COMMITTEE FOR A MULTICULTURAL UNIVERSITY

Minutes of 27 January 1998
Circulated 23 January 1998
Approved 10 February 1998

PRESENT: C.B. Smith (Chair), Bob Megginson, Lewis Kleinsmith, Sarah Stone, Wen-Jei Yang
ABSENT:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
The agenda was approved without modification.

CB Smith announced that Associate Provost Lester Monts would like the announcements and agendas of the meetings sent to his secretary. It was stated that the committee, at one point in time was in somewhat of an advisory role to him, and in the future may do so again. Many committee members stated that it would be advantageous if he could attend some meetings so they could get some input from him before they begin to submit any formal recommendations.

Reporting as the SACUA liaison, L. Kleinsmith stated that there is an admissions study group set up to look at the faculty role. It is a small committee, of which he is chair. He brought up the Selection Index Worksheet in which there were points of view that stated different points of value as criteria for admissions. This worksheet he said was interpreted by one SACUA member as discrimination.

Associate Provost Lester Monts came in. He brought with him some press releases from the Detroit News, The Detroit Free Press, and The Michigan Daily. The reports he felt were unfairly judging the university in the area of admissions. He also stated that he felt that the reports were making unfair comparisons to "Lower universities." L. Kleinsmith said he wondered if there is a danger in giving the news clips too much attention. L. Monts stated that news clips such as these are damaging to students now and after they graduate, particularly minorities. He also stated that the climate on campus is hurt as well.

CB Smith reported that he presented the Statement on Diversity to the Senate Assembly. It was first sent to SACUA for amendment and then presented to Senate Assembly where it was received well and finally endorsed. During a discussion, one member wanted to table it because of the lack of recommendations. CB Smith noted that it was not an affirmative action statement, but rather a statement of purpose, and that the committee is working hard for a set of recommendations.
B. Megginson noted that this individual wanted something more in the statement. B. Megginson stated that had the statement been tabled, it would have sent a strong message.

CB Smith noted that not very many people had filled out the questionnaire with written comments. The comments that were written out were all negative. B. Megginson made the suggestion that a new questionnaire be sent out in order to get more constructive comments. CB Smith suggested sending out E-mail to get comments.

L. Kleinsmith suggested sending out the single question "What is the one thing you would like to see change?" He noted that there is a real need for comments and suggestions in order to make good recommendation.

Associate Provost Monts suggested that statements from the committee should routinely be used to communicate with other groups within the University and the community.

CB Smith stated that the committee would also like to work with the administration to help in coming up with recommendations.

L. Kleinsmith added that he thought as well that isolation wouldn't work in coming up with recommendations, there is a need to work with others. He also added that the committee shouldn't be trying to reach a unanimous decision, but try to come up with and agree upon the ten best ideas.

L. Kleinsmith stated that each person should work on what she or he feels is the most important recommendation and tell why he or she thinks this recommendation is going to be positive.

CB Smith noted that the University doesn't have a problem with recruiting minorities and females but there is a real problem that the environment here isn't conducive for success.

L. Kleinsmith suggested that the main areas in recruitment of faculty and students be defined and then within those areas become more specific.

The Committee came up with three main areas of interest
1) Environment
2) Recruitment of Students and Faculty
3) Institutional Barriers

B. Megginson noted that faculty and students of color intermingle more than majority of these groups. Robert also noted that in regards to institutional barriers that it is a problem to have lots of faculty of color in programs were there is no possibility for tenure.

CB Smith noted that with regard to the environment problem, that there are concerns of both students and faculty about mentoring and role models.
L. Kleinsmith stated that the environments differ from a person's committee to when they get back to their particular areas of the university.

B. Megginson brought up the Michigan Mandate. He noted that everyone expresses concerns about it but he stressed the importance of the mandate existing whether it is good or bad.

CB Smith put forth the question of "who do we recruit for the committee next year?"

L. Kleinsmith suggested to think about assembly members. He noted that they need to get involved where they previously haven't been.

CB Smith asked everyone to circulate a recommendation idea or two by the next meeting on February 10, 1998

Respectfully Submitted,

Pedrick Jones, Secretary HR