

Diversity Council Meeting Minutes

Date/time/location of meeting: Tuesday, February 21, 2017: 2:00pm: 220A-4

Council members in attendance

Byron Thomas (Chair)

Anita Bowden

Gaelan Benway

Trent Masiki

Elda Zeko

Terri Rodriguez

Ed Crotty

Maria Addison

Tiger Swan

Vaughn Lee

Agenda Items

The agenda items included the recruitment, hiring, and retention of minority faculty and staff, gender neutral restrooms, along with the challenges and experiences of the immigrant student population at QCC.

Discussion Summary

As it relates to the recruitment, hiring, and retention of minority faculty and staff, we discussed the 2007 Campus Climate Survey regarding its findings and usefulness in constructing a survey instrument that would be administered to the campus community, including faculty and staff from underrepresented groups, to obtain information regarding their experiences at the college as it relates to matters of diversity and inclusion. Based on our discussion of the survey instrument, it was determined that it would be best to consult with Ingrid in the Office of Institutional Research and Planning due to her expertise in the area and we set a goal of administering the survey during the fall 2017 semester. We also discussed the usefulness of conducting focus groups as another method of gathering information on the subject. Regarding our discussion on conducting focus groups, Gaelan made mention of the importance of conducting focus groups at the different QCC campus locations. Anita and Elda inquired as to which groups would be included in the focus groups and pointed out the need to be inclusive. We also decided on beginning the focus groups in March of this year. Council members also made several suggestions for improving retention among minority faculty and staff. For example, Trent highlighted the importance of developing and implementing a comprehensive onboarding process for new faculty and staff, including providing new faculty and staff with information on

housing, schools, and the Worcester area. Gaelan and Maria pointed out that the Breakfast Club would be a good pathway to put the onboarding process into practice and Trent referenced the need to collaborate with Pat and Nancy on an onboarding system for new hires. Additionally, Terri brought of the idea of providing opportunities for new hires to get together on an informal bases and somewhat regularly as a way to socialize and share information about their experiences.

Concerning gender neutral restrooms, Ed made the council aware of a restroom in the Surprenant Building that is now gender neutral. Some members of the council brought up concerns over the layout of gender neutral restrooms, along with questions related to the impact of building codes on the layout of such restroom spaces. Tiger inquired as to whether or not one of the faculty restrooms in the Quest Building could be designated as a gender neutral restroom. Ed indicated that he would check with Jim Racki regarding building code issues.

Regarding the immigrant student population at QCC, members of the council brought up the importance of understanding the different statuses that affect QCC students (i.e. undocumented, refugee, etc.). Other members highlighted the need to identify information about the rights of students from a variety of sources and provide the information to students through various avenues, such as the QCC campus newspaper. Vaughn inquired about the possibility of developing a survey geared towards the immigrant student population and Zelda stressed the need to find out how other colleges and universities are addressing the experiences and needs of their immigrant student population. There was discussion about immigrant student safety concerns and resources available to foreign students or immigrants.

Discussion Conclusion

The council concluded its meeting by establishing specific action items to pursue based on suggestions stemming from our discussion on the established agenda items. Accordingly, Trent and I will meet with Ingrid during the week of March 6th to consult with her about the survey instrument; the council members will communicate by email to further develop our plans regarding the focus groups, along with our plans to compile and disseminate information that might be useful to the immigrant student population; and Ed will follow up with college officials regarding gender neutral restrooms.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Diversity Council will he held on Tuesday, March 28, 2017 at 2:00pm in Room 220A-4.