

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

The Special Committee on Minority Faculty Affairs met on **Thursday, May 8, 2003**, at 3:00 p.m. Chair Tom Colonnese called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

PRESENT: **Professors:** Colonnese, James, Koenig, Spigner
 ex officio members: Remick, Simmons, del Rosario

ABSENT: **Professors** Bae, Fabien, B. Huang, H. Huang, Lopez-Guisa, Ramulu
 ex officio members Morishima, Murata, Gallardo, Butler

Guest – Susan Jeffords, Assistant Dean of Creative and Communication Arts

Synopsis

1. Approve agenda
2. Approve minutes
3. Discussion of how to affect minority faculty recruitment and retention
 Susan Jeffords, Assistant Dean of Creative and Communication Arts,
 College of Arts and Sciences

The March and April minutes were approved.

General Discussion

Cynthia del Rosario reported that she was disturbed by some of the comments she heard at the March 20 Presidential Search forum in Kane Hall. At that forum, current Faculty Senate leadership invited several past Faculty Senate chairs to contribute their perspectives on the qualities the UW should seek in a new president. There was also a period for comments from the floor.

Del Rosario said she was unclear about the format, and did not know whether she was allowed to speak since she is not faculty. Was this open to the public, Rosario asked? She felt intimidated because she felt she was one of only two people who were not faculty members. In fact, the meeting was widely advertised by the Faculty Senate Office and was open to everyone, including the general public.

Rosario said did not know what the point of the meeting was. Colonnese responded that it was for former Faculty Senate chairs to give their comments to the Search Committee on what is needed in a president and for others to speak up as well - there were several Search Committee members present to hear the comments. Rosario said she had a little bit of a problem with some of the things that were said at the meeting. Faculty Senate Chair Sandra Silberstein, who joined the Council meeting briefly, responded that the meeting was arranged because the Faculty Senate was essentially left out of the search process - the ex officio members of the Regents (which includes the Faculty Senate chair) have always been part of presidential search committees, but were not included this time.

Rosario said she was very disturbed at Prof. Miceal Vaughan's response to Colonnese's statement about the importance of having a President with a demonstrated commitment to diversity on campus. Vaughan said that the University may need to "go narrower and do just a few things well" in order to work within current budget constraints. Did he mean that even fewer minority faculty and students will be recruited?

Silberstein said she would be glad to review the videotapes of the event with Colonnese and del Rosario to revisit and analyze Vaughan's remarks in order to clarify the issue.

Clarence Spigner asked what had happened to Sherry Sifari, a minority professor in the School of Pharmacy. She is gone and no one will tell Spigner what happened to her. He is concerned that minority faculty members continue to leave the UW, and no one seems to know much about their reasons for leaving. Even with a good, enlightened dean such as Dean of Engineering Denice Denton, Spigner said, minorities continue to leave. Someone should sit down with them and ask why.

Minority Faculty Recruitment and Retention

Colonnese introduced Susan Jeffords, Assistant Dean of Creative and Communication Arts in the College of Arts and Sciences to talk about the retention and recruitment of minorities in a post-I-200 world.

Jeffords told a story about Helen Remick coming up to her and saying (facetiously) "I don't know what to do – someone just met all their minority goals." Jeffords said she told Remick "Raise the goals."

Then last thing we can allow is to have the budget situation drive us to lose sight of priorities in minority recruitment and retention, Jeffords said. We need to create a welcoming environment for faculty of color so they will stay and be successful. This is something to work on and reinforce.

A deadly attitude some departments take with faculty of color is "you succeeded thanks to us." Jeffords has told chairs about this, and they are dumbfounded. They do not realize that the subtext of what they are doing is "you should be grateful to us for doing this."

Spigner said it would be easy if he could label these faculty members as being racist, but he can't. They are just ignorant, Spigner added. They really think they are doing the right thing.

Jeffords spoke of a Ford Foundation Grant that gave the UW funds to hire faculty of color with the specific mandate to change the institution. There was money for organized colloquia, for the development of new course curricula, for travel and research. But the Ford grant is almost over – Jeffords wants to write an article pointing out the changes that have been made in curricula and course design. Changes have been made, thanks to these new faculty who have changed the institution. This cohort was empowered to make changes and they did, and this worked against the isolation that other faculty of color often feel.

Spigner agreed that a cohort works well in offering support – when someone gets discouraged, there is a feeling that "we won't let you fail." Jeffords would like to try this approach again.

Colonnese said that part of the SCFMA charge is to track the status of faculty of color. In the past ten years, the overall number of faculty of color is almost unchanged. While there are pockets of success, virtually no progress has been made campus-wide. Numbers of American Indian, African American, and Hispanic faculty are low. Only Asian faculty numbers are increasing. This is true of Asians in some geographic areas, said del Rosario, but not everywhere. She does not want to buy into the stereotype of the "smart Asian," which can be just as damaging as any other stereotype.

Jeffords would like to hire another cohort, and would like to know of good candidates who could be hired. Some other chairs have also become very aggressive about the issue and would support as well. For example, some students in Anthropology think the UW could be a magnet school for Pacific Islanders on the mainland and recruiting appropriate faculty is in the works.

Spigner asserted that minority faculty members feel more of an obligation than whites to do community service work, and this hurts their chances for tenure. Jeffords agreed, and said she has strongly cautioned faculty of color to pay attention to publishing or they will not achieve tenure and will not be around to do

anything. Chairs need to make sure faculty of color are mentored properly so they get this message and don't neglect their publishing in favor of service.

Recruitment techniques for faculty of color are another issue – though they are required by Federal regulations, ads don't work very well. Experience shows that the personal invitation and effective networking produce the best results. One study showed that 75% of successful candidates applied as a result of personal contact with someone they know. The "Keeping Our Faculties" conferences are a good place to network and to recruit, del Rosario said.

Colonnese commented that the economy is a strong factor in opening up slots for hiring new faculty – if TIAA-CREF become strong again, some faculty nearing retirement age will opt to retire. If the economy doesn't recover, people will work longer before retiring.

Jeffords said there that budget cuts mean the UW will not have as many resources as in the past, but it is important to keep our eye on the ball and maintain priorities. She hopes the Provost's Office will continue to be supportive of recruiting and retaining faculty of color.

Jeffords would be interested in doing a one-day workshop in the Fall on recruiting and retaining faculty of color, particularly if it could be an interesting collaboration with SCMFA.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m. *Minutes by Linda Fullerton, Recorder.*