

**Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, September 13, 2004**

Minutes

Present: Edd Sewell, Pat Hyer, Helen Crawford, Linda Woodard, Edwin Larroy Rodriguez, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Ray Plaza, Jean Brickey, Jeff Mann, Valerie Hardcastle, Susanna Rinehart, Leon Geyer, Mary Madis, LaChelle Waller, Kimberly Philpott, Devi Gnyawali, Susan Willis-Walton, Michael Goode, Hayward Farrar, Lois Berg, Kim Beisecker, Cynthia Bonner, David Travis, Muhammad Chughtai, Jon Wooge, Maxine Lyons

Absent: Darleen Baker, Sam Cook, Hassan Aref

Guests: Ellen Plummer, Jennie Reilly, Yonsenia White, Larry Vaughan, S.K. DeDatta, Miriam Rich

I. Adoption of Agenda

The chair asked that the guest speaker be moved to directly after welcome and introductions. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the revised agenda. The motion carried.

II. Welcome and Introductions

Ray Plaza welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the commission for the 2004-05 year and introductions followed.

III. Guest Speaker/Presentation

S.K. DeDatta presented a progress report on the International Strategic Directions Team. In addition to a PowerPoint presentation, handouts were provided on the International Mission and Vision and drafts of goals for the four areas: Undergraduate Education, Research and Scholarship, Support Services, and Graduate Education. The deadline for submitting the International Strategic Plan to the Provost is October 15, 2004.

Kim Beisecker recommended that members read the handouts closely and provide very specific recommendations. Ben Dixon reminded people that some of the goals are very closely tied to the commission and the Diversity Strategic Plan and individuals should keep that in mind when reviewing.

IV. Overview of Commission Purpose and Mission

Ray Plaza reviewed the commission charge for new members and asked if those who were part of its creation wanted to make any comments. Pat Hyer shared that the commission has topics and issues of concern that overlap other commissions and bodies which is why there are so many representatives. Much work needs to be done with other commissions and bodies and it is up to the representatives to make interconnections and be a conduit through which information can flow. Ben Dixon reminded the members of the unique nature of the commission and the importance of having all voices heard. Once issues are brought to the table, members need to decide if the commission has responsibility or if the issue is better taken up by another commission or unit in the university.

V. Commission Structure and Mechanics

Ray Plaza reviewed the operating guidelines of the commission. His goal as chair is to send out agendas one week prior to the meetings. Commission meetings are open and representatives are encouraged to send alternate representatives if they are unable to attend. Jean Brickey shared that Dr. Steger made the comment that there is too much absenteeism on commissions and challenged the faculty and staff senates to have alternates.

The chair raised the question about changing the meeting time from 10:30 - 12:00 to 10:00 – 12:00 to allow some members who have to leave early the opportunity to attend more of the meeting and also to give some more time for committees or task forces to do some work. There were no objections, so the meeting times will now be from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon. A revised schedule of meetings for fall semester will be sent.

A vice chair will need to be selected at the next meeting and in the spring some members will be needed to serve on a committee to assist with the recommendation of at-large members sent to the president. Finally, Ben Dixon stated that if the commission is involved in recommending policy it will need to be finalized by January to get it to university council in time for them to process it during this academic year.

Last year there were five committees: recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and students; classroom and community climate, curriculum, and best practices. There was some confusion around the committees and some were more effective than others. Ray proposed having task groups to work on very specific projects but also retaining the committee structure. There was some conversation about whether or not it made sense to have both operating and what the time commitment might be for individuals who are needed in both groups. Further discussion on committees and task forces will occur after the review of last year.

The commission took a quick break and then returned and began discussion the handouts from the earlier presentation on International Strategic Directions. Kim Beisecker suggested that if the commission has recommendations and feedback, it must act quickly because of the tight timeline. A number of members voiced concern with some of the documents. There was discussion on the undergraduate education goals which were not near as elaborate and detailed as some of the other areas' goals. There was also a question raised about staff since the documents seemed to have been written with faculty in mind and not much attention to staff. Additionally, concerns were raised around the research and scholarship area with regards to impact on faculty. After considerable discussion, Helen Crawford made a motion to make a request to S.K. DeDatta and the Provost to extend the deadline for submission of the International Strategic Plan and allow commission and university-wide feedback to the documents until October 15. There was consensus that the commission needed more time to evaluate, discuss, and make recommendations on the four areas of undergraduate education, support services, graduate education, and research and scholarship. The motion passed. It was further recommended that Ben Dixon speak with S.K. DeDatta and request that more content information be provided as part of his presentation to other groups.

It was determined that a task force needed to be formed immediately to respond to the documents on the International Strategic Plan. This group comprised of Lois Berg, Valerie Hardcastle, Devi Gnywali, Edd Sewell, Kim Beisecker, Muhammad Chughtai, and Leon Geyer meet and report back at the next commission meeting on September 27. It was also recommended that Ron Daniel be invited to the next commission meeting as he is the chair of the sub group dealing with Undergraduate Education and much of the discussion was focused on that group.

VI. Review of the First Year

Ray Plaza reviewed some of the accomplishments during the first year of the commission including the adoption of the Standards for Inclusive Policies, Programs, and Practices. Ben Dixon shared that these standards are an official document of the university. He also shared with members copies of a position paper on diversity that he and Karen DePauw authored at the request of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Visitors.

Ray then asked that each committee provide a brief report of accomplishments. The full reports are available on-line as part of the minutes from the May 10, 2004 meeting.

VII. Lunch and Updates from Constituent Groups

Any corrections to information on the roster should be sent to Alicia Cohen. Members provided the following updates from constituent groups:

Staff (includes Staff Senate and Commission on Classified Staff Affairs) - The staff senate is still reorganizing itself, they are working on educating staff on issues related to the charter university, salary issues, meeting with new deans, access to computers, and literacy.

At-Large – Susan Willis-Walton responded for the Center for Survey Research. The Center has data collection efforts going on and hopes to provide summaries of some of the different data that is available and of interest to commission members.

GSA – GSA is looking at ways to increase the number of graduate students on campus.

SGA – SGA is focused on voter registration and providing absentee ballots for students and others who may need them. They are also working on their outreach and increasing awareness of the issues affecting students.

Division of Student Affairs – The Celebration of Diversity was held last week with over 750 in attendance, the Cultural Centers Advisory Committee has begun meeting, Hispanic Heritage Month begins this week, on November 13 Face-to-Face will occur, the Counseling Center is offering numerous workshops for students, the White Ribbon Campaign will begin shortly, and the VTCC is conducting a social climate and diversity survey.

Cranwell International Center – They are still working on the numbers. There are 1570 graduate students and 560 undergraduates. There are fewer international students here this fall for a number of reasons. The UK and Australia are heavily recruiting students and don't require them to take the GRE or GMAT. They will be holding their first ever reception for international faculty, staff, and researchers on October 8th.

CAPFA – They have not yet met. On another note, the Open House for the new Career Services Building is Wednesday, September 22 from 10:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Office for Equal Opportunity – The search process for a new director is still in progress. In the interim, the office hopes to make some changes and become more of a resource and do more outreach in the university, especially in the areas of the faculty search process and training on laws and policies related to harassment.

Americans with Disabilities Act – The first ADA committee meeting is this week. More and more students with ADHD will be coming to campus, so we need to think about how we can help those students be successful. There is a new tennis player who has one arm who is an amazing player.

Faculty Senate – The Faculty Senate has completed its reorganization.

Commission on Faculty Affairs - The CFA has a large agenda which includes the Computer Privacy Policy draft.

LGBT Caucus – The Faculty and Staff Caucus finally added Transgender to its name and is now the LGBT Caucus. There are a number of programs in the works including Chris Glaser on October 18.

Black Caucus – The Caucus is concerned about the impact of the charter university on the recruitment and retention of students of color. They held a move-in cookout and had around 350 participants and also gave out a book scholarship. They also want to establish stronger ties with the undergraduate and graduate students and have extended membership to them. Concern remains regarding the exodus of black faculty and staff.

At-Large – Hayward Farrar voiced concerns about the escalating tuition costs at Virginia Tech. He believes that economic stratification will become more and more of an issue.

CISO – Dance of Nations will be held on November 4 and International Week will occur in the spring.

Pat Hyer/Provost's Office – As part of the ADVANCE grant a childcare survey was completed. Other issues they are focusing on include dual career couples, mentoring, and leadership.

Ellen Plummer/Women's Center – The Women's Center is working with Residence Life and Student Affairs to find out why students in their first year are not reporting incidents of violence (we are significantly underreporting), the Vagina Monologues is coming on February 12 and 13, there are Kids'

Night Out and Parents' Night Out Programs, there was a very well attended reception last week, and work is underway to create a Graduate Women's Network.

Ben Dixon/Office of Multicultural Affairs – The office is focusing on raising the profile of two communities – Hispanic and People with Disabilities. The Diversity Indicators Report is in the process of being completed and will be issued to the CEOD upon completion. The Diversity Research Initiative that was launched last spring at the Mid Atlantic Conference on the Scholarship of Diversity will continue. The conference will also occur again this year on March 17 & 18 at the Hotel Roanoke. Nikki Giovanni will be doing the closing session. Finally, the office is working with Alumni and Development to reconnect alumni of color and they held their first event, a golf tournament, to raise money for the Opportunities Scholarship Program.

VIII. Announcements

Jennie Reilly passed out some brochures and information on an upcoming workshop through CEUT. She also informed members of the new resource center that is part of Personnel Services and a new accessibility map that is located under the campus maps link on the VT homepage. Ray Plaza passed out information on the upcoming Organizations for Hispanic Leadership in America Conference that Virginia Tech is hosting. Ben Dixon passed out information on the upcoming NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet. Through the generosity of President Steger's office, Virginia Tech will be a Corporate Sponsor of the banquet this year. There are limited free tickets available on a first come, first served basis through the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

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

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, September 27, 2004

Minutes

Present: Edd Sewell, Pat Hyer, Linda Woodard, Edwin Larroy Rodriquez, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Ray Plaza, Jean Brickey, Mary Madis, LaChelle Waller, Kimberly Philpott, Devi Gnyawali, Susan Willis-Walton, Michael Goode, Hayward Farrar, Kim Beisecker, Cynthia Bonner, David Travis, Jon Wooge, Maxine Lyons, Sam Cook, Brandon Smith

Absent: Darleen Baker, Helen Crawford, Jeff Mann, Valerie Hardcastle, Susanna Rinehart, Leon Geyer, Hassan Aref, Muhammad Chughtai, Lois Berg, Myrna Callison

Guests: Ellen Plummer, Christine Dennis, Karen DePauw

I. Adoption of Agenda

Kimberly Philpott asked that the charter university initiative be added to the agenda under new business. The revised agenda was approved.

II. Chair Report

Ray Plaza welcomed two new members, Brandon Smith, representing the Joint Committee on Diversity and Multicultural Affairs through SGA, and Sam Cook, representing American Indian Studies. Ray then distributed a handout on the role of the task force and shared his rationale for this approach. The benefits include greater flexibility and a designated and specified timeframe for completion, increased efficiency, the ability to work on various items simultaneously, utilization of expertise of members, and provides opportunities for members to become experts on a particular topic and bring recommendations forward to the commission. Ray also suggested the following as potential agenda/task force items:

- International Strategic Plan
- Short BOV Paper on Diversity
- Harassment Policy
- Diversity Research Initiative
- Diversity in the Faculty Dossier used for Promotion and Tenure
- Results of the Exit Survey
- Workplace Violence
- Affirmative Action Plan
- Student Enrollment
- Campus Climate Issues
- Revisions/Updates to the Diversity Strategic Plan
- How to Market the Standards Document to the University Community
- Diversity Summit

It was suggested that the Charter University Initiative be added to the list of topics. Ray asked that members review the list and let him know if they have additional topics. He also indicated that the committee structure could still exist but in a different way.

Ray reported that the first meeting of University Council was last week. The majority of the meeting was spent with a presentation and question and answer session by Minnis Ridenour on the Charter University Initiative. Commission chairs also provided updates. Ray has shared the list of task force items with both the president and the provost.

III. Old Business

Report and Recommendations from the Task Force on the International Strategic Plan

Edd Sewell reported that he, Kim Beisecker, and Devi Gnyawali had one meeting to discuss the documents. Another meeting was held with Edd, Leon Geyer, Ron Daniel and others to discuss the goals and objectives for undergraduate education. The task force believes the latest draft of this document is a great improvement over the five goals that were distributed at the last meeting. Multicultural is now gone

from the document and replaced with cross-cultural. In the foreign language area, it was suggested that Virginia Tech needs to offer different languages like Chinese, Arabic, and Japanese. There is a focus on education abroad, not just study abroad.

Devi responded that he, too, thought the latest draft was much improved. However, he was concerned that it is unclear what the overall strategic direction is and how the four areas fit together. There has been a significant drop in the number of international students coming to VT. In response, the university needs to figure out how to compete with the international market. While the United States is tightening barriers other countries are lowering theirs. It is the barriers and perception of barriers; we have an image problem. Given this information, Devi posed the question of whether the international strategic plan addresses how to attract and retain students, faculty, and staff.

Kim recommended that the commission look at the four areas and state in clear terms what the commission does and does not support. She suggested this be a written document that could also give some priorities to areas that are of specific concern to the commission like services (equal opportunity, access, etc.) and graduate and undergraduate education.

In the area of support services, there were two areas highlighted. One was the immigration process and how it can be better facilitated. The other was the importance of having a liaison for international matters in each department. A concern was raised about the timeline and who the recommendations would go to. Ray said the deadline is still October 15, but we can provide recommendations until then and they will go to both the provost and the team.

It was suggested that the goals and priorities identified by Devi would serve as a good starting point. They are listed below.

There is a need for an overarching set of goals and priorities. The current documents speak to specific areas of focus, but it is unclear what the overall set of goals and priorities are. The mission and vision statement does not spell them out either. Examples of overarching issues and priorities are:

- Creating an environment at VT that values and promotes international and cross-cultural perspectives
- Increasing the pool of resources and expertise for international programs and services (e.g. grants for international programs, training for faculty and staff)
- Developing mechanisms to coordinate and promote international programs. (e.g. creation of international liaison in every department)
- Attracting and retaining diverse student body (internationally and cross-culturally). The pool of international students is getting smaller due to visa problems and many universities are becoming more aggressive in attracting and retaining high quality international students. We need to undertake concrete steps in this regard. (Business Week article of Oct 4 2004 provides useful facts and figures).
- Attracting and retaining faculty and staff with expertise in international and cross-cultural aspects. Examples include creation of reward systems, training and development, and mechanisms for faster processing of immigration documents and visas.

Discussion then moved to study abroad and the need to improve the quality of the program. It currently is not a university program but something done by individual faculty. One recommendation was to staff up the study abroad office. This led to conversations about the importance of quality in addition to quantity, given that each goal will have a metric.

It was decided since no document could be written before the next team meeting on Tuesday morning, that Kim would act as the official spokesperson of the commission and share some of the discussions. The task force would then meet again and draft something for review at the next commission meeting.

The question was raised about whether all international offices and programs would be located under one central office. There was general consensus that the commission doesn't support consolidation since there are different constituencies that need to be served in different ways. The commission does support the need for accountability and coordination.

A final question was raised about student involvement in the process. It was suggested that students be involved as stakeholders. Kim responded that there was a student representative on the team who is now unable to attend meetings due to a class conflict.

IV. New Business

Review/Discussion of the Short Position Paper on Diversity

Karen DePauw and Ben Dixon provided background information on the paper. The Academic Affairs committee of the Board of Visitors has three priorities this year: graduate education, faculty, and diversity. This provides the university with a great opportunity to affect the way we "do diversity." The committee requested a statement on diversity from the provost. He asked Karen and Ben to draft the document. It includes a philosophical statement and then cites the four dimensions of a diverse university as representation (access and success, via recruitment and retention across academic programs), campus climate and intergroup relations, education and scholarship (teaching, research, and outreach initiatives), and institutional transformation (restructuring to meet all aspects of the institution's mission).

She then suggested that the commission look at policy, personnel, pedagogy, and programs and determine the highest priorities. Work on this should begin fairly quickly so that an update is ready for the next board meeting in November. One suggestion was to place the topic areas in those four areas and move from there. Additionally, if there is a best practice on campus in one of the four areas, it should be cited. Ray suggested this be on the agenda for both commission meetings in October.

Diversity Summit

Ray informed the commission that the Diversity Summit will be fully coordinated by the commission this year. A task force will be formed to work on this. There are models from seven years of the summit for the task force to review in determining the format for 2005. This is a major engagement activity and vehicle for the university community to come together to focus on issues of diversity and a great opportunity for the commission.

Charter University Initiative

Kim Philpott suggested that while there have been numerous comments on the Charter University Initiative from those on campus who authored it, the commission should invite people with different perspectives to come and share their reactions on the impact of this initiative. She then went on to make a motion to have Secretary of Education Belle Wheelan come and speak on the impact on diversity. There was some concern about her ability to speak on this since the initiative is still a work in progress and she is a state official. There was, however, general consensus that it would be good to have a panel with outside perspectives. Other commissions as well as the faculty and staff senates would also likely be interested in this panel. Some members suggested the need to be cautious since the initiative is still a work in progress and stressed the need to prioritize and work on responses to the items in the position paper on diversity. While the motion had been seconded, the chair did not recognize the motion but stated that the commission will pursue the idea of the diverse panel and the Charter University Initiative will remain on the agenda.

V. Next Meeting

The next commission meeting is Monday, October 11, from 10-12 in the Executive Conference Room, Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

**Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, October 11, 2004**

Minutes

Present: Edd Sewell, Pat Hyer, Darleen Baker, Helen Crawford, Jeff Mann, Linda Woodard, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Ray Plaza, Jean Brickey, Mary Madis, LaChelle Waller, Marilyn Kershaw, Devi Gnyawali, Susan Willis-Walton, Michael Goode, Kim Beisecker, Cynthia Bonner, Fain Rutherford (for David Travis), Jon Wooge, Maxine Lyons, Brandon Smith, Monika Gibson

Absent: Valerie Hardcastle, Edwin Larroy Rodriquez, Susanna Rinehart, Leon Geyer, Hassan Aref, Muhammad Chughtai, Lois Berg, Hayward Farrar, Sam Cook

Guests: Ellen Plummer, Jennie Reilly

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

II. Chair Report

Ray welcomed two new members: Monika Gibson, representing the Commission on Student Affairs, and Marilyn Kershaw representing the Black Caucus. Fain Rutherford was also present in place of David Travis. Ray then distributed a handout with descriptions of the task forces and a sign-up sheet for them. He moved on to ask commission members if they felt that the CEOD should release a statement given the incident on the NAACP door and subsequent graffiti in McBryde Hall. (Statement is attached with minutes.) He shared a statement that he had drafted and asked for comments on it. He also passed around the SGA resolution in response to these incidents. Michael Goode shared the student perspective that press releases are not enough. The students do not feel that the university is dedicated to diversity. They feel like it is up to them to take action since the university has not stepped up to the plate.

Cynthia Bonner shared how the Division of Student Affairs is responding to these incidents. There are two areas of focus: security and student life/campus climate. In the area of security, there has been a meeting with student organizations that have offices in Squires concerning cameras and the implications of increased security and cameras. Additionally, the policy on handling vandalism in the building has been changed so that it is covered up but not touched until the police have an opportunity to investigate. With regards to campus climate, the Office of Student Life is investigating the possibility of bringing in a facilitator who has experience in addressing hate crimes on campus. They are also considering some hate crime campaigns. Unfortunately, most of them focus more on t-shirts and buttons. Finally, there will be a campus climate check-up and the Face-to-Face program on November 13 will focus on hate crimes.

It was suggested that others outside of the Division of Student Affairs could also be involved in some of these efforts, specifically, the Women's Center. It was also mentioned that if the incident on the door of the NAACP office had been against LGBTA it would not be viewed as a hate crime. Fain Rutherford responded that the university has administrative policies that extend more protection than Virginia statute.

After some revisions to the draft statement, a motion was made and seconded to adopt the statement as altered. The motion carried. A number of members suggested that the statement along with the actions being taken in the Division of Student Affairs be publicized widely so that members of the university community can see that actions are being taken in response to the incidents. Suggestions included a CT article, a link from the VT homepage, and an article in the next issue of the Spectrum.

III. Old Business

A. Recommendations from the Task Force on the International Strategic Plan

Kim Beisecker introduced the memorandum to Dr. McNamee from the Commission. Ben Dixon suggested adding and global diversity to the last sentence in the second paragraph. A motion was made and seconded to approve the memorandum as amended send it forward to the Provost and S.K. DeDatta. The motion carried.

B. Diversity Summit

Ray indicated that the summit is one of the task forces and although the commission as a whole will be involved, the task force will provide the leadership for the program. One of the first issues that will need to be addressed is the date and time for the summit so that a location can be secured. Another important item is the need to get the word out sooner. He would like to have information set so that by November 1 or 15 the date is widely circulated to faculty, staff, and students.

C. BOV Short Position Paper on Diversity

Ben Dixon asked that responses to the matrix sent out last week be submitted to him at the end of the meeting or tomorrow so that he can summarize this input for the BOV members on the Academic Affairs Committee. A question was raised regarding institutional transformation and restructuring. Ben responded that this is not a call for the reorganization of the university, although in the case of student affairs, a review is about to begin and could result in restructuring. Institutional transformation is not only about attitudes but how we get things done at the university. Susan Willis-Walton suggested that information they gather from VT alumni which is mandated by SCHEV could cut across all four areas and might be appropriate to include in an appendix.

D. Charter University Initiative

Ray informed the commission that Minnis Ridenour is not available to attend the meeting on November 15, but Larry Hincker, Associate Vice President for University Relations, will be present to answer questions about the Charter University Initiative. He then opened the floor for a brainstorming discussion on the potential impact of the initiative on equity and diversity. One of the major impacts would be the university's ability to increase tuition. There is a concern that increased tuition could affect access. An important question for students is given increased tuition, will the university also increase financial aid and in what kind of form will it be? Some students are concerned that funding would be in the form of loans which will just increase student debt.

Another impact would be increased power in the Board of Visitors. The Student Government Association is concerned about the checks and balances if the BOV has more power. They plan to request that the student representative to the BOV be picked solely by students and that the student have voting power.

Staff concerns revolve mostly around the issue of benefits being protected. Linda Woodard shared that the charter legislation does provide protection of benefits, but that does still seem to be the greatest area of concern for staff. Additionally, it moves human resource policy to the BOV from the state, so staff would fall under the BOV just like faculty currently do. The locus of control moves from the state to the BOV.

A member asked how this could impact the Office for Equal Opportunity. Fain Rutherford responded that their office is obligated to follow federal law, so there shouldn't be any changes to the work that they do. Ellen Plummer shared that part of the discomfort individuals have with the initiative is concern about what is proposed versus what is actually passed and how the legislation might change through the process.

Linda explained that some questions might be answered by a spectrum-like publication being sent this week to all employees to help increase awareness and understanding of the initiative. Edd Sewell shared that most faculty don't have issues with the initiative but see higher level financing as what is at stake for the university. Darleen Baker suggested that the effects may be more long term. Ben Dixon offered members to consider changing their points of view and look at how the charter status could help the university better address some of the issues. In this view, there might be things positively affected should this legislation be passed. Mary Madis shared continued staff concern over the question of how staff will be affected. In numerous settings, individuals have said they don't know if staff will be better or worse off.

In conclusion, many members agreed that if there is an open, frank, and honest discussion, people will be more comfortable. Ray reminded members that we will revisit the charter university initiative at the November 15 meeting.

IV. New Business

The next meeting of the commission is Monday, October 25, from 10-12 in Conference Room C, Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center. Some of this meeting time will be spent in task forces. The question was raised about members who serve on more than one task force. It was suggested that some task forces may need to work sequentially.

V. Announcements

- ❖ On October 26th at 10:00 a.m. in Donaldson Brown Auditorium, Paul Hippolitus in the Office of Disability Employment Policy will be discussing the impact and importance of recruiting and hiring people with disabilities.
- ❖ On October 18 at 7:30 p.m., Chris Glaser will be speaking on, "Can Gay Marriage be Sacred?" in the Donaldson Brown Auditorium.
- ❖ Today is Indigenous People's Day and marks the beginning on American Indian Awareness Month. There are numerous events including speakers and movies throughout the month.
- ❖ October 19 is Diversity Career Day at the University of Virginia. Career Services has arranged for a bus to transport Virginia Tech students to the fair where there will be 110 companies present, some of whom do not come to VT to interview.
- ❖ Ben Dixon shared that the Pepsi Bottling Group requested a meeting with some of the Presidential Campus Enrichment Grant recipients. At the meeting they did a presentation on the company and included a lot of information about the role of diversity in their business.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

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

CEOD Statement on Hate Crime and Vandalism

In light of recent campus events concerning the hate crime committed against the student NAACP office in Squires Student Center and the defacement of a partition in McBryde Hall, the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity (CEOD) calls on the entire Virginia Tech

community to heed the potential warning signs of these two incidents and pay closer attention to the diversity challenges that are faced at Virginia Tech.

We are concerned about the message sent by these two incidents. We cannot allow these two incidents to sabotage the progress that has been made. As a university community, we must challenge ourselves and each other to stand up against this and other forms of hate speech, bigotry, and discrimination.

We must work together to ensure that such actions do not repeat themselves within the university community. In addition to following up these incidents, we strongly urge the university administration to address more aggressively the larger climate issues these incidents illustrate.

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, November 15, 2004

Minutes

Present: Edd Sewell, Pat Hyer, Darleen Baker, Marilyn Kershaw, Devi Gnyawali, Linda Woodard, Leon Geyer, Jeff Mann, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Ray Plaza, Jean Brickey, Mary Madis, Susan Willis-Walton, Michael Goode, Kim Beisecker, Hayward Farrar, Cynthia Bonner, David Travis, Jon Wooge, Valerie Hardcastle, Edwin Larroy Rodriquez, Susanna Rinehart, Monika Gibson, Lois Berg, Brandon Smith

Absent: Hassan Aref, Muhammad Chughtai, Helen Crawford, Sam Cook, LaChelle Waller, Maxine Lyons

Guests: Larry Hincker, Ellen Plummer, Mary Grace Campos, Shawn Braxton, Michael Smith, Emenike La, Jennie Reilly

I. Adoption of Agenda

The chair asked that the student representatives' presentation be added before the task force updates. The agenda was approved as revised.

II. Chair Report

Ray Plaza began by having the guests introduce themselves. He then passed out a chronology of events from September 26, 2004 through November 14, 2004, and reminded members of the responsibility of the commission. The President has stated that he sees the commission as the formal university vehicle to address campus climate issues. Ray stressed the importance of members communicating with their constituent groups.

Given the amount of work that needs to be done, an additional meeting will be added to the schedule this semester on Monday, December 13. While this is exam week and some individuals may not be able to attend, those who can attend can help move agenda items forward. The schedule for spring semester is still being worked on and will be presented before the end of the semester. Finally, Ray passed out the holiday memo issued by Ben Dixon, Lanny Cross, and David Travis.

III. Charter University

Larry Hincker provided some background information on the Charter University Initiative and answered questions. The basic idea of the legislation is that the three institutions would accept less money for the state in return for more freedom (in areas like procurement and human resources). In addressing the concern of increased tuition, Larry said that VT plans to double the institutional funds for financial aid over the next 5 years (all need-based). A question was raised regarding whether those funds would be in the form of grants or loans. Larry didn't know the answer but promised to follow-up with Dwight Shelton and get back to the commission.

One potential negative to the charter university is if the General Assembly chooses to ignore higher education funding needs. A question was raised regarding how the university would supplement the loss of funds from the state. Larry answered that this could be done through tuition increases, internal efficiencies, and overnight deposits. Additionally, the university would like the ability to offer optional retirement for classified staff which is not currently possible.

IV. Briefing on the Board of Visitors Meeting

Ben Dixon shared two documents that were distributed at the Academic Affairs Committee meeting of the BOV. The strategies document references heavily the short position paper on diversity and is the operational plan the university needs to launch in order to have transformational change. The work of the task forces of the commission can be folded into this plan and the CEOD can make recommendations along the way.

The second handout was a copy of Dr. McNamee's power point presentation. It provides details on the status of women and minorities at Virginia Tech. The Student Affairs Committee also dealt with campus climate issues and heard from Shawn Braxton, president of the student chapter of the NAACP.

In response to all these issues and incidents, a number of people have met to discuss what needs to happen around communication strategies. There is a need for a communication campaign to highlight all of the positive things that are happening around campus that most students, faculty, and staff don't know about. This extends beyond the website. If members have ideas about ways to get the word out to students and others, Ben asked that people send them either to the Office of Multicultural Affairs or to University Relations. This campaign needs to be both internal and external. An example of a new external project is The Prism, a news magazine that will be published twice/yearly for alumni of color.

Valerie Hardcastle suggested one way to improve the university's image would be to get The Chronicle of Higher Education to do a follow-up piece on Virginia Tech to show how the university has worked through these problems. While many agreed that this would be a good step, there was some concern about whether The Chronicle would even be interested in this positive piece. It was also suggested to get articles in the Journal for Blacks in Higher Education and Black Issues in Higher Education. Ray added that there will be a session at the ACPA national conference on the commission and the work the university is doing in the area of diversity/campus climate. Ben shared that as a member institution of HACU, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, the university was able to send two individuals, one faculty and one staff, to the annual conference.

V. Proposals from Student Representatives

Shawn Braxton, president of the student chapter of the NAACP, was the first to speak. He had no formal proposal but had some questions he wanted to ask. He was specifically concerned about the issue of harassment and was wondering if the university had researched what other peer institutions have in place. As an example, he read the harassment definition from the University of Maryland. David Travis shared that the university has done benchmarking against peer institutions and is currently revising the harassment policy which needs a lot of work. Additionally the university is looking at some on-line harassment training programs as a possible way to train faculty and staff.

Emenike La, president of DROP Alliance (Direct Resistance of Privilege), presented three proposals. The first was the creation of a racial harassment policy to include protocol for handling situations when they arise. Ellen Plummer shared that a group of individuals have been working hard at a workplace violence policy which incorporates and addresses these issues of concern. It was stressed that there needs to be a policy that addresses students, too, and not just faculty and staff. Additionally, there need to be consequences that fit the crime.

La then shared that they have read the report by the university regarding Lee Hall and believe that the concern regarding conclusive evidence is unwarranted and absurd. They see Lee Hall as a clear example of institutional bias and want the name removed. They do not support the creation of another committee to look at the history because they feel another report is unnecessary. The hall could be renamed PATH House (Progressive Action Toward Humanity).

The final proposal was to create a learning community in Lee Hall named PATH House. This community would create a welcoming place for all students and see to educate the whole person. DROP Alliance is looking for the commission to get behind their proposals and give the institutional support necessary to move them along.

There was considerable conversation around the learning community. Some concern was raised about the de-diversification and segregation of students. Kim Beisecker stressed the need to have goals specified before working on the mechanics of a learning community. Valerie Hardcastle suggested the commission endorse the idea of the learning community since someone else will work on the mechanics. However, Pat Hyer suggested it would be more advisable for the commission to meet with those responsible for learning communities in order to gather more information before moving forward. Her concern was endorsing something that might not be able to come to fruition and the frustration that would result. Ray suggested that this discussion be continued at the December 6 meeting and he will try to see if some individuals from Student Programs who work with theme housing and learning communities could attend to answer questions and provide more information. He will also see if Betsy Flanagan can attend to provide information on the process for naming buildings.

An additional question was raised around the concepts of narrow-tailoring and strict scrutiny. Hayward Farrar suggested that some time be spent informing people about what those terms mean because there is a lot of confusion. Ben Dixon shared that the narrow tailoring issue will likely be incorporated into the Diversity Summit on January 21, 2005.

Ben also informed the commission that DROP Alliance presented a pledge at the Face to Face conference on Saturday. He encouraged members to sign up for the pledge and take a good look at it. Additionally, members of the BOV are very interested in having a university-wide statement on the principles of living in community. The administration hopes to present something at the March meeting for the BOV to endorse. This may need to be worked on quickly so that it can go through University Council before the board meeting.

VI. Task Force Updates

Edd Sewell will send electronically an update on the campus climate task force which has met and has some ideas for the spring.

The next meeting is Monday, December 6 at 10:00 a.m. in the Executive Conference Room. The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

**Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, December 6, 2004**

Minutes

Present: Edd Sewell, Pat Hyer, Marilyn Kershaw, Devi Gnyawali, Linda Woodard, Jeff Mann, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Ray Plaza, Jean Brickey, Susan Willis-Walton, Michael Goode, Kim Beisecker, Hayward Farrar, Cynthia Bonner, David Travis, Jon Wooge, Susanna Rinehart, LaChelle Waller, Maxine Lyons, Susan Angle (for Lois Berg)

Absent: Hassan Aref, Darleen Baker, Muhammad Chughtai, Leon Geyer, Sam Cook, Monika Gibson, Mary Madis, Valerie Hardcastle, Edwin Larroy Rodriquez, Brandon Smith

Guests: Ellen Plummer, Mary Grace Campos, Jennie Reilly, Peter Wallenstein, Ed Spencer

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved as revised.

II. Chair Report

Ray Plaza noted that the spring meeting schedule was listed on the reverse side of the agenda. There are nine scheduled meetings from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon with a change in sequence in March due to the Board of Visitors meeting. Additionally, the first meeting is not until January 24 since the first day of classes is MLK day and a difficult time for many people to meet. The Diversity Summit is scheduled for Friday, January 21 from 3:00-5:00 p.m. in Owens Banquet Hall. Mary Grace Campos reported that the planning committee met to begin working on the details for the summit. A historical overview of previous summits will be distributed to participants. There will also be scenarios, a group activity, and roundtable discussions around the four Ps (Policy, Personnel, Pedagogy, and Programs). Commission members will be needed as facilitators and recorders during the roundtable discussions. Departments and units will also be given the opportunity to share resources on tables at the summit. Pat Hyer asked if there would be time to share the statement that is being drafted for the Board's review at their meeting in March. It was determined that reviewing that at the summit would be appropriate if the commission has an opportunity to respond to it at the next meeting. Pat will check on the status of the statement and more details on the roles and expectations of members at the summit will be shared next week. Michael Goode charged members with the task of coming up with a catchy name for the summit.

III. Presentations

A. Naming of Buildings

Ray passed out the Commemorative Tributes Policy and shared that Betsy Flanagan, Vice President for Development, was not able to attend the commission meetings but if there are questions related to the policy, Ray can forward them to her. A question was raised about whether any other buildings have been renamed.

B. Lee Hall Name Controversy – Dr. Peter Wallenstein

Dr. Wallenstein shared some documents and provided background information on the investigation into Claudius Lee and Lee Hall that was done at the request of the President Torgersen. There was an addendum to the November 11 report that was shared. Dr. Wallenstein said that the questions that are being raised again are complicated and need to be thought through carefully. He suggested that there are "action" items that were identified in the November 11 report that may still be applicable today. Additionally, he suggested that the university could confer an honorary degree to Irving Peddrew. Hayward Farrar asked what Claudius Lee had done to deserve having a building named after him. Dr. Wallenstein shared that he was on the faculty for 50 years and was a really good teacher for a long

time. He also shared some of the names of buildings at other universities. Pat Hyer shared a case at Indiana University and how their chancellor dealt with the issues surrounding a mural in question. Ray thanked Dr. Wallenstein and said that at the meeting next week the commission will discuss the options and determine our recommendation. He asked that members reread the documents and be prepared with some specific recommendations to address this issue.

C. Theme Housing Components

Ray introduced Dr. Ed Spencer to share the process for theme housing programs. Dr. Spencer passed out two handouts. One was the Student Programs brochure which has theme housing as part of it and the other was the application form for theme housing programs. The deadline for theme housing proposals is August 1 because the brochure has to go to print so early. It is a detailed application. Kim Beisecker reminded members that it also requires a backbone of funding and a strong, stable support group in order to succeed. Another option is to lease a house in the Oak Lane community. One of the fraternities is not renewing its lease, so there is an open house. There was some conversation about concerns with having too many theme housing options. Dr. Spencer also shared that with the Biological and Life Sciences and Galileo both being housed in Lee Hall, it would be highly unlikely that another theme housing option could also be located in that hall. Michael Goode suggested that what is really needed for this paradigm shift is something more globally applied to all residence halls. A question was raised about the training that Resident Advisers receive. They take a three-credit course during their first semester in the job and three weeks of the course are devoted to diversity training. Additionally, they are required to attend a fall workshop prior to the beginning of the semester.

IV. New Business

A. Peace Garden Structure

Kim Beisecker passed out some information on the Peace Garden Structure. The Rotary Club in the name of the university was able to get some materials from the World Trade Center. They are proposing to build a monument in the Peace Garden. The international students are opposed to this as they see it as a monument to terror and don't feel they need a "reminder." Additionally, Cranwell is seen by them as a safe and non-political place. There is a meeting later this week with members of the administration and Scott Hurst, the university architect, and Kurt Krause will be at the next meeting to answer any questions about the proposal. Members of the commission did voice their objections to the proposal and asked that Kim share those objections at the meeting this week.

V. Next Meeting

The next meeting is Monday, December 13 at 10:00 a.m. in Conference Room C at Donaldson Brown. The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, December 13, 2004

Minutes

Present: Edd Sewell, Pat Hyer, Marilyn Kershaw, Devi Gnyawali, Linda Woodard, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Ray Plaza, Jean Brickey, Susan Willis-Walton, Michael Goode, Kim Beisecker, Fain Rutherford (for David Travis), Jon Wooge, LaChelle Waller, Maxine Lyons, Leon Geyer, Mary Madis, Valerie Hardcastle, Monika Gibson, Darleen Baker

Absent: Jeff Mann, Hassan Aref, Hayward Farrar, Susanna Rinehart, Cynthia Bonner, Muhammad Chughtai, Sam Cook, Lois Berg, Edwin Larroy Rodriquez, Brandon Smith

Guests: Mary Grace Campos, Jennie Reilly, Kurt Krause

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

II. Chair Report

Ray Plaza shared information on a meeting last Wednesday focused on the future of Multicultural Programs (including the Black Cultural Center and Multicultural Center). There will be a position opening in January when Kimberly Philpott leaves and it is not certain how it will be filled. There were three options discussed at the meeting. The first option is to keep Multicultural Programs in Student Life. The second option is to move it to Student Activities since their funding is auxiliary as opposed to the E&G funding for Student Life. The third option is to move it under the Office of Multicultural Affairs. The discussion lasted for two hours with no consensus. There was considerable concern about the stability of the unit. Michael Goode suggested that the community wait to see what happens with the Division of Student Affairs before making any changes in the status and structure of Multicultural Programs.

Ray then provided an update on the Student Affairs Task Force. They are currently looking at two different organizational models. One model is a traditional model with academic affairs and student affairs operating separately but with some elements being moved from one area to the other. The other model is a bridge model which keeps both units intact but makes a third unit with elements from both which also reports to the provost. Their last meeting is today and they will send their recommendations to the provost for his consideration. A question was raised about what needed fixing in student affairs. Ray responded that there were issues about how to better partner the two units as well as issues surrounding learning communities, classes for credit, and program assessment which cut across both student affairs and academic affairs.

Ray then passed out some three universities' principles of community statements. Pat Hyer provided the background information on the university's need to develop a statement on the commitment to diversity. At the November 8 board meeting the Rector and the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee requested a statement that they could approve at their March meeting. Some university officials shared what had worked well at previous institutions where they had been employed.

Ray asked that members review the three models distributed and send any comments to Alicia or Ben by December 20th. There is a very tight timeline in order to get the statement before the board for the March meeting. The intent is to have it ready in January to present to faculty and staff senates. The final edits will be made during the January 24 and 31 CEOD meetings so that it can be ready by the February 15 deadline for the BOV. Once a draft is ready for dissemination, members should share with constituent groups and get feedback. A copy of the process and timeline was distributed. There was consensus on the

need to work hard on the mass communication and marketing strategy for the VT Principles of Community. Pat shared some of the ideas generated at a preliminary meeting which included wallet cards, press releases, a large version of the document with the Rector beside it (like the huge checks that are made for lottery winners), full page ad in the CT, etc. It was suggested that advertising go beyond the university and also that it would be better if the statement was succinct. Another recommendation was to post it in all classrooms like the Honor Code. Leon Geyer also suggested that some faculty might take a few minutes of class time to discuss the draft document with students. It may also be possible to send it to Diversity Summit participants prior to the summit.

III. Task Force Updates

A. Diversity Summit

Michael Goode said the flier for the Diversity Summit will go out on email this afternoon. The theme is Valuing our Differences: Celebrating Diversity.

B. Campus Climate

Edd Sewell shared that much of what the task force had discussed at their last meeting has been superseded by other things. Cynthia Bonner has asked John Muffo to pull data on student related issues from his various surveys and Susan Willis-Walton has distributed the exit survey data. There is a lot of information from the exit surveys that will need to be whittled down. Linda Woodard said they are now working on a survey for new employees and a draft of that will be shared with the commission.

IV. Old Business

A. Recommendations on Dealing with the Lee Hall Name/Situation

Ray distributed a draft of recommendations on how to proceed and resolve the issue so it doesn't come up again. Many members liked recommendations one through three, especially the display to provide historical retrospect. Susan recommended that the archivists be involved and the display be high quality and well protected. It would serve as a way to keep our history in the forefront. It was also suggested that while the commission should endorse items one through three, that four through fourteen should be done under our own initiative and not as a response to Lee Hall. Additionally, it was noted that the display should not be limited to Lee Hall. Edd reminded members that there are three buildings named after women and other buildings that have a role to play in understanding our history. Jean reminded people that Paul Derring was one of the first employees with a disability at Virginia Tech. Kurt Krause added his perspective which included questions like, Who owns it? Who maintains it? Who keeps it fresh? Putting a display in a residence hall doesn't necessarily allow everyone to see it. He suggested it could possibly be part of a new visitor's center which is in the list of projects in the next six year plan. Other possible locations for a display include Special Collections in the Library and Squires Student Center.

Conversation then moved to implementing a more aggressive plan to include a DVD that includes the history of Virginia Tech and current issues. This could be sent or given to new students as well as new faculty and staff at orientation. It could also be accessible from the homepage. Issues about where the town of Blacksburg fits in with the history as well as Kentland Farm, Reynolds Homestead, etc. were raised. Valerie recommended that the commission and university not get bogged down in the "right" history and that we take the history and turn it into something positive.

The commission will work on separating recommendations into short term and long term and present them to the President on February 1. Ben reminded members of the need to communicate our recommendations and actions to the groups who are advocating the name change. Rather than sending an email, it was recommended that a more personal approach would be appropriate and someone should visit them at their meetings and provide them with an update in January.

B. Peace Garden Sculpture

Kurt Krause provided an update on the status of the project. There was a meeting last Thursday with various university officials. He was concerned about the university allowing an outside entity to put something on our property. However, he added, there are no clear cut policies on art work or how it gets approved or where it will go. There was a lot of pride in this project and the university architect had spent time trying to make this an aesthetically pleasing. Unfortunately, the location designated (the peace garden) doesn't have the traffic the university would like for commissioned art and it is in an area at risk for vandalism. Additionally, it is on the route to the stadium during football games and is not conducive for a litter free environment. Kurt has requested a stop to this project and has put in two calls to the President of the rotary group that is supporting the project. While the mission and passion are good, this project needs to go on town land. He believes it is fundamentally wrong for enough reasons to stop it at this time. The President's office is aware of the commission's concern regarding this project but Kurt requested a more formal statement from the commission for him to share as he talks with various parties about stopping the project. Pat moved that the commission finds this a problematic project and urges the university to reconsider. The motion was seconded and approved.

V. New Business

University Council Realignment

Ray distributed information on the realignment of University Council based on work done by the task force on membership. The biggest impact for the commission is the proposal to have CEOD elect two representatives to replace what is currently stated as one student representative from the African American student community elected by the Black Organizations Council and one representative from the African American faculty and staff community elected by the Black Caucus. If passed, the commission would need to determine the criteria for how to select those two seats. This need for change was identified because it violates the equal protection clause since the slots are selected by race. A question was raised about why this is illegal since the groups that select those representatives are open to anyone (Black Organizations Council and Black Caucus). A further question was raised about whether diversity needs to be more than black and white. One response could be to rotate the position designation by the eight community groups represented on the commission. That would only work if it was a one-year term and even then it would take years to rotate among all those groups.

There was some conversation about whether the slots were needed since the Chair of the Commission and the Vice President for Multicultural Affairs both have seats on University Council. Ray suggested that members read the document and share any questions with him. He will then pass them on to the task force.

VI. Next Meeting

Presentations by Norrine Bailey Spencer and Peggy Meszaros have been postponed to the end of January or early February. The next meeting is Monday, January 24 at 10:00 a.m. in Conference Room C, Donaldson Brown. 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, January 24, 2005**

Minutes

Present: Ray Plaza, Pat Hyer, Marilyn Kershaw, Devi Gnyawali, Hayward Farrar, Susanna Rinehart, Cynthia Bonner, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Ray Plaza, Jean Brickey, Susan Willis-Walton, Michael Goode, Kim Beisecker, Fain Rutherford (for David Travis), Jon Wooge, Edwin Larroy Rodriguez LaChelle Waller, Maxine Lyons, Leon Geyer, Monika Gibson, Darleen Baker

Absent: Linda Woodard, Jeff Mann, Hassan Aref, Muhammad Chughtai, Sam Cook, Lois Berg, Mary Madis, Valerie Hardcastle, Brandon Smith, Susan Anderson, Ruth Grene

Guests: Mary Grace Campos, Jennie Reilly, Ellen Plummer

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

II. Chair Report

Ray Plaza shared copies of the Black History Month calendar and thanked commission members for their assistance at the Diversity Summit on Friday. He also reported that there are two new members to the commission. Ruth Grene is taking Edd Sewell's place since he teaches a class Monday mornings and Susan Anderson is taking the place vacated by Helen Crawford. The memo from the CEOD to the President requesting the university reconsider the Peace Garden Proposal was sent. Ray indicated that he thought the Rotary might want to come before the commission to present their case. A number of members suggested that would not be appropriate and that the issue needs to be dealt with by the administration. Finally, Ray reminded members that a subcommittee or task force will need to be formed this semester to deal with the selection process for new at-large members.

III. Old Business

A. Recommendations on Dealing with the Lee Hall Name/Situation

Ray distributed revised recommendations categorized as short, medium, and long term. He shared that orientation will no longer be using the video to address diversity issues. It was suggested that the commission invited Tom Brown and Rick Sparks to a meeting to discuss diversity concerns and how to best address them at orientation. Additionally, a discussion on faculty and staff orientation needs to occur. Ray recommended that one of the February meetings of the commission be devoted to orientation.

A concern was raised about the importance of not focusing solely on Lee Hall, since it is part of a larger history and is one of many possible examples. Similar concerns from previous meetings were raised again, including the need to not limit a display to Lee Hall. It was recommended that if a display is placed in Lee Hall that it also be available on-line to increase its visibility and access. Considerable discussion occurred around the portrait of Claudius Lee that was removed in 1997. It was suggested that the portrait not be put back up but that a display could include pictures.

Members were reminded that orientation should not be relied on too heavily since students already receive information overload and do not necessarily retain what is presented. In response, a recommendation was made to craft ~~at a~~ one to three-year programmatic scheme that would help students understand Virginia Tech's historical exclusion of certain groups as a context for today's diversity issues. This could be a medium/long term goal. The seeds of this could be planted at orientation and then followed up with more significant programming throughout the academic year.

Edwin Larroy Rodriguez shared that part of the Cultural Centers' Strategic Plan includes working more closely with academics and other units across campus as well as creating a cultural competencies course. The proposal is for a 4000 level course that could be adapted for undergraduate and graduate students. Some concerns were raised about a class at that level for undergraduates.

Another recommendation was the development of a DVD and documentary video that outlines Virginia Tech's ongoing process to transform itself from an institution of exclusion to one of inclusion.

The question was raised whether this information had been shared with DROP Alliance and other students who presented their case before the commission. Ray responded that members should be sharing this information with their constituent groups and that when a determination is made and sent forward to the president, those students will be copied. Ben said that with the permission of the members, he would update the students on this discussion at a meeting with them later today.

A final edit to the recommendations was to explore, rather than establish, a diversity learning community. Members were also reminded that graduate students are another group that is not really addressed in these recommendations.

Ray will send a revised document with the hopes that next week this can be finalized and he can forward the commission recommendations to the President by February 1.

B. University Council Realignment

There was considerable conversation on the proposed realignment of University Council. Hayward Farrar indicated that this does not send a good message and since the upper administration is still primarily white males, the seats elected by the Black Organizations Council and the Black Caucus should remain and if needed, more seats should be added for the other communities. Eliminating the existing seats reduces the clout and power of the Black community.

The question was raised as to why the proposal was made. Pat Hyer indicated that the language in the constitution of University Council needed to be changed and the committee felt that since diversity is more than black and white those seats be elected more broadly. The committee also felt that the Commission on Student Affairs and the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity are the vehicles to introduce policy to University Council and are both very diverse groups.

Marilyn Kershaw articulated the response of the Black Caucus. They do not want to lose their seat and are also concerned because historically African Americans have been discriminated against more than any other group. There was an additional concern over the removal of the Director of Equal Opportunity.

Ben Dixon proposed a compromise to increase University Council by two and give the Commission four seats to deal with on a two-year rotation. Ray asked that members think about the options so that a decision can be made next week. A final recommendation was to have either all the seats elected by the respective communities or the commission but not a mixture of the two.

IV. New Business

A. VT Principles of Community

Ray asked that members share some of the table conversations about the VT Principles of Diversity from the Diversity Summit. Some of the issues raised were:

- ❖ How to move from words to action

- ❖ How to measure it
- ❖ How will people be held accountable
- ❖ Concern over the use of the term “confront”
- ❖ Treat it like the Honor Code
- ❖ Change to “I” statements and have people sign it like a pledge
- ❖ Put it on the VT Directory
- ❖ Too long
- ❖ Include it on syllabi

B. Tsunami Response

Invitations to the Hokies United Silent Parade of Flags and Brief Ceremony were distributed. This event will remember and honor the victims of the tragic tsunami in Asia this Friday, January 28. The parade of flags will begin at noon at Squires and move to Burruss Auditorium for a brief ceremony.

VI. Next Meeting

The next meeting is Monday, January 31 at 10:00 a.m. in Conference Room C, Donaldson Brown. 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, January 31, 2005**

Minutes

Present: Ray Plaza, Pat Hyer, Marilyn Kershaw, Hayward Farrar, Susanna Rinehart, Cynthia Bonner, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Jean Brickey, Susan Willis-Walton, Michael Goode, Kim Beisecker, David Travis, Jon Wooge, Edwin Larroy Rodriquez, LaChelle Waller, Monika Gibson, Mary Madis, Valerie Hardcastle, Linda Woodard, Susan Anderson, Craig Brians

Absent: Darleen Baker, Jeff Mann, Hassan Aref, Muhammad Chughtai, Sam Cook, Brandon Smith, Devi Gnyawali, Maxine Lyons, Leon Geyer, Ruth Grene

Guests: Mary Grace Campos, Jennie Reilly, Ellen Plummer

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented. Jennie Reilly introduced Craig Brians who will be taking Lois Berg's position on the commission.

II. Chair Report

Ray Plaza began by thanking those who helped with the flag ceremony on Friday. Na'im Akbar, the keynote speaker for Black History Month, will be speaking this Thursday, February 3. So far 96 people have filled out evaluations of the Diversity Summit. The evaluation will be extended for one more week and then the results will be summarized and shared. Dr. McNamee reported on the progress of the Charter University Initiative in a meeting this morning. A three-tier process is being developed so that all institutions could go through the steps to receive more autonomy. It appears that about 80% of the proposal is being adopted with institutions remaining state agencies. Staff will still be part of the VRS system and they are encouraging boards to work on six-year tuition cycles.

III. Old Business

A. Recommendations on Dealing with the Lee Hall Name/Situation

Ray shared some of the changes in the revised document, including the addition of areas involved related to each action item. Additionally, after speaking with Student Programs, it was decided that it be important to share the history of all residence halls and how they received their names as well as the creation of a broad programming body. Student Programs also responded that New Residence Hall East would not be a good location for a learning community.

Cynthia Bonner talked about the importance of involving residents of Lee Hall and/or the Hall Council in some discussions. She has heard that there are some feelings of guilt/anxiety expressed by some of the residents. She suggested that could be added to action item #1 in the short term.

Ray then asked for any changes in the action items listed under short term. Pat Hyer recommended removing the VT Police from the areas involved for action item #4. While the police might be needed to assist with security of the display, it was felt they didn't need to be listed there. She also raised the question of having the commission listed under area involved for each item. It was determined that CEOD should be removed and be referenced as having the role of oversight of the action items in the cover document.

For the medium term, there was discussion around action #4 with the recommendation to change the language to say develop and disseminate a set of resources that could be used by faculty to discuss diversity issues at Virginia Tech. Additional conversation focused on items #1 and #2. The word

annually was added to both items to indicate these would not be one-time actions. Jean Brickey questioned whether education should be on how each building on campus was named and not just the residence halls. While many agreed on the merit of the idea, it was not viewed as a priority at this time. Ben Dixon reminded members of the need to make a strong connection to living on campus and living in community, reinforcing the education of the naming of the residence halls and not necessarily other buildings on campus.

Jennie Reilly asked about updating the Diversity Awareness Workshop to include the VT Principles of Community. Ben responded that updating the workshop will be part of an education and training initiative next year. A new position has been created and will work closely with the Office for Equal Opportunity in developing a comprehensive education and training program.

Kim Beisecker questioned what the response would be to students who refuse to live in Lee Hall. Ray indicated that Student Programs has a policy for dealing with cases like that, so there is no need to create anything new or different.

Finally, Marilyn Kershaw asked about the time frame for the honorary degree for Irving Peddrew. Ben responded that informal conversations have taken place since the initial recommendation in 1997 but having it part of these recommendations might move it forward in a more formal way. He also said it would likely take at least six months to go through the necessary process.

In the area of long term, considerable discussion focused on action item #1, the university mandated diversity course for all students. Valerie Hardcastle voiced concern over mandating courses. She indicated that faculty would not accept this and that it would be problematic for a number of reasons, including the fact that there are no other courses required of all students. In theory, many members support this item, but in practice, most feel it is not feasible. In response, Kim suggested an on-line module that could be required of all new students, similar to one being done for alcohol education. There was concern with the lack of conversation and discussion with an on-line course. Ben suggested that an on-line course/module could be combined with face-to-face opportunities for students to engage in conversations.

Valerie pointed out that a number of courses already exist that deal with issues of diversity and that a better approach might be to have colleges/departments demonstrate that there is a diversity component in each major/minor. Additionally, members spoke of the fact that employers want to see hard evidence that students have “learned” about diversity and that it needs to be embedded in all activities, not just in the classroom. In that regard, Monika suggested an exercise similar to the group that worked on internationalizing the campus. In response, Pat recommended the action item be changed to read, establish a task force, led by faculty, with a charge to develop and propose a variety of workable options to dramatically increase student multicultural competence through new or revised courses, certificate programs, or other methods that will fully integrate diversity issues in the curriculum.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the recommendations as revised. The motion carried. Individuals will be able to share this document with constituent groups once the president receives his copy. Members were reminded that this is not final, the president can modify or enhance the proposal.

B. University Council Realignment

Ray shared the four options to be considered:

Option #A: CEOD would get four seats: two for faculty/staff and two for students. CEOD would rotate these on a two-year cycle among the different constituent groups.

Option #B: CEOD would support the current University Council seats remaining with the Black Caucus and BOC using the appropriate language to ensure that they are in compliance with the legal standard.

In addition, CEOD would still get one seat for faculty/staff and one for students that CEOD could rotate on a yearly basis. *(This would increase UC membership by two seats)*

Option #C: CEOD recommends that all constituent groups be afforded seats on University Council.

Option #D: CEOD would assume the role over the former seats for the Black Caucus and BOC, and determine an election process based on a rotation of the different constituent groups.

Hayward Farrar voiced his concern over the importance of all constituent groups having seats on the council. He suggested it be better to have an unwieldy council that is inclusive to one that is efficient but exclusive. Considerable discussion ensued on both sides of the issue. Ben reminded members of the struggle when dealing with issues of equity and equal treatment. One of the benefits of the commission is the ability to represent constituencies to move issues and policies forward to the university. Individual seats on university council will not give those groups a sense of empowerment or lead to the same kinds of rich discussions that occur through the CEOD.

Hayward added that the presence of diverse people changes the dynamics and by adding these seats would change the chemistry of the council. Valerie commented that since some of the smaller groups might have difficulty filling seats since they are already spread thin, they could choose to join forces with other smaller groups and have one seat representing multiple communities.

Pat reminded members of the concern with changing the numbers of faculty, staff, students, and administrators on the council. The most frequent business of the council is academic issues with very few controversial issues. With that in mind, there is sensitivity to having greater numbers of faculty members given that the academic and faculty employment matters make up the majority of the business. Rarely do members vote along racial/ethnic lines.

Ray suggested an informal poll to narrow the options down to two before a formal vote. Options B and C were supported by the majority of members. A motion was made and seconded to recommend Option C. The motion failed. A second motion was made and seconded to recommend Option B. The motion passed.

The second issue in the University Council realignment is the elimination of the EO director position. The history behind the position is that it was added in the 1990s to give the council more diversity but that with the vice president for multicultural affairs, chair of the CEOD, and other seats, there is no longer the need for that representation. A question was raised about the message it sends to remove that position. Many argued that the function of the office and what it represents are significant enough to have a seat. Additionally, given the issues of the council around faculty hiring, many felt the need to have the director there. Finally, Linda added that it gives prominence to the position and a visible role that is really needed at this time. A motion was made and seconded to retain the director of equal opportunity position on University Council. The motion passed. Ray will forward these responses to Sam Easterling. The task force will then submit a proposal to the president and in order to change the constitution, it will need to be passed by both the faculty and staff senates.

C. VT Principles of Community

Pat shared the most revised version of the principles. Given the considerable number of people who were uncomfortable with the word “confront” it was removed. Additionally, the decision was made to keep the EO statement which matches our non-discrimination statement to have the board endorse it. Discussion then revolved around the third paragraph and how to change some of the wording. LaChelle informed members that the GSA had considerable discussion at their meeting last week and have a subgroup meeting this week to further discuss the document. She will share with them the revised version. A final recommendation by Valerie was to move the sixth paragraph up to the first paragraph and then have the principles follow. There was general consensus to adopt those changes and have Pat distribute a revised version. The plan remains to have the principles presented to the BOV in March.

VI. Next Meeting

Linda shared that the search for the Director of Equal Opportunity has been reopened. The next meeting is Monday, February 14 at 10:00 a.m. in Conference Room C, Donaldson Brown. Dr. Norrine Bailey Spencer will share student enrollment data at that meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

**Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, February 14, 2005**

Minutes

Present: Ray Plaza, Pat Hyer, Marilyn Kershaw, Shamiso Rowley (for Hayward Farrar), Susanna Rinehart, Cynthia Bonner, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Jean Brickey, Susan Willis-Walton, Michael Goode, Kim Beisecker, David Travis, Ross Edmonds (for Jon Wooge), Edwin Larroy Rodriguez, Monika Gibson, Mary Madis, Valerie Hardcastle, Linda Woodard, Susan Anderson, Devi Gnyawali, Maxine Lyons, Leon Geyer, Ruth Grene, Craig Brians, Patcharee Phongsvirajati

Absent: LaChelle Waller, Darleen Baker, Jeff Mann, Hassan Aref, Sam Cook, Brandon Smith

Guests: Mary Grace Campos, Jennie Reilly, Norrine Bailey Spencer, Karen DePauw

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented. Ray informed members that Hayward Farrar had double by-pass surgery last week and is now at home recuperating. He will be off for the remainder of the semester and Shamiso Rowley will be serving in his absence. Ruth Grene was introduced as Edd Sewell's replacement, Ross Edmonds was introduced as a substitute for Jon Wooge, and Patcharee Phongsvirajati was introduced as the new representative from the Council of International Student Organizations.

II. Chair Report

- A. Recommendations on Dealing with the Lee Hall Name/Situation** – the report and recommendations were forwarded to the President. Ray has not received any feedback.
- B. University Council Realignment** – Ray sent Sam Easterling the commission's recommendations on the realignment and these were incorporated into the report they presented to the President. Those recommendations included maintaining the seats for the Black Caucus and Black Organizations Council and having one faculty/staff and one student at-large position elected by the commission as well as maintaining the position for the Director of Equal Opportunity.
- C. VT Principles of Community** – the most recent version was distributed. The line for the signature of the President of the Alumni Association has been removed because they do not have adequate time to review the document before the board meeting in March. Their executive committee does not meet again until April. They have been encouraged to do something else in addition to endorsing the document after their April meeting. There will be a marketing plan once the document is signed. Details are still being discussed There will be a public ceremony at the BOV meeting on the afternoon of Monday, March 14. It will be a powerful resolution from the board which will recognize not only the Principles of Community but also the Diversity Matters paper, the standards of inclusive policies, programs, and practices, and both the PATH and Human Relations Council pledges.
- D. Task Force Updates** – a couple of copies of a summary of the evaluations from the Diversity Summit are being passed around. Most task forces haven't had a chance to meet given the full schedule of the commission.
- E. Other items** – Ray asked for a member to attend University Council in his place on Monday, February 21 as he will be at a conference. Kim Beisecker volunteered to attend.

III. Presentations: A Look at Undergraduate and Graduate Admission at Virginia Tech

- A. Dr. Norrine Bailey Spencer, Associate Provost and Director of Undergraduate Admissions**
Norrine began her presentation by passing out a handout with some of the initiatives taking place in the Admissions Office in the areas of policy and procedures, personnel, and programs and collaborations. One of the charges she was given when she accepted the position was to bring more

diversity through the freshman admissions process. Right now the office is reviewing 17,700 applications. When reviewing, they look at course selection, grades in courses, SAT scores, and then everything else (to include items like first generation college student, race, major, athlete, etc.). In addition, this year a second optional statement on diversity was included as part of the application. Norrine highlighted some of the items from the handout and shared some of the numbers. They will make 12,000 offers with the goal of a freshman class of 3,350 in state and 1,650 out of state students. Some of the challenges they face include the resignation of the sole African American Assistant Director and that fact that we meet about 70% of need but it is mostly in the form of loans. Norrine then answered a number of questions from commission members. There were some specific questions about University Studies and whether or not students are able to move from that program into specific majors with relative ease. No one knew whether or not that was an issue, so it will be investigated further. Norrine asked that if individuals have suggestions or recommendations to please pass them on to her.

B. Dr. Karen DePauw, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School

Karen began by sharing some of the fall 2003 data including number of master's students, doctoral students, graduate assistants, graduate teaching assistants, and graduate research assistants. She also provided some of the demographics of the graduate population. Female students have declined while male students have increased. Most of the graduate students are from Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware. They would like to see an increase of students from some of the other states. There is also a move by the university to increase the enrollment of PhD students by 900 by the year 2010. There are 49 new graduate assistant positions for PhD students next year to assist with this goal. They are also trying to bring back the ABD (all but dissertation) program and there have been more combined bachelor's/master's programs. A question was raised about how competitive Virginia Tech is with the stipends for graduate students. Karen responded that the stipend is not as much of an obstacle as health insurance has been. However, we have moved from 30% to 70% funding of health insurance premiums. Her goal is to get it to 100%.

Ben Dixon thanked both Norrine and Karen and commended them on their leadership in their respective areas which is helping to turn the university in the right direction. He encouraged members to be sure to share this information with their constituencies so that everyone is more informed.

IV. Announcements

Ben reminded members of the upcoming Mid-Atlantic Conference on the Scholarship of Diversity which is being held March 17-18 at the Hotel Roanoke. The keynote speaker is William Harvey, Vice President and Director of the Center for the Advancement of Racial and Ethnic Equity. Also speaking on Thursday is Megan Boler, a former faculty member at Virginia Tech. The closing address will be made by Nikki Giovanni. Kim Beisecker announced that there will be a Tsunami Relief Concert on Thursday, February 17 in Burruss Auditorium.

V. Next Meeting

The next commission meeting is February 28. Tom Brown will be present to discuss student orientation and Linda Woodard will share information on staff orientation. David Ford will attend a meeting in March to discuss faculty orientation since he is unavailable on February 28. The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, February 28, 2005

Minutes

Present: Ray Plaza, Pat Hyer, Shamiso Rowley (for Hayward Farrar), Susanna Rinehart, Cynthia Bonner, Laura Hickerson, Ben Dixon, Jean Brickey, Michael Goode, Ross Edmonds, Jon Wooge, Linda Woodard, Susan Anderson, Leon Geyer, Ruth Grene, Craig Brians, LaChelle Waller

Absent: Darlene Baker, Jeff Mann, Hassan Aref, Sam Cook, Brandon Smith, Marilyn Kershaw, Susan Willis-Walton, Kim Beisecker, David Travis, Edwin Larroy Rodriquez, Monika Gibson, Mary Madis, Valerie Hardcastle, Devy Gnyawali, Maxine Lyons, Patcharee Phonsvirajati

Guests: Mary Grace Campos, Ellen Plummer, Tom Brown

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented. Ray thanked everyone for coming out amid the weather. He noted that we couldn't cancel due to the nature of the agenda and the schedule.

II. Chair Report

Ray shared a copy of the editorials written by Provost McNamee. They appeared in The Collegiate Times on Wednesday, 2/23 and Thursday, 2/24. He also thanked Kim Beisecker for serving as his sub at the last University Council Meeting.

Ray also shared that the President is currently reviewing the Lee Hall recommendations. Due to meetings in Richmond, Dr. Steger hasn't had a chance to respond yet, but we hope to hear soon so that we can begin to implement the short-term recommendations.

III. Old Business: Latest Revision of the VT Principles of Community

Ray shared the latest revision to the VT Principles of Community. He highlighted that the main change has been the re-incorporation of the listing that includes "age, color, disability, gender..." He explained that this was originally in the document, removed, and then added back.

A motion to approve was made and seconded. In the discussion it was agreed that the official title would be "The Virginia Tech Principles of Community," rather than the abbreviated "VT." In addition, the usage of the quotation marks in the very last line that mentions Ut Prosim would be changed to be more in line with proper usage.

It was noted that the re-incorporation of the listing was a positive step, but it was unfortunate as to how it all came about. We need to learn from this experience. Additional conversations focused on the need for accountability. It was noted that the language used in the VT Principles is consistent with University policy. The hope is that having the VT Principles will help to encourage a dialogue on current and past issues. It was noted that the Commission is the gatekeeper and guardian of the VT Principles and it will play a critical role in its implementation.

Several members noted that the VT Principles could be used in training students and faculty could use it as a part of their class syllabi, similar to the statement on services with students with disabilities. Ben and Pat agreed to finalize the items for the Board meeting.

As the discussion concluded, a formal vote was taken. The revised and final draft of the "Virginia Tech Principles of Community" was unanimously adopted.

Part IV: IV. Discussion surrounding the Student and Staff Orientation Processes at Virginia Tech

A: Student Orientation

Tom Brown, Director of Student Life, shared that the timing for this discussion is ideal since they are looking at doing something different due to the dated nature of the current “VT Video.”

~~Tom. He provided shared~~ a historical overview. In the early 90’s, the topic of diversity was handled through a talk-show format like Oprah. This eventually evolved into a video presentation called “Community of Conscience.” By the mid’90’s, this video had become too dated, and skits were developed entitled “Once upon a Community.” These skits then led to the development of the “VT Video” which was based on the then popular VH1 show called “Pop-up Video.” The video consisted of student testimonials and facts about VT would “pop-up.” The video not only addressed diversity, it also tackled sexual assault and alcohol.

At this point, Orientation wants to do something different and are looking for university feedback at an open forum scheduled for March 24.

They are currently investigating what other schools are doing and most schools similar to Virginia Tech are doing more of the skit approach. It was also noted that UVA has a program called “Different Voices, Common Threads,” which consists of a brief introduction of the history of the campus and focus on specific items. It leads into live testimonials from students, faculty and staff. VT has requested a copy of this program. It has been noted to be very powerful at UVA.

Tom passed out a handout to the members. He added that it has become increasing more difficult to get students to open-up and talk about diversity, but with this new format, alcohol and sexual assault will have their own sessions during orientation be dealt with separately, allowing more time to focus on diversity issues. This allows for more time to concentrate on the issues.

The floor was then open for discussion. A number of items were addressed including the need for the continuation of the small group discussions, the need to probe deeper with our discussions about diversity, and the need for actual stories and testimonials.

One member asked why we share bad things. Pat responded that we need to portray the true picture of what happens at Virginia Tech to remain credible with various audiences. Shamiso agreed and commented on the importance of honesty. It was suggested that it would be powerful for students to hear stories of students who may have had a negative experience but would not change their decision of coming to Virginia Tech. Mary Grace asked how the VT Principles of Community could be incorporated. She suggested that if they go with testimonials that they follow them with the respective bolded statements of the principles.

Shamiso asked if the terms of prejudice, discrimination are defined? And if so, how do we define them? She mentioned ‘Are you a ...ist? It is important that we breakdown the terms. Tom noted they had never deliberately broken down the terms as a whole group. He really liked the ‘Are you a ...ist?’ Ross indicated you could also ask, “Did you ever make fun of someone?” “Have you ever done this?” Others added, “Did you tease someone?” “Why did you do this?”

Pat offered another way to talk about “isms”. Pat shared information concerning Virginia Valian, author of Why So Slow? describes gender schemas in which both men and women perpetuate the stereotypes utilize about themselves. For example, both men and women evaluate vitas with the name of a woman as less qualified than the identical vita with a male name. She mentioned this as an example of

~~what happens with diversity. The information is from the book entitled “Why So Slow”. The author is based out of Hunter College.~~

Tom asked that if there were other groups that we need to involve to please let him know. He also asked that the group look at the last page of the packet and consider answering those questions by the end of March.

Leon made the point that we need to better collaborate with the ~~f~~Faculty in order to make sure that the discussion is ~~more~~ ongoing rather than just at ~~o~~Orientation. Tom liked the idea of how the staff and faculty are used in the UVA program. He also mentioned that he is working with Kim Beisecker to ensure that the program meets the needs of the International students.

Tom concluded by sharing that they are on a rather tight timeframe. The hope would be to convene a working group in April and May to develop the project, have it tested, and then train the Orientation Leaders in mid-June.

Tom also passed out flyers for the first-ever Campus Climate Check-up that will be held on Monday, March 28th from 6 – 7:30pm in the Donaldson Brown Dining Room. Pat noted that we need to make sure that we incorporate the VT Principles of Community in this effort.

B. Staff Orientation

Linda Woodard, Assistant Vice-President for Personnel Services, shared information about the staff orientation program. Currently, it is primarily a program that highlights the benefits package. They are looking at ways to incorporate other topics. She passed out several examples of the packet that new employees receive at orientation.

She noted that there is a different orientation for off-campus sites. Her office provides the information then does a lot of phone consultations to answer questions. They do not travel from site to site doing the orientation.

Nine months ago they started to look at expanding the efforts for the staff. Any expansion would need to incorporate lunch, greatly increasing the cost and complicating the logistics. Typically, they try to capture new employees within their first week on the job. Each week, they hold separate sessions for faculty and staff due to the differences in the packages.

In regards to Staff Orientation, they are looking at incorporating three modules that would be between 20 – 30 minutes each. The first module would be one designed by Environmental Health and Safety, the second would be designed by Instructional Technology, and the third would be called “University Citizenship.” This module could address issues of respect/civility, the VT Principles of Community, harassment policies, and other related items.

One of the dilemmas faced with the third module is that new employees would be trained and sent to offices where their supervisors and other co-workers might not be trained. Linda noted that other things would be needed in place to help the rest of the community. Another challenge is that it would not be ideal to have an all-day program. Typically, after a day of benefits, it is hard for most to keep their focus. Initial desire would be to pilot something and then alter accordingly.

She noted that the biggest obstacle would be finding individuals willing to work on the third module. Her staff is not geared toward this area. Linda is looking at the development of a small working group that could consist of Multicultural Fellows, CEOD members, and representatives from the Office for Equal Opportunity, Provost’s Office, and the Women’s Center. This group could create a meaningful module.

Linda also noted that a change to the process would impact the off-campus sites, as it would be a challenge for them to access the modules. It is possible that we could use more web-based information. Linda noted that her area is looking at different presentation software for distance learning possibilities to reach these areas.

Leon noted that we need longer term training efforts. Linda suggested some of the orientation could be done via the vice president and college areas which could allow for more frequent training beyond the first week. Unfortunately, Personnel is not at a point where they can logistically plan and schedule all of this. Pat noted that ~~her struggle was with the frequency it would be difficult to staff frequent college-based training initiatives with current personnel.~~ However, ~~t~~The administration is ~~moving~~ expanding employee training and leadership development on several fronts through the Provost's office, Equal Opportunity and Multicultural Affairs, ~~so orientation programs will.~~ ~~These efforts are~~ not standing alone. She noted that CEUT ~~is finally discussing~~ addresses diversity issues important to these issues through pedagogy, ~~and it has been about ten years in the making.~~ Ellen indicated that we cannot forget graduate students, postdocs, and wage employees. It was noted that Dr. DePauw has been spearheading efforts for the graduate students.

Ross mentioned the possibility of a mentoring program. This would train the trainers to help new employees. Linda mentioned that adding more time to ~~Staff~~ staff orientation would help in providing a better overview of different resources that are available. Currently, her office has developed a draft of a brochure that highlights where employees can go if they need assistance. Pat noted efforts made in Extension in which new employees have a ~~transition~~ job orientation -plan in which they ~~potentially must complete a number of check-off~~ different learning tasks. ~~It is like a self-orientation.~~ Maybe such a program could be done, and then each college could hold a program each semester.

Jean noted that it could be a component of their job. She highlighted the fact that classified staff work for the first few months on job probation. It could be a component of getting off job probation. Pat liked that possibility to structuring some sort of effort. Linda indicated that she would check into the extension process. She indicated that she is in the process of hiring to help with this effort.

IV. Announcements

Ray reminded everyone about the Al Sharpton speech on Wednesday, March 2nd. He noted that tickets could be picked up from the UUSA Ticket Booth in Squires.

Ellen made mention of supporting Women's History Month, and Susan shared that Take Back the Night is scheduled for Thursday, March 31st.

V. Next Meeting

The next commission meeting is March 21st. Dr. Ford will be in attendance to discuss faculty orientation, and we will also look at the implementation of the VT Principles of Community.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ray Plaza, Chair, Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, March 21, 2005

Minutes

Present: Ray Plaza, Pat Hyer, Susanna Rinehart, LaChelle Waller, Ben Dixon, Jean Brickey, Susan Willis-Walton, Michael Goode, David Travis, Ross Edmonds, Monika Gibson, Mary Madis, Valerie Hardcastle, Linda Woodard, Susan Anderson, Devi Gnyawali, Maxine Lyons, Ruth Grene, Craig Brians, Jon Wooge

Absent: Cynthia Bonner, Laura Hickerson, Leon Geyer, Marilyn Kershaw, Shamiso Rowley (for Hayward Farrar), Darleen Baker, Jeff Mann, Hassan Aref, Sam Cook, Edwin Larroy Rodriquez, Patcharee Phongsvirajati, Kim Beisecker, Brandon Smith

Guests: Mary Grace Campos, Jennie Reilly, David Ford, Fain Rutherford

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

II. Chair Report

- A. University Council Realignment**– the report and recommendations sent to the president were accepted and it has passed the faculty and staff senates. The first reading at University Council will be on April 4, 2005.
- B. Recommendations on Dealing with the Lee Hall Name/Situation** – there is a draft of a response from the President which should be finalized and sent to Ray shortly.
- C. Virginia Tech Principles of Community** – the principles were signed last Monday at the BOV meeting.
- D. Position Vacancies** – there are two at-large positions that will be available for fall 2005. A committee of at least three commission members will need to be formed to review the applications and send forward four names to the President’s Office by April 15. Michael Goode volunteered to serve as did Pat Hyer. There are four positions that will need to be filled by the following constituent groups/offices: ADA Coordinator, Cranwell International Center, American Indian Studies, and the Women’s Center.
- E. Commission Chair** – a new commission chair for 2005-06 will also need to be elected before April 15. Interested individuals should talk with Ray for more information.

III. Faculty Orientation Processes at Virginia Tech

Dr. David Ford, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, shared information on the two major programs initiated by the Provost’s Office. The first program is a half-day session on the Friday before classes start in the fall. This leaves the afternoon open for colleges and departments to do more specific orientation/meetings with new faculty. The purpose is to create identity with as many areas as possible. They used to follow-up with monthly lunches but they got to the point where they were not well attended, so they were cut during budget reductions. They have been replaced with a spring program where a book is used as a focus for discussion. Typically they have 1/4 -1/3 of the new faculty attend this (25-30). One other program that was discontinued with budget reductions was the Commonwealth Connection, a four-day bus trip that took individuals around the state to various centers, etc. It was a costly program at \$17,000. Both Devi and Craig discussed the benefits of the program despite its cost. These included meeting other faculty and staff from around the university and developing a great understanding of the scope and breadth of Virginia Tech across the state.

The question arose as to how to help faculty come to grips with the issues of diversity. It was suggested that workshops like the diversity awareness one should be strongly recommended. While workshops may address some issues, Valerie shared the need to have a departmental climate that encourages participation in workshops. There was also concern over the issue of time. One member suggested that there be more detailed programs throughout the semester. Pat suggested that some of these issues are better dealt with at the departmental or college level. The College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences has a significant orientation program. However, there was not a good sense of what other colleges are doing.

There was some consensus to the value of doing the more substantive orientation after the first year here. A number of members voiced their opinions over the need to have session be mandatory. Susanna suggested if they aren't, those who elect to participate are often not the ones who need to. Another member commented on the importance of community building and the need to have a variety of venues throughout the year and give individuals some choices.

Michael stressed the importance of policy and practice and the need to do things all year round. He also suggested that it would be helpful to have opportunities for students to talk with faculty about issues. It was also recommended that this be part of the Faculty Activity Report. Diversity has been introduced as part of the Promotion and Tenure process this year, so we will be able to see what people are doing on that topic.

Ben shared the importance of leadership on this issue and the role that department heads and diversity committees can play. There is a diversity leadership mini retreat on April 22 that will cover many of these issues.

IV. New Business

Policy 1025 Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Prevention

David Travis introduced policy 1025 which has been a work in progress for awhile. The hope is to get it passed by the commission and then on to university council and ready for the BOV meeting in August. Ben asked how close the policy resembles other universities' policies. David shared that they looked at peer institutions and the majority have revised their policies.

Valerie voiced concerns over graduate students being treated as faculty but not necessarily having the same support as faculty. Considerable discussion followed on the issue of graduate students. Ray concluded the discussion by asking members to submit specific suggestions for changing the language in the policy to David by Wednesday. This will then be on the agenda for voting at the next meeting.

V. Old Business

Virginia Tech Principles of Community

Ben shared that there will be framed copies for the Vice President and Vice Provost offices. Additionally, department heads can request framed copies of the document and there will be tent cards in the dining halls. There has been a recommendation to have a framed copy in every instructional area. There will be postcards printed with the document on one side – these can be mailed out or distributed. There will also be a series of discussions about the principles and the foundation upon which they were formed. Faculty will be encouraged to discuss them as part of the introduction to their courses and have it referenced in their syllabi like the honor code.

VI. Announcements

Graduate Education Week is this week. Linda shared that one of the candidates for the Director of Equal Opportunity will be on campus April 6-7. The Mid-Atlantic Conference on Diversity last week

was successful with 130 registrants. March 31st at 6:30 p.m. is Take Back the Night. Please encourage everyone to attend, it is not an event only for women.

VII. Next Meeting

The next commission meeting is March 28. The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

**Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, March 28, 2005**

Minutes

Present: Ray Plaza, Pat Hyer, Susanna Rinehart, Ben Dixon, Jean Brickey, Susan Willis-Walton, Michael Goode, David Travis, Ross Edmonds, Monika Gibson, Susan Anderson, Maxine Lyons, Ruth Grene, Craig Brians, Jon Wooge, Leon Geyer, Marilyn Kershaw, Laura Hickerson, Cynthia Bonner, Kim Beisecker

Absent: Shamiso Rowley (for Hayward Farrar), Darleen Baker, Jeff Mann, Hassan Aref, Sam Cook, Edwin Larroy Rodriguez, Patcharee Phongsvirajati, Brandon Smith, LaChelle Waller, Valerie Hardcastle, Devi Gnyawali, Linda Woodard, Mary Madis

Guests: Mary Grace Campos, Fain Rutherford, Bob Youngs, Matt Gart, John Muffo, Laura Clark, Ellen Plummer

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

II. Chair Report

Ray reminded members that the Campus Climate Check-Up is scheduled for today, March 28 at 6:00 p.m. and will feature updates from various people across campus. Last Thursday was the open forum for orientation. There were 18-20 people there who reviewed the video and discussed how to best engage new students around diversity issues. One recommendation made was to extend the activities to the fall during Hokie Hi week prior to the start of classes. Ray will be out of town for the next University Council meeting on April 4. Marilyn Kershaw volunteered to attend in his place. There is still a need for a few more volunteers to serve on the committee to review the at-large applications.

Finally, Ray introduced Dr. Bob Youngs from the Rotary Club who wished to address the issue of the Peace Garden Sculpture. He provided some background information and stressed that the Rotary's intention was to promote international peace and understanding. They are now considering putting the sculpture in a park in Christiansburg. There was considerable conversation around the issue of public art. The university will be combining the Visual Arts and the Art in Public Places Committees. A recommendation was made to request the opportunity to have some commission members be a part of this new committee. Maxine Lyons, Susanna Rinehart, Susan Willis-Walton, and Ruth Grene indicated interest in working on this topic. Kim Beisecker recognized the incredible contributions of Bob and Esther Youngs to the Peace Garden and explained the concerns international students had with regard to the sculpture. John Muffo also explained the international nature of the Rotary Club and his disappointment that they had not been contacted to present their side of the story prior to the commission voting to request the administration not allow the sculpture to be placed in the Peace Garden.

III. Old Business – Policy 1025 Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Prevention

David Travis shared that they received feedback from a number of different individuals and made some changes to the document shared last week. The changes were reviewed and included adding language for classified staff performing instructional and academic advising duties; including a representative from the Graduate School or Student Affairs for an appeal if the appellant respondent is a student; and notifying the major advisor and department head if the respondent is a student as well as suggesting that an accused student may wish to consult a faculty mentor in

responding to the complaint. There were still some concerns about graduate students being held to a higher standard without the privileges associated. Ben Dixon suggested that those concerns are part of a larger problem regarding the rights and responsibilities of graduate students and need to be dealt with separately from this policy. The motion was made and seconded to vote on this policy acknowledging that it will be reviewed by the Commission on Faculty Affairs on April 8 and should appear on the agenda for the April 18 meeting of University Council. The policy was approved with one abstention.

IV. Announcements

March 31st at 6:30 p.m. is Take Back the Night. The International Street Fair is Saturday, April 9 from 11:00 – 5:00 with additional events all week long. This week is Gay Awareness Week. Holocaust Awareness Week is April 11-15. There will be three candidates for the Director of Equal Opportunity on campus for interviews. The first candidate, Rebecca Woodrick, will present on Thursday, April 7 at 9:00 a.m. The second candidate, Janet Saunders, will present on Tuesday, April 12 at 9:00 a.m. The third candidate, Kevin McDonald, will present on Tuesday, April 26 at 9:00 a.m. All presentations will be in Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center. Ben Dixon shared that the Office of Multicultural Affairs is advertising two position, Director of Education and Training and Coordinator of Alumni and Community Relations. The Office for Equal Opportunity is advertising for a Web Designer.

VII. Next Meeting

The next commission meeting is April 11. There will be a preliminary report on the exit survey data at the meeting on April 25. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, April 11, 2005

Minutes

Present: Ray Plaza, Pat Hyer, Susanna Rinehart, Ben Dixon, Michael Goode, David Travis, Ross Edmonds, Monika Gibson, Susan Anderson, Maxine Lyons, Craig Brians, Edwin Larroy Rodriguez, Marilyn Kershaw, Laura Hickerson, Cynthia Bonner, Kim Beisecker, LaChelle Waller, Valerie Hardcastle, Devi Gnyawali, Linda Woodard

Absent: Shamiso Rowley (for Hayward Farrar), Darleen Baker, Jeff Mann, Hassan Aref, Sam Cook, Patcharee Phongsvirajati, Brandon Smith, Mary Madis, Jon Wooge, Leon Geyer, Jean Brickey, Ruth Grene, Susan Willis-Walton

Guests: Mary Grace Campos, Fain Rutherford, Ellen Plummer

I. Adoption of Agenda

The Virginia Tech Principles of Community were added under old business. The revised agenda was approved.

II. Chair Report

Ray thanked Marilyn Kershaw for attending University Council for him on April 4. He was at ACPA where he presented a session on the commission. The discussion about art on campus will likely not occur until summer with the individuals who indicated interest. Holocaust Awareness Week begins today and International Week continues through the week. There were over 12,000 people at the Street Fair on Saturday. The people who have volunteered to serve on the review committee for the at-large positions are Pat Hyer, Cynthia Bonner, Monika Gibson, and Michael Goode. There are 20 applicants which need to be narrowed down to four to be sent to the President. Ellen Plummer reported that the call for a women's representative went out this morning for people to apply. The international community is still working on identifying their new representative.

III. Old Business

A. Virginia Tech Principles of Community

Ben Dixon reported that there have been two occasions where the use of the principles has become obvious. In University Council there was a reference that they are not university policy. Ben has issued a memo to the President's office requesting clarification on whether or not they constitute policy even though there is no policy number designated to them. The items for the marketing campaign are still being developed. There will be framed versions that offices can order and it will also be posted on our website as a PDF file so if individuals want to just print that and frame it, they can do so. There will be postcards and bookmarks available for the various orientations and other events and programs. The resident advisors were all given pre-made bulletin boards about the principles with questions to use to guide discussions with residents.

B. Policy 1025 Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Prevention

David Travis provided an update on the policy that was passed at the last meeting. Some changes were made after meeting with the Commission on Faculty Affairs. Ray went through the document and highlighted the changes. A motion was made and seconded to proceed with the recommended changes. It was unanimously passed. The first reading at University Council should be on April 18.

IV. New Business – Constituent Reports

Reports were presented by the international community, individuals with disabilities community, Division of Student Affairs, Commission on Student Affairs, Graduate Student Assembly, Faculty Senate, Student Government Association, Commission on Faculty Affairs, Faculty Senate, Hispanic Caucus, Staff Senate, Provost's Office, Personnel Services, and Office for Equal Opportunity. The LGBT Caucus report will be presented on April 25. It was suggested that the EO office report annually to the commission on number of complaints, outcomes of searches, etc.

Some of the challenges and issues for the various communities include: decline in international students; need for training and understanding of the unique challenges of internationals in our community; recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and students; development of display and signage for Lee Hall; establishment of task force to propose and develop initiatives to increase student multicultural competence; VT website translation efforts; mentoring for Hispanic/Latino students; increasing the visibility of disability issues; perceptions by undergraduates that they are underserved as compared to graduate students; need for greater collaboration between undergraduate and graduate students; affects of the restructuring of higher education on the students who come to Virginia Tech; how undergraduate fit into the research mission; increased communication between students and administration; improving the image/perceptions of Virginia Tech; computer access for staff; how to incorporate the Virginia Tech Principles; and training and education of faculty, staff, and students.

Linda Woodard reported that they have speaker on campus today and tomorrow on bullying in the workplace. She also shared some of the leadership programs being offered for various individuals on campus. The exit survey will hopefully be ready for reporting on at the next meeting and they are working on developing a survey for current staff employees related to campus climate issues.

VII. Next Meeting and Announcements

The next commission meeting is April 25. Kim reminded members that there are international lunches from Tuesday-Friday at Cranwell International Center. Friday is the closing event with a parade of flags and talent show. Susan Anderson shared that 500 people attended the Take Back the Night Rally. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, April 25, 2005

Minutes

Present: Ray Plaza, Pat Hyer, Susanna Rinehart, Ben Dixon, Michael Goode, David Travis, Ross Edmonds, Monika Gibson, Susan Anderson, Maxine Lyons, Craig Brians, Edwin Larroy Rodriquez, Cynthia Bonner, Kim Beisecker, LaChelle Waller, Valerie Hardcastle, Linda Woodard, Shamiso Rowley (for Hayward Farrar), Susan Willis-Walton, Darleen Baker, Jeff Mann, Mary Madis

Absent: Devi Gnyawali, Marilyn Kershaw, Laura Hickerson, Hassan Aref, Sam Cook, Patcharee Phongsvirajati, Brandon Smith, Jon Wooge, Leon Geyer, Jean Brickey, Ruth Grene

Guests: Mary Grace Campos, Fain Rutherford, Ellen Plummer, Jennie Reilly

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

II. Chair Report

Ray shared that there was a diversity retreat last Friday with college diversity committee chairs and committee members along with others involved in diversity issues. Ben Dixon spoke at the retreat about the review of the diversity strategic plan which will need the support and assistance of the commission as well as the diversity committees. Dr. Farrar was honored at the Black Caucus dinner. The subcommittee reviewing the at-large applications forwarded four names to the President's office. Ray has heard that the Lee Hall recommendations have been endorsed by the President. More information should be available shortly on the implementation of those recommendations.

III. Old Business

A. Constituent Reports

Susanna Rinehart distributed a report from the LGBT Caucus which highlighted some of the significant challenges faced by this community beginning with the passage of HB 751 into law. The report also included achievements, challenges, and issues for the future. Some questions arose regarding partner benefits. Linda informed members that with the higher education restructuring, Virginia Tech has no control over the state's health insurance plan or retirement plan. There are other ways that the university can provide leadership, though, with things like providing gym passes for partners. The commission can play a role as an ally and supporter.

Susanna also provided a report from the Faculty Senate. They have developed a strong working relationship with the commission and enjoyed its first year of departmental representation. Some of the challenges and concerns for this group include salary equity, recruitment and retention of faculty, pressures created by the goal of "top 30," struggles with work/life issues, the need for a stronger sense of community among faculty members, and lack of clarity about expectations.

B. Policy 1025 Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Prevention

A question arose regarding why sex was switched to gender in the policy. Susanna presented information from Bernice Hausman regarding her concern about this shift. When she raised the issue at University Council, Kay Heidbreder shared that legally there isn't a distinction made between these terms. Pat informed members that the decision was made with the intent to be inclusive and to provide the most coverage. A motion was made and seconded to leave gender as

the term in the policy. It passed unanimously. A request was made to articulate the rationale for leaving gender in the policy as a response to Bernice's concern.

IV. New Business

A. How To Guide – VT Principles of Community

The discussion began with utilizing the principles in the classroom. There was considerable discussion about whether or not to have students sign and acknowledge acceptance of the principles. It was also suggested that faculty can stress the importance of adhering to the principles in class discussions. Another recommendation was to see the extent to which the principles had been achieved by incorporating relevant questions in the student assessment surveys done by John Muffo.

The second area was the workplace. Conversation focused on the need to bridge the education gap – to explain the VT Principles in depth. It was also suggested that faculty and staff could sign off on them like they have to sign off on the Business Conduct Standards. The principles should also be sent out with offer letters to new employees. Ben recommended creating an on-line, fifteen-minute presentation around the principles with clear expectations and consequences for violating them (those reside in various university policies that would need to be identified). People could sign off on them after completing this on-line component. Due to time, Ray suggested discussion on other areas will continue at the next meeting.

B. Procedure for At-Large Faculty/Staff and Student Seats on University Council

With the adoption of the new membership for University Council, the commission is responsible for election of two at-large positions – one for students and one for faculty/staff. Ray distributed a draft survey to use. Some changes were made to the survey. It will be available later this week with the deadline of May 6 so they can be voted on at the last meeting on May 9.

VII. Next Meeting and Announcements

The next commission meeting is May 9. A new chair and vice chair will be elected at that meeting. Ray reminded members that the last EO director candidate presentation is tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. Ben reported that Susan Anderson was given a special award last week as part of the Victory over Violence events. The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, May 9, 2005

Minutes

Present: Ray Plaza, Pat Hyer, Susanna Rinehart, Ben Dixon, Michael Goode, Laura Hickerson, David Travis, Ross Edmonds, Monika Gibson, Susan Anderson, Maxine Lyons, Craig Brians, Cynthia Bonner, Kim Beisecker, Annette Booker (for LaChelle Waller), Shamiso Rowley (for Hayward Farrar), Susan Willis-Walton, Jon Wooge, Leon Geyer, Jean Brickey, Darleen Baker, Devi Gnyawali, Mary Madis

Absent: Jeff Mann, Edwin Larroy Rodriguez, Marilyn Kershaw, Hassan Aref, Sam Cook, Patcharee Phongsvirajati, Brandon Smith, Ruth Grene, Linda Woodard, Valerie Hardcastle

Guests: Mary Grace Campos, Ellen Plummer, Jennie Reilly

I. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

II. Chair Report

Ray informed commission members that Policy 1025 passed University Council. He then asked for nominations for chair. Ray was nominated and accepted. A question was raised regarding Ray's status at the university. If he remains employed in a full time position, he can serve as chair. If he chooses to be a full time student, he can still serve his position as representative from the Hispanic Caucus but would not be able to serve as chair. If he is no longer at Virginia Tech, a new chair can be elected at the first meeting in the fall. Four names were forwarded to President Steger to select for the two CEOD at-large seats. The president selected Sam Camden and Gresilda Tilley-Lubbs. The commission now needs to elect two at-large representatives for University Council. One seat is for a student and the other for a faculty or staff member. There were three applicants for each seat. Members will be forwarded the application information and will need to let Alicia know their selections for each position. These are one-year terms and it was determined that they should be encouraged to attend and participate in CEOD meetings.

III. Old Business

How to Guide – VT Principles of Community

Ray shared a revised guide of this working document. He envisions that when it is complete, it would be available on the website so people can get ideas on how to implement the principles and respond on things they are doing. Discussion began with how to use the principles with student organizations. Michael Goode said some student recommendations included having a University Student Leadership Award tied to the principles, sharing copies with all student organizations, providing training for students, and encouraging organizations to adopt them in their constitutions. Kim Beisecker shared what the leadership team in student affairs discussed regarding the principles. There was some concern over mandating anything for registered student organizations given their loose relationship with the university. They did recommend having some type of modular training that would be easy to use and possibly tied to some incentive. It will be part of the Summer Leadership Employment Program.

Another member recommended having an information table on the VT Principles at the Student Organizations Showcase. Additionally, Susan Anderson suggested somehow having there be a tie in with Student Budget Board so that if student organizations are getting funds from the

university, then we can require them to do something related to the Principles. Ben suggested that we should consider rewarding what student organizations do with respect to the VT Principles. Conversation moved back to the faculty and classroom with a reminder that if the principles are posted in the classroom, they need to be checked on a regular basis for maintenance/upkeep. Additional questions arose about faculty training. Shamiso suggested that have diversity to a main workshop as part of FDI and incorporate the VT Principles in that. Ben commented that work is being done on a faculty professional development program that could include the principles.

Monika stressed the importance of people living by the principles and modeling them in their every day lives. A question was raised regarding how the guide will be used. Ray responded that once it is more fully developed, it will be distributed to diversity committees, deans, and vice presidents. It was suggested that examples be included on how administrative units and department heads can incorporate the principles as part of their routine operations. Additionally, items that are considered as minimum should be noted. Ellen recommended that a small group convene to try to add introductory statements for each section and edit the document further so that it can be reviewed and finalized at the start of fall. Kim Beisecker and Jean Brickey agreed to work on that project with Ellen.

IV. New Business

Preliminary Overview of Exit Survey Data

Susan Willis-Walton provided an overview of the data that has been collected from exit surveys of individuals who have left the university. There were 308 completed surveys returned with a response rate of 42% for faculty and 48% for staff. The next wave of surveys are coming in now and that data will be compared, where appropriate, with this data and also with some of the information gathered from the ADVANCE grant survey. When the report is completed, it will be posted on the website and they expect to do presentations for groups like Faculty and Staff Senates as well as the Commissions on Staff Affairs and Faculty Affairs.

VII. Announcements

Ray presented outgoing commission members with certificates and thanked everyone for their participation. Ben thanked Ray for his leadership and stressed the important role of the commission at the university and commended members for the high quality of work completed. The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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