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MEC minutes 03/06/2017

Multi-Ethnic Experience Committee

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MEC Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Hilda Ladner, Jenna Ray, Olivia Klemek, Thomas Genova , David Isreals-Swenson, and Adrienne Conley. Ruby DeBellis attended the last few minutes.

Dave Isreals-Swenson, Director of Student Activities, attended the MEC meeting to give background on how listserv emails work at UMM and the guidelines specified guidelines used to monitor these listservs.

The first question posed was “How does the student listserv work?” It was explained to the MEC committee that as of 2013, FERPA policy disallowed universities to create a, “opt-out” listserv making the current student listserv an opt-in system; currently 600 students have chosen to be a part of this listserv. As far as screening the listserv emails, students are able to use the email system to advance their own rhetoric, when as long as the email is following the university guidelines, the university is not able to officially step in. Dave also mentioned that there are some updates happening with the listserv system and he acknowledged the system is “a bit archaic.”

Dave quoted Simón Franco, a student who graduated in 2008 and now works in the activities office, who says that he has seen a shift in use of the listserv over the last ten years. Originally, the listserv was used to advertise student organization events and campus events. Currently students who have opted- in to the listserv receive 50-80 emails a day and the bulk of those emails are for weekly student organization meetings. Due to the high volume of emails received every day, students often choose to delete them without reading the email first.

MCSA was very adamant they want to keep the listserv active when they were approached about potentially removing that system of communication. MCSA says that it still feels useful to contact the student body.

Adrienne mentioned that some of her colleagues at other institutions are able to have more control over what emails go out to their students from a student listserv. At UMM, there is little in regards to how to best monitor the student listserv due to specific language in the student listserv code of conduct.

These are all things that MEC has to consider before choosing whether or not they should release a formal statement regarding the line between free speech and hate speech. IT and Student Activities have their biennial interest survey sent out via the student listserv—so far 250/600 students have completed the survey.

3/23/17 is the DiversiTea will be held from 3-4:30pm in the Cougar Room of Oyate. Ruby and Hilda volunteered to help facilitate the program. Liv will order food and Hilda will look into having a grant from the NCAA to help cover those costs.

Ruby DeBellis was still interested in tabling for the DiversiTea and to promote visibility of the EDI office and the MRC building. Liv will use Astra to reserve tables in the student center from 11am-2pm from 3/20-22/17. Meeting ended with the MEC committee formulating questions for this event.

Discussion questions for the DiversiTea event were discussed and are copied here:

- 1) How should the University address hateful speech on social media?
- 2) Question about Black Lives Matter
- 3) Question about expanded EDI
- 4) Question about sanctuary campus
- 5) Question about microaggressions on campus
- 6) Recruitment and retention suggestions. How to create more welcoming climate for: people of color, people of different gender identities, people with disabilities, people of different religious identities
- 7) What do we mean by "diversity"? What kind of diversity do you want to promote at UMM?
- 8) Open discussion: What do you want to talk about?
- 9) What is the role of higher educational institutions like UMM in addressing the current political climate?