**Multicultural Advisory Committee**

**GUC Events Conference Room**

**May 5, 2010**

**Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 3:09 p.m. Members present were Dr. Jana Beaver, Dr. Joy Brown, Dr. Ernestine Davis, Dr. Ann Dillon, Ms. Lauren Givens, and Dr. Ian Loeppky. Dr. Lelon Davidson from ODIE was also in attendance. Guests in attendance, all who were asked to be present for this meeting, included Dr. Mary Bowers, Ms. Tammy Jacques, Mr. DeAnte Smith, and Ms. Cindy Wood.

There were not enough members present for a quorum, but the committee decided to open the meeting to discuss the agenda items that did not require a vote.

The minutes from April’s meeting were approved with no changes.

Dr. Mary Bowers, the specialist for UNA Disability Support Services, opened our meeting by discussing some of the basic purposes of her office and stating that they are doing the best job they can with the limited resources available. Dr. Bowers and Ms. Wood discussed the new Campus Master Plan and stated that this plan includes limiting or removing the handicapped parking spaces on campus. They noted that no employee from Health Services or Disability Support Services was contacted to serve on the committee for the Master Plan and were upset about this decision. Next, Dr. Bowers and Ms. Wood addressed the committee’s desire to create a new task force to specifically handle disability issues. There was concern that creating another committee would just be ‘too many committees’. However, Dr. Loeppky noted that ‘the less steps to the top’ approach with a separate committee or subcommittee might accomplish more than our broad committee could handle. Dr. Loeppky made a motion that “the Multicultural Advisory Committee recommend a subcommittee called the ‘Accessibility Advisory Committee’ to handle disability issues on campus”. Dr. Dillon seconded the motion. Before we take a vote on this issue (when there is a quorum), we need to ask Dr. Richardson, president of Faculty Senate, if our committee even has the authority to create a subcommittee, and if so, learn the shared governance procedures to accomplish this goal.

Next, Mr. De Anté Smith, Assistant Director of Student Engagement for Greek Affairs, discussed diversity in respect to National Pan-Hellenic Council (NHPC) and Interfraternity Council (IFC). Mr. Smith explained the different councils and the guidelines for membership. Ms. Williams mentioned how the Greek population is very influential on campus and she would like to see the Greeks diversify and show how that could affect the entire student population. We talked about the possibility of educating Greek students (and advisors, alumni, etc.) about diversity and the outcome might be that Greek organizations have a more diverse population in the future. Ms. Tammy Jacques, Director of Student Engagement, stated that there wasn’t a Greek retreat during the 09-10 school year because Mr. Smith did not start in this position until January. However, as they plan for next year’s retreat, some of the workshops and content might include barriers to diversity. Ms. Givens reminded us that the focus of the Office for Student Engagement is for the staff to help educate the students and we might discuss with them some of our ideas. Mr. Smith mentioned that there’s a DVD to advertise each Greek group at SOAR and they could attempt to diversify the faces shown in the DVD for each group (when possible).

Ms. Jacques said she has set aside some money for a Student Multicultural Advisory Committee. She plans to let it be student powered and hopes it will start for the 2010-11 school year. The committee will have a budget and should plan 2 or 3 events in each semester. Dr. Loeppky made a motion that “the Multicultural Advisory Committee has a joint meeting with this new student advisory group to brainstorm ways to improve education about diversity on campus”. Ms. Givens seconded the motion. We will vote at a later time when there is a quorum. Ms. Jacques also mentioned the possibility of ½ to 1 day of training for a representative(s) from each student organization to learn to embrace diversity. In addition, she discussed that Ms. Jennifer C. Brown, Assistant Director for Leadership and Volunteerism conducts workshops throughout the year with student leaders on campus and that she might also be a good resource to promote diversity among students.

Ms. Williams asked Ms. Jacques about the best way to conduct a diversity-related survey for students in the fall semester. Ms. Jacques stated that the Office for Student Engagement can assist in advertising an online survey and help in promoting this endeavor with the entire student population. Ms. Williams asked that we send any suggestions for a student diversity survey to the ODIE office by July 15th.

At last month’s meeting, we decided that the best way for this committee to make recommendations to the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment (OIRPA) for the next iteration of the Campus Climate Survey (as part of our charge) was for our committee to rewrite and/or add several diversity related survey questions and offer them to OIRPA for consideration. Here are our proposed changes:

* Below the first question in Section IV of the survey, which addresses being ‘comfortable’, we suggest that another question be added to read “I enjoy participating in activities with cultures other than my own.” We feel that just because one might be comfortable participating in activities, it doesn’t mean that he/she would enjoy participating in activities with other cultures. We hope this question will provide more insight into diversity issues.
* Because ‘service’ is listed as a separate category in the demographic section, we request that this group be given its own “I am satisfied with the diversity of…” question to match the same question for the other three categories. Also, for other questions that refer to ‘staff’, please add ‘service’ in with that wording to include this group. Or, creating separate questions for ‘service’ is also acceptable.
* Related to that same question, all employees on campus are addressed, but we have not addressed whether we as administrators, faculty, staff, and service employees are satisfied with student diversity at UNA. Please add a question relating to student diversity.
* For the two questions that cover racial/ethnic and gender minorities, we request that these be reworded to include sexual orientation and religion to give equal representation to the various minorities on campus.
* Two questions address the gender issue for promotion and advancement among faculty and staff. However, we feel these could be reworded to state, “Decisions of promotion and tenure of faculty are not affected by gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Then, create another question that addresses the staff and service group. Should we separate administrators or put them in with the faculty question?
* Two questions start with the word ‘prejudice’ and we think using ‘unfair treatment’ is a better way to word this.
* Also, our committee is concerned about the words ‘comfortable’ and ‘satisfied’ used in several questions. We ask the experts in the OIRPA office to consider finding more specific words that might solicit a more genuine response to the statements.

Once the committee approves this (with a quorum), the changes will be presented to the OIRPA office or correct chain of command.

The meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.