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Multi-Ethnic Experience Committee

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Multi-Ethnic Experience Committee (MEC) Meeting

October 7, 2013

Present: Jennifer Deane-chair, David Ericksen, Soloman Gashaw, Shirley Miller, Stacey Rosana, Pengxieu Thao, Daniel Rodriguez, Eric Gandrud, Tracy Peterson, Michael Ceballos, Janel Mendoza

Absent: T.J. Ross

Katrice Albert (Vice President from the Office for Equity and Diversity) visit

- Requested to meet with the MEC committee during her visit to UMM on 11/18/13; the committee discussed arranging our meeting to coincide with her visit.
 - Later in the meeting, it was decided to instead schedule the DiversiTea event to coincide with her visit

Diversity Award

- Miller and Gashaw continue work on this; Rosana volunteered to help
- The idea of naming the award after Ida & Bill Stewart was also brought up
- Funding is still up in the air-the group will compile information and get it to Allisande Allaben, who will then work with them to secure funding; possibly from the Chancellor's Office
 - Deane will forward email from Allisande Allaben regarding the award specifics to Miller, Gashaw, and Rosana

DiversiTea

- Last year was the first DiversiTea-students of color met with staff/faculty and the MEC committee-Sue Lor helped with activities and conversation starters
 - A survey was given out to students (as well as left at the info desk), asking students how they can better be served
- Ideas for this year?
 - Rosana mentioned we need to focus on more of the minority students who do not hold leadership roles on campus/might not have a strong connection to MSP
 - Reach out to Gateway mentors and get their groups to attend
 - Once again leave the surveys at the info desk for those that cannot attend
 - Should this be an open or closed event? Most agreed that it should be an open event, but gear it towards students of color
 - Make an extra effort to help them get lists of resources available to them on campus
 - It was suggested to have two faculty members speak about research they are doing and have conversations afterward; however, this may prove a bit difficult as the format of DiversiTea is "come-and-go." We could have a list of faculty who teach or do research in multi-ethnic studies available.

Multi-Ethnic Development Workshop for Faculty/Instructors

- Committee agreed to hold another one this year in the spring; there seems to be a definite need to help change the climate/environment
- Last year, Hmong students volunteered their time and did presentations (facilitated by Sue Lor); 20 faculty attended
- For this year, it was suggested the presentations be made shorter in order for the faculty to hold discussions in their groups
- Ceballos recommended sending a short quiz to faculty, prior to the workshop, that would quiz them on their multi-ethnic knowledge-perhaps faculty would be more apt to attend.
- Various issues with reporting issues students have with faculty were brought up:
 - Gashaw talked about how there needs to be a way to break through the structural barrier; students need to be encouraged to speak to the discipline
 - Ceballos said there needs to be a mechanism to deal with these issues formally
 - Professors do not see the handwritten evaluations done by students until six months later; it was emphasized that most professors want to know about the issue right away so they can fix it; most professors are not intentionally trying to offend their students
 - Ceballos suggested using surveymonkey.com-he uses this during the school year to get immediate feedback from his students; everything is also typed, anonymity is kept
 - What should be focused on this year? Committee agreed that after the DiversiTea is held, and the surveys are gone through, we will have a better idea of what group or topic to focus on
- Peterson talked about up-coming events we need to make students aware of:
 - November 6th-Film ("Oil on Ice") 7:00pm
 - November 7th-Elder in Residence Faculty/Staff Development (Moccasin Flower Room)
- Discussed how important it is to make sure students know about research/internship opportunities-webpage linked to ACE
 - Send an email to faculty to ask if they have more opportunities to add to the webpage
- Committee agreed to meet every two weeks for the next couple of months