

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
DIVERSITY AND MULTICUTURALISM COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
November 16, 2010**

Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Members Present: Trustees Louise Sundin, Chair; Trustee Duane Benson, Vice Chair; Alfredo Oliveira; Christine Rice; James Van Houten

Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Members Absent: Jacob Englund

Other Board Members Present: Chair Scott Thiss, Trustees Cheryl Dickson, Christopher Frederick, Phil Krinke, David Paskach, Thomas Renier,

Leadership Council Members Present: Whitney Stewart Harris, Executive Director; Phil Davis, President

A meeting of the Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee was held on November 16, 2010, at Wells Fargo Place, 4th Floor Board Room, 30 7th Street East, St. Paul. Chair Sundin called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

1. Minutes of September 15, 2010

The minutes of the September 15, 2010, meeting were approved as written.

2. Diversity and Multiculturalism Division Update

Trustee Sundin called on Dr. Whitney Harris to give the update.

Planning

- Twenty-eight campus diversity officers attended the diversity officers' fall professional development meeting on October 22, hosted by the Diversity and Multiculturalism division at the Office of the Chancellor. The session included a presentation from Dr. Robert C. Johnson on the Access, Opportunity and Success project. This was a practical application of the statistical training the division offered diversity officers last spring, assisting the diversity officers to develop and assess their programs based on backward design. The officers also reviewed the system's draft American Indian Work plan 2006-2010. This plan is due for revision.
- The division co-hosted a meeting of system employees who are working to increase higher education access, opportunity and success for American Indians. This meeting was held at Central Lakes College and focused specifically on fall-to-fall retention for American Indian Students, which is a problem nationwide. The division is considering working with Bemidji State University to develop a

pilot program on retention because of its proximity to three American Indian Nations.

Evaluation, assessment and accountability

- The Diversity and Multiculturalism division conducted two system On-Site Civil Rights Compliance Reviews. The reviews were conducted at Hennepin Technical College and Central Lakes College.
- In 2007, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities began participation with the National Association of System Heads (NASH) program designed to narrow the gap, decreasing the enrollment, persistence and success gap of underrepresented students.

Underrepresented students include three groups: Pell-eligible students (which is a proxy for low-income students), first generation students, and students of color.

At the time of joining the NASH program, the base rate for persistence and completion for underrepresented students at system colleges was 65.8 %, which represented 7,826 successful students out of an entering cohort in 2006 of 11,889. The target for the colleges was to increase to 69.0 % by 2014. As of fall 2009, the persistence and completion rate for system colleges was 68.4%, which means that the colleges as a group have accomplished 80% of the improvement needed to achieve the target. The system is making great progress, due in part to Board actions, such as providing Access, Opportunity and Success funds and holding those in the system accountable.

The base rate in 2006 for all system universities was 83.3%, which represented 3,677 successful students out of an entering cohort of 4,413. The target persistence rate for the universities was 88.4 % by 2014. As of fall 2009, the persistence and completion rate was 85%, which means that the universities as a group have accomplished 81% of the improvement needed to achieve the target. These are stretch goals, and tremendous progress has been made.

- Regarding the Office of the Legislative Auditor (OLA) update, the only OLA recommendation that concerned this division is that the Board continue to cooperate with the Chancellor to monitor the division's work. This report is in furtherance of that goal.

Training

- The division recently began a new series of webinars, offering systemwide training on a variety of topics. The first one was entitled: Access and Success for Men of Color. More than 30 sites participated in this webinar, many with multiple participants. This webinar shared research-based techniques for supporting educational access, opportunity and success for men of color. There will be webinars addressing other demographic groups, and many of the practices discussed in this webinar have applicability for all students.

President Davis said that in the past, diversity officers often saw their jobs as focused around organizing cultural events and celebrations. Dr. Harris' division has been training officers to think about their roles in increasing the academic success of underrepresented students. The division has set a new and commendable standard of what the role involves and how to measure results.

In answer to a question from Chancellor McCormick about NASH, Dr. Schoenecker said that there are 22 systems now involved with NASH. The NASH initiative committed to halving the gap in enrollment, participation, graduation and transfer of underrepresented students. The effort's focus is on measuring the gap for students of color and Pell-eligible students. The NASH program does not include first-generation students, because most other systems do not have the measurement systems in place. The goals were set in 2008, with the target of cutting the gap in half by 2015. Each year, all of the participating systems report on their progress. The Minnesota State system's gap is more pronounced with respect to race-ethnicity than with Pell-eligible students.

3. Discuss and Report Progress on Committee Goals

Chair Sundin called attention to the committee goals in the Board documents. She said that Dr. Harris and President Davis might want to take the issues raised by Trustee Van Houten to the Leadership Council and the division: to examine the mix of majors underrepresented students are choosing and to determine whether to focus on two-year rather than four-year institutions. President Davis said that there is plenty of room in the framework to accommodate these issues.

Trustee Sundin invited further discussion on the two committee goals that have been revised based on input from the last meeting. The first goal now includes credit transfer in addition to the recruitment, persistence and completion analysis.

There was some discussion about whether rewarding campuses was actually beneficial. Dr. Harris suggested that to maximize the benefits, it is important to tie new reward programs to other system programs and to have a stringent assessment procedure in place to verify the effectiveness of the reward system.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gale Rohde