Council on Diversity and Inclusion

Meeting Agenda

September 9, 2013

Members present: Jennifer Brooks, Mark Levandoski, Mark Watts, Deanna Shorb, Karen Edwards, Henry Morisada Rietz, Sarah Farbman, Poonam Arora, Thomas Neil, Narren Brown, Clare Mao, Jayn Chaney Karla Erickson

Guests present: Nilob Nahib, Lucy Chang, Marlene Jacks

Meeting called to order at 4:15. Members and guests introduced themselves.

Minutes were approved by unanimous consent. The chair explained that it is the practice of this Council to take rather full notes of the meetings. However, comments are typically not attributed to individuals unless speaking from their office or position.

Composition and Charge of the Council

The Council reviewed the Council's composition and a draft of the President's updated charge. Rietz explained that the composition reflects the College's shared governance with representatives from SGA, Staff Council and the Faculty. The Council also includes representatives from offices, committees and functions across campus that deal with diversity and inclusion. This year the President added a representative from the Office of Development and Alumni Relations in response to the Council's recommendation last year.

The draft of the President's updated charge continues to stress the Council making "strategic recommendations" and "monitor[ing]" and focuses us on "envisioning the value of diversity as a cross cutting theme." The chair explained that the President's intention is to strengthen this Council.

Report on follow-up of the Restructuring of ITS

Following the Council's May meeting, the faculty members of the Council on Diversity and Inclusion met with the President in May to share our findings in the wake of the restructuring of ITS. They:

1) emphasized that the College needs to model social justice as an essential part of realizing its educational mission;

2) requested that the College articulate best practices in the Staff Handbook in ways that are consistent with our values when a restructuring occurs (e.g., offering other employment opportunities at the College);

3) requested that the administration work with the Accessibility Committee to provide students with assistive technology services;

4) requested that the College articulate best practices when a restructuring takes place to ensure that students are not adversely affected;

5) requested that the College make demonstrable efforts to improve staff morale.

The chairs followed-up with the President again in August.

A representative from the Accessibility Committee reported that a committee is being formed to look into assistive technology. However, the convener has been out and may not be back for a while. This committee will look at the topic and will report to the Council later in the year. It was reported that Angie Story has been very helpful to at least one student in this transition period but could not speak for others.

Job description for the Director of Intercultural Engagement and Leadership
The Chief Diversity Officer shared a draft of the job description for the Director of Intercultural Engagement and Leadership and solicited feedback [Brown recused himself for this discussion]. Discussion ensued. Several additions to the job description were suggested, including "religious diversity," "linguistic diversity," and international diversity. Discussion included the vision that this position will work with others, but not take over the lead for some of these other aspects of diversity. Arora invited members to email her additional suggestions. We are setting a deadline for applications around October 10th to facilitate interviews beginning around the third week of October, and a decision by the end of December.

Review of College documents, policies and procedures regarding diversity
The chair shared a list links to College documents, policies and procedures regarding diversity. One of our goals this year is to begin to review these documents, bring them up to date and eliminate those that are out of date. We briefly discussed the problem that some links on the website are out of date.

Overview of major campus climate assessment instruments; announcing development of calendar to review results
Narren Brown provided an overview of the major campus climate assessment instruments, which are either being done or are planned. These include:

HERI: proposed for this year;
Survey of the faculty who left Grinnell College;
Staff: generate in –house instrument building on 2008 Staff Survey

He is working to develop a calendar which will list when we will receive data from instruments to discuss be able to discuss the results. We hope this will become an annual schedule of reviewing assessment data.

"Envisioning the Value of Diversity as a cross cutting theme in Grinnell's Liberal Arts Education for the 21st Century"
Rietz briefly reviewed the recent history of work on diversity and the plan developed last year to articulate the value of diversity in Grinnell's liberal education. The President is planning to continue the listening sessions for this fall. Two are currently being planned—one with alumni and the other with the Caucus for Staff and Faculty of Color. The Chief Diversity Officer will be soliciting people who are interested in participating in these listening sessions and will be scheduling them Each group will consist of 10-15 students will be selected on the basis of first come first serve.

Brief Reports and Announcements

PCPOP: Brown reported that several revisions to PCPOP were made this year in response to feedback received. He provided a draft report assessing this year's PCPOP and is working to incorporate other revisions.

Orientation of New Faculty: Arora reported on the orientation of new faculty. Diversity situations in the classrooms need to be discussed and alert faculty on the issues of intimacy**.**

Meskwaki initiative: Arora reported on working with the Meskwaki settlement to have a Posse retreat there. The Meskwaki Nation provides an example of self-governance.

School district initiative: Brown reported on an initiative with the school district to help connect college students with high school.

Meet and greet: Arora reported on the recent Posse meet and greet which we met with approval.

Title IX Symposium: Stephensen reported on the upcoming Title IX Symposium, September 17-20.

Development and Alumni Relations events: Chaney reported on upcoming Development and Alumni Relations events and projects, which include a dialogue between African American Alumni and current students. One of the dialogues will happen on the 11th - 12th October.

Center for the Humanities speaker: Rietz announced an upcoming Center for the Humanities speaker, Sara Hendren, who makes material and digital art works and writes about adaptive technologies and prosthetics, critical design, the medicalized and biopolitical body, and cultural representations of disability and health.

New Business: Thomas Neil raised a question about the possible intersections between retention, students of concern and interactions with local law enforcement. The sense was that this is a topic we should see what data we have and discuss at a future meeting.