

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
DIVERSITY AND MULTICUTURALISM COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
September 15, 2010**

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

Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Members Absent: None

Other Board Members Present: Chair Scott Thiss, Trustees Cheryl Dickson, Clarence Hightower, David Paskach, Michael Vekich

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

A meeting of the Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee was held on September 15, 2010, at Wells Fargo Place, 4th Floor Board Room, 30 7th Street East, St. Paul. Chair Sundin called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

1. Minutes of July 20, 2010

The minutes of the July 20, 2010, meeting were approved as written.

2. Diversity and Multiculturalism Division Update

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

Planning

- The division funded a pilot project at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College called Nandakikendan, Ojibwe for “seek to learn.” This two-week program started just before the school year and brought together a group of at-risk students in a program that immersed them in the American Indian culture, looking at areas such as registration and finance from an American Indian cultural perspective. The program appears to have been successful, but the students will be tracked to verify this, with a goal of providing best practice ideas to the other institutions.
- The Diversity and Multiculturalism division plans to reduce its staff by 1.5 positions. These reductions will result in the restructuring of the division’s work. The division will continue its focus on access, opportunity and success; monitoring compliance with appropriate federal and state laws and Board policies concerning equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in education and

employment; and providing technical assistance to campuses, supporting campus work to enhance access, opportunity and success to students and to create an innovative, diverse workforce. The division will reduce or eliminate direct community outreach, eliminating the Super Weekend program and Office of the Chancellor presence at community events, such as the Chinese New Year and Rondo Days. Rather, technical assistance will be made available to campuses that may wish to engage in such activities. The work of the division will be primarily compliance, monitoring, policy, leadership and training.

Evaluation, assessment and accountability

- Staff conducted six training events with campus staff and faculty concerning access, opportunity, and success and issues of diversity.
- A conference call was held with the seven institutions that are piloting a new program, “Get Cut, Get Styled, Get College,” which the division is sponsoring. In this program, admissions officers go to hair salons and barber shops and either directly recruit new students or train the staff there to indirectly recruit them. The division expects to bring a report at a future meeting, perhaps next spring. The goal of the program is to increase overall college awareness, including information about financial aid and the registration process.

3. Discuss and Select Committee Goals

Trustee Sundin called the committee’s attention to the revised goal sheets that were distributed at the meeting. President Davis reviewed the proposed goals. These goals reflect the priorities of the Leadership Council Diversity Committee, and there are sufficiently few that he believes they could all be completed.

The overall emphasis is to use data to drive behavior. The first proposed goal, “Use Action Analytics to evaluate the effectiveness of campus recruitment and retention programs,” focuses on recruitment and retention. Last month’s Board report showed considerable success in increasing access for underrepresented students. At the last meeting of the Leadership Council Diversity Committee, Dr. Craig Schoenecker introduced the committee to the data warehouse and searchable tool that he and his team are developing for system use.

Regarding the second proposed goal, “Increase the persistence and completion rate of underrepresented students and reduce the achievement gap between underrepresented and non-underrepresented students,” President Davis said that the role of successful transfer is missing from that goal and should probably be included. Persistence and completion is an issue that is currently of great interest in the system.

The third goal listed is, “Reward campuses that demonstrate measurable success in building relationships that support student engagement on college and university campuses.” President Davis said that a reward program creates a context of improvement that he believes is very important. The Leadership Council Diversity Committee recommends that, prior to launching a program such as this, more precise criteria be developed and feedback sought from campuses. Because of the preparatory work needed, the suggested goal is to have the reward program ready to launch by spring.

The following are some points that were made in the discussion that followed:

- The Action Analytics goals could be incorporated into the other two goals, by defining it as the process by which those goals are completed. This would reduce the number of goals to two.
- For the goal to be significant, it should include some target numbers or goals, particularly for persistence and completion rates, that would require the campuses to stretch.
- Diversity and Multiculturalism staff in consultation with the Leadership Council Diversity Committee could be asked to return with suggested numbers or benchmarks, targets for performance, for this goal.
- Publicly announcing expectations drives behavior and motivates people, particularly when this is combined with a system of rewards.
- It would be valuable to have more information about the process by which underrepresented students decide about whether or not to attend college and at what age this decision is made. Perhaps market research would provide useful information.
- Much of this research has been done; the challenge is to use research from other regions and apply it to Minnesota: to know the factors that lead to success and to develop programs based on them. It is important to keep the issue visible, hold people accountable and develop a reward structure based on success.
- It would be advantageous to have something in place that would require high school students to apply to college in order to graduate from high school.
- The system may want to expand its advertising about the Post-Secondary Enrollment Option program.
- Diversity and Multiculturalism may want to have joint committee meetings, perhaps with Academic and Student Affairs.
- It makes sense to count transfer as a success. Many underrepresented students start at two-year colleges and transfer to universities.

Trustee Sundin summarized her understanding of the action desired by the committee. The goals would be rewritten to eliminate the first goal and incorporate Action Analytics into the second and third goals. Increasing enrollment and successful transfer would be incorporated into the goal about the persistence and completion rate, as would goals or benchmarks. Existing methods of assessing, such as CCSSE, would be used for the reward program. A revised set of goals, including benchmarks would be presented at the next meeting for committee approval. The Diversity and Multiculturalism division and

the Leadership Council, in consultation with the committee chair, could revise the goals. If necessary, a time for discussion could be found at the Board retreat. Additional information about student college attendance decisions could be presented at a future meeting.

Trustee Benson moved that the Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee adopt the two goals in concept, with the understanding that there will some modifications and details, including target numbers, added in the future. Trustee Rice seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

4. Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee/Division Work Plan for FY 2011

This issue was not addressed because of a shortage of time.

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gale Rohde