

**DIVERSITY COMMITTEE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT AND STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE**

A meeting of the Diversity Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College was held on Friday, August 26, 2005 at 1:45 p.m. in Room 427A Waterman Building.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Thomas Little, Vice Chair Ian Boyce, Claire Ayer, Christine Hertz, James Leddy, and Kami Patrizio

REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Staff Representative Marilyn Eldred, Alumni Representative Janet Terp, and Student Representative Katie Kasarjian

ABSENT: Faculty Representative Jane Birnn

PERSONS ALSO PARTICIPATING: John Bramley, Provost, Willi Coleman, Vice Provost for Multicultural Affairs, Kathryn Friedman, Executive Director for Diversity and Equity, and Robert Lawson, Chair of the President's Commission on Racial Diversity and Professor and Chair of Psychology

Chair Thomas Little called the meeting to order at 1:45 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made, seconded and voted to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2005 meeting.

Chair Little passed around fliers on an upcoming film and discussion opportunity "Last Chance for Eden," a documentary about eight men and women discussing the issues of racism and sexism, to be held Tuesday September 27, 2005, at Waterman Manor. Chair Little also mentioned a recent article from the Associated Press and the Rutland Herald, which focused on the University of New Hampshire's (UNH) ranking as 11th in a Princeton Review pertaining to student body. The article highlights UNH's plans to focus on recruiting minority faculty and students to the school and keeping them there. The UNH officials are also focusing on attracting female professors to teach in historically male dominated fields, such as science and math. The article also highlighted that UNH is encouraging the development of first-year courses on diversity issues.

Campus Climate Survey Project Update

Provost John Bramley reported to the Committee on the Campus Climate Survey distributed to the campus community this past spring. The survey asked respondents to provide information about their personal experiences with regard to campus climate issues, their perceptions of the climate for underrepresented members of the academic community, and their perceptions of institutional actions, including administrative

policies and academic initiatives regarding climate issues and related concerns on campus.

Provost Bramley reported that the survey generated three thousand responses from students, faculty, and staff. The data are now under review and analysis. The survey team is looking for statistical relevance, what actions are needed for any short comings, and importantly, an established assessment mechanism to determine progress. The Provost noted some basis for comparison of how UVM stands against other institutions on the points covered in the survey is needed.

Chair Little inquired as to when a final report or progress report, could be expected. Provost Bramley reiterated that the data is largely unprocessed, and that the committee wants to be careful and understand the validity of the data, without prejudging.

Per Racial Diversity Commission Chair, Professor Robert Lawson, the Campus Climate Survey Committee will proceed to complete its assessment of the survey data, consistently with the University's research and analysis standards.

Report on President's Commission on Racial Diversity: Progress and New Initiatives

Commission Chair Robert Lawson presented a detailed report on the work of this Commission, highlighting key issues, including the importance of diversity to the University's mission and vision. Chair Lawson, a University professor for 40 years, shared Census Bureau Statistics, and emphasized the important role that racial diversity plays with regard to academic excellence.

Chair Lawson thanked the Commission members for their hard work and dedication. He presented a detailed report, focusing on UVM's vision and mission and the valuing of diversity. He pointed out a critical part of the Commission's mission statement: To make recommendations to the President, to promote diversity and to strengthen UVM through sustained and active recruitment and retention programs. Four years worth of data from the Office of Institutional Studies, on racial demographics for students, faculty, and staff was included in the report. Chair Lawson commented that under the leadership of President Fogel and Provost Bramley, significant progress is being made.

One initiative the Commission has proposed is the implementation of a diversity component to the curriculum. Provost John Bramley explained that a 9-member faculty committee, chaired by Vice Provost Willi Coleman, has developed a proposal to institute a 6-credit diversity requirement. Vice Provost Coleman reported that the proposal has been submitted to the Faculty Senate for its review and action. The Senate is expected to hold public hearings on the proposal later this year. Provost John Bramley expressed the desire to have this suggested curriculum in place by fall semester 2006.

Chair Lawson ended with a question and answers period, which covered a variety of issues, including demographic data collection and student and faculty recruitment.

There was additional discussion concerning current practices for faculty recruitment. Trustee James Leddy commended the Commission for its work and commitment. He did state concerns about the pace for needed change being slow. Provost Bramley responded that the challenge is that the Administration does not control some fundamental change processes, such as curriculum. Professor Lawson noted that stable and strong University leadership is aiding progress.

Report on Faculty and Staff New Hires

Director Kathryn Friedman and Vice Provost Willi Coleman reported on the new Faculty and Staff hires for the 2004 to 2005 academic year. In conjunction with her report, Director Friedman shared data from the Office of Institutional Studies regarding racial and gender demographics. She commended Campus Life for being successful in hiring ALANA staff. Vice Provost Coleman shared that in some quarters there is controversy in being proactive and aggressive about pursuing ALANA hires.

Director Friedman closed with comments that UVM needs to intensify its efforts through a variety of means to achieve diversity in its faculty and staff. The Committee members then engaged in a discussion about recruitment and retention strategies and measures of their effectiveness.

Committee Work Plan

The Committee concluded the meeting with a discussion of desirable future Committee agenda items. Chair Little will circulate proposals for upcoming meetings.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Submitted by,

Thomas Little, Chair