

**Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity
Monday, November 16, 2009 – Graduate Life Center – Room B
Meeting Minutes**

Present: Kim Beisecker, Craig Brians, Jean Brickey, Ross Edmonds, Pat Hyer (represented by Ellen Plummer), Brad Klein, Meghan Kuhn, Maxine Lyons, Kevin McDonald, Michelle McLeese, Sue Ott Rowlands (represented by Fred Piercy), Ray Plaza, Guy Sims, Melissa Simpkins, Maggie Sloane, Jim Snyder (represented by Major Carrie Cox), Mikhelle Taylor

Absent: Virgilio Centeno, Paul Deyerle, Shivani Handa, Hal Irvin, Stevan Jackson, Aditya Johri, Anna LoMascolo (with notice), Bhanu Peddi, Daphne Rainey-Wittich, Chris Ramos, Keisha Riley (with notice), Christine Snider, Amy Sorenson, Elisa Sotelino, Ethan Wechtaluk, Dennis Welch, Ray Williams (with notice)

Guests: Karisa Moore, Susanna Rinehart

I. Call to Order

Guy Sims, Chair of CEOD, called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the November 2nd meeting were approved.

III. Transition of Vice President for Equity and Inclusion

Kevin announced that he has accepted a position as the Chief Diversity Officer at the Rochester Institute of Technology and will be leaving his current position as Vice President for Equity and Inclusion at the end of the year. Kevin introduced Karen Eley Sanders who will be service as the Interim Vice President for six months in 2010 while a national search is conducted.

Guy offered CEOD's support to Karen and appreciation was expressed to Kevin for his service to Virginia Tech.

IV. Policy 1025 – Maggie Sloane

Maggie offered follow up remarks on the resolution for revision to Policy 1025 in response to some concerns raised by the Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs and the Staff Senate. At its last meeting, CSPA voted to rescind support of the resolution for revisions because a requested revision to have the word "staff" included in Section 4: Responsibilities of Administrators, Supervisors, and Faculty was not included in the resolution being forwarded to University Council.

Because the Resolution has already been forwarded to University Council and many at the university are seeking to have the currently proposed revisions progress in a timely manner for vote, discussion was held as to possible ways to address the concerns raised by these groups while not impeding the progress of the current resolution.

Discussion was held on whether CSPA would consider proposing its own amendments at University Council. While CSPA did plan on discussing their viewpoint at University Council, there is concern that extensive discussion could cause further delays at University Council with respect to consideration of the currently proposed revisions.

Melissa indicated that CSPA's fundamental concern is that staff were not explicitly recognized as being in a supervisory role and that the word "others" did not adequately represent the role and significance of staff members. Ross expressed a desire to move forward on the current revisions and to also address the need to clarify the inclusion of staff in the policy at a later date. Kim suggested that the current resolution be considered at University Council along with a statement from CEOD that staff concerns will be addressed at a later time. Discussion was held on whether the proposed addition of the word "staff" could be detrimental to staff by making it more likely that staff members could be targeted in litigation. Maxine indicated that addressing the revisions to Policy 1025 as two separate issues in need of consideration would likely be agreeable to CSPA and Staff Senate.

Ross made a motion to address staff concerns with existing language in Policy 1025 in cooperation with the Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs in the Spring Semester of 2010. Michelle seconded the motion. The motion passed on voice vote.

V. Old Business

Guy reported that the resolution seeking the addition of an ex officio seat for the Dean of Students Office was passed by University Council and that a representative is being identified for future meetings.

Ross announced that the date for the Diversity Summit has been confirmed for Friday, January 29th from 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. in Squires Commonwealth Ballroom.

VI. New Business/Announcements

Perry introduced Ellen Plummer as beginning to serve a greater role with CEOD in the coming months by attending meetings for Pat Hyer as needed.

Guy indicated that discussions on being inclusive when recognizing holidays has been held within University Unions and Student Activities and students have been invited to develop holiday displays for a diversity of holidays within Squires. Information is being developed to be distributed to the university community on being considerate of the diversity of cultures and religions at the university during the coming weeks. It was noted that highlighting holidays in December is troubling to many students, staff, and faculty and that likewise many individuals on campus have a strong desire for expression of holidays near the end of the year. It was determined that it would be appropriate for CEOD to address the issue of recognition and representation of holidays at the university in order to help facilitate institutional approaches that are respectful of all cultures and religions. There was agreement that CEOD would address this issue during the Spring Semester meetings of 2010.

Ray announced that the Center for Academic Enrichment and Excellence, Office for Equity and Inclusion, and the Student Government Association have organized a student networking reception for Wednesday, November 18th from 3:00 p.m. - 4:45 p.m. at the Black Cultural Center in Squires.

Michelle announced the Commission on Student Affairs meeting on Thursday, November 19th and encouraged everyone to attend.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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