CHANCELLOR’S COMMISSION ON DIVERSITY
Meeting notes for March 8, 2013

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR ADVANCE/RETREAT
April 12, 2013 from 11:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Location TBA

CHOOSE FOCUS FOR ADVANCE/RETREAT

• The 2009 Plan for Diversity focused on six areas:
  o Access and Equity – Employees
  o Access and Equity – Students
  o Campus Climate,
    o Community Partnerships
  o Curriculum and Research
  o Learning and Development

• Commission members “voted” our top three priorities on wall charts that listed the following nine topics:
  o Climate – 44 votes
  o Student access – 30 votes
  o Employee equity – 30 votes
  o Student equity – 15 votes
  o Community partnerships – 14 votes
  o Globalization – 6 votes
  o Research – 6 votes
  o Curriculum – 5 votes
  o Employee access – 0 votes

• Each member had three votes of 3-2-1 points to assign to the above, with latitude to use all 6 of points on one area if we felt strongly about it.

• Top three priorities:
  o #1 Climate
  o #2 Student Access and Employee Equity (tie)

• Commission will prioritize:
Which require huge buy-in?
Which do not (low-hanging fruit)?
Which will give us some momentum to build on?
Effort must be a grassroots one, not dependent on the top-down model

• Commission will choose three action steps from the three priorities:
  • Commission will not produce another diversity plan.
  • Will focus on action steps, not on goals. We need action.
  • As we take some small action steps and have successes, we can then bring out some of the more audacious action steps and have a better chance of achieving those.

WHICH GROUPS ON CAMPUS ARE OUR FOCUS?

• Religious groups
• Staff groups with significant “power of opportunity” differences

Add these groups or subgroups to the list:
• Undergraduate recruitment and transition team
• Spouse/partner organizations:
  • Appalachian spouse/domestic partner/family member group
  • International Faculty, Staff and Spouse Association (IFSSA)
• International Student Association
• African Student Association
• Asian Student Association
• Chinese Student Association
• United Hope - social justice group – Amanda Moore, contact
• Hmong Student Association
• Sexual and Gender Alliance (SAGA)
• transACTION
• AIESEC internships abroad; originally Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Economiques et Commerciales (French no longer used and organization known simply by acronym)
• Native American Council
HOW DO WE PROCEED AT ADVANCE/RETREAT – AND BEYOND

- Draft a statement of diversity for Appalachian. Scour the web for the best language to help us craft one of our own, or tweak the one we have. Strategic Plan sub-group is working on ASU mission statement now – that language could be helpful. J. Kearse offered her unit’s diversity statement as a starting place for discussion.
- Assimilate from all the past diversity plans a list of all the goals we have had over the years.
- Determine if diversity is a real value or an espoused value.
- Provide trained facilitators to ensure that we create a sense of safety to talk about difficult subjects, to help teach folks how to open up and debrief.
- We’ll make up the process as we go – where do we want to be at the end of this time period?
- Approach this initiative “backward,” not strategically like in the military; afraid we are doomed if we start with another huge plan.
- Communicate that diversity initiatives must be systemic, not segmented. The concept is not yet imbedded into our culture.
- Could we target church leadership to speak of these values from the pulpit?
- Move beyond intersectionality ... religion, race, sexual orientation are not separate issues. Whether they are applicable to each of us or not, they are part of all of us. All issues are connected.
- Learn to talk about what we gain by being in a diverse community.
- Look at internationalization successes and bring them to the domestic diversity arena.
- Look at model for “culturally responsive teaching.”
- Realize that even if we do not change peoples’ feelings about certain groups, at least make sure people are safe even if they are not appreciated.

WHAT OBSTACLES MIGHT WE ENCOUNTER?

- See that we don’t get lost in just the issues that we’re interested in personally. Task force may have picked too many areas to study in 2009. What are the smaller things we can put into place now?
- Since ours is a standing commission, choose fewer initiatives on the front end, knowing we can go forward in a second and third phase.

Note: Office of International Education and Development should be listed under service activities
• Reports of some staff feeling that some university policies are in conflict with their personal beliefs. Some employees think we are too tolerant.
• Religion is often the elephant in the room. The subject of organized prayer in state institutions must be addressed.
• Realize that there will be some groups who will never be convinced that diversity is critical to what we do.
• Price tag of 2009 was probably daunting. Work now with our a view toward asking Advancement folks to help us raise funds toward a certain goal, if commission deems it is worth pursuing.
• Important now to identify what areas from the last diversity plan we made significant progress on, a little bit of progress on, or no progress on? Where there were initiatives without success, what were the barriers?
• Hierarchical power issues may not be diversity issues but still relate to climate. Or – they may well be a diversity issue.

INITIATIVES FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION OR COLLABORATION
• University of Georgie African American male recruitment/retention initiative (Jeff McBride)
• Coach Survey – faculty – Harvard group. Did it about a year ago, but there was nothing around climate in this survey. Does this suggest homogeneity?
• Lori will put the Coach data on ASuLearn. 18 different units.
• Should we ask the recruitment folks in Enrollment Management tell us about how they target some of these populations? Ask scholarship folks to share with us what resources they have to work with and what they can do?
• Work-Life balance committee – hopefully a work-life balance survey may come out of that.
• Review climate surveys from other institutions. Check Appalachian’s past climate surveys. Most recent ASU climate survey was done 2008. (Note: Many employees with least power don’t have access to computers to take surveys.)
• A hiring initiative to address “trailing spouses” at University of Kentucky had the provost’s office pay 1/3 of salaries of some faculty hires for 3 years Such attention is critical in locations like Boone, much more so than in Charlotte or other large cities.