

Diversity and inclusion
September 26, 2017
Approved: 10/31/2017

In Attendance: Lara Willox, Yves Rose Porcena, Angela Pashia, LaDonia Patterson, Ihor Pidhainy, Michelle Frazier Trotman Scott, Philip Reaves, Jairus-Joaquin Matthews, Muriel Cormican, Jeong H. Kang, Isabel Maggiano

I. **2:00 PM** LW called the meeting to order and minutes were approved.

II. **Diversifying the Faculty**

The meeting began with a discussion of notes prepared by Drs. Elizabeth Dahms and Yves Rose Porcena for Provost Michael Crafton on diversifying the faculty. The guiding question was whether the committee might present to Faculty Senate a recommendation/resolution about diversifying the faculty.

Decision: Yes, with the caveat that we not just prepare a “we support this” statement but include ideas for implementation.

YRP was asked what she identifies as important goals for the University in terms of its diversity initiatives more broadly speaking. Given her experience directly with such issues and her position as the Senior Diversity Officer on Campus, the group felt that her knowledge would prove helpful in drafting a resolution. She identified the following:

- 1) Faculty diversity (Evidence suggests that it is linked to student success, retention, etc.)
- 2) Diversity at the unit levels, not just through a central office
- 3) Changing the office to address faculty concerns

A Small committee of volunteers agreed to draft a resolution: Angela Pashia, LaDonia Patterson, and Michelle Frazier Trotman Scott (in the order in which they volunteered).

Discussion on the question of internationalization followed. Since the committee is the Committee on Diversity and Internationalization, some wondered how the latter fits into the idea of diversity and how we can ensure not losing focus on one of the charges of the committee.

There was general agreement (no vote taken) that the two issues be kept separate given that they have different contexts, histories, and different remedies.

III. **Minority Serving Institution Presentation**

LW presented information on UWG’s current status as a PBI (predominantly black institution). This makes the institution eligible for a variety of grants/funding opportunities. The committee discussed how to make all of this better known on campus. It was agreed that, as a start, the committee would request a spot at the next Faculty Senate meeting to present an “Information item.”

The committee discussed what it perceived to be problematic discourses (given to negative stereotyping) on campus and in the community about the changing demographics of the institution and how it might intervene positively in those discourses. The committee will consider the following:

- 1) Creating an award to shine a light on positive examples from groups often negatively perceived.
- 2) Expanding and giving more attention to the MAP program.
- 3) Collecting and disseminating positive stories about our students to help dissipate unfounded and specious “fear” discourses.

The discussion then turned to retention of our minority and international students. A broad array of ideas was broached in what became a brainstorming activity.

- 1) Could the committee help organize tutoring for specific demographic groups by members of that demographic group?
- 2) Can the committee do some research on who is our campus now in terms of faculty? How has, or has, the faculty changed in terms of internationalization? This is an aspect we don’t know much about.
- 3) Can the committee make an inventory of support systems? A summary of resources available?
- 4) Should we ask to add a “Did you know” agenda item to every Faculty Senate meeting?

Information item: The Graduate School is working on diversity initiatives with COAH and Fort Valley State, among other places, to develop recruitment paths to help diversify our graduate programs.

IV. International Student/Faculty Support

This part of the meeting is also best characterized as a brainstorming activity. Among the committee’s questions were the following:

1. How do we support international faculty and students better?
2. Could UWG eventually develop an English as a second language center? LW will contact John Head
3. Should we try to help establish and/or publicize policies and procedures for hiring international faculty?
4. Should the committee spend time making an inventory in this area too?
5. How can the committee encourage and develop flexibility within the bureaucratic processes used on campus that are often americentric and not given to accommodating differences in academic and other cultures across the globe?

V. Liaison Reports – permanent agenda item.

- a. LW reminded the committee of a forthcoming survey.
- b. IP reported on the Office of Education Abroad Advisory Committee. The discussions, he reported, centered on the recent Study Abroad Fair.