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Multi-Ethnic Experience Committee

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University of Minnesota, Morris
MULTI-ETHNIC STUDENT PROGRAM

To: Multi-Ethnic Experience Committee (MEC) Members
From: Bonnie Tipcke, Recording Secretary
Subject: **September 1, 2011, MEC Minutes**

Present: Nancy Carpenter-chair, Vicente Cabrera, Kali Dale, Cha Vue

Absent: Brittany Anderson, Bryan Herrmann, Brooks Jessup, Hilda Ladner, Shirley Miller, Stacey Rosana

The Multi-Ethnic Experience Committee met at 9 a.m. on September 1, 2011, in the Prairie Lounge. This was the first meeting of the 2011-12 academic year.

Introductions were made as everyone present is new to the MEC. A VCAA designate for the committee has not yet been named, and faculty member Brooks Jessup is on fall semester leave. The USA member was inadvertently omitted from the roster for this meeting and was, therefore, not in attendance.

We looked at the minutes from 2010-11 to see what priorities had been set and talked about what we would like to do this year. An issue we would like to address immediately is the lack of awareness regarding the existence and business of the MEC, particularly for students. The idea of hosting a get-acquainted ice cream social was suggested and steps will be taken to explore costs, a possible sponsor, and a date. It will be a campus-wide event, broadly publicized via Weekly Bulletin, posters, and e-mails.

The charge of the committee was reviewed and it was clarified that our responsibility is for racial and ethnic minority students. This does include international students. The MEC has not had a connection to the International Programs Committee in the past, but it might be something we would like to explore.

Referring to the priorities listed by the 2010-11 MEC, we think it is important to continue to explore four of them:

1. Recruiting and retaining faculty and staff of color: resources, documents, best practices.
2. Visibility of research and other opportunities for students of color: action plan
3. Look at international students and how the MEC relates to them.
4. Visibility of UMM's new level of diversity in the student population

We, like the previous committee, recognize the problems created for faculty of color and students of color on committees regarding workload and participation due to small numbers of people involved. However, we aren't in a position to solve the problem, so this will not be one of our priorities.

Plans were underway last year to send a postcard to the campus community with facts about our students of color population. We would like to follow through with this idea but with some modifications. Instead of a postcard, we will prepare a single-sided pdf “diversity fact sheet” that will be sent to all employees by e-mail. In addition, we will produce a small number of 11x17 posters to be distributed around campus with information regarding the various opportunities available to students. It is always difficult finding ways to get the word out to students since many don’t open their University e-mail messages or check their post office boxes. Student members were asked to talk with other students to see where they would go to look for opportunities. It would be good to have an opportunities webpage with links to the ACE and MSP webpages, for example. The best way for students to find the information would probably be through the UMM search engine.

Cabrera will ask Nancy Helsper for statistics about recruiting and retaining faculty and staff of color.

Carpenter will invite Pilar Eble to the next meeting to help us decide if it would be beneficial to have a connection to the International Programs Committee. She will also make the necessary contacts to proceed with plans for the ice cream social and talk with Bryan Herrmann about updating the postcard information from last year for the diversity fact sheet.