

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Multicultural Affairs
November 20, 2013, 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Gerberding 36

Meeting Synopsis

1. Call to Order
2. Review of the Minutes from October 23, 2013
3. Update on Student Diversity Requirement
4. Online Education and Access
5. Volunteers for Diversity Council Meeting
6. Senate Executive Committee Luncheon
7. Good of the Order
8. Adjournment

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Rubio at 3:40 p.m.

2. Review of the Minutes from October 23, 2013

The minutes from October 23, 2013 were not approved due to lack of quorum.

3. Update on the Student Diversity Requirement

Betty Schmitz, Director for the Center for Curriculum Transformation, provided an update to the undergraduate student diversity requirement.

Schmitz is the co-chair of the diversity graduation task force. When the requirement was passed by the faculty the Provost appointed a task force to oversee implementation with the responsibility to oversee its incorporation into university curriculum. There was some initial confusion about a November 8th deadline but it encouraged departments to move quickly to identify courses that meet the diversity criteria. Schmitz mentioned that the Student Diversity Coalition, which helped craft the first proposal, was allowed to be represented on the task force.

The task force received a great deal of feedback from different units. There were a lot of questions that addressed the requirement, such as courses containing international or global content, language and culture. There were two main issues that the task force is dealing with:

- Confusion surrounding the definition of diversity, especially the term “cross-cultural”. Additional concern has been raised about vetting the courses.
- Do curriculum committees have the expertise to judge if diversity is met based on the criteria provided?

The diversity committee was asked to make recommendations, especially from small colleges that do not want to judge their colleagues. In reviewing the courses that have been submitted every unit is proposing courses that clearly meet the conditions of the diversity requirement. Kevin Miada will be discussing with Deans and curriculum committees to develop the specific criteria. The goal is to be fairly

strict and explicit that a course is covering diversity, not just as a backdrop to the general content. One primary criterion that most people agree on is focusing on power inequities resulting from diversity issues, not just general cultural issues. At this time there have been 690 submissions with only 150 going forward. Schmitz clarified that the task force has not rejected any proposals, but is just waiting for the remaining courses to be approved.

Schmitz mentioned that one issue that is reoccurring is the 60% course-content required for a class to be classified as “diversity”. Additionally, there is concern that a “diversity” course could drop its classification at a later time in the future. However, Schmitz does not believe this would happen because units are being very careful in designating courses as “diversity”.

The task force will review the list of courses submitted and recommend guidelines and criteria that would be useful for units to review as they continue this process. Specifically, the task force will review the meaning of “global” as this has been a problematic issue for several units. “Global” is to be all-inclusive, including within the US, but there has been confusion about its meaning. The task last year was to review the resources available to conduct this review, now the focus is on pedagogical issues. The task force will also address one-time designation and study abroad courses to develop a process in evaluating these credits.

Discussion ensued. One concern that has been expressed in the diversity council was that including too many courses under the term “diversity” would water-down the meaning. A question was raised asking that since the requirement is in effect for incoming students, will there be enough courses available for graduation purposes. In addition to the courses already reviewed there will be hundreds more, including courses in the College of Arts and Sciences. The task force performed a seat study which found that there will be plenty of courses available for students because the task force has not yet review issues tied to research, service learning and study abroad. Discussion ensued. Schmitz mentioned that it will be likely UW will provide supplemental information regarding the diversity graduation requirement if there are any missing courses by Fall Quarter 2014. A question was raised asking about the longevity of the task force and the role FCAS would play in oversight. The task force will address diversity this year and the Center for Teaching will take over in the future.

A question was raised asking when the task force will have the guidelines for departments to review. The task force is still waiting for more information but should be done by the beginning of Winter Quarter 2014. Discussion ensued. It would be useful to have an outside document explaining the approved course and ensuring departments there will be consistency across campus. Individual units will want time to prepare before approving courses and not be turned down when a proposal is submitted.

A question was raised asking what happens if students do not believe that the course is covering diversity to the extent that they expect. Discussion ensued. Students could address this with their individual advisor, department chair or another faculty member within the department. A comment was raised that UW is not forcing non-scholars to become experts in diversity. Diversity is a word covering a broad field of scholarship with important perspectives from across campus that fits the diversity requirement.

4. Online Education and Access

Rubio reported that there is also an implementation task force for undergraduate online degrees. Items covered include: an Integrated Social Science degree, the recent Early Childhood Family Studies degree, and the recent UW-Tacoma Criminal Justice degree. In conversations with Fraga it is good to think about

online education and how it is being offered, but it is important UW ensures access to education. During its last meeting FCMA discussed online education and access for low-income individuals. Rubio spoke with Jack Lee, chair of the Faculty Senate, who invited FCMA to submit questions. Jack Lee also encouraged FCMA to attend a task force meeting to expand on any issues and concerns generated by the council. Rubio asked council members to send him questions to deliver to the task force.

A question was raised asking if the task force is interested in big picture issues, or just specific concerns. One issue that could be addressed is access to the greater community. It would be useful to have specific data to frame the question.

5. Volunteers for the Diversity Council Meeting

Rubio reported that the diversity council will be meeting tomorrow. Rubio will be in attendance and asked if anyone else is interested. Rubio will take notes to bring back to the council.

6. Senate Executive Council Luncheon

As chair of FCMA, Rubio also sits on the Senate Executive Committee (SEC). The SEC will be having a luncheon on December 10th and Rubio asked if any council members are interested in attending as a proxy.

7. Good of the Order

During the last SEC meeting Rubio heard a report from the President's office explaining the recent decision regarding the criminal history background question on new student applications. The question asks whether a student was convicted of a violent felony or a registered sex offender. Discussion ensued. The concern is that this question may be viewed as discriminatory against a particular group or population. The question will still be asked but not used as a determining factor for admissions. Rather, UW will use the question to identify the resources required to ensure the student is successful once they are admitted to the university. Rubio will follow up on the process and identify areas in which FCMA can contribute to the discussion.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Rubio at 4:10 p.m.

Minutes by Grayson Court, Faculty Council Support Analyst, gcourt@uw.edu

Present: **Faculty:** Rubio (Chair), Carothers (phone)
 Ex Officio: Lobo (phone), Ruffin

Absent: **Faculty:** Babigumira, Barria-Roman, Chapman, Ginorio, Harris, Willgerodt
 Ex Officio: Devine
 President's Designee: Fraga