



UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE

FACULTY SENATE DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

3211 Providence Drive, Anchorage Alaska 99508
Drs Robert Boeckmann & Steven Aufrecht, Co-chairs.

DATE: NOVEMBER 4, 2005
TO: Dr. Greg Protasel, Faculty Senate President
FROM: Rob Crosman, Secretary
SUBJECT: Committee Status Report.

The second regular meeting for 2005-06 was held on October 28, 2005 in BEB 303, from 1:30 to 3:00 P.M.

Present: Profs. Robert Boeckmann (Chair), Ping-Tung Chang, Robert Crosman (secretary), Herminia Din, Patricia Fagan, Dave Fitzgerald, Dennis Howard, Helena Jermalovic, Natasa Masanovic, Sudarsan Rangarajan, Ira Romel, Sam Thiru. Chairita Franklin, Director of the Campus Diversity & Compliance Office, Mike McCormack, Student Activities Director, and Russell Pressley, Academic Advising Coordinator (CHSW) also attended.

Dr. Gabrielle Barnett, from the Bachelor of Liberal Studies program, addressed us on the possibilities for enhancing diversity in her program. The BLS, she said, was important to the project in spreading a sensitivity to diversity because it was the major subject of many future elementary school teachers. In her courses, Humanities and Dance, she emphasized developing a multiplicity of perspectives – for example contrasting the Western European and Hindu traditions in literature and dance. Visiting speakers can also add information from different cultural backgrounds. Mainstreaming multicultural course content she believed, was a way of achieving diversity during the current freeze in hiring.

Science courses are team-taught, and even in the humanities diversity can be achieved by diverse methods of teaching, as well as diverse content.

In hiring, she suggested that interviewers ask “How do you address issues of diversity in your teaching and academic work?”

Discussion followed. Dr. Romel suggested surveying students in your classes demographically, and described ways of enlisting student contributions to the syllabus as a way of ensuring relevance of the materials to those being taught. Dr. Barnett agreed, subject to limitations imposed by national tests in standardizing course content.

On hiring, Dr. Howard pointed out that questions being asked of applicants were only as good as the questioners evaluating the answers. Mike McCormack suggested the question “How **will you** address diversity issues **when you get here?** This question would elicit the applicant’s knowledge of UAA as well as her commitment to diversity.

Chairman Boeckmann and secretary Crosman described the mixed reaction of October’s Faculty Senate to the suggested diversity questions for the course evaluation questionnaires. The Faculty Senate’s Professional Development Committee wants

to coordinate with us in providing professional development to help faculty improve their skills in teaching a diverse student body.

Time being short, Dr. Crosman proposed that he re-send our four goals for 2005-06 to members of the committee, and that each of us pledge to serve on a sub-committee devoted to achieving **one** of these goals. They are:

- 1) Diversity training for new and returning faculty. Make it substantial, including an annual visit to the Alaska Native Heritage Center. Make diversity-oriented activities and teaching a mandatory part of the periodic self-review that all faculty perform.
- 2) Bring speakers on diversity issues to UAA on a regular, ongoing basis. Depak Chopra, Fr. Aleksa, and bel hooks were suggested as possible speakers.
- 3) An initiative to find ways to hire more faculty of color, including targeted advertising, direct hires, salary subventions, recruitment at professional conferences.
- 4) Put sensitivity questions onto the student evaluation forms. Last May's resolution for the Faculty Senate to include questions of diversity onto the new student evaluation forms was received with some caution by that body. The committee undertook to visit that proposal again to make it more palatable to the Faculty Senate.

Director Chairita Franklin distributed copies of the handsome new "Diversity Resource Guide," which lists and describes diversity-related Academic Programs; Support Programs; Clubs, Councils and Committees; and Community Support Programs. This guide, which assembles much important information in one place, is a valuable new resource for students trying to find their way around campus, and for faculty who advise them.

- **Next meeting: Next scheduled meeting will be on Friday, November 18th, 2005, 3:00 - 4:30P.M. Location to be announced.**
- **December's meeting will be on Friday the 9th. Time and place to be decided later.**
- **Website: See the Website for the latest News Flash and the Diversity Scholarship Notices - <http://hosting.uaa.alaska.edu/fsdc/diversity.html>**

ACTION ITEMS: NONE