

March 17, 2005

Dear Colleagues: Please add to, or correct the summary, as you deem appropriate based on your own recollections.

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 14 at 4:00. We will send out the room information and an agenda in a couple of weeks.

Thanks so much.
Amber and Flore

The Minority Affairs Committee met on March 17. Two informative presentations were made; Deputy Chancellor Michael Middleton also attended our meeting and listened to the presentations:

1. Sang Kim, Director of the Asian Affairs Center, met with the Committee and presented a great deal of information about his center, which was created in 1998. He discussed MU partner programs with several universities in Southeast Asia, particularly in China, Japan, Korea (where most of our partner programs are), Thailand, and Vietnam. Several MU colleges have dual degree programs with Southeast Asian Universities, such as the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources' (CAFNR) program in Agro-tourism with Chonnam National University in Korea; and the department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis (ELPA) and the School of Information System and Learning Technologies' (SISLT)--both in the College of Education--exchange programs with Prince of Songkla University in Thailand. The College of Engineering has a twinning program with Thailand, and is in the process of developing exchanges with universities in China. The department of Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) has a study abroad in Asia in the summer of 2005. MU Soccer Program also participates in exchanges with the Korean National Women's Soccer Team.

In addition, the Missouri International Training Institute (MITI) offers training programs for Asian Visiting Officials and Scholars, and there are Special (Enrichment) Programs for Asian College Students, such as the English Proficiency and Internship Program offered in the summer. Mr. Kim also told us that MU is sending a delegation to the 7th Harry Truman Conference that will take place in May in Korea. There is a tuition free program for Korean students that was put together in the late 1950s, by President Truman, as a result of the Korean War. On our campus, there is a strong representation of Asian students: China leads the group with 283 students, India follows with 232, and South Korea is in third place with 205 students. Taiwan has 97 students, and Thailand 61.

To facilitate the acclimatization process of new Asian students, there exists an email body system. Prospective Asian students are put in contact via email with current Asian students at MU, and they can gather pertinent information about MU before they arrive. Mr Kim told us that this system is very successful; the committee discussed the possibility of recommending such a system for other prospective minority students.

2. The second presentation was made by Ryan Hack, MU senior and President of the Hispanic American Leadership Organization (HALO). He brought to the committee's attention various issues affecting Hispanic students. For example, HALO feels that MU could do more to recruit Hispanic students. MU has a current enrollment of 444 Hispanic students, which represents 1.6% of the student population. HALO suggests that MU pursue a more aggressive recruitment plan: Admission materials (including scholarships materials) should be printed in Spanish. Ryan Hack explains that this is important to enable parents--who are not all English-speakers--to understand the information and discuss it with their children. He also discussed the possibility of MU having a coordinator for Hispanic Affairs, Recruitment, and Retention. MU should target specific schools in the Kansas City Area, where most of the Hispanics in Missouri reside. Hispanic students could be invited to come to MU and visit the campus. Other possibilities include having summer programs for Hispanic high schoolers to enable them to have an MU experience. HALO believes that an existing familiarity with MU will be critical in Hispanic students' decision to enroll at MU once they graduate. The proposed coordinator should also act as a liaison between the admission office and the various academic units.

Ryan Hack went on to talk about MU being more aware of national organizations for Hispanics, such as the National Hispanic Institute College Register, and the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute. These organizations can help MU target talented Hispanics and entice them to pursue their college education at MU. HALO feels that the MU Hispanic student organizations can also be involved in the recruitment and retention of Hispanic students. Once Hispanic students are here, Ryan talked about diversifying and "modernizing" the curriculum to meet their needs. He discussed the development of a Hispanic and/or Latin American Studies Program, that focuses specifically on Hispanic perspectives from a variety of disciplines (political sciences, sociology, and so on). HALO also suggested that the Spanish department develops courses in areas other than literature, that can attract Hispanic students. Areas can include Business Spanish, Chicano and immigrant issues.