A meeting of the Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee was held on March 19, 2008 at Wells Fargo Place, 4th Floor Board Room, 30 7th Street East, St. Paul. Chair Benson called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

1. Minutes of the January 16, 2008 Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee and the Minutes of January 16, 2008 Joint Advancement and Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee

The minutes of both January 16, 2008 meetings were approved as written.

2. Diversity and Multiculturalism Division Update

Dr. Harris said that he would frame the update in terms of the priority areas, citing highlights from among the many activities in these areas.

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

Nearly a year ago the Diversity and Multiculturalism Division started looking at the issue of gender equity in the system. Recently, the division convened the first meeting of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Male Access and Success Study Group. The responsibility of the study group is to work in cooperation with the Diversity and Multiculturalism Division and Academic and Student Affairs to examine issues of access and success for males at the system’s institutions. A final report will be prepared in approximately six months.

The Office of the Chancellor is in the process of contracting with a facilitator to lead ten focus groups of middle-school-aged students from groups traditionally underrepresented
in higher education to learn how to best do outreach to them and to their parents. Six of these groups will be in the metropolitan area and four in Greater Minnesota.

The division has begun work to revamp and update the "Make College Part of Your Future" brochure and translate it into several languages, and there are plans to translate the website into several languages as well. Even though the students will need English to succeed at school, the translation provides access to parents to information about the colleges and universities, and it creates a more welcoming climate.

Members of Diversity and Multiculturalism will be partnering with Minneapolis Public Schools to present programs to parents of middle school students about college issues. Staff will serve as translators for these sessions.

President Anne Weyandt spoke regarding Super Weekend. She said the Super Weekend program is some of the most important work. She would like to see this work continued. Having translators and translated literature has augmented this program. Dr. Harris said that this year the number of presentations was tripled from the previous year. One of the most exciting things has been the follow up to the event. Chancellor McCormick said he had gone to a Spanish-speaking church. One of the translators was a student; having a successful student as translator made the program even more effective.

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

At the invitation of campus presidents, the staff of the Diversity and Multiculturalism Division conducted several training sessions for frontline staff on campuses on issues of multicultural competency.

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

The Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee of the Leadership Council spent a session reviewing data. Plans are being made to develop programs to increase the diversity in pools from which the system draws its candidates.

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

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

3. Expenditure Data: Diversity-Oriented Academic Support and Cultural Support Services

Trustee Benson called on Whitney Harris to report on financial and funding data. This is one of a series of financial reports. The November report was on recruitment and

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1 The staff of the Diversity and Multiculturalism Division conducted compliance reviews at Anoka Ramsey and Century Colleges.
retention data. Academic assistance services and student support services overlap. The purpose of the report is to share additional information.

Diversity has been working closely with the Finance Division to find ways to collect and report the data that make sense. Diversity-oriented academic support services and diversity-oriented cultural support services do not only serve underrepresented students. The information needed had not previously been collected. Campuses were given descriptions and examples of the information needed after Office of the Chancellor staff first held a conference call with the campus diversity leaders in order to reach a common understanding of terms.

Diversity-oriented academic support services have limited eligibility based on need, and eligibility is determined before rendering these services. TRiO is one example. Of these funds, $9.3 million came from the general fund in fiscal year 2007, and $11.6 million came from federal funds. There were smaller amounts from other sources.

Diversity-oriented cultural support services are noncurricular programs designed to create a welcoming climate and are open to all students. They are part of what is assessed by the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) campus climate survey. While these services may be focused on a particular group, they serve all students and may also engage the larger community. Of these funds, $6.3 million came from the general fund in fiscal year 2007, and $.5 million came from federal funds.

Judy Borgen, Associate Vice Chancellor for Budget, said that expenditures for recruitment and retention as a whole are not currently identified at that level in the accounting system. Colleges and universities would have to self report the expenditures for these activities as they did for the report made at this meeting.

Trustee Hightower wondered if there was a way to identify how funds are being used up front instead of going back to the campuses afterwards to ask how they were spent. Judy Borgen said it is hard to determine up front how the money will be apportioned. President Weyandt said that at her campus, and she thinks at others, recruitment and retention of all students has been lumped together, rather than having specific groups broken out.

Chancellor McCormick says that the system’s success will be measured by how well it closes the gap. Are more of the underrepresented groups making it through high school and college? Dr. Harris said there are mechanisms being built into new programs to measure success in closing the gap.

President Weyandt agreed that there was a need for the system’s institutions to work with K-12 and others as partners to close the achievement gap, and that the campuses need the framework of quantifying the investment, determining best practices and measuring the difference that has been made. However, she was not sure that there was a consensus in communities that closing the gap is a major priority for colleges and universities. Vice Chancellor Linda Baer said her division is working on an action analytics approach:
where the money is put for what kind of activities, for what kind of outcomes and the cost/benefit ratio.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gale Rohde