Diversity Curriculum Review Committee (DCRC)
of the Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee

Minutes

Thursday, May 18, 2017, 3:00 – 4:15 pm
Waterman 427A

Present: Holly Busier (HCOL), Alec Ewald (CAS), Sue Kasser (CNHS), Thomas Macias (CAS), Joanne Pencak (GSB), Jonathan Sands (CEMS), Tao Sun (CALS), Jackie Weinstock (CAC rep).

Absent: Katharine Anderson (RSENR), Evan Eyler (LCOM), Shana Haines (CESS), Amani Whitfield (CAS).

Guests: Wanda Heading-Grant, Katie Shepherd.

I. Approval of minutes from the April 20, 2017 meeting. The minutes of the April 20, 2017 meeting were approved as written.

II. Discussion and update with Katie Shepherd, co-chair (with Cynthia Reyes) of the Diversity Gen Ed Assessment Committee.

Their committee met at least monthly, this academic year. In working on an “indirect” assessment of existing D1 courses, they reviewed records of diversity-course assessments past, including by the DCRC; worked with Alex Yin and the Office of Institutional Research to generate lists of instructors and students currently enrolled in D1 courses; convened focus groups, in collaboration with the CTL’s program involving student leaders; and conducted a very brief survey of a small sample of D1 instructors. Katie shared an informal selection of comments and themes from student focus groups; a more full report is forthcoming, and will be shared with the DCRC when it is available. Their committee has a preliminary plan for how to conduct a “direct” assessment next year.

Discussion concerns how to maintain communication and collaboration between our two committees. One possibility is to have a person serve on both committees; another is to employ the new Gen Ed Committee, on which the Chair of the DCRC is
joined by Brian Reed, who in turn supervises the Diversity Assessment Committee. General agreement that holding a joint meeting of the two committees very early next year would be an excellent idea.

III. Farewells to departing Committee members; discussion of Committee composition (and importance of full unit representation) in 2017-2018.

IV. Other business.

A. Circulation of draft version of the Chair’s report for the 2016-2017 year, in hard copy; Chair solicits contributions, corrections and suggestions from the committee prior to submission, both in this meeting and via e-mail.

   Strong consensus that Chair should include in the report a specific statement about the need for resources in support of the development, evaluation, and enrichment of diversity-related teaching at UVM. This emerges from discussion of some difficult events that have occurred this academic year at the University, as well as the discussion of the importance of the Diversity Gen Ed Assessment Committee’s ongoing work. Discussion notes that over the years, numerous efforts to assess and strengthen our diversity-course portfolio have started and stopped, only to be picked up again years later, then dropped again as a committee disbands, turns its attention to other matters, or finds itself stretched thin. The Chair is urged to emphasize in the report the fact that DCRC year-end reports going back several years have pointed to this need for resources.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.