COMMITTEE FOR A MULTICULTURAL UNIVERSITY

Minutes

Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2003

Time: 5:15 to 6:45 p.m.

Location: B311 Dental School

Present: Stephen Chi-Tak Ho, Marita Inglehart, Sylvia Pedraza, Alexandra Rivera-Rule

The minutes from February 4, 2003, were approved.

A more detailed update of the discussion from the February meeting was provided. The conclusions from the last meeting were that these recommendations should be seen in the context of the current economic / budget situation, and that the focus on the faculty perspective should be shown clearly.

The new draft of the recommendations was discussed (see Appendix). No substantial changes were suggested.

The discussion then centered around the question how these recommendations should now be passed on to SACUA. The committee agreed that instead of writing a cover letter that provides information about the committee’s intentions, an introduction to the recommendations should be written as part of the actual document. This would assure that the information would be directly included in the document and would not be lost on the way. This introduction should include (a) a description of the committee’s mission, esp. that its focus is on diversity in general, (b) the general intention that led to the formulation of these recommendations, and (c) the explicitly stated hope that the recommendations would proceed through the SACUA executive committee to the Senate Assembly, and would then - with the support of the faculty on the Senate Assembly - be submitted to the President and Provost for consideration.

Time line: It was discussed that one last message to all committee members will ask for feedback by Friday, March 14. After this feedback period, a final revised version of the recommendations will then be mailed to the committee members in the week of March 18, and then submitted to SACUA on April 1. The committee members hoped that this
would allow SACUA to address the recommendations before the end of the academic year.

Outlook: On Tuesday, April 8, 2003, we will have the last meeting of this term. The chair invited everybody to her home for dinner on this day. Agenda: how can we make this committee more successful in the future? Preliminary thoughts were given on how to rewrite the mission of the committee, to work on interdisciplinary faculty positions / joint appointments, or to collect best practices in mentoring.

The meeting was closed at 6:45 p.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 8, 2003, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., 2626 Geddes Ave.
Attachment to the Minutes from March 4, 2003:

SACUA Committee for a Multicultural University

Recommendations for Faculty Recruitment and Retention

Draft

Tuesday, March 4, 2003

Recruitment:

- Despite current economic constraints, it is of utmost importance that the university leadership will continue the efforts to recruit world-class scholars and high profile leaders from diverse backgrounds to our university. The University of Michigan is a leader in the efforts to create a truly democratic institution of higher education. We recommend that the president and provost persist in taking the lead and being actively involved in recruiting highly visible faculty that bring diversity to their units to model the type of behavior they expect from all organizational units.

- In order to encourage the continuation of broad based efforts for the recruitment of outstanding scholars from underrepresented backgrounds in the different organizational units in this university, we recommend that the university leadership will continue to provide resources and offer an incentive structure that supports all such efforts.

- “Faculty hire faculty”, as former Provost Whitaker pointed out. Assuming that our faculty is acutely aware of the benefit and value of bringing diverse expertise to our university, it seems crucial to provide faculty members on search committees with the support they need to (a) identify outstanding job candidates from diverse backgrounds, and (b) allow them to gain a clear understanding of how to optimally motivate and encourage these faculty members to be attracted to our university. Given the expertise of some of our senior administrators such as Dr. Monts, we recommend to put a support structure into place that would brief any search committee on the ways their search could be sensitive to achieve diversity in their applicant pool and allow them to hire stellar faculty members from diverse backgrounds.

- Without solid empirical information about the status of recruitment efforts, it is difficult for any department chair or dean to assess progress. We therefore recommend that at the beginning of every academic year, a status report about all recruitment efforts will be distributed to all deans and chairs. This report should summarize all recruitment efforts broken down by schools and departments. By providing information about the percentage of male / female persons from different ethnic / racial backgrounds who applied for a position, were interviewed, received offers, and were hired during any given
academic year, departmental comparisons are possible, and an open discussion can develop based on this information.

**Retention:**

- Mentor programs should be available in all organizational units. Junior faculty (particularly women and minorities) should have a senior mentor who provides regular feedback and advice for how to create successful promotion packages. Tenured faculty in early stages of their careers should have opportunities to receive feedback from more senior tenured faculty and administrators for their career development. Mentoring efforts take time and effort. It is therefore recommended to assure that mentoring efforts are recognized and rewarded.

- Information about persons and networks providing social support should be created to allow faculty to optimally utilize the rich personal resources available at the University of Michigan. Being able to connect with other professionals with similar backgrounds and/or career goals and sharing expertise is likely to enhance faculty members’ quality of life and professional success at all levels of career development. This information should be created and provided to incoming faculty members as well as to faculty members at points of career transitions (such as when receiving tenure).

- Structural analyses (such as pay and space equity studies) should be conducted on a regular basis to assure that structural factors do not put faculty members at a disadvantage. Assuring that resources are available to allow all faculty members to live up to their potentials is important.