

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
DIVERSITY AND MULTICUTURALISM COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
November 18, 2008**

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**Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Members Present:** Trustees Duane Benson, Chair; Clarence Hightower, Vice Chair; Allyson Lueneburg, Tom Renier, Terri Thomas.

**Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Members Absent:** Louise Sundin

**Other Board Members Present:** Trustees Cheryl Dickson, Jacob Englund, Christine Rice and James Van Houten.

**Leadership Council Members Present:** Dr. Whitney Stewart Harris, President Patrick Johns

A meeting of the Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee was held on November 18, 2008 at Wells Fargo Place, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Board Room, 30 7<sup>th</sup> Street East, St. Paul. Chair Benson called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m.

**1. Minutes of the July 16, 2008 Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee**

The minutes of the July 16, 2008 meeting were approved as written

**2. Minutes of Joint Advancement and Diversity and Multiculturalism Committees of July 16, 2008.**

The minutes of the July 16, 2008 joint committee meeting were approved as written.

**3. Diversity and Multiculturalism Update**

This item was deferred to allow more time for other agenda items. Whitney Harris introduced Aicha Cooper, the new student intern for the Diversity and Multiculturalism division.

**4. Update on Enrollment and Retention of Underrepresented Students**

Dr. Craig Schoenecker reported on some of the impacts of the investment in Access and Opportunity Centers for Fiscal Year 2008. Dr. Schoenecker reiterated the definition of underrepresented students as students of color, low-income students, and/or first-generation students. Between FY2007 and FY2008 there was an increase in underrepresented students (about six and one half percent) as compared to the total

enrollment (about four percent). There was also an increase in retention rates of underrepresented students. At system colleges the retention rate of underrepresented students increased from to 47.5 percent to 48.3 percent; at the universities, it increased from 70 percent to 71.2 percent.

There is not complete data on the origins of students, but it is estimated that about 22 percent of students of color are from origins outside of the United States.

## **5. Update on Underrepresented Student Programs**

Dr. Mike López introduced the update by saying the board had allocated money for the creation of three college access and opportunity centers. In previous meetings he has provided summaries of their work. At this session, in order to provide a more in-depth review of the centers' work, he brought representatives from the center operated by Century Community College and Inver Hills Community College: Jason Cardinal, Barbara Read and Tadael Emiru. Reports on the other two centers will be provided at the March and May meetings.

Dr. Barbara Read said the goals of the center include increasing high school graduation rates for underrepresented students, strengthening their college readiness, and developing collaborative relationships between high school and college teachers. The center aims to address both systemic change and direct services to students. Dr. Read described the "R you Ready?" program as a direct-service program designed to help middle school students aspire to college.

Jason Cardinal introduced a DVD on "Preparing to Achieve a College Education (PACE)," which assists high school students to do college-level work by taking courses in a cohort on Saturdays during the summer. This is not just for high-level academic students, but is designed for middle-level students, with a focus on underrepresented students; and the students can earn college credits as a result. Tadael Emiru distributed a handout which described how the PACE program exceeded the center's goals for enrollment, completion rate, grades and retention. For example, he said, center staff had hoped to have 100 students enrolled in the program, but 123 were enrolled.

Dr. Read characterized the program as a balance of rigorous academics and very intrusive advising. She spoke of using the grant money also to expand the existing learning community program, and she described how the cooperation among students and between students and instructors has enhanced the effectiveness of the programs. Mr. Cardinal said that the program has increased the communication and collaboration between the community colleges and the high schools. Trustee Hightower and Trustee Benson both said the work of the center was very impressive, but asked that staff find ways to document the difference the program has made. Dr. Harris said that there is both a strong evaluation component and a research component built into these programs as a way of learning which programs are most effective.

**6. Campus Climate Update: Community College Student Engagement Survey**  
**7. FY 2009 Diversity and Multiculturalism Division Work Plan**

The Campus Climate Update and the Diversity and Multiculturalism Work Plan were deferred to the January meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gale Rohde