

Diversity Council  
March 13, 2008  
Minutes

Present: E. Abercrombie, D. Acosta, C. Berryman-Fink, L. Billionis, C. Collins, G. Dent, S. Downing, K. Faaborg, G. Hand, H. Kegler, M. Livingston, B. Marshall, R. Martin, M. McCrate, D. Meem, D. Merchant, C. Miller, L. Mortimer, N. Pinto, B. Rinto, K. Robbins, K. Simonson, M. Stagaman, G. Wharton

Absent: E. Akpinar, M. Hall, J. Heisey, A. Ingber, A. Leonard, M. Leventhal, E. Owens, J. Radley, M. Spencer

Chair Report

C. Berryman-Fink reported that at the last meeting the issue of religious observances was discussed. As there is no university policy on this matter, a communication was sent to faculty and a follow up to department heads from T. Perzigian and M. Livingston asking them to be sensitive to students' needs.

A proposal was presented to her and M. Livingston from T. Stopfel, C. Mack and S. Downing to organize a diversity conference next year as a way to share best practices on campus and in the community. The proposal indicates it would be a modest conference with local speakers; not on a national level and it could possibly become an annual event. S. Downing is hopeful that this conference will begin to change the culture on campus. The targeted audience is students, faculty and staff.

Chief Diversity Officer Report

M. Livingston shared his enthusiasm for the conference proposal and expressed his appreciation to those who brought the proposal forward and it is his hope that others will offer ideas to begin the culture change.

He reported the recent \$4 million gift along with two other verbal commitments of \$1 million each will be part of the diversity initiative. The \$4 million gift is targeted to women and persons of color and the President has the prerogative on the final allocation decision. Additionally, there was another gift given this week in the form of an endowed scholarship for a physically disabled student. Donors are excited about the diversity work and ready to make a commitment to this area.

M. Livingston referenced the Freedom Sisters Exhibit which opens at the Cincinnati Museum Center on 3/15 and runs through September. All members were sent flyers to share.

2007-08 Budget

C. Berryman-Fink reviewed the items that are to be implemented for this current year. They have been approved and appropriate co-chairs were notified to proceed with implementation.

### Incentive Program Proposal

N. Pinto proposed the idea at the last meeting and was asked to develop a draft proposal. The intent of the program should diffuse permanently through the community and use money as a mechanism to achieve institutional goals and permeate the culture. He recommends the money given to these programs should be substantial and could be a mix of one-time and permanent funds. There could be a resource group that would work with individuals when preparing their plans to provide guidance. The Diversity Council would review the proposals and make selections based on best alignment with diversity priorities. Awards should be announced in a public way. There would have to be a mechanism for accountability and recipients would be required to report. The budget would have to be significant in order to motivate people to develop plans. All were in agreement with the proposal and volunteers were requested to work with N. Pinto to refine the proposal.

### 2008-09 Budget

C. Berryman-Fink walked through the items submitted by each of the sub-committees. There were two recommendations that supported a full-time CDO with a dedicated office and staff. M. Livingston reminded everyone that the President reviewed many different models from across the country and chose the blended model which has been very successful. The Council has been asked to work on the 52 recommendations from the Diversity Task Force especially in the first year. This recommendation can certainly be part of the longer range plan. Since the budget given to the Council is not immense, these resources should be dedicated to the recommendations. However, M. Livingston will share this recommendation with the President when he meets with her next. Those who support the recommendation gave the following reasons:

- 1) in order for diversity to be successful, a dedicated position and office are necessary;
- 2) the diversity initiative will be temporary if there is not a full-time CDO (other programs/initiatives have disappeared when the responsible person left);
- 3) individual offices are not capable of implementing recommendations; they have other responsibilities and cannot devote adequate time

B. Marshall suggested that perhaps the Council needs to revisit their charge and go back to the communication plan on how to disseminate information to the campus.

H. Kegler reported that each college was to identify a person within their unit that would be responsible for developing a diversity plan for the college and implementation.

M. Livingston added that people should refrain from saying they cannot assume responsibility for implementing diversity recommendations with the current model. OSU, like ours, is a model of the blended offices using the Office of Minority Affairs combined with the CDO and work with a council as an advisory board. Additionally, they have worked with colleagues from around the country to create a national organization for CDOs. To argue you can't get things done without a full-time CDO is false. To depend on one office to do the entire university's work for diversity is isolation. All members of the university community where appropriate should participate and be responsible. The Diversity Council is the architect of the plan. No one person or office

can carry this burden alone, but it should be woven into the fabric of everyone's responsibilities.

C. Berryman-Fink stated the leadership team will be meet on 3/18 to prioritize the slate of recommendations to submit for the 2008-09 budget and invited feedback from the Council for prioritization. M. Stagaman suggested creating criteria for members to use in this task. However, the university budget process is ending soon and the diversity budget needs to be submitted now. C. Berryman-Fink concluded that she would send an email to the Council requesting feedback.

L. Billionis recognized the need for broad thinking in relation to the full-time CDO recommendation, but cautioned the Council to live within the limits defined by the President. There are ideas that can be championed and there will be an appropriate time. However, it is not wise to do so in this current environment and time.

M. Livingston distributed an updated chart listing the 52 recommendations with notations of proposed budget, responsible person/office and current status. He called attention to items already completed.

#### Retention Data

C. Miller reviewed information that was distributed with the agenda. N. Zimpher had requested information on the retention of African American males. C. Miller reported retention has improved in the last seven years and specifically noted the entering class in '04 is 63% and that has improved to 76%.

#### Communication Update

B. Marshall reported the web site is live and gave an overview of items on the site (history of the Council, inventories, pictures and bios of Council members, recommendation chart). An email address is provided for people to direct questions (diversity@uc.edu). Eventually there will be a list questions and concerns that have been sent into the web site.

G. Hand reported after the last meeting he has taken into consideration feedback received and a revised plan is forthcoming. There are many Council members who have not provided pictures for the web site. His staff is going through the photo archive to determine if there are pictures available for use. If not, then photographers will be contacting members to schedule a time for a photo shoot. Any events that are listed on the web page have to be in the R25 system first. He has suggested to the editor of the UC Magazine dedicating an upcoming issue to diversity. This would provide a quality diversity publication at a minimal cost compared to creating a separate publication at this time. M. Livingston stated this is an excellent example of an office complementing the work they currently do by incorporating diversity.

#### Sub-committee Reports

C. Berryman-Fink acknowledged most sub-committees had reported on their work by way of their recommendations and asked if anyone had additional information. L.

Mortimer and G. Dent reported on the status of their work with the report card. He distributed handouts that reflected comparisons of UC with aspirational institutions. Their goal is to identify a consistent way to look at the data.

Minutes approved by C. Berryman-Fink and M. Livingston.

Future Meetings (begin at 10:00 am)

April 9

May 22

June 25

Distributed: 4/4/08