

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURALISM COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
May 20, 2008**

Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Members Present: Trustees Duane Benson, Chair; Trustees Caleb Anderson, Ann Curme Shaw

Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Members Absent: Clarence Hightower, Vice Chair

Other Board Members Present: Trustees Michael Boulton, Cheryl Dickson, Dan McElroy, David Paskach, Christine Rice, Scott Thiss, and James Van Houten.

Leadership Council Members Present: Dr. Whitney Stewart Harris, President Anne Weyandt

A meeting of the Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee was held on May 20, 2008 at Wells Fargo Place, 4th Floor Board Room, 30 7th Street East, St. Paul. Chair Benson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

1. Minutes of the March 19, 2008 Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee

The minutes of the March 19, 2008 meeting were approved as written.

2. Diversity and Multiculturalism Update

Dr. Harris framed his report in terms of the four divisional priorities and the goals from the Board of Trustees' retreat.

1) Develop and enhance strategies to support the post-secondary access and success of underrepresented students and American Indian students.

Twenty-five students from four Minnesota State Colleges and Universities institutions recently participated in a leadership training assembly led by Charles Black Lance who is working on behalf of the Diversity and Multiculturalism division to further the Boards' Systemwide Strategic Work Plan for American Indians.

The Office of the Chancellor's Diversity and Multiculturalism division recently coordinated five professional development sessions for campus diversity officers, teaching program planning and assessment skills.

2) Provide institutions with models to improve the success of underrepresented, underserved, and American Indian students.

In response to a concern for providing “welcoming” campus climates, the staff of the Diversity and Multiculturalism division, in cooperation with campus staff, conducted professional development sessions on several campuses. These sessions provided front-line staff with information and models for dealing with students from different cultures and language groups.

3) Increase the diversity of faculty and staff and administrators.

Although there was activity in this area, it was not reported at this meeting.¹

4) Coordinate and manage the Office of Civil Rights program for reviewing campuses.

The Diversity and Multiculturalism Division hosted the Department of Education Office for Civil Rights conference from May 12 to May 16. Thirty-eight participants from throughout the United States and five administrators from the Department of Education were at the conference. The conference focused on compliance with the federal nondiscrimination laws and guidelines. This was an opportunity to showcase the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.

With respect to the goals set at the Board of Trustees’ retreat:

Twelve focus groups of middle-school-age students from groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education have been completed. Two more focus groups are scheduled for later in the month. The purpose is to learn how these students prefer to get information about colleges and what types of messages appeal to them. The results of this research will be used to develop a marketing program which will reach down to the middle school level, so that these students will begin to consider higher education at an earlier age. Research shows that this is when students make the decision about whether they will attend college.

Campus staff from admissions and diversity offices in the metropolitan area, the campuses that make up the Metro Alliance, reviewed current recruitment programs and activities focused on new Americans and other underrepresented groups.

The work on revamping and updating the "Make College Part of Your Future" brochure is underway. It is currently in four languages, and more will be added. In addition, it will be on the Web site.

Chancellor McCormick said that more needs to be done with early childhood, elementary, and secondary schools. It might be interesting to hold a seminar showcasing individual examples from the system that demonstrate cooperative programs with the schools that have been effective. Ann Curme Shaw said that many organizations are

¹ The Diversity Division held a work day for affirmative action officers who need assistance in preparing their affirmative action plans.

addressing this issue, and she suggested that the system might have a role in coordinating their efforts.

3. Minnesota State TRiO Association.

Whitney Harris said that Minnesota TRiO's program is one of the best in the nation in terms of effectiveness. He introduced Charles Black Lance, Director of TRiO Programs at Central Lakes College and Project Coordinator for the American Indian Project at the Office of the Chancellor, who in turn introduced Dr. Karen Johnson from Winona State University and Dr. Jennifer Brookins-King from Minneapolis Community and Technical College. The three of them gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Board.

TRiO grew out of the civil rights movement and the war on Poverty. Originally there were three TRiO programs, but there are now nine programs. TRiO serves low-income and first-generation students, and is the nation's oldest and leading college access program. The speakers showed the correlation between the system's strategic directions one and two and the work of TRiO. There are 68 TRiO programs in Minnesota, 48 of which are in 22 of the Minnesota State system's institutions. The first TRiO program in the system started in 1966; and it has served as a model for best practices. Last spring a new initiative was granted to Central Lakes College. It was specifically designed to include American Indian students, although it is not restricted to American Indians. President Weyandt commented that TRiO is all-pervasive across the system; even those institutions that do not have TRiO funding use TRiO best practices.

4. Preliminary Report on Inventory of Recruitment and Retention Programs

Whitney Harris introduced, Ka Vang, Diversity Programs Manager, to introduce a chart summarizing recruitment and retention programs used in the system. The chart is drawn from the diversity plans submitted to the Diversity and Multiculturalism Division in October of 2007. These are representative examples and not meant to be an exhaustive list. The data fell into three categories: 1) Recruitment, 2) Retention, and 3) Recruitment and Retention combined, and the programs focus on Strategic Direction One, Access and Opportunity.

There was a discussion of the gender gap between males and females in the system. Trustee Dickson asked if Dr. Harris could circulate some literature about males in higher education. Dr. Harris said that there was currently a systemwide committee, Male Access and Success, that is studying this issue and will be reporting to the Leadership Council Diversity Committee in a few months. He offered to circulate a reading list to the Trustees. Chancellor McCormick encouraged a look at the total picture, including the private colleges and universities.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gale Rohde