

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

The Special Committee on Minority Faculty Affairs met on **March 28, 2001**, at 1:30 p.m. Chair Brian Fabien presided.

**PRESENT:**     *Professors* Fabien (Chair) and Madison;  
                  *ex officio members* Gallardo and Vaezy.

**ABSENT:**     *Professors* Gamboa, Koenig, Lindenberg, Ramulu and Spigner;  
                  *ex officio members* Colonnese, Pine, Remick, Shaw, Teng, You and Zhao.

**Approval of minutes**

The vote on approval of the minutes of February 21, 2001 was deferred due to lack of quorum.

**Web site development: Richard Ells, Senior Computer Specialist, Computing and Communications**

Ells said the special committee's situation with respect to Web site development is a common one. He said it is helpful that the committee already has a Web site on the Faculty Senate Home Page. That the SCMFA Web site contains minutes of its meetings and explains "what it is about" – and what its charge is - further suggests that the Web site is pointed in the right direction. Eventually, Ells said, the committee will want to decide if it would prefer an independent Web site with a different design. But the present Web site, and the design of the Faculty Senate Home Page, should suffice in the interim.

Ells said his mantra in talking to people about Web sites is: Keep it simple. He said the primary question in setting up a Web site is: What do you want it for? What do you want it to do? Another key question is: Do you want to establish links with other Web sites? Ells said this can be easily done. Fabien said this is definitely a goal, particularly to establish links with the Web sites of the Equal Opportunity Office, the Graduate School (Minority Education), the Office of Minority Affairs, Minority Student Affairs, and any other office or organization whose concerns would affect, or be of interest to, minority faculty at UW. He said the role of the Web site will be to serve as an "interest gateway," leading people – for instance – to Chapter 24 in the University Handbook, for information on Promotion and Tenure, and to links offering data on minority faculty representation and other minority-related issues at the University. A crucial destination, once through this "interest gateway," will be news-related items and upcoming events of interest to all minority faculty. This has been a vexing problem for the committee: not being able to apprise minority faculty of news (e.g., the hiring of minority faculty, or of minority administrators) and events (e.g., the annual Minority Faculty Mentoring Workshop, or the upcoming special meeting, open to all faculty, focusing on underrepresented minority faculty at UW) that minority faculty would naturally be interested in knowing, and being made aware of; the Web site should considerably abate that vexation.

Fabien said a major impetus for the SCMFA Web site is to move special committee discussions away from E-mail. "There is a lot of discussion taking place on E-mail that should be taking place on a 'discussion board' online," he noted. Many people do not even check their E-mail, or do not do so regularly, and discussions on E-mail have less continuity over time than discussions online. E-mail messages are routinely deleted after they have been read (without necessarily being printed out and saved elsewhere). Discussions on a Web site, on the other hand, have a natural continuity, allowing for both "posted" comments and direct responses, or "dialogue," depending on the issue and the kind of Web site that has been established. Fabien said the SCMFA Web site would allow for both "posted" comments (comments, or "complaints," that do not necessarily require a response online) and direct responses, where many people could respond to one another's statements placed on the "discussion board."

Madison pointed out that the committee wants to be open to outside contributors. "Communication is our biggest issue," he said. "People who are left out of the committee's regular conversations – its faculty senate council meetings – would be able to give us their input." This would be faculty for the most part, but not exclusively so. "We want to hear from faculty or staff from anywhere on campus."

Ells said that, with increasing frequency, access is being accomplished with UWID. He said the UW Home Page will work with any browser and that the content of each page can fit in a template.

Fabien said that some of the Web sites he has looked at are quite unimpressive, and in obvious need of refinement. He wants the SCMFA Web site to be visually attractive while being “simple to use,” heeding Ells’s counsel. The simpler it is to use, the more likely it is to serve as a “base” for the wide range of opinions the committee is seeking on issues related to minority faculty.

Fabien said the Web site, more than anything, “should help us get an infrastructure for minority faculty on campus.” He mentioned a long-standing grievance of the committee: “We don’t know who we are on campus. We want to find out who we are.”

Fabien said that if Ells could find qualified students, or anyone else who is qualified, to monitor the SCMFA Web site, he could in all likelihood find the necessary financial support. Ells said he would see what he could do. It was noted that continuity and confidentiality would both be problems with a student monitor of the Web site. Ells said he and five other people at Computing and Communications serve as “Web guides” for people setting up new Web sites; he would certainly be available in that capacity. Fabien said that would be deeply appreciated, but someone definitely would be needed to monitor and maintain the Web site over time.

Customarily, departments “look out for their own Web sites,” Ells said. But quite obviously, this is a different situation. “We could help get different people together, coordinating with other Web designers on campus, especially those designers who are involved in your kinds of issues.”

Fabien said it would be most helpful if there were a link to the SCMFA Web site in the “Diversity” section of the UW Home Page.

Gallardo said he would be glad to assist in “getting the foundation of this Web site started.” Vaezy said he also would do what he could to help. Fabien will ask other SCMFA members if they would be interested in offering assistance.

It was agreed that the first thing to be done on the Web site is to put up news items and announcements. This could be done on the current site in the Faculty Senate Home Page. The first priority is a message board; the second priority, a discussion board.

Gallardo said, “We could set up an account with Homer through Computing and Communication.”

Questions that will be asked of other SCMFA members regarding the Web site include:

- 1) What should SCMFA have on the Web site (with respect to both content and style)?
- 2) What should the “discussion board” look like?
- 3) What frequently asked questions should be included on the Web site?
- 4) What “visible” links should the SCMFA Web site establish?
- 5) What, in addition to Chapter 24 of the University Handbook, should the Web site contain about Promotion and Tenure?
- 6) With what professional groups should the SCMFA Web site be conversant?

**April 19th meeting with all faculty who can attend – Brian Fabien**

Fabien showed the special committee the following announcement to be sent to all faculty at UW:

“Dear Colleague,

The Special Committee on Minority Faculty Affairs (SCMFA) would like to invite you to a special meeting to be held on Thursday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, from 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. in the HUB, room 200C.

Please take this opportunity to meet and socialize with some of your colleagues on campus. There will also be an open-ended discussion of issues related to underrepresented minority faculty at UW.

Meeting of the SCMFA

Place: HUB 200C

Date: Thursday, April 19, 2001

4:30 p.m.: Welcome – Refreshments

5:00 p.m.: Discussion

6:00 p.m.: Adjourn

RSVP to Brian C. Fabien ([fabien@u.washington.edu](mailto:fabien@u.washington.edu)) by Tuesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>.

This meeting is sponsored by the UW Equal Opportunity Office.”

Fabien added that, since this announcement necessarily will go to all faculty, it cannot be too specific.

The announcement will go to ladder faculty, librarians, lecturers, and research faculty. In addition to being sent via E-mail, the announcement will appear in University Week.

**SCMFA meeting with faculty and President McCormick (most probably May 17<sup>th</sup>)**

Fabien spoke with President McCormick’s office, and was told that May 17<sup>th</sup> (most probably) is the best date for him to join SCMFA and all faculty who are able to come. Those faculty members who attend the April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting will be informed of the May 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. But all faculty will receive notice of the meeting with President McCormick.

In both meetings, the emphasis is equally on meeting fellow faculty members and on participating in substantive discussions of issues directly relevant to underrepresented minority faculty at the University.

**Next meeting**

The next SCMFA meeting is set for Wednesday, April 25, 2001, at 1:30 p.m., in 36 Gerberding Hall.

Brian Taylor  
Recorder

