

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
FACULTY COUNCIL ON STUDENT AFFAIRS**

The Faculty Council on Student Affairs met at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, **April 9, 2002**, in 36 Gerberding Hall. Chair Lee Nelson presided.

Approval of minutes

The minutes of March 5, 2002 were approved as written.

Rusty Barcelo, Vice President, Office of Minority Affairs

Barcelo said she came to the University of Washington nine months ago. She said she has been able to do “a lot in a short period of time.” The Office of Minority Affairs, she said, is “going in new directions.” She has met with deans, with faculty, with students, and with innumerable community organizations and leaders. She has sought out those leaders’ perspectives on the University’s diversity efforts.

Barcelo has been impressed with “what is being done by colleges, by Student Affairs, and by others on diversity. But often we do not know what each other is doing, and therefore we need to improve our intercommunication.”

“When I came here, the President made it clear that I was Vice President for Minority Affairs, and not for the *Office* of Minority Affairs,” said Barcelo. “We’re not moving away from direct services to students, but we *are* moving to broaden our services in collaboration with other departments. In particular, we’re significantly enhancing outreach efforts, and already beginning to realize benefits from doing so. Our minority applications are up 24% in the past year alone, in part due to new outreach initiatives.”

Barcelo said Minority Affairs needed to take a hard look at retention efforts. “We need to know why minority students are leaving the University. The reasons are complex; they rarely have to do with academic performance. They much more frequently have to do with intense family responsibilities, financial considerations, and cultural alienation.”

Barcelo said an important question for her and others at Minority Affairs is: “How do we support the mission of the colleges?” The goal is to support the mission while making diversity an inextricable part of the mission. Ultimately the mission must result in diversity becoming an organic attribute in teaching, and in course content.

She noted that there has been a 29% increase in the number of students participating in, and taking advantage of, Minority Affairs activities and services. “We have been bursting at the seams,” she enthused.

Barcelo said Minority Affairs has been working closely with the Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE). Collaboration is a crucial part of Barcelo’s strategy in the new directions in which she is taking Minority Affairs, and the collaboration with OUE, and its acting dean George Bridges, has borne significant fruit already, as have other efforts with several offices and groups both within and without the University.

Barcelo said she reorganized the Office of Minority Affairs, not because it was poorly organized before, but because it needed to cohere in structure with the vision she has for it. An important part of the reorganization is the placement of all pre-collegiate programs under the supervision of FCSA ex officio member William Baker, now Associate Vice President of Pre-Collegiate Programs.

The reach of the pre-collegiate programs is statewide. As a single instance, upwards of 10,000 students in the Yakima Valley alone are part of the programs, and the test scores of these students are up appreciably as a result of the programs.

Other leaders in the office include Enrique Morales, Assistant Vice President of Administrative Services; Emile Pitre, Assistant Vice President of Academic Support; Julian Argel, Assistant to the Vice President for Native American Issues; and Delores Gibson, Assistant to the Vice President for Human Resources. Barcelo said each of these leaders has oversight responsibilities in his or her designated area(s).

Barcelo said a major event in February 2002 brought together everyone on campus – approximately 50 people – involved in K-12 outreach efforts. “We have programs: very good programs, but we couldn’t refer students in eighth grade programs to appropriate ninth grade programs. “In the end, we’re all working with the same students,” said Barcelo. “We need to see ‘Charlie’ each step of the way from kindergarten through his senior year in high school.”

Barcelo said Minority Affairs is conducting a large-scale assessment with the Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE) on minority student progress “to see how we can best help our students.” The reorganization of Minority Affairs should facilitate effective use of the assessment.

Barcelo said Minority Affairs is collaborating with OUE in summer and autumn “bridge programs” to better prepare students for life at the University of Washington. “We are also developing partnerships with other offices on campus,” she noted. “It’s good to expand this kind of experience: good for Minority Affairs and for the University as a whole.” She said her office is looking at the satellite space in the Instructional Center on Brooklyn Avenue N.E. as another source of collaboration.

A question that haunts Barcelo is: What are the career paths for minority students at the University of Washington? “We need to do more to diversify the student body at the University of Washington. That possibility needs to be initiated in kindergarten, and permeate K-12. It cannot start at the University level.”

“There are amazing challenges for us to take up,” said Barcelo. As for the perception that the larger community has of the University in the area of diversity, she said that “too much of that perception, and that perspective, is based on ‘old data’; we need to have better information to share with the community.”

“We are making some substantive changes,” she said. “We have reformatted the University’s liaison with the Native American population statewide. There is a much more serious emphasis being placed on this kind of outreach activity than has been the case hitherto. There are 29 tribal associations in the state, with many of which we will be establishing liaisons. We are meeting with Native American leadership to gain a better understanding of their educational needs.”

Barcelo said, “We are in the process of evaluating our programs to see if they’re doing well. The Office of Minority Affairs has a reputation of being isolated from the rest of campus. We are vigorously changing this perception. We are looking at a communications plan. We are looking at our mission. We are stressing communication, collaboration, and cooperation as the cornerstones of our movement in new directions.”

Barcelo said she and her colleagues in Minority Affairs are working towards a clearer answer to the question: “What *is* our vision?” That vision must encompass all three campuses of the University. “The numbers are not where we want them to be for diversity participation in the University, but we are doing everything we can to augment those numbers.”

In some cases, those numbers *are* augmented. African American applications are up 54%, from 253 to 391. “We are trying especially hard to help Pacific Islander students at the University; these students are struggling at present, in part for reasons already mentioned. Again, these reasons are not, for the most part, academic, but familial, cultural and emotional. These students feel there ‘is not a place’ for them; they feel ostracized, and that there is little if anything in the curriculum that reflects their own experiences in life. (A pipe program has been set up to help them, a program that Minority Affairs is supporting.) Native American students have the lowest graduation rate in the University. As mentioned, we are doing all we can to address this plight as well.”

Barcelo said Minority Affairs has met with Nursing, Law, Engineering and Social Work to explore collaborations. Outside the University, high school counselors need to be able to do a better job of preparing their students; but in order to do that job they need better information than they are getting.

Nelson, corroborating Barcelo, said, “The bottom line is what goes on in the classroom. The latent curriculum gets in the way of academic expectation.” She pointed out that something as basic as classroom participation – on which part of a student’s grade is dependent – is complicated for students such as Pacific Islanders, for whom such “speaking out” is not a cultural norm. It would not be considered proper behavior in their provenance or homeland. Barcelo said, “It *can* happen: *our* adapting to *their* cultural realities in curriculum, and not simply our expecting *them* to wholly adapt to *our* norms.”

Barcelo said there is a strong emphasis this academic year on the issue of retention of minority students. (Clark said it has come up, in many conversations in which she has been a participant, that there are serious problems with retention of minority students. She said it seems that retention is fairly good after the freshman year, but noticeably poorer after the sophomore year.) Barcelo said it is definitely the case that retention of minority students suffers after both the freshman and sophomore years, but more dramatically after the sophomore year. “We’re working closely with George Bridges of OUE to combat this.”

“One thing we will be doing in the effort to redress this trend will be to give greater recognition to students who have not traditionally received their due recognition,” Barcelo said. “At our May 1st celebration this year, there will be a ‘Gallery of Excellence’ noting the accomplishments of minority students in many different disciplines. So far, 19 units have said they will be participating in the celebration; this is more than we had expected. We want to have as many colleges as possible participating in the event. We’re ahead of where we had hoped to be in terms of our donations for the event. Dinner is already paid for.”

“There’s a lot of possibility for enhancement of diversity participation at the University of Washington,” said Barcelo. “We’re one of only five universities in the country that can become a ‘model of excellence’ in diversity for other universities. We do graduate 65% of all minority students who graduate from institutions of higher learning in the state of Washington, including doctors, lawyers, health workers, engineers, teachers, and others in professional and business life. These minority graduates are in positions of leadership throughout the state. This is a story that is not being told. Too often, diversity is looked upon as a ‘problem.’ But its positive contributions have not been acknowledged.”

Regarding efforts to improve diversity awareness in pedagogy, Barcelo said an “excellent workshop has been conducted in which many faculty said the most difficult teaching they had ever done was to attempt to teach issues of diversity, to ‘teach difference’.”

With respect to partnerships within the University, Barcelo said, “We’re having discussions with Nursing; they very much want to diversify their programs. And we’re very supportive of the work being done in Social Work; they simply do a good job of diversifying their programs. Engineering has established

programs emphasizing diversity. And we're looking at 'gateway courses,' or 'killer courses,' that are keeping students out of programs in the sciences."

Concerning assessment, Barcelo said, "We're looking beyond the numbers. We're trying to tell how effectively, or ineffectively, we're communicating with minority students, though not only students, but faculty as well." Pertinent to that assessment is the attempt to understand the perception of the University that minority students and faculty develop both while attending or teaching at the University and after they leave. Native American students, for instance, believe that many people graduate from the University of Washington who are not prepared to work with, and understand, Native Americans within the context of their social reality. And many other minority students and faculty have a similar perception.

"But many students now are beginning to comprehend that they'll be living and working in a diverse world, and they often feel they are ill-prepared for that reality," Barcelo noted. Kravas said this issue invariably arises "whenever passionate, caring people come together, but faculty always seem to vote down any kind of cultural diversity requirement that is brought to them from the Faculty Senate for approval." This has happened several times in the recent past at the University of Washington. Yet, as Kravas observed, other universities, such as the University of California at Berkeley, *do* have cultural diversity requirements. So it *is* feasible.

Nelson asked, "What should the diversity requirement *be*? This is a difficult challenge." Barcelo said, "There are cultural issues here. *We* have to learn the languages, and better understand the cultures, of students and faculty who come from other cultures. And we must realize the importance of seeing cultural diversity as an educational prerogative, and not as a political prerogative. Had this realization existed before, diversity in universities would have been far better off than it has been."

Barcelo reiterated her belief in "the possibility for enhanced diversity at the University. It depends on how we structure the dialogue, and how we relate it to actual experience." Schwartz said, "It's important to reach out beyond one's own academic and cultural niche to comprehend diversity and difference." Barcelo said, "There are more multi-cultural readers coming out of high schools now; that's an encouraging sign." Kravas added, "There is a need to learn about culture, not just a need to learn languages. One can learn something about a culture without mastering the language; as one can master the language without learning about the culture."

Barcelo said, "*We do* have the Diversity Council, appointed by the President, which will address many of the issues raised in this discussion, with particular emphasis on curriculum, outreach and recruitment, retention and climate, and staffing."

Nelson thanked Barcelo for an extremely informative presentation, and a most stimulating discussion. Barcelo said she enjoyed the opportunity to share her reflections with the council, and will look forward to a future visit when she will present "more detailed information about some of the issues discussed today."

Update on council reorganization – Lee Nelson

Nelson said she is "much less alarmed now" about the possible demise of the council – which seems altogether *unlikely* – after attending a recent meeting of the Rose Task Force looking into reorganization of faculty councils.

"There are several proposals on the table," said Nelson, but she added that, at this stage, no major overhaul of the current council structure seems likely, and any reorganization that eventually is proposed would be required to go through the full Faculty Senate process. Thus, any changes that do occur would

be at least a year, and quite possibly several years, in the making. Such Class “A” legislation would be subject to approval by the Senate Executive Committee and by the Faculty Senate, and would require a full faculty vote by written ballot.

Nelson said the reasons behind the formulation of the Faculty Council on Student Affairs seem to her as valid now as when they were first conceived. The council remains the only one specifically established to accommodate student issues as brought to the council by ASUW representatives themselves.

Discussion of replacement for Lee Nelson as FCSA chair

Nelson said the council will need a new chair for the 2002-2003 academic year. Anyone who is interested can contact her at leenels@u.washington.edu or 616-6364. She will also send out an E-mail encouraging council members to consider serving as chair.

Next meeting

The next FCSA meeting is set for Tuesday, May 7, 2002, at 8:30 a.m., in 36 Gerberding Hall.

Brian Taylor
Recorder

PRESENT: *Professors* Nelson (chair) and Schwartz;
Ex officio members Baker, Clark, Feetham, Kravas and Lewis;
Guest Rusty Barcelo, Vice President, Office of Minority Affairs

ABSENT: *Professors* Herwig, Karmy-Jones, Lehman, Nicholson, O’Neill and Williams;
ex officio members Bennett, Hatlen and Rasmussen.