

Annual Diversity Report to the Faculty Senate, 2003-2004

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Overview

Six committees are the subject of this report: Advocates and Allies for GLBT Issues [GLBT] (formerly Advocates for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Issues); the Committee on the Status of Women [CSW]; the Multiethnic Coalition [MEC]; the Intercultural Collaborative [IC]; the University Disabilities Resource Coalition [UDRC]; and the Work and Family Taskforce [WFT]. This report will summarize committee activities for 2003-2004, and will provide an overview of the directions that will be taken for the 2004-2005 academic year.

With the exception of the CSW, this was a transitional year during which each of the committees underwent substantial change in membership and a modification in mission. As foreshadowed in the 2002-2003 report, the committees (with the exception of the CSW) broadened their initial missions to include a more direct emphasis on providing educational opportunities to the university community for the 2004-2005 academic year.

The President assisted the GLBT, the IC, the MEC, and the WFT, in a recruitment drive at mid-year. The result was a turnover in membership as new voices came forward. (Membership on the CSW is established by recommendations from the Faculty Senate, augmented by self-identifying volunteers. The UDRC is equally well established and staffed).

The WFT benefited most in this process and was transformed from a small group of long-committed faculty and staff into a larger, more diverse, and more vibrant organization. This success is a clear indication, in my view, that Work and Family issues remain a central challenge to the institution's students and employees.

The GLBT benefited least from the recruitment drive. Two new members were added to an original support team that had dwindled to four stalwart and deeply committed members of the university community. While the continued low rate of participation may beg the question of the viability of this committee, the major task it has undertaken for Fall 2004 is clearly a courageous and ambitious action with enormous potential to benefit the university community and beyond [see. GLBT, On Tap for 2004-2005, below].

The IC and MEC benefited from the recruitment drive, and both appear well positioned for Fall 2004.

One of the major benefits of the recruitment drive was to provide the committees with summer opportunities to continue their planning efforts for activities that will be initiated in the Fall. For the past two years this strategy has eliminated the start-up lag time that is often experienced by other university-wide committees.

Committees

Advocates and Allies on GLBT Issues

<http://www.unr.edu/sapd/GLBTAdvocacyCommittee.htm>

Meetings of the GLBT were suspended for the first semester due to lack of attendance, internal disagreement, and my consideration that the committee may not be a viable vehicle to address the issues and concerns of GLBT members of the university community. For reasons that still elude me, the initial promise of the committee has gone unfulfilled. The committee's early commitment to work to establish domestic partner benefits within the benefits wholly controlled by UCCSN dissipated in the wake of internal disagreement and national events.

The hiatus ended in the Spring 2004 when four members decided to push forward. Planning sessions resulted in a decision to provide at least one training exercise in the elimination of homophobia for Fall 2004. The committee produced a training manual [[SAFEZONE Project](#)], and finalized the logistics of offering the training to the faculty and graduate students of the College of Education. Our rationale was two-fold: (1) the faculty and graduate students of the COE have the broadest interaction with the larger K-12 community and may be well placed to continue the process of combating homophobia; and (2) a useful training program could model the "Advocate and Allies" relationship and encourage more members of the campus community to join or otherwise actively support the committee.

On Tap for 2004-2005

"Safe Zone" training in September to the COE.

Anticipated Needs: More campus involvement. Anything the Faculty Senate can do to aid the viability of this committee, or suggest an alternative course that can meet our community's need to combat homophobia and heterosexism would be welcomed.

Committee on the Status of Women

[http://www.unr.edu/sapd/csw\(new\).htm](http://www.unr.edu/sapd/csw(new).htm)

The CSW produces an independent annual report for the Faculty Senate. The committee's recommendations for 2004, and a summary of a survey conducted by the Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE), can be found at

the committee web site above, or via the following links:

http://www.unr.edu/sapd/documents/CSW_Recommendations_20042.pdf .

<http://www.unr.edu/sapd/documents/UNRWISEsurvey2003-summary2.pdf> .

Both items have been discussed with the President, and follow-up will be communicated separately.

Intercultural Collaborative

(<http://www.unr.edu/sapd/IC.htm>)

Largely reconstituted in the Spring semester, the IC is still feeling its' way. Volunteer co-chairs have not stepped forward, the spring meetings were largely organizational (modifying the mission statement; brain-storming ideas and issues) and attendance at summer meetings has been sporadic given summer schedules. The committee has embraced a role to provide education opportunities and will work to define that portion of its agenda in Fall 2004.

Additional strength may reside in new members who conduct intercultural and other awareness trainings that are much in demand by off-campus businesses, state agencies and other organizations.

Anticipated for 2004-2005

Some of the committee's initial interests have centered on student-related questions. These questions may indicate directions the committee may take: (1) do we continue to offer training for university academic advisers who serve "transfer" students?; (2) how do we construct a community in which students recognize and exercise their empowerment?; (3) how can we facilitate more systematic student-to-student mentoring?

The committee has also asked to review the results of a survey of Students of Color conducted by the Division of Student Service [the analysis has not been completed as of this writing].

The Multiethnic Coalition

(<http://www.unr.edu/sapd/mec.htm>)

The recruitment drive attracted several new members to this already strong committee—particularly from academic faculty in the sciences and engineering. Two important new directions have emerged: (1) the committee will investigate the utility of adopting the intercultural communication module developed by International Students and Scholars to increase intercultural understanding more broadly on campus; and (2) the committee is particularly interested in the possible expansion of the COE's Dean's Future Scholar [DFS] program to other colleges and schools, particularly those with strong curricula in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math [STEM]. The rationale is that the historic under-representation of

people of color in these disciplines cannot be overcome without long term investment in and cultivation of students of color, their parents and their communities.

I include the following illustration as the basis for the recommendation which follows it.

On behalf of the committee, I organized a joint discussion with the Deans of Science, Engineering, and Cooperative Extension to discuss the development of what I envisioned as a consortium of DFC programs with an emphasis on STEM disciplines. Cooperative Extension was included because it offers after-school programs to children in both Washoe and Clark Counties, and could provide both a venue and a constituency for such a joint DFC program. Our discussion alerted me to two grant submissions that would provide funding for such programs in Science and Engineering. I was subsequently informed that one of the grants submitted by the COE's DFS program had been funded. No further information was available regarding a large submission to NSF—a joint application by the COE, the College of Engineering, and WCSU—that predated the implementation of the College of Science. The College of Liberal Art, meanwhile, will develop a Dean's Future Scholars program.

This experience demonstrates and underscores one of the most consistent difficulties of navigating the university: we have not implemented the mechanisms necessary for clear and efficient internal communication. Individuals and groups often work on related issues in nearly total isolation from one another. We do not have an effective means to detect—much less encourage—the kind of synergies prophesized by strategic planning. "Light bulb" moments based on chance encounters are more the rule than the exception.

Recommendation

The Provost's Office developed a database of university outreach programs several years ago. The potential for synergy in outreach efforts might be enhanced if a searchable database was maintained, updated, and accessible through the Faculty/Staff page of the university web site.

Backlogged items

Several issues raised in 2002-2003 remained outstanding, given the flux in university staffing in key areas. Because these issues should find resonance with the Faculty Senate, I've included them here with an update of their current status.

Faculty and Staff

- A. The "silencing" of faculty and staff, particular women and people of color
 1. Concerns regarding the implicit and explicit silencing of faculty and staff, especially acute for tenure track and new administrative faculty and staff, was expressed in several contexts. The most pressing was

- the need to more fully integrate new faculty and staff into the units of their employment from orientation onward
2. The need to establish practices which allow the university to realize the richness of opinion that is a primary justification for, and benefit from, an increasingly diverse faculty and staff
 3. The existence of climates at the unit level in which administrators are perceived as silencing anyone who's view do not agree with those of the administrator
- B. Need for Supervisor Training
- There is an unmet need to provide training for supervisors in the management of a diverse workforce. More explicitly, there is a need to train managers and supervisors to:
1. Perform more effectively in increasingly intercultural settings
 2. Communicate more effectively in settings where language and action are open to multiple culturally based interpretations
- C. Challenges faced by classified staff
1. The evaluation of job responsibilities that are changed between, rather than at the point of, a performance appraisal can be problematic. A supervisor's expectation of employee performance can be at variance with what an employee believes to be the basis of performance evaluation
 2. Effective communication should establish, precisely, the elements upon which staff are to be evaluated in the immediate next evaluation period
 3. The timing of performance appraisals: practices in some units do not conform to the requirements listed in the State Handbook
- D. We need clear explicit policy and procedures on:
1. Classified Staff
 - a. the appropriate role of classified staff within their unit
 - b. the appropriate relationship between staff, faculty, and students within each unit
 - c. demands on classified staff that are inappropriate from faculty and students
 2. Graduate Assistants:
 - a. the GSA's goal to develop a Bill of Rights for Graduate Assistants has stalled, but the need for a clear articulation of such rights remains
 3. Student Employees:
 - a. the appropriate role of student employees within their unit
 - b. the appropriate relationship between student employees, staff, and faculty within each unit
 - c. demands on student employees that are inappropriate from faculty and staff (i.e., unpaid assistance in moving; babysitting; house-sitting; etc.)
- E. Annual evaluation of supervisor
- Would the university and its employees benefit from the wider adoption of a procedure that allows those who are supervised to have a formal role in the annual evaluation of their supervisors (the 360' model)?

Update on the backlogged items

The issues/concerns listed in A, and E will require further exploration. **The substantive concerns raised in A, however, should be of interest to the Faculty Senate.**

I've discussed those listed in B and C with Gena Jones, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources. They were also discussed in a separate meeting with Carole Anderson, Employee Development in HR. Both discussions were reported to the committee, and although the dialogues were friendly neither resulted in early commitments by HR to pursue and/or resolve the issues/concerns.

On Tap for 2004-2005

Though no final decisions were made, the committee developed a list of potential educational topics to begin addressing in the Fall.

- The relationship between African American and African students
- Cultural isolation in the classroom
- The alienation of individuals within groups: the role of an "outsider"
- How, as educators, do our assumptions about individual students impact their educational outcomes?
- "Accent" in the classroom as a challenge and an opportunity
- The value of higher education in the context of a globalized economy
- How should we, as educators, empower students to take control of their education? [this mirrors the IC above]
 - Students, what are your responsibilities in working to achieve academic success?
- What can we learn from multinational perspectives that might inform the two previous questions?
- Growing our own: using graduate students to proselytize "the hows and whys" of graduate education to ethnic undergraduate clubs, organizations, etc.

The University Disabilities Resource Coalition

<http://www.unr.edu/sapd/udrc/>

The UDRC continues to be one of the most effective diversity-related committees. Well staffed by knowledgeable volunteers, the committee has continued its diligent advocacy to resolve disability related issues on campus. A major and continuing emphasis has been ADA/504 compliance in Lawlor Event Center and Mackay Stadium. Particular attention has been given to accessibility issues, the adequacy of seating, restroom facilities and other structural concerns.

The committee has also moved beyond basic legal compliance in an attempt to encourage a spirit of welcoming cooperation with the ICA staff

and others associated with the operation and maintenance of the university's two major public venues. Unlike similar discussions with previous administrations in ICA, a discussion that included representatives of the committee (Michael Coray, Special Assistant to the President for Diversity, John Burnett, Director of Affirmative Action and ADA Compliance Officer, and Lyle Woodward, Facilities Management representative to the committee) with the new Athletic Director (AD), her staff, and the management of Lawlor, promises to bear tangible results: improved seating for individuals in wheelchairs; chair-accessible restrooms; a new attitude of cheerful customer service by event staff to all patrons, particularly those who might request assistance; and new ADA compliance and awareness training for event staff by the university's ADA Compliance/Affirmative Action officer. The AD will also provide a representative to the committee.

This development represents a dramatic change with past efforts to encourage compliance in Lawlor and Mackay. It also brings the committee "full circle" in achieving an earlier goal of including as many of the "players" as possible directly on the committee to facilitate better communication and follow-up on committee recommendations.

The committee also mounted a reasonably successful drive this year to encourage employees on the main or other campuses to report access and other difficulties or questions directly to the Michael Coray or to Lyle Woodward. This has been particularly useful in helping the employees in off-campus facilities address compliance concerns.

The committee has also recommended the creation of a campus map that clearly displays accessible routes, including those within buildings. If developed, this map should be available to the public on the university's web site.

The committee continues to be concerned about the accessibility of teaching and other class materials on the web, and continues to have occasional discussions in this regard with the university webmaster. The committee's goal, and that of the webmaster, is to insure that all web-based instructional material is 508 compliant (an enormous commitment that will require the active endorsement and support of the President's Council, the Faculty Senate, the Academic Leadership Council, the all departments that provide web-based instruction).

On Tap for 2004-05

As of this writing, the committee will:

- undertake a series of public "brown bag" lunch discussions on a range of "hidden disabilities" that are most prevalent/misunderstood on campus

- participate and co-sponsor Disability Awareness Month (October 2004).

The Work and Family Taskforce

http://www.unr.edu/sapd/workandfamilytaskforce_000.htm

The WFT has, as mentioned above, undergone a fundamental rebirth as a result of the recruitment drive in the Spring semester. Faculty and staff interests are high, continuity with past concerns and recommendations has been maintained, and the richness of talent and expertise of the individual committee members will serve the WFT well as it moves forward.

The committee has had an opportunity to review the 2001 report and recommendations included in [Work & Family at UNR: Planning for the Future](#) as a jumping off point for the 2004-2005 year. Some of the more general issues that have emerged include: (1) the continuing urgent need for affordable, safe, and accessible child/day care; (2) a desire to have an office of Work and Family within HR (or the consolidation of services and information into a single point of contact); (3) the need to update the resources listed on the committee's original web site (this has become a summer project and the revised and updated resource list will be housed at the committee's new web site, above); and (4) a desire to develop an employee appreciation program that enhances the opportunity of employees and their families to participate in the university's array of cultural, athletic, and co-curricular programs.

On Tap for 2004-2005

- Workshops on family topics (better publicity for what is currently offered, and the development of additional topics)
- Develop a handbook on work-family policies (the revised resource list will initiate that process)
- Advocate for, and assess the feasibility of, a reduction of faculty workload for dependent care
- Develop training/guidance to supervisors on work-family issues
- Advocate the establishment of "relocation services" (a broad range of assistance in such arenas as housing, schools, child and dependent care, employment, etc.) to assist university employees
- Identify and cooperate with support groups on work-family issues both on and off campus
- Advocate for the designation of staff specifically charged to improve the university's work-family environment
- Identify and build a resource library on work-family issues (or coordinate decentralized holdings across campus)