

Minutes
Diversity Committee Meeting #1
September 10, 2015

Present:

Judy Abbott, Dr. Osaro Airen, Dr. Gina Causin, Dr. Brandon Fox, Dr. Ali Hachem, MS. Heather Munro, Dr. Grayson Grayson, Dr. Jannah Nerren, Ms. Heather Samuelson, Dr. Tingting Xu,

Not present: Dr. Linda Black, Dr. Sarah Drake, Dr. Frank Mullins (all had class)

The committee began with introductions.

Dr. Abbott attended the committee meeting as a guest. She spoke to the group about SFA and Nacogdoches being less diverse than the rest of Texas. She requested that we look at our search guidelines for the PCOE, which are more specific and direct than the SFA guidelines, because we are trying to establish in this college a more committed culture to recruiting and retaining diverse faculty. In some programs we need more males, in some we need males, in every department we need racial and ethnic diversity. We also need to pay attention to other types of diversity, across the unit (our college) to support. Dr. Abbott asked the committee to think broadly about resources that could support the diversity that we have and grow the diverse faculty. Searches are important. We also need to think about the diverse nature of our student population. Some of our student programs within the college are very diverse, and others are not. Some of that is the nature of the program, and some is self-selection. What do we need to do to recruit, retain, and support the diverse population toward success in whatever degree they are seeking? Our college tends to have more kinds of diverse faculty than other colleges. Part of this is because we have programs specific to students who are diverse. We have low-vision, rehabilitative counseling, special education, and physical education.

Dr. Fox talked about the fact that the Texas Chapter of the National Association for Multicultural Education (TxNAME) is coming to SFA in April of 2017. Dr. Fox is on the national board and is now on the Texas board.

Electing a co-chair:

Only four are eligible – Dr. Brandon Fox, Dr. Jane Grayson, Dr. Osaro Airen, and Dr. Ali Hachem. Dr. Grayson does not wish to be considered for the position.

Dr. Nerren stated that she would send an electronic ballot out to the committee along with the minutes within a week.

The returning members of the committee briefed the new members about the work from 2014-2015.

Dr. Nerren shared that the following had been completed:

- A comprehensive list of strengths and weaknesses related to diversity, as perceived by the 2014-2015 committee.
- A revised committee structure document, with two significant changes: the addition of standing membership by the Director of the Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs and the position of a committee-elected co-chair.
- Support by the committee at the 2014-2105 functions of the OMA.
- Dr. Fox added that 2014-2015 was a year of envisioning and trying to come together as a rebuilding year. The focus of the previous year (2013-2014) had been NCATE.

The committee discussed the focus for the 2015-2016 year:

Dr. Airen expressed concern for the revolving door of faculty and staff of color because of a feeling of being undervalued. He suggested a climate survey of current and former faculty of color. He shared that there is a Black Faculty Alliance and a Latino Faculty Alliance, but that there are low numbers and no support. He stated that it is common to hear diverse faculty state they “may not be here too long” and this is concerning.

Another issue is retention - when there are discussions about this, the people of color are not at the table.

Dr. Fox asked how the survey could be completely anonymous. He expressed the need to explore another tool, as there is a need to protect the respondent.

The question was raised: “What do you see tangible occurring from the survey? Bringing it to HR? Adding faculty and staff to the front lines of decision-making?”

Factors to think about when creating such a survey:

The committee was reminded by Dr. Nerren that PCOE is the scope of this committee.

It was added that we should survey hires that attended SFA and did not attend SFA.

Dr. Fox stated that a low response rate is also telling.

Dr. Fox stated that it is a leadership opportunity for faculty members with diverse background, to conduct a research study focusing on the faculties with leadership role from different departments in the past 5 years.
Dr. Grayson- recruitment guideline, process, there is not enough resources on university website for diverse faculty members to work together

Dr. Xu suggested that international faculties in College of Education make connections to support each other: Share resources and family issues, children's school choices, etc.

Dr. Airen suggested websites for recruitment, and posed the question about faculty of color that are not international, how can we make them connected? He added that on the OMA website, there are 5 different cultural organizations for faculty, staff and students to share the cultural differences.

Dr. Causin suggested an HR announcement targeting diverse faculty.

The committee discussed frequency of meetings.

Frequency of meeting, once a month is agreed, with a poll to determine dates.