

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON MINORITY FACULTY AFFAIRS**

The Special Committee on Minority Faculty Affairs met on **May 24, 2005**, at 8:30 a.m. Chair Brian Fabien called the meeting to order at 8:30.

**Synopsis:**

1. Minutes, report from the Chair
2. Discussion with Dr. Betsy Rodriguez, Asst. Vice Chancellor, University of Colorado, Denver

**Announcements, minutes, information requests**

The minutes were approved.

SCMFA members are reminded to attend the Town Hall meeting with President Emmert, May 25, from 3:15 to 4:30 p.m., followed by the Faculty of Color Reception with the President. The format for the Town Hall Meeting will be question and answer.

Rusty Barcelo announced that President Emmert will be on hand Saturday, June 11, for the installation of a student-designed Diversity Monument between Mary Gates Hall and Suzzallo Library. Since June 11 is also the day UW commencement exercises are held, it is hoped that many SCMFA members will attend to support the installation of the monument.

**Discussion: Dr. Betsy Rodriguez, Asst. Vice Chancellor, University of Colorado, Denver**

Dr. Betsy Rodriguez visited the UW to present a seminar sponsored by Go-Map on diversity in the faculty search process. Rodriguez, who is Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Human Resources at the University of Colorado, Denver, has made it a practice to advise search committees on basic Human Resources practices that can help them conduct quality searches.

Rodriguez was mandated to improve search processes at Colorado after their administration became concerned about Human Subjects compliance. She has since trained 500 people in search techniques that promote diversity. As she pointed out, "a successful search is a successful employee." The training, she said, is not about the content of the search but about the process – it's about how you get a diverse pool of applicants.

Two very powerful techniques Rodriguez has instituted at Colorado are evaluating interviewers and informal conversations with minority faculty. Evaluating interviewers before they begin to interview candidates can assess both their interpersonal skills and their commitment to diversity, and point out areas that can be improved. Informal conversations with minority faculty, conducted by people who are clearly not going to be evaluating the candidate, can put candidates at ease and give them straight information about climate issues.

Rodriguez said that, unlike the decentralized process at the UW, all searches at Colorado are required to go through the Office of Diversity twice (to review the search plan and then to review the candidate) so diversity efforts can be assessed and approved. If the search plan and/or its results are not approved by the Office of Diversity, the hire cannot take place. Rodriguez attributes the increase in minority faculty numbers (from 11% to 15%) largely to this practice.

But search committees cannot legislate diversity, Rodriguez stressed. Departments have to define their standards and give an appropriate charge to the search committee before diverse hiring can take place. Rodriguez said that the measure of success is sufficient diversity in both the applicant pool and the actual people hired.

Colorado has used, and continues to use, a wide variety of diversity-hiring techniques, including target-of-opportunity and cluster hiring. Cluster hiring, in particular, has great advantages. But the overarching goal is to get departments to change their search processes so that diversity considerations are built into each search in a meaningful way.

Rodriguez lauded effective mentoring as a powerful tool in building a diverse university. She has designed a mentoring program for junior faculty around a series of monthly workshops on topics such as promotion and tenure, time management, etc. Because both minority and non-minority faculty attend, this is an opportunity to build collegial relationships that are broad-based and lasting.

Some of these same kinds of mentoring programs exist at the UW, but they are not as widely known as they could be. In addition, tenure standards are different across departments and in some cases do not exist – many research faculty, for example, are vitally interested in grant funding, but are not eligible for tenure. Arts and Sciences holds an annual workshop for junior faculty, but this one-time event does not promote as much collegiality as monthly programs might do.

Rodriguez stressed that people who care about diversity must take the time to "make the case for diversity." In making the case for diversity at the UW, it's important to know what has been done already. If you don't know who has been interviewed, Rodriguez said, you can't know whether you have problems with the process and what they are. It's also important to do exit interviews, so you know what has motivated a minority faculty member to leave the University. Cultural differences and unmet expectations can be as difficult for some minority faculty as climate issues in their departments. Has the University done a good job of mentoring or advising about cultural differences, either formally or informally? Do junior faculty fully understand the priorities in the University's stated mission of research, teaching and service, including the unequal weight currently assigned to these three areas?

It is unclear whether a centralized search process would work as well at the UW as it appears to at Colorado, since deans are asking for even more decentralization. However, the new chancellor at Colorado now evaluates deans in part on their diversity efforts and results – it could be that the new UW Provost, when named, might take this tack as well. Certainly, this would be a step in the right direction.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m. *Minutes by Linda Fullerton, Recorder.*

**PRESENT:** *Professors:* Cardenas, Colonnese, Fabien, Lin, Tokuno, Lincoln  
*ex officio:* Lillard, Remick, Barcelo, Butler

**ABSENT:** *Professors:* Huang, Kozuki, Centurion-Lara, Lincoln, Yang, Yue-Hashimoto  
*ex officio:* Vaughn, Barker