THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
Committee for a Multicultural University
Minutes of October 24, 1996

Present: D. Deskins (SACUA Liaison), A. Nadasen, C. Smith (Chair), J. Su, P. Wilhelm (Secretary), Y. Wulff, W. Yang

Guest: Lester Monts, Vice Provost for Academic and Multicultural Affairs

Absent: Y. Kuniyuki, R. Megginson, S. Pandit, J. Salazar

Items Distributed:
1. Agenda
2. Brochure from OVPAMA -- Faculty Award Programs, 1996-1997 (Monts)
3. Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) statement on Advancing Diversity/ Achieving Excellence (Monts)
4. CIC Advancing Diversity / Achieving Excellence Action Plan, Revised Draft, 10/15/96 (Monts)

Smith called the meeting to order at 5:08pm.

Agenda.
There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes of October 10, 1996.
Minutes were approved without revision.

Comments on the OVPAMA from L. Monts.

Lester Monts, the Vice Provost for Academic and Multicultural Affairs, shared with the committee an overview of his office. He focused on four categories in his overview: administrative responsibilities, external responsibilities, programs administered within the office, and current issues with regard to Academic and Multicultural Affairs.

Monts went into some detail about the programs that his office administers. He first noted the Presidential Professors Program, which brings in highly acclaimed and distinguished faculty to the University for up to a full semester. Secondly, Monts
mentioned the King, Chavez, Parks Visiting Professors Program, which brings in role models for students in an attempt "to increase the number of under-represented instructors in the classroom." Monts also noted the Faculty Awards for Research and Creative Projects that his office administers. Monts stressed that the web page for his office contains a lot of this information in detail (http://www.umich.edu/~ovpama).

Monts also spoke of a program to hire minority faculty, the Target Opportunity Program, that is administered by his office. He stated that this program made sixteen appointees last year and in collaborating with OVPR has now launched a new post-doctorate program in the sciences in the College of LS&A. He noted that the goal of this program is to lead under-represented post-doctoral fellows to tenure-track professorial appointments in LS&A.

In discussing current issues, Monts turned to the reorganization of COMU. He noted that three to four years ago the council was primarily made up of associate deans from various colleges and a few other individuals. The charge from the President to this year's council is to address issues surrounding student, faculty, and staff retention. Monts noted that it has been suggested that that committee hold a retreat in May of 1997, similar to a retreat held in 1994 which led to the creation of the Multicultural Teaching and Learning component in the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT). The Office of the Vice Provost is also involved in the development of the Undergraduate Research Initiative, which is not exclusively a minority program. Monts explained that COMU is concerned with the infusion of diversity into the classroom and classroom equity.

Smith asked what "classroom equity" means. Monts replied that it means teaching various perspectives, and gave as an example not teaching "The Bell Curve" as the only valid perspective on achievement. Monts continued that he deals with retaining a diverse student body and faculty. He noted that this University loses a lot of minority faculty for a lot of reasons, but many are intellectual reasons.

The Target Program, Monts noted, offers several spots to minority faculty and does this along various ranks; that is, it offers spots for junior and senior faculty. Monts said that he also deals with campus climate issues and challenges to affirmative action. Monts distributed the CIC statement on Advancing Diversity / Achieving Excellence.

Smith asked Monts about Monts' dealings with the DPSS review committee, as this department is a factor in campus climate. Monts said that he has not had any dealings with that committee. He said that if they asked him to, he would. Smith noted that J. Matlock had agreed to work with CMU on a draft of the definition of "climate" that was to be given to the Task Force on Campus Safety and Security. Monts said that the CMU should not be giving suggestions to Matlock,
but to him. Monts said he thought that to give suggestions directly to Matlock was not part of CMU's by-laws.

Wulff asked for what purpose the Advancing Diversity / Achieving Excellence statement was made. Monts said that it is for the Provosts of the CIC to deal with. Nadasen asked whether the statement affects Dearborn or Flint campuses. Monts said that it does not. Smith asked whether Monts had a working relationship with Dearborn or Flint, and Monts replied that he did not at all have one. Smith said that this issue had been discussed at a recent meeting of another Senate Assembly committee. Monts said that his authority is parallel to the U-M provost and that he has had no authority to deal with Dearborn and Flint.

Nadasen asked Monts what the probability was of publicizing the CIC statements on the Dearborn and Flint campuses. Monts replied that his office sends all of their documents to the two chancellors of those campuses and it is up to them to implement anything. He said that direct implementation on those campuses is out of his circle of authority.

Draft of Statement on DPSS Review.

Wulff said that this week she would give to the committee over e-mail a draft or outline of the proposed letter to SACUA.

Study of University Administrators update.

Smith announced that there was nothing to share on this topic at this meeting, but did answer a question from Monts about the nature of the study. Smith said that this was a study of some data from a year ago from the Provost. Smith said that the intent of CMU was to prepare a short report on these data to be sent to SACUA.

Senate Assembly Diversity Statement.

Smith began discussion on the statement by noting that he had heard that the Academic Women's Caucus has been distributing about 400 copies of the Assembly-approved statement on campus. Smith asked Deskins to share what had happened at SACUA on the issue of putting the statement before all the units of the University. Deskins stated that someone had made a motion to do this, but no one offered a second to that motion. The issue, said Deskins, was twofold: First, what is the precedent of sending out a SACUA statement on diversity for faculty approval when SACUA does not send out any other such statements. Second, Deskins stressed that the statement adopted by the Senate Assembly is a "non-statement." Deskins argued that, while others say it is a starting point -- a great accomplishment,
the approved statement really says that diversity has no value at this University. He said that it was a sad thing for the faculty to have said this. Deskins also noted that a legal expert had said that it is legally a non-statement -- it is a statement of just the minimum of what the law requires.

Smith commented on the Nichols Report. Monts said that he had met with the interim dean and associate dean of the Medical School the previous day and that they had told him they were moving ahead with a very strong task force that targets students, staff, and faculty.

Deskins said that it is obvious the statement will come back to CMU. Smith said that SACUA needs to tell CMU what they want the CMU to do with the statement. Deskins said that it has been recommended that SACUA take it to Senate Assembly to see what the statement really means. Deskins noted that it is important to spell out exactly what diversity means.

Monts asked Smith whether Smith, as a chair, could request to address the Senate Assembly. Smith said that he could and he will. The adopted statement, said Monts, is an embarrassment. This is so because it is the same thing that appears at the bottom of the University vacancy statements. He said that CMU worked very hard on the statement and the Senate Assembly trashed it.

Smith said that one has to know how the Assembly works. He said that one cannot send them a statement and let them hash it out, one has to be detailed about what it means. Monts and Smith then exchanged a thought on whether this statement was a waste of time. Wulff added that climates do not change overnight. She said it is useful to have even a short article which says “the Michigan faculty took the following action --.”

Monts stated that Michigan is moving ahead more than a lot of other universities, and on his office’s web page you can see evidence of this through the various programs.

Deskins said that this is a long battle, sort of like throwing sand at the ocean.

Smith said that things have changed. He cited that a committee like CMU did not exist thirty years ago. Smith noted that in his department they have minority students. He said the fact that they are there is a change.

Deskins asked the committee whether this all was a result of demographics. Smith said that graphics are a factor in policy. He cited the Michigan Mandate as an example, as it was trying to prepare for the future. It was proactive, not reactive, said Smith. Deskins added that if the Mandate had been put before the faculty it would have been voted down.
The discussion turned to a set of 1995 data on Ph.D. production in the sciences and engineering. Deskins noted that the percentage has not increased for minorities recently in this area, but it has increased the most for alien workers in the US. In conclusion Deskins asserted that statements are probably ineffective.

Smith added that if one had an administration that was totally dedicated to making a change, something would actually happen. Nadasen agreed here saying that influencing the senior administration would be the best thing to do. Yang added that senior administration is waving flags at the top but it is not happening at the bottom. Deskins said here that the deans are very important to the process. Monts added that the crucial element here is accountability from within. Smith said that he agreed entirely. Nadasen added that now the deans and chairs are free to do what they want. Smith added that there must be a provost that is committed to these programs.

**Liaisons with other committees.**

Smith said that he has sent a message to the chair of SACUA to discuss with the president the issue of cross-representation. He has received no response. Smith noted that this may be because SACUA has been busy with the interviews of presidential candidates.

**Announcements.**

Smith announced the Academic Freedom Lecture which is to be held March 17, 1997, and will be delivered by Roger Wood Wilkins from George Mason University.

The next meeting was set for Thursday, November 7 at 5:00pm in 6065 Fleming Administration Building.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:23pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul A. Wilhelm
Secretary to the committee