

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
DIVERSITY AND MULTICUTURALISM COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
January 19, 2010**

Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Members Present: Trustees Duane Benson, Chair; Clarence Hightower, Vice Chair; Christopher Frederick, Louise Sundin; Terri Thomas

Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Members Absent: Tom Renier,

Other Board Members Present: Trustees Cheryl Dickson, David Paskach, Christine Rice, Scott Thiss, James Van Houten.

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

A meeting of the Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee was held on January 19, 2010, at Wells Fargo Place, 4th Floor Board Room, 30 7th Street East, St. Paul. Chair Benson called the meeting to order at 12:34 p.m.

1. Minutes of the November 17, 2009 Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee

The minutes of the November 17, 2009 meeting were approved as written.

2. Diversity and Multiculturalism Update

1) Planning

- The staff of the Diversity and Multiculturalism division completed 17 campus meetings/work sessions since the last Board meeting. The purpose of those sessions is to help campuses develop accountability measures and implement their diversity and access, opportunity and success plans. The goal is to have at least two work sessions per campus per academic year.

2) Evaluation, assessment and accountability

- Professional development sessions were conducted at two schools. One session focused on issues of disability, updating the campus on the changes in the disability law. Another was on investigator training, relating to the Board of Trustees Policy 1B.1, Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education Opportunity.

3) Operations

- The Office of the Chancellor received a regional award from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education for a joint project of the Diversity and Multiculturalism and the Public Affairs divisions. This is for the

recruitment program that includes the brochures and web site in multiple languages and also the bus ads. The National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education has invited Whitney Harris and Linda Kohl to present on this program as a webinar on January 29, 2010, as an example of cooperative ventures between public relations and diversity.

- As mentioned in an earlier meeting, Raúl Ramos, Senior Access and Opportunity Specialist, is currently at an event in Washington, D.C., where he is a featured panelist

3. Final Report of Male Access and Success at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Study Group

About eighteen months ago, the Diversity and Multiculturalism division established a study group to consider factors that might increase access and success for males in Minnesota. The study group has completed a report that will be posted on the division web page. There has been a nationwide decrease in males accessing higher education. This year, however, the increase of males in the Minnesota State system has been higher than females in all demographic groups except for American Indians. Dr. Harris said he thought the GI Bill and unemployment are factors that may have contributed to this change. He also hopes that current access, opportunity and success programs are a factor in this change.

Whitney Harris offered the following proposals:

1. **Provide assistance with financial issues and financial literacy.** There appears to be a gap for males in their basic financial knowledge and their ability to connect with financial aid. Sometimes a basic lack of knowledge prevents the current programs from being of use.
2. **Develop or modify programs in conjunction with secondary schools.** In particular, he recommends programs that will increase family involvement in the consideration of college, beginning around the ninth grade. One way is to meet males where they are, possibly in athletics.
3. **Provide professional development to teachers.** Teachers in middle and high schools could use more professional development around male discipline issues in order to more effectively assist males to successfully complete school.
4. **Focused outreach to males in tutoring programs and learning communities.** Many of these types of programs already exist, but there is a shortage of male participation; the goal would be to engage more males in participation, particularly lower-income males, which is the group that is underrepresented in these programs.

Dr. Harris reiterated that although many of these programs already exist, they may need to be enhanced; and although these programs and practices have shown some level of success, none of them have as yet been validated by external evaluators. What he proposes are college- or university-based efforts, where the system assists with

coordination between programs and assists with evaluation of the activities as a way to further identify the most promising practices.

Trustee Hightower suggested that there be two or three clear directives for action. He sees that the work of the committee as broadening the base of students that attend system institutions, not just attracting those who are already predisposed toward college.

Dr. Harris said the system has to find ways to address the lack of interest and preparation in higher education.

4. American Indian Initiative Update

This issue was not addressed at the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gale Rohde