhance the participation and advancement of women in science and engineering. There are four focus areas for the grant: pipeline, recruitment and retention, leadership, and institutionalizing change. There is also a significant assessment component and the intention is to collect a lot of data. Issues raised in breakout discussions at the Advance Workshop on January 12 included: child care, climate, dual career appointments, mentoring, lack of critical mass/low numbers, and balancing work/life expectations.

There is considerable hope that through the work of this grant, Virginia Tech will become a better place for all people to work and learn, not just women. There was a question raised about the university's commitment with regards to policy. Pat Hyer responded that there is a fiscal commitment and other commitments as part of the proposal. If Virginia Tech hasn't made progress at year three, the grant won't be refunded. However, there is no list of things that the

NSF expects the university to fix. Rather, it is the institution's responsibility to determine changes that need to occur. Additionally, the university must provide NSF with considerable data about space, salary equity, etc. Some changes may be made administratively and others will be policy changes that go through the governance system.

The grant is focused on women in science and engineering, but many of the activities are open to the university community as a whole. They are also trying to reach out to the women scientists in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Veterinary Medicine.

Another question was raised regarding search processes and the fact that it sometimes takes too long for the process which results in losing good candidates. Ellen Plummer responded that the grant provides us with an opportunity to look at the processes we have in place and see if changes can be made. However, it's important to understand that the university must follow guidelines from the federal government can make it difficult to be flexible.

A final question was raised regarding child care. The response to why the university has had conversations about it for many years but not moved forward was answered in part by the liability issue.

IV. Diversity Summit

Ben Dixon asked that commission members see this year's summit as a transition to summits in the future now that the Office of Multicultural Affairs has the responsibility for this event. The choice to revisit the standards that were addressed last year was made in part because last year there was no place to send the standards. Now that the CEOD exists, the standards can be sent to the various CEOD committees.

It is Ben's feeling that the CEOD owns the summit and he welcomed suggestions and recommendations on both the content and format. Whatever the format, it seems important to keep the summit as a place for the university community to come together and dialogue on issues related to diversity.

Meredith Katz reported some of the concerns raised by the student group, including the need for a program at orientation and faculty sensitivity training. Some members were shocked to hear comments that some faculty make in classes. Students feel they have no recourse; there is no mechanism that protects them, so they don't move forward with complaints because they fear it will be reflected in their grades. One member reminded others that it is not illegal to be offensive; faculty and others aren't breaching a legal standard. The challenge is to articulate community standards and find ways to hold one another accountable. Part of this can be addressed through a comprehensive education program.

V. Committee Meetings

Edd suggested since many members were absent, that all the recruitment and retention committees meet in the Executive Conference Room for the few minutes left and the remaining three committees on curriculum, best practices, and climate meet in Conference Room A. Before adjourning for committee meetings, the two committees that have met reported on their meetings. The faculty recruitment and retention committee met and identified exit interviews as a

focal issue . The staff recruitment and retention committee met and discussed retaining staff, establishing small mentoring groups, exit interviews, and the need to assess the experiences of new faculty and staff during their first year to find out how the university can be supportive of them. Those two committees will work together on the exit interviews.

A question was raised about whether commission meeting time will be devoted to committees and it was determined that the committees need to meet outside of commission meetings since there are other items that need to be addressed by the full commission and there isn't enough time to do both during meetings.

IV. Next Meeting

The next meeting is February 23 from 10:30 — 12:00 in Conference Room F, Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, February 23, 2004

Minutes

Present: Pat Hyer, Helen Crawford, Keohi Council (for Peggy Quesinberry), Linda Woodard, Jean Elliott, Darleen Baker, Kimberly Philpott, Kim Beisecker, Laura Hickerson, Hayward Farrar, Ben Dixon, Bill Greenberg, Ray Plaza, Susan Willis-Walton, Susanna Rinehart, Mary Madis, Jean Brickey, Ellen Plummer, Betty Fine, Jon Wooge

Absent: Valerie Hardcastle, Meredith Katz, Devi Gnyawali, Trey Church, Brandon Bull, Hassan Aref, Stefanie Linder (for Gavin Luter), Sam Cook, Edd Sewell, Lois Berg, Lanny Cross

Guests: Diane Bell, Jennie Reilly

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

II. Discussion on Rules of Procedures

Bill Greenberg recommended that members have an agreement that they will proceed by informal discussion and not present any motions before the discussion is completed. It works well if there is some consensus before motions are made. Everyone was agreeable to this with the understanding that the chair would help keep discussion focused and if there are instances in which the commission does need to act quickly, then the chair would use Roberts Rules of Order. Additionally, a recommendation was made that members see drafts of documents prior to voting on their approval/acceptance. It was also suggested that the commission begin using a listserv for discussions. One was set up by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, but needs some additions to the list. Once it is finalized, the address will be sent out.

III. Announcements

Suzanna Rinehart announced that while the Freedom to Marry Day on Thursday was a positive event and a good experience for the LGBT community, it was followed by an incident of vandalism. One of the students who stood up in a marriage had his car vandalized as well as the door to his apartment. He has not yet decided what action he will take and they do not know who did it.

Kimberly Philpott reported that the question on the Multicultural Programs website is, "Should same sex marriages be legalized in the United States." At the time she checked there had been 110 responses with 52% responding yes, 42% responding no, and 6% neutral.

Jennie Reilly reported that one issue identified at the disability table at the diversity summit was the need for clearing of parking spaces/areas for people with disabilities so that they can park and get into their buildings on campus during inclement weather. After communicating their concerns, they were told that when there is a need for a particular area to be cleared, Parking Services should be notified and it will receive priority clearing. Another area of concern is the visibility of the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (SSD). The office does send out

newsletters each semester and has an updated website. Any ideas and suggestions are welcome. Helen Crawford recommended that in addition to having a statement on syllabi, faculty should also include the number to contact, address, and website. Some students aren't comfortable approaching faculty but need to know about the SSD office and the services they provide. Jean Elliott suggested contacting Larry Hincker or Mark Owczarski to have SSD as a featured site for a couple of days on the VT homepage.

Pat Hyer reported that in the fall the university had a visit from the Office of Civil Rights in response to a complaint filed by the Center for Equal Opportunity. The university is now in the official response stage with the Office for Equal Opportunity at VT coordinating the response. In relation to this, the Provost's Office will be convening individuals and groups who provide services (MAOP, etc.) to review programs and services and ensure the university is in compliance. Commission members will likely be invited to participate in these sessions which will be in the afternoon on April 7. As details are finalized, information will be sent. Ben Dixon responded that it is critical for commission members to be at this program and part of the conversation. There is a need for guidance regarding what is right and legal. He recommended that all members read the book *Compelling interest: Examining the evidence on racial dynamics in colleges and universities*. Copies are available from the Office of Multicultural Affairs, courtesy of the Karen DePauw, dean of the graduate school.

Jean Brickey announced that the library diversity committee is sponsoring a program on Brown v. The Board of Education on Wednesday, February 25 at 3:00 p.m. in the Torgersen Museum.

Betty Fine raised the question regarding a search in which there are two candidates who are equally qualified, one is a white female and the other is a minority male. The search committee selected the white female with whom they felt more comfortable. She asked if there is a mechanism above the departmental level and if the administration has power. While the administration has power to certify and validate any hire. However, this process is usually handled by department heads and deans and can vary from college to college. There are revised faculty search guidelines which were sent to the Attorney General's Office (AG). The first part of those guidelines have been blessed by the AG's office and are now available on the Office for Equal Opportunity website. It was suggested that a presentation on what is on the EO site be an agenda item in the future.

Helen Crawford announced that last Tuesday the Faculty Senate met. In January the Commission's POSITION STATEMENT REAFFIRMING OUR CIVIL LIBERTIES was presented by Helen to the Faculty Senate for adoption. After discussion they tabled it to get legal counsel. At the February meeting it was revised and then voted on unanimously. The senate made changes in numbers 2, 5, 6, and 7 and created a stronger document. More details on the exact changes are in the e-mail Helen sent to commission members. The three faculty senators (Suzanna, Bill, Helen) are now asking that commission accept the revised position statement. Helen made a motion to this effect. Discussion followed on the need for feedback from other constituent groups. Kimberly Philpott sent the CEOD statement out to the Black Caucus listserv and received no comments, but most other members had not had the opportunity to share the statement with their constituent groups. The motion was seconded to have the commission approve this amended version. It was pointed out that it is important for the commission to get

this right when adopting a final statement. Helen and Bill agreed to table the motion until the next meeting on March 22. Commission members will be responsible for sharing the statement from the faculty statement (which is considered a working document of the commission) with their constituent groups and get any feedback for the meeting on March 22.

Kim Beisecker reported that since there is a need for more dialogue on the US Patriot Act, a program is planned for April 7 at 7:30 p.m. in Colonial Hall. John Brownlee, a US attorney in West Virginia, who is an expert on the US Patriot Act, has agreed to participate along with a representative from the FBI in a panel. Kim asked if the commission would be willing to sponsor this event. No financial support is needed, but assistance is needed in promoting the event. The commission agreed that it would serve as a sponsor for the event. Kim also asked for commission members to suggest additional participants for the panel.

IV. Committee Meetings

Jean Elliott moved that the meeting adjourn so that committees could meet. The motion was seconded and approved. The meeting was adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, March 22, 2004

Minutes

Present: Edd Sewell, Devi Gnyawali, Trey Church, Pat Hyer, Helen Crawford, Keohi Council (for Peggy Quesinberry), Linda Woodard, Jean Elliott, Kimberly Philpott, Kim Beisecker, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Bill Greenberg, Ray Plaza, Susan Willis-Walton, Jean Brickey, Jon Wooge, Bev Watford (for Hassan Aref), Valerie Hardcastle, Brandon Bull, Stefanie Linden (for Gavin Luter), Lois Berg

Absent: Meredith Katz, Sam Cook, Lanny Cross, Darleen Baker, Hayward Farrar, Susanna Rinehart, Mary Madis, Ellen Plummer, Betty Fine

Guest: Jennie Reilly

I. Adoption of Agenda

Edd Sewell added committee reports to the agenda. The agenda was approved as amended.

II. Announcements

The following announcements were made:

- Gay Awareness Week is March 28 – April 2. Trey Church passed around postcards with information for the week. Wednesday, March 31st is Wear jeans if you support gay equality day.
- Disabilities Awareness Week is April 4. On April 4 the Gallaudet Dancers will be performing at 1:00 p.m. in Haymarket Theatre, Squires. On April 6 Salome Heyward, an African American attorney who is a legal expert and author of numerous books on disability accommodations in higher education, is speaking from 10-12 in the Donaldson Brown Auditorium. She will discuss how faculty/staff can manage disability compliance with confidence and compassion.
- Thursday, March 25 is Take Back the Night
- April 11-17 is Holocaust Awareness Week. The keynote speaker is Severin Hochberg, a historian with the Holocaust Museum in D.C. He will speak on Wednesday, April 14.
- Lois Berg is speaking on Tuesday, March 23 at 12:30 at the Women's Center. The title for her brown bag session is, "Directions for Life: Left Without a Right."
- April 7th is the program on the US Patriot Act. After a presentation on what the Patriot Act is, there will be a dialogue. Please let Kim Beisecker know if you have suggestions on who to invite. Diane Bell was mentioned as a possible participant in the dialogue.
- April 7th from 2-5p.m. in Conference Rooms D&E, DBHCC is Managing Programs that Contribute to Diversity in the Current Legal Environment.
- Kim Beisecker passed out brochures for International Week which begins April 3. For the first time it includes a reunion of international students and scholars. There is also a parade of nations at 2 p.m. on the drillfield on April 9. There have been efforts to have other units support international week and expand its presence. This is evident in dining halls which will have international foods, a speaker sponsored by the Pamplin College of

Business, international music used for aerobic classes through rec sports, and special features for the international athletes.

- March 25 is Shattering the Silence: Creating an Inclusive Campus Community, a video presentation and dialogue guided by VT faculty members about campus climate and our contributions to it.
- March 24 Belle Wheelan is speaking as part of Graduate Education Week. Synthia St. James is also speaker that night. She is an African American artist who designed the Kwanzaa stamp.
- The Joint Committee on Diversity and Multicultural Affairs is sponsoring a Diversity Week April 11-17. Details will be provided as they are confirmed.

Kim Beisecker reported on the international student who had a pulmonary embolism. He was in a coma for 18 days but has come out of the coma and has no brain damage. He does, however, have some damage to his right arm. He is from India and some of the profits raised during International week will go to support some of his incidental expenses.

III. Discussion/Sharing Feedback from Constituent Groups on the Working Document – Position Statement Reaffirming our Civil Liberties

Jean Brickey reported that the Commission on Classified Staff Affairs (CCSA) questioned the purpose of the position statement and did not see what it would accomplish. There were concerns that there were details and procedures for some departments but not others. They didn't feel like departments should be singled out. They also thought there could be a conflict with other policies like the computer privacy policy (Pat Hyer told the committee there is no conflict with the computer privacy policy that is currently being revised). They also felt they needed to hear from Kay Heidebreder/legal counsel to be sure we are in full compliance. They recommended the Staff Senate not endorse the position statement. The Staff Senate had many of the same concerns as CCSA and tabled it indefinitely. They also recommended that senators go to the legislators if they really disapprove of the law.

In response, the commission members were reminded that libraries and police departments are the two entities the law actually mentions. Helen Crawford stated that the library representative on the Faculty Senate approved the statement. Jean reiterated concern regarding the unusualness of the position statement, its ambiguity, and concern that it would create more confusion.

Jennie Reilly reported that there were two responses from the ADA Executive Committee. One was in favor and said it is the right thing to do and good for the commission to support. The other response was not in favor of the position statement. That person felt the statement is too political and would damage the credibility of the commission.

Trey Church reported that he was going to present the statement to the Commission on Student Affairs and asked if someone who is more knowledgeable would go with him to help answer questions. Kim Beisecker offered to attend the meeting with him.

Kimberly Philpott reported that there were no concerns from the Black Caucus.

Regarding questions about the library's role, Pat said that Eileen Hitchingham isn't required to do anything even if the position statement is passed. Kim Beisecker reported that it is standard practice for many other libraries. It was stated that this is a mild political statement and an improvement over the one passed earlier by the commission. A motion was made and seconded to approve the faculty senate version of the position statement. There were 20 in favor and 2 opposed.

It was suggested that someone present the position statement at the dialogue on April 7 with the distinction made between a policy and position statement.

IV. Discussion of Revised Standards Document

Ben Dixon began the discussion and commented that the Student Success Standard was changed to the Student Development Standard. Pat Hyer voiced concern regarding the Legal and Inclusion Standards. There were suggested revisions to the wording to avoid the contradiction in the two standards. Pat wanted to be sure that people feel they can shape programs that target groups as long as they don't automatically exclude. There was another suggestion to just have an inclusion standard and remove the legal one. A question was then raised regarding how the standards affect student activities and where fraternities and sororities fit in this. Ray Plaza reminded members that the law gives fraternities and sororities the right to exist as single-sex organizations. After considerable discussion, Edd asked Pat and Ben to meet and revise the wording for the standards to either collapse into one or have two. Anyone who has specific comments or recommendations should send them directly to Pat or Ben.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, April 12, 2004

Minutes

Present: Edd Sewell, Devi Gnyawali, Pat Hyer, Helen Crawford, Linda Woodard, Jean Elliott, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Ray Plaza, Susan Willis-Walton, Jean Brickey, Jon Wooge, Bev Watford (for Hassan Aref), Ellen Plummer, Betty Fine, Stefanie Linden (for Gavin Luter), Hayward Farrar, Susanna Rinehart, Darleen Baker, Lanny Cross, Mary Madis

Absent: Meredith Katz, Sam Cook, Trey Church, Lois Berg, Valerie Hardcastle, Brandon Bull, Keohi Council, Bill Greenberg, Kim Beisecker, Kimberly Philpott

I. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion carried.

II. Announcements

The following announcements were made:

- April 11-17 is Holocaust Awareness Week. A detailed flier was distributed.
- The Joint Committee on Diversity and Multicultural Affairs is sponsoring Diversity Week April 18-23. Sunday is bowling at the breakzone, Monday is Tearing Down the Wall at the Dietrick field, Tuesday is a Poverty Simulation, Wednesday is movie night, Thursday is a forum, and Friday there is a potluck in the BCC.
- This coming Friday-Saturday is the Gateway weekend for African American, Hispanic American, Native American and first generation, low-income students who have been offered admission to VT. It is a program designed to increase the yield of these students.
- Helen Crawford reported that the panel on the USA Patriot Act last week had over 150 people in attendance and lasted from 7:30-10:00 p.m. There was a presentation by the FBI, then John Brownlee spoke, Helen read the position statement, and Diane Bell shared her personal experiences. There was also a speaker from GSA followed by an open dialogue. In retrospect, there should have been a representative from the INS. The international students seemed greatly appreciative of the opportunity to ask questions and get information.

III. Feedback/Discussion on Managing Programs that Contribute to Diversity in the Current Legal Environment

Pat Hyer reported on the workshop that was held on April 7. There were 83-84 people signed up and about 75 present. The speakers on the panel were: Rosalind Fuse-Hall, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor, North Carolina Central University; Camille Hazeur, Assistant to the President and Director of University Equity and Diversity Services, George Mason University; and William Thro, General Counsel for Christopher Newport University and Deputy State Solicitor of the Commonwealth of Virginia. There was good conversation in a very public setting. William Thro had the impression that more was being communicated to the university than was happening in reality. A question regarding the accord was raised and he said it is a public document and therefore available to the public. Dr. Dixon now has a copy of that document for those who are interested. There are clearly things that the administration needs to address in the

broad scheme of things and people need to know what is permissible and how to navigate through the system. Many folks seem to be risk-averse. There needs to be a quicker response from the university administration than there has been in the past. The follow-up workshop is Wednesday, April 28 from 2-5 pm in Hillcrest Dining Hall.

A question was raised regarding the Gateway program and why it was changed. Ellen responded that it was targeted in the OCR complaint, and so the university is responding accordingly. One of the questions regarding targeted programs is whether they provide a benefit that doesn't exist for others. Targeted programs also need to be open for all students. Right now the legal issue is race. Language is still being worked on for scholarships.

IV. Process for Filling Vacancies on the Commission

The following seats need to be filled for the 2004-05 year: CSA, Appalachian Studies, Hispanic Caucus, CCSA, CFA, one Faculty Senate representative, one Staff Senate representative, one At-Large representative, CISO, SGA, and GSA. The three positions the Office of Multicultural Affairs needs to advertise are the Appalachian Studies and Hispanic Caucus (as community representatives) and the At-Large position. These will be announced through an e-mail to the DDDH list and applications will be available on the OMA website. There was a question about whether or not individuals could serve consecutive terms. Alicia will check the University Council constitution to see what is permissible.

V. Discussion of Chronicle of Higher Education Article

Edd shared the article as information. There was some discussion. Some people did not realize the author was serious. What is presented is a different point of view. This view might be similar to one held by members of the National Academy of Science (NAS) professional association. It was suggested that it might be good to contact members of NAS at Virginia Tech to have a dialogue.

VI. Discussion of Revised Standards Document

Pat Hyer shared a more revised standards document. She shortened the background section and the majority of changes made were to the legal and inclusion standards. There was still considerable discussion about some of the language in the document and a debate about whether or not the student development standard was necessary. There was also a suggestion that if that standard remains, perhaps a standard for staff and faculty development should also be included. A vote was taken and more members felt the need to keep the standard but work to make it fit better. A concern was also raised about some who feel in the curriculum the diversity of ideas is all that is needed. That concept could be more clearly addressed in a statement on the educational benefits of diversity. Pat agreed to work some more on the language and distribute a final copy for electronic voting. Dr. McNamee has seen the standards document and his recommendation was to attach it to the minutes (once approved) so that all of University Council can see it.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, April 26, 2004

Minutes

Present: Edd Sewell, Pat Hyer, Helen Crawford, Linda Woodard, Jean Elliott, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Ray Plaza, Jean Brickey, Jon Wooge, Ellen Plummer, Betty Fine, Lois Berg, Valerie Hardcastle, Susanna Rinehart, Bill Greenberg, Mary Madis, Meredith Katz, Sam Cook, Kimberly Philpott

Absent: Devi Gnyawali, Susan Willis-Walton, Stefanie Linden (for Gavin Luter), Hayward Farrar, Trey Church, Darleen Baker, Lanny Cross, Brandon Bull, Keohi Council, Kim Beisecker, Hassan Aref

Guests: Diane Bell, Jennie Reilly

I. Adoption of Agenda

Edd announced that one additional meeting of the Commission has been scheduled for Monday, May 10 in 325 Burruss Hall. The election of a new chair and vice chair and committee reports will be moved to the agenda for the May 10 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the revised agenda. The motion carried. There was some clarification about the chair and vice chair. The operating guidelines for the commission state, "The chair and the vice chair will be elected from among eligible faculty or staff members of the commission. Students and ex-officio members are not eligible to serve as chair or vice-chair. Election of the chair and vice-chair will be done each year usually in the spring." Pat Hyer reminded representatives whose terms are ending that they are eligible to serve for two consecutive terms.

III. Revised Standards

Pat distributed the most current standards document with changes and recommendations from many on the commission. She highlighted some of the changes and went through each standard. There were some additional edits which were discussed and consensus reached. There was a motion to made and seconded to approve the standards with the edits. The motion passed. The final version of the standards follows the minutes and will be sent forward to University Council as part of the minutes from the April 26 meeting. The standards will be shared at the second workshop, Best Practices for Managing Activities that Promote Diversity at Virginia Tech, on April 28 from 2:00-5:00 p.m. in Hillcrest Hall. The standards will also be posted on numerous websites.

IV. Diane Bell

Edd had asked Diane Bell to share some of her thoughts and observations from this year having served as a guest at many of our meetings. Diane began talking about how anthropologists work, asking questions like, "How do the natives understand themselves?" She shared that she learned a lot about Virginia Tech as a community from its symbols, myths, rituals, kinship and marriage patterns, and other aspects of our culture. She was struck by the loyalty people have to Virginia Tech and that people really care about the students. The flip side to this intense loyalty is that people take it very hard and are hurt when they don't get rewarded for the work they do. There is

a real “can-do” attitude here. Diane also shared observations about the drillfield as a cultural space from reflecting our command and control of the military history, while also being used in very different ways, such as the display of the clothesline project. She also said that she investigated some of the cases at Virginia Tech that have made the national press and that many are about sexual violence. While this may be painful to accept, she suggests that the university must know its history or it will relive it. There are also many who are conflict averse. She suggested the commission think about the ways in which it deals with conflict. There was considerable debate/conflict around the Patriot Act resolution that was never really processed. Additionally, she observed from the brainstorming session that there is an unresolved question of, “What does diversity mean?” The commission needs a framework for thinking about this, including an understanding of how various kinds of “difference” are affected by power and therefore may command more of our attention. Diane then engaged members in an activity to think about whom they represent and what they most want done for their constituent groups. After some conversations about those issues, Diane closed with the recommendation that tolerance is not enough and the institution needs to look at the incentives and rewards for this work. It is difficult to change systems, it takes time, and it is not always a win-win situation.

V. Announcements

Edd asked for volunteers for a committee to select the two names to forward to the president for the At-Large Representative position that needs to be filled. Edd, Kimberly Philpott, and Meredith Katz agreed to serve on that committee. Copies of a draft of the VT International Mission were distributed as information. Ben Dixon also distributed a summary of some of the recommendations made in a report done on the Office for Equal Opportunity.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

**Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, May 10, 2004**

Minutes

Present: Edd Sewell, Pat Hyer, Helen Crawford, Linda Woodard, Jean Elliott, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Ray Plaza, Jean Brickey, Betty Fine, Valerie Hardcastle, Susanna Rinehart, Bill Greenberg, Mary Madis, Meredith Katz, Kimberly Philpott, Devi Gnyawali, Susan Willis-Walton, Stefanie Linden (for Gavin Luter), Hayward Farrar, Brandon Bull, Keohi Council, Kim Beisecker

Absent: Trey Church, Jon Wooge, Ellen Plummer, Darleen Baker, Lanny Cross, Sam Cook, Lois Berg, Hassan Aref

Guests: Diane Bell, Jennie Reilly

I. Adoption of Agenda

Helen Crawford and Bill Greenberg asked to be added to the agenda. Edd said would add them under announcements since there is no section for new business. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the revised agenda. The motion carried.

II. Election of the Chair

A question was raised regarding the open at-large position. The committee met and forwarded Edwin Larroy and Christina Brogdon to the President to select. There has been no notification from the President's office yet. Edd was asked to remain as chair. He declined but Ray Plaza volunteered to serve in that capacity. He was approved by acclamation. The vice chair will be elected in the fall.

III. Committee Reports

All committee reports appear at the end of the minutes.

A. Staff Report – Jean Brickey and Linda Woodard presented the staff committee report. The committee worked with the faculty committee on exit interviews. A small group of individuals have continued work on that and anticipate sending out the survey next month to 830 faculty and staff who left the university between Spring 2002 and August 9, 2003. This number is large because it includes special research faculty and staff funded on research grants. After this pilot group, they will survey people from August 10, 2003 – August 9, 2004 and will then administer the survey annually. The second stage is to survey new employees during their first year of work. They also have piloted a computer literacy program with several dozen housekeepers as part of the goal to increase computer access and literacy to employees who don't work in traditional office settings. They hope to fully implement computer access across campus by fall 2004. Finally, Sue Ellen Crocker, President of the Staff Senate, has sent a letter to the President which has been forwarded to the executive committee of the BOV requesting a staff non-voting member be added to the board.

B. Faculty Report – Devi Gnyawali presented the faculty committee report. There was some conversation regarding the need to communicate with individuals working on the ADVANCE grant to see what kind of information they receive from the surveys and interviews they have conducted and will continue to conduct. There were concerns about the level of support for processing H1B visa and permanent residence applications. Kim Beisecker responded that through some restructuring, employee immigration paperwork will be done in S.K. De Datta's office. As part of the changes, though, support for international employees has expanded with a permanent welcome center at Cranwell International Center. There was also discussion on gathering information on faculty experiences through informal discussions. Susanna Rinehart shared information on a project that she is working on to collect multidimensional artistic images of diversity university-wide to culminate in a theatrical production in spring '06. She requested that any commission members interested in participating with this effort let her know.

C. Student Recruitment and Retention – Kimberly Philpott summarized the committee report. While it may be too late to impact the process for new BOV member selection, it was suggested that the commission be mindful of this in the future. Bill Greenberg recommended that the commission contact the new director of admissions (once hired) and work with that individual to obtain yield data and determine ways to improve the recruitment of underrepresented students. Jean Elliott informed the commission that an article on the incoming VT freshman class including SAT scores and other demographics would be in Tuesday's paper.

D. Best Practices – It was suggested that Peggy Meszaros be invited to speak to the commission in the fall about her benchmarking report. Susanna Rinehart distributed a report on Best Practices Regarding Domestic Partnership. She requested that this be put on the CEOD agenda in the fall.

V. Announcements

Helen Crawford distributed the following statement:

According to the Athletic Comprehensive Action Plan of Virginia Tech, the athletic director has the sole and serious responsibility of determining how to deal with athletes found to be in trouble with the law. The Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity urges the athletic director to consider not only the athletic program, but also the university as a whole and Virginia Tech's commitment to hold ourselves to the highest standards of human dignity. Submitted for consideration and voting upon by Helen Crawford, May 10, 2004.

It was determined that it would be inappropriate for the commission to consider this at the last minute as the meeting was about to end. It was recommended that individual members who support this statement send it or something similar to President Steger and Jim Weaver. Some also suggested the Comprehensive Action Plan will likely be reviewed.

Bill Greenberg closed the meeting by informing members that he chose not to run again in part because of his disappointment in the lack of accomplishments by the commission. He believes the commission could have done much more. Edd responded that his perspective differs and that the committee reports provide members with a map on where to go next year and specific issues

to focus on. Kimberly Philpott made a motion to give the chair permission to call a special meeting of the commission over the summer if need arises. It was seconded and passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia P. Cohen, Secretary to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

**Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
2003-04 Report for the Staff Sub-Committee**

The sub-committee met in January with representatives of Personnel Services to identify and discuss issues relating to staff recruitment and retention. A number of issues were identified, with the following issues potentially relevant to the work of CEOD:

1. Lack of awareness of the support services that the university offers and where they can seek assistance (e.g., ADA, Women's Center, Employee Dependent Scholarship fund)
2. Need for further supervisory development and training (to provide opportunities for advancement for employees as well as to improve effectiveness of supervisory practices)
3. Under-utilization or under-employment of staff
4. Reluctance of employees to share concerns with supervisors or managers, and supervisors may not know how to respond to concerns or answer employees' questions
5. Perceptions and treatment of staff as "second class citizens" within the university community
6. Perceptions that age discrimination may be occurring with respect to opportunities to be assigned to work on projects, be provided training opportunities, be included in meetings, etc.
7. Literacy (including English as 2nd language and computer literacy)
8. Need for more opportunities to recognize staff accomplishments

The staff and faculty sub-committees met to discuss common issues, one of which was a shared interest in the development of an exit interview process. The two committees reviewed and provided input on the draft faculty and staff exit surveys, which had been developed by representatives of Center for Survey Research, Personnel Services, Provost, EO, and Multi-Cultural Affairs, with the expectation that the survey will be implemented this year in two stages. The first stage will be to survey the faculty and staff who resigned between Spring 2002 and Summer 2003; the second stage will be an annual survey. An annual survey of new employees will be developed for implementation in Fall 2004.

Members of the staffing sub-committee have also been working with Personnel Services and the Commission for Staff Affairs on a computer access and literacy project, which has been piloted. This initiative has several primary components: identification of work areas or labs where computers can be made available for staff use, development of a basic training module for computer use (e.g., email, web navigation, important university websites), and development of employee guides for appropriate use.

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Report from the Faculty Recruitment and Retention Committee (5/10/04)

The committee engaged in three primary activities:

First, issues surrounding faculty recruitment and retention and overall climate of Virginia Tech and Blacksburg were discussed. Some members of the committee shared results of informal discussions held with various faculty members to gather insights on the issues faced by faculty in general and underrepresented faculty in particular. Some minority/underrepresented faculty expressed concerns that because they are a minority, they are asked to serve on many committees and to participate in diverse activities and thus are loaded with extra work with little or no added returns. Lack of employment opportunities for spouse seems to be an overriding concern. Several faculty members stated that the lack of spousal employment is likely to be a key reason for them to leave Virginia Tech. Other issues mentioned included lack of facilities for child and parental care and limited opportunities for socialization. Some international faculty expressed concerns about the level of support provided by the university for processing H1B visa and permanent residence applications.

Second, the committee met jointly with the staff recruitment and retention committee and extensively discussed the Exit Survey and suggested improvements on the draft. It was decided to have two separate exit surveys for faculty and staff with some overlapping questions on both surveys and many questions unique to faculty and staff. Since the details of the survey are included in the report put together by the Staff Recruitment and Retention Committee, they are not repeated here.

Finally, the committee is in the process of identifying a few important issues for its focus next year. More informal conversations will be held with various faculty to get more insights on issues and concerns related to faculty recruitment and retention. Here is a list of some suggested areas for next year:

- Go through the benchmarking report based on the research conducted by Peggy Meszaros and Karen Joest on faculty recruitment and retention and identify areas for the committee to address. The report investigated Virginia Tech's peer top 15 NSF-ranked institutions and tried to discover strategies used by these institutions to recruit and retain underrepresented faculty. It is possible that some immediate action steps could be identified based on that report and recommended to the university administration.
- Some research seems to suggest that people with certain personality traits (e.g. "hardy personality") are more likely to stay in the environment such as Virginia Tech and Blacksburg. It may be worthwhile to understand current research in this area and explore how such research could be appropriately used in improving recruitment and retention of underrepresented faculty.
- Continue informal conversations with minority and underrepresented faculty and gather further insights and recommendations on the concerns of excessive service loads, spousal employment, and visa processing mentioned above and other relevant issues.

**CEOD Student Retention & Recruitment Committee
Recommendations to the CEOD from February 23, 2004**

The Student Subcommittee met on February 23rd after a CEOD meeting to discuss some recommendations for our area. We discussed areas that we knew needed reform, such as the scholarship deadlines, BOV vacancies, etc.

Future plans: Efforts will be made to keep up to date with other schools and investigate what services, programs they are offering in regards to student retention and recruitment. Some initial research has been conducted this semester using resources from Pat Hyer's office.

Below are the recommendations we came up with for this year.

I. Scholarships, Grants, Fellowships, Graduate Assistantships and Foundation Funds

If possible, adjust internal scholarship deadlines to dates after students have been offered admission to the university (sometime between April 1 – 15). As this may expand the initial scholarship pools to comprise mainly students who have been offered admission to the university. Most deadlines were prior to the date admissions offers are given.

Scholarships listed below were found by using the Virginia Tech Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid's Scholarship Database Search:

<http://www.finaid.vt.edu/scholarshipsearch/scholarDBsearch.html>

| Scholarship Type | Deadline |
|---|--|
| General (VT) 89 Need & Merit Based | 3/11/2004 Except: Weyerhaeuser/United Negro College Fund Corporate Scholars Program, 3/15/2004 |
| General (VT) 28 Neither Need Nor Merit Based | 3/11/2004 |
| Departmental (VT) 1 Need & Merit Based Pamplin Scholars Program for Virginians | Postmark February 2 (Leader Award & Pamplin Scholar Award) |

II. Institutionally define the term "diversity" and state it is a compelling interest at VA Tech

- The university's mission and strategic plan should state and support "diversity" as a compelling interest. Such an interest should be applied to recruitment and retention of

students (undergraduate, graduate and professional; between and within academic and non-academic disciplines). University departments, programs, and various entities of the university will have access to available federal, state and private funds that support the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body. Any entity of the university whose mission is related to this compelling interest can develop and enact strategic recruitment and retention programs that support this compelling interest. At any time a concern related to such retention and recruitment efforts and/or programs should be questioned the program and/or event will be reviewed by the CEOD. The CEOD constituency may seek advisement, as needed, utilizing university and non-university information sources to develop a consensual response plan.

- In June of 2004, there will be 4 openings on the University's Board of Visitors (BOV). The Commission should develop and suggest a list of possible candidates to apply for appointment by the Governor.

III. Educate and Expanding the Knowledge Base of Members on the Issue of Recruitment & Retention (national/VA Tech)

- Invite off-campus guest speakers to explain some of the terms, issues, policy and practices the commission faces
- Invite key on-campus program areas and/or departments which have experienced a change due to the use of the terms "race neutral" and "narrow tailoring" and/or have been identified in letters written by the Center for Equal Opportunity as being race based programs. Have these areas to share the affects on their program and/or department's mission related to retention and recruitment efforts (especially, underrepresented groups such as Black, Hispanic, Native American and women). Our committee suggests: Karen Sanders, Director - CAEE Academic Enrichment & Excellence; Ray Williams, Jr., Assistant Director for Undergraduate Admissions; John Muffo, Director of Academic Assessment Programs; and Bevlee Watford, Director-Center for the Enhancement of Engineering Diversity

IV. Use our own methods that some departments use to try and get the word out to students.

- Utilize some of our own ideas/Best Practices to get students interested and motivated about VT. From what I understand Admissions sends our very little literature to prospective students being everything is on the web now. Little things like sending a postcard to remind students that a scholarship deadline is coming up, or an Open House is next month, could do a lot for students. They look at the materials they get and if one school sends them a lot of materials and others send nothing, they may feel unimportant and that they are just a number.
- Of course budget is always an issue, but postcards mailing are fairly cheap and mean a lot to students.

CEOD Best Practices Subcommittee Spring 2004

The CEOD Best Practices Subcommittee met in late February to discuss our role as a subgroup of the Commission for Equal Opportunity and Diversity and to develop some criteria for best practices in regards to diversity.

We discussed some comparison schools and ones we should try and model ourselves after. We discussed looking at the Top 30-50 research schools list, our SCHEV peer institutions, most diverse schools (US News & World Report ranking), etc. The committee also discussed utilizing the CASS standards because they include a diversity component.

It was decided that once we established criteria for best practices, we would split up among the other subcommittees and assist them in researching best practices. Below is the breakdown we decided upon.

Laura: Student Retention & Recruitment Sub-committee

Jean: Climate Sub-committee

Brandon: Curriculum Sub-committee

Jennie: Staff & Faculty Recruitment & Retention Sub-committee

Below is the Best Practices criterion we came up with and circulated electronically to the other CEOD members.

What makes a Best Practice a Best Practice?

Questions to consider as you research ideas or programs at VT or at other institutions.

1. Does it have a clear statement of what it was trying to accomplish?
2. Does it have a departmental or university policy that it fits into?
3. Is it part of a consistent and purposeful plan?
4. What was the outcome or impact?
5. How long has it been in existence?
6. How is it funded? Is there an adequate resource or funding strategy to support it?
7. Will it work at Virginia Tech? (consider geographic location, size of school, mission etc.)
8. Is there an assessment component to it? How can you measure it?
9. Consider assets and liabilities (or pros and cons) of program.

Items to consider:

- What schools/universities stand out when you think about diversity issues related to your sub-committee area?
 - Perhaps we can all consider which schools stand out and then try and visit them. (hopefully there will be some overlap among the sub-committees, which will help with travel and costs).
- We suggest sub-committees limit Best Practice suggestions to 3 at the most. We don't want to be considering so many programs that we run out of time and aren't able to work with any of them.

- Remember to look both internally and externally for Best Practices. There may be some departments at VT doing great things that others are unaware of.

Suggestions:

Invite Dr. Peggy Meszaros to address the CEOD early next year on her benchmarking research with regard to "Improving Campus Climate to Support Diversity and Retention."

Report on Actions Taken:

- Formulated criteria to assess Best Practices
- Met with Lanny Cross and collected:
 - CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education 2003 pertaining to Diversity and Ethics
- Reviewed "Diversity Indicators in the Top 30 Research Institutions" – DRAFT from Ben Dixon
- Collected benchmark reports and diversity materials to read from Pat Hyer
- Obtained the list of top 50 institutions for comparison
- Obtained the Peggy Meszaros and Karen Joest report, "Improving Campus Climate to Support Diversity and Retention" Benchmarking the Top 15 NSF-Ranked Institutions"