

Minority Affairs Committee Meeting, Oct 21, 2011.

Present: Noor Azizan-Gardner, Casandra Harper, Eliana Jeanetta, Mark Milanick, Kristin Schwain,
Guest: Leona Rubin

Leona Rubin, Chair of Faculty Council, 2010-2011, lead a discussion about the diversity course requirement. The committee discussed ways that MAC could support current diversity courses and students taking them, as well as other ways to foster more dialogue on the issue of requiring a diversity course. A selection of the ideas follows:

MAC could host a website that brings together people in the idea stage of working on projects related to diversity and minority needs. This would be different from the wonderful resources listed on the Mizzou Diversity website; the Mizzou Diversity website lists activities and groups that are fully formed and active. The MAC website could host those activities in progress and in this way foster more groups working together early. Hopefully most of the ideas initially hosted by MAC would be fully formed and organized and transition to the Mizzou Diversity Website. Potential terms for this website/blog include Incubator for Innovative Ideas for Inclusivity (4I or I^4) or Incubator for Designing and Innovating Diversity (ID^2).

MAC could host a website that lists current courses that met last year's Faculty Council's definition of a Diversity Intensive course. This would allow students looking for such a course an easy way to browse them and also allow faculty teaching the courses to perhaps identify other faculty for support in the current course as well as allow faculty considering teaching such courses a list of possible contacts for assistance in developing a course.

MAC could publish information about how many Big 12 and SEC schools currently have a diversity course requirement.

MAC could provide recognition to those faculty who redesign their course to make it fit Faculty Council's Definition of Diversity Intensive including letters of appreciation to FC and to the faculty's chair. MAC could also host a website with the Diversity Intensive Requirements and provide a way for faculty considering developing such a course to pair with education research faculty in an effort to not only teach a DI course but also obtain an educational research publication from the effort.

There remains a need to identify gender neutral bathrooms on campus and an easy source to find them. This overlaps with a need of the Family Friendly Task Force/Committee and MAC will work with them on this. Hopefully, MU could brag that either every building on campus has a gender neutral bathroom OR from any building on campus a gender neutral bathroom is only x yards away.

MAC could encourage the administration to change many single stall (or stall and urinal) bathrooms to gender neutral bathrooms; presumably this would only require a sign change and addition of a lock to the door and so would be substantially less cost than requiring plumbing changes. MAC could also sponsor a contest for artistic and cost effective designs for covering the urinals; students, particularly in the arts, that had their designs chosen would not only improve the situation on campus but also be able to add the award to their c.v.

Associate Professors have been found to be the least happy of faculty. MAC could work to get them involved in developing more ways to make the campus diverse and inclusive; they are the rank of faculty who tend to innovate the most and MAC could be one way to encourage, recognize, and reward their efforts.

There was also a discussion of how divisions created by boxes on forms have become outdated. The FASFA form now requests information about two supporting parents, married or unmarried, same sex or opposite sex. Some colleges have added an "other" box to the choices of male/female. Some institutions are allowing students to identify with more than one racial group. MAC will have further discussions to see which types of changes we should advocate for MU this year.

MAC was informed that the system has changed its faculty awards program to promote more diversity in the type of award winners and the members present were all enthusiastic about the changes.

MAC was informed that FC was reviewing promotion and tenure guidelines. Iowa now has a part-time tenure track. This is another issue that overlaps with the Family Friendly Task Force/Committee and MAC could work with them to be sure the promotion and tenure guidelines promote a diverse faculty. There does seem to be some differences between those activities that count towards P&T and those activities that are most valuable to the university community and perhaps there needs to be better alignment. Is asking "what I have to do to get promotion and tenure?" a bit like a student asking, "what do I have to do to get an "A"?" ?