

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
DIVERSITY AND MULTICUTURALISM COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 18, 2011**

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

**Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Members Absent:** Alfredo Oliveira

**Other Board Members Present:** Trustees Cheryl Dickson, Christopher Frederick, Clarence Hightower, Dan McElroy, Scott Thiss, 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 January 18, 2011, at Wells Fargo Place, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Board Room, 30 7<sup>th</sup> Street East, St. Paul. Chair Sundin called the meeting to order at 11:31 a.m.

**1. Minutes of November 16, 2010**

The minutes of the November 16, 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 Diversity and Multiculturalism division has just initiated a multidivisional committee to explore ways of insuring the accessibility of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities information technology to persons of varying abilities. An update will be provided at a future meeting.

**Training**

- Staff from the Diversity and Multiculturalism division provided training to approximately 550 faculty and staff members during recent faculty duty day sessions at system campuses. The goal of the sessions is to connect diversity to system goals – primarily access, opportunity and success – and to enhance cultural competency among the faculty and staff, creating a strong workforce.
- Division staff offered Investigator and Decisionmaker training sessions for campus designees. This training has been conducted with assistance from the General Counsel's office and Labor Relations, and it provides necessary information for

implementing the 1B.1 Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education Opportunity policy and accompanying procedure 1B.1.1. Approximately 60 people attended.

### **Other**

- Mary Sam, Director of Diversity at Central Lakes College, recently received a Minnesota Department of Human Rights Award. This award recognizes outstanding contributions concerning human rights issues and serves to honor her ongoing involvement and commitment.

Trustee Van Houten requested a follow-up report on issues raised at the last meeting:

- 1) The possibility that a focus on two-year versus four-year colleges for underrepresented students might improve outcomes and use of resources
- 2) An examination of the majors chosen by underrepresented students

He is concerned that there may be a relatively small number of underrepresented students in science and mathematics.

Dr. Harris said that these are complicated issues which he is currently researching and exploring. He plans to revisit these issues in March or April.

### **3. Enrollment and Retention Data for Underrepresented Students**

Dr. Harris introduced a presentation by Dr. Craig Schoenecker, System Director for Research, on enrollment and retention data by saying that this data drives the diversity work relative to the campuses. He said that the Chancellor has encouraged the system to connect most of the diversity work to access, opportunity and success.

Dr. Schoenecker elaborated on the information in the Board packet, the graphics of which he presented in a PowerPoint format. He said that in fiscal year 2010, there was a very substantial increase in the overall enrollment and in the numbers of underrepresented students. A significant portion of that increase was in the number of students who were Pell eligible and in the number of students of color and first-generation students.

In answer to a question from Trustee Benson, Dr. Schoenecker said that underrepresented students are comprised of three categories of students: (1) students who are eligible for a Pell grant (low-income students), (2) students of color, and (3) first-generation students. Much of this data comes from data the students choose to provide. Currently only one or two percent of system students do not report their race-ethnicity. There is a much higher percentage who do not report their parents' education levels. The records regarding Pell eligibility are unknown for those who did not apply for financial assistance, which is why the graph shows such a high percentage of students whose underrepresented status is unknown.

In examining enrollment trends, the category of continuing students, rather than that of new students, is the one that had the largest growth in underrepresented students in fall of 2010. This is a reflection of the large increases in new underrepresented students in fall

2009. The most dramatic increase was in the category of Pell eligibility. Last fiscal year there was more than a 30 percent increase in new, Pell-eligible students. This fiscal year there is an increase of 23 percent for continuing, and 11 percent for new, Pell-eligible students. Overall the undergraduate enrollment by new students actually declined slightly.

There has been a delay in obtaining the data for the retention, persistence and completion, but Dr. Schoenecker said that he should have the data within a few weeks and will report on it at a future meeting.

In answer to a question, Dr. Schoenecker said he believed that the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system probably has a larger percentage in the underrepresented category than many other sectors of higher education in the state. The office of higher education could provide that information.

#### **4. Discuss and Report Progress on Committee Goals**

Dr. Harris said that at the last meeting, the Board had asked him to develop outcome measures and implementation strategies for the Relationship Factor Program. He said that the division has laid out an implementation strategy but has been deliberately waiting on the work plan in order to align more closely with the Resources for Results program, which is being developed by Academic and Student Affairs. A work plan will be brought back in the future. Dr. Harris said his hope is to give the first award in October 2012.

The Relationship Factor awards would be based on data that is currently being collected: awards conferred and fall-to-fall persistence and completion rate.

Trustee Van Houten asked staff to provide information about the portion of underrepresented students who are benefiting from and participating in the student engagement programs that are designed to benefit all students. He wonders if the underrepresented students are proportionately involved in these. Dr. Harris said he would work with the Finance and Academic and Student Affairs divisions to see if this information can be gathered.

The meeting adjourned at 12:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gale Rohde