

CULTURAL DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Monday 1/6/15, 3:30-4:30 PM

Langdale 718

Attendees: Lynda Brown-Wright, Liz Dawson, Fernando Doria, Judith Emerson, Paula Gordon, Shif Gurmu, Marian Meyers, Sarah Pallas, Faye Stewart

Absentees: Nedda Ahmed, Dawn Baunach, Diane Belcher, Elisabeth Burgess, Annette Butler, Kofi Dadzie, Mourad Dakhli, Jennifer Esposito, Valerie Fennell, Harley Granville, Heather Housley, Miles Irving, Janelle Kerlin, Toni Le, Mandy Swygart-Hobough, Tanya Washington, Yali Zhao

Handouts: Sojourn at Associate Professor

Sarah Pallas opened the meeting at 3:35

1. December Minutes were approved.

2. Subcommittee, Administrative Reports

a. Distance Education Council (Mourad Dakhli): Not there to discuss.

b. Staff Issues (Harley Granville): Not there to discuss.

c. Student Issues (Toni Le, Hilda, Dwumfuor): Not there to discuss.

a. Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs (Lynda Brown-Wright): She reported that the office had been busy with its normal functions in addition to concentrating on Promotion and Tenure. She urged those in attendance to utilize the Distinguished Scholars Program to attract faculty of color. She reported that since its inception, only four faculty have been Distinguished Visiting Scholars; she encouraged all to promote the program in their departments. The normal length for each visiting scholar is one semester and the Provost office supports the effort with \$75,000. It was expressed that some have found the time period of one semester to be too short to attract faculty who were willing to leave permanent positions to relocate to Georgia. Lynda Brown-Wright stated that exceptions could and have been considered for longer visits on campus; this happens on an individual basis. She further shared that some universities have sabbatical leaves and those faculty opt to take sabbaticals to come to GSU for a semester. They find temporary housing as an alternative to full relocation. She went on to state that departments and colleges need to commit resources to help support faculty they would like to attract because the Provost's Office would not be able to assume the entire financial burden of permanent hires. Furthermore, she stated that the research shows that when departments and colleges invest resources in the hiring efforts for Faculty of Color, they tend to provide greater support for the faculty member to ensure their success. She stated that

the hope was that departments and colleges would consider diversifying the faculty when “normal” vacancies occur.

She added that many hiring units do not realize that there are non-traditional strategies to attract faculty of color, in addition to advertising. She emphasized that recruiting at conferences, and seeking nominations from colleagues are among some of the strategies that should be considered. Lynda Brown-Wright suggested “going after” faculty instead of only looking at candidates who are applying for positions. It was suggested that a problem is that many do not have the lines, and the lines that they do have may not be given back to the department when faculty retire or leave. Lynda Brown-Wright encouraged faculty members to talk with the chair and dean about support to increase the number of diverse faculty. She will provide updated Tenured and Tenure Track Faculty Demographics as soon as they are available.

- d. Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students (Darryl Holloman): Not there to discuss.
- e. Senior Faculty Associate for Disabilities (Judith Emerson): The Disabilities committee is in the process of prioritizing locations on campus that need repair.
- f. Director of Diversity Education Planning, ODDEP (John Day): Not there to discuss.
- g. Director of Affirmative Action, ODEPP (Annette Butler): Not there to discuss.
- h. International Student Services Representative (Heather Housley): Not there to discuss.

3. Old Business

- a. P&T committee composition: The faculty who sit on the P&T committees across the Units do not necessarily reflect the diversity of the faculty they are evaluating. The Cultural Diversity Committee recommends that correcting this mismatch be made an explicit goal. Because GSU has a very small percentage of faculty of color at senior ranks, it may not be possible to achieve racial diversity at this time, but gender diversity is attainable. The committee voted, and 100% of the committee members who were present voted in favor of the proposed language:

“The Cultural Diversity Committee of the University Senate strongly recommends that each Unit strive to match the diversity of their P&T committees to the diversity of their faculty as much as possible.”

Rationale: The CDC informally gathered information on how P&T committee members are selected. In some cases, members are nominated by the faculty, and in others, they are nominated by chairs. In most cases, the committee composition does not reflect the gender or racial/ethnic balance of the faculty. Currently, the P&T committee membership is 16% female in CoAS, 20% female in AYSPS, 100% male in RCB, 83%

female in Nursing, and 100% female in the Library. In order to have an evaluation committee that reflects those being evaluated and in order to minimize implicit bias against faculty members from underrepresented groups, units need to consider the diversity of their nominee pool.

- b. Diversity question(s) for the SEI. At the December meeting, we again considered language that might be used for students to evaluate their instructors' respect for diversity. Sarah Pallas solicited more suggestions via email. Suggestions for review are as follows:

Nedda: *The instructor fostered a classroom climate of inclusiveness.*

Yali: *The instructor fostered a classroom climate of inclusiveness and respect for diversity.*

How would you rate the teaching and learning climate in this class? Do you feel respected, safe, and included?

How would you rate this professor with regard to respect for the diversity of students in the class? Please comment on the Instructor's sensitivity to the diversity of the students in the class.

Sarah Pallas stated that the Cultural Diversity Committee can recommend SEI items to submit to FAC, but ultimately it is not the committee's decision. The first option was the most favored, primarily because it is the simplest. Sarah Pallas stated that because she also sits on the SEI committee chaired by Mark Geil, she could pass along our other suggestions to that committee for consideration.

4. New Business

- a. Report from FAC Equity subcommittee on Sojourn at Associate Professor Survey: Several committees are working on a way to encourage faculty to make the transition from associate professor to full professor. A mentoring program was developed, but a few women felt that a women-only program suggests that women need special help to progress. The initiation was put on hold in order to gather more data and develop a gender-inclusive mentoring program.
- b. Domestic partner health insurance coverage: GSU needs a way to address insurance coverage for domestic partners, given the current Board of Regents prohibition and the state of Georgia's unwillingness to pass a same-sex marriage bill. Sarah Pallas suggested writing to President Becker to ask him to bring the suggestion to the Board of Regents again. It was noted that other monies must be used because state monies cannot be used for this purpose at this time. Florida uses concession stand monies. The lack of this benefit impacts faculty hiring in a negative way. The Benefits committee of FAC, chaired by Russel White, is exploring this issue.

Our next meeting is scheduled for March 3, 3:30 – 4:30 PM, Langdale 718.