



**President's Commission on Diversity
February 14, 2008
Room 306 Main Building
Minutes**

Members Present: Oscar Arevalo, Druscilla Bakert, Patty Bender, Mary Bolin-Reece, Lina Croker, Bessie Guerrant, Vanessa Jackson, Ibrahim Jawahir, Jane Kirschling, Michael Lee, Bob Mullens, Mahjabeen Rafiuddin, Allan G. Richards, Karen Slaymaker, Richard Sutphen, Isabel Taylor, Rakesh Kandibanda, Linda Rakes

Members Absent: Chike Anyaegbunam, Lori Gonzalez, Chester Grundy, Sara Jones, Lionel Williamson, Jeff Dembo, Gail Hairston, Sharon Taylor New, Alvin Seals.

Welcome and Call to Order: **Allan G. Richards**

Dr, Richards called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m.

Welcome to new commission member, Isabel Taylor, Multicultural Affairs Coordinator, Lexington Fayette Urban County Government.

Approval of Minutes: **Allan G. Richards**

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Michael Lee and seconded by Mary Bolin-Reece . The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote with no changes.

Chair Report **Allan G. Richards**

President's Awards for Diversity

The Diversity Awards ceremony will be held April 17, 2008 in the Lexmark Room of the Main Building and will begin at 3:00pm. Nominations are open until the deadline of February 29, 2008 and instructions and the nomination form are found at www.uky.edu/pcd. The keynote speaker for the ceremony will be Hasan Davis. Hasan Davis is a lawyer, educator, youth advocate and actor. Hasan founded Empowerment Solutions in 1998, following his position as the director of the Youth Violence Prevention

Project for the city of Lexington, Kentucky. Hasan is a part time community artist-in-residence. His Staging Success curriculum combines the arts of theater, creative writing and storytelling to address important social issues with youth and adult participants. We look forward to Mr. Davis' address at the Awards Ceremony.

Next year's diversity awards ceremony will be revamped to be inclusive and to reflect what this institution is about on a more global scale. The keynote speaker brought to our campus for the event next year will engage the campus community around the celebration of the diversity awards ceremony. Suggestions and ideas are welcome as we endeavor to develop new strategies for this annual event.

The PCD website is constantly changing and is an informational campus-wide tool. The commission members are encouraged to visit the website regularly and to get the word out about this "one stop shopping" for campus wide events, information, etc. Thanks to Rakesh Kandibanda, graduate assistant to the PCD, for his dedication, commitment and excellence in creating and maintaining the PCD website.

Nominating Committee:

Bessie Guerrant

The current membership of the commission is in good standing with a 25 member slate. Nominations may be submitted at any time throughout the year and will be kept on file. The membership nomination form can be found on the PCD website (www.uky.edu/pcd) and may be sent electronically to Linda Rakes @ lrake2@email.uky.edu or faxed to 859-323-9804. The nominations will be reviewed and submitted to the President for appointment by June 30, 2008 for any openings on the Commission.

Undergraduate Student Affairs

Mary Bolin-Reece, Committee Chair, reported that at the last meeting, the committee's discussion centered on two related topics and documents:

1. Principles of a revised General Education Curriculum [derived from the USP Reform Steering Committee proposal]
2. Defining desired outcomes and key indicators of UK undergraduates' experience, related to the vision of UK as a diverse and inclusive institutional culture worthy of a Top 20 public research university

The committee members in attendance agreed on their support of all seven key points in the "Principles" USP reform document. The USP reform themes dovetail with the PCD committee's hopes for the UK undergraduate experience – that beyond mastering specific content, our students will develop skills and a process for active, life-long learning which will allow them to become culturally proficient so that they are successful in a global environment. We appreciated the statement, "Life does not always present itself as a problem to be *solved*; it often appears as a dilemma that must be *resolved*." The

committee's discussion represented a variety of viewpoints – and crossed back and forth between USP and the experiences they hope the UK undergraduates will have, to affect their thinking, behavior, communication, values, beliefs – and which can be measured and evaluated for future improvements in the UK experience.

Graduate and Professional Student Affairs Jane Kirschling

Questions have been sent out by this committee to approximately 160 graduate and professional students. The outcomes and indicators from this questionnaire will be reviewed and reported on.

Faculty and Staff Affairs Vanessa Jackson

Committee is in the process of interviewing people in the categories of administrators, faculty and staff. Information is being gathered from the interviews conducted and will be submitted in a condensed report..

Engagement and Public Relations Richard Sutphen

This committee is in the process of conducting interviews of campus, local, national (alumni), international students and people within the state. International students on campus have been interviewed. The legislature convenes in March and at that time, interviews with people within the state will be scheduled. Gail Hairston will gather outcomes and indicators data on a national level for the final report.

New Business Allan G. Richards

The goal from the work and results of the committees is to develop assessment tools for the institution and where it should be based on the results of the outcomes and indicators of the committees' reports. These outcomes and indicators are requested to be submitted to Dr. Richards by March 25, 2008 so that the results of these reports can be combined into a master report.

The committee chairs and committee members were thanked for their substantive discussions, goals and hard work. Dr. Judy "JJ" Jackson has accepted and been appointed as the new Vice President for Institutional Diversity and will come to UK July 1, 2008 to begin her duties. The fulfillment of this newly created position sends a strong message to the campus, community and state that UK is serious about diversity. One person can not accomplish this task alone as it takes everyone working in a collaborative effort toward the same goals. Dr. Jackson may become an ex-officio member of the PCD as indicated by her position

March 1-31, 2008 is the Multiculture Festival campus wide. Complete details and information are located on the PCD website.

Bessie Guerrant reported that UK had 22 students ACCEPTED as undergraduate research students, but only 19 will be able to attend and present their research at the 2008 National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR), to be held April 10-12th at Salisbury University, in Maryland (<http://www.salisbury.edu/ncur22>).

Allan Richards concluded the commission meeting with the following remarks:

“Some 6 months ago we started a journey. With the adoption of our Strategic Plan for Diversity, we decided, as a Commission, to create an institutional culture that is diverse and inclusive based on our work and recommendations to the President of UK. An institutional culture that is diverse and inclusive will not only meet the Diversity Goal and the Top 20 status laid out in the UK Strategic Plan but it will make diversity central to the day-to-day operation of the university, prepare students to successfully navigate the global community, provide opportunities for faculty and staff growth and advancement, provide administrators with the tools to develop an execute policies that are meaningful to effectively communicate to all constituencies, engage and enlist communities in the fundamental struggles for social and economic justice and equality, and above all demonstrate that our histories do not have to be impediments to success but an asset to innovation and goodwill.

As we seek to move forward, we should not only see the Commission Strategic Plan as a roadmap to our goal to create an institutional culture that is diverse and inclusive but we should understand that this is not enough. We should change minds and we should change old attitudes about diversity and inclusion. This I know is a time-consuming process because it means carefully and sensitively educating this campus for a paradigm shift from a piecemeal approach to promoting diversity to one that is an holistic approach where everyone is integrally tied to the creation of an institutional culture that is diverse and inclusive.

Gardner (1983), who is credited for discovering that we have multiple intelligences, suggests that for the most part we are the sum total of our experiences. From this we can extrapolate that no two people are alike and thus they bring different perspectives to the world of issues that we are facing and that we have to grapple with. Diversity is about you and me; diversity is about all of us; and all of us must participate fully in this effort to create an institutional culture that is diverse and inclusive if our efforts are going to be successful.

Strategically we are currently working very hard to develop important and necessary tools to guide our decisions and programmatic activities on this commission. Assessment strategies are the core tools in this pragmatic process. And the work of the Commission Committees is bringing these assessment strategies closer to reality. Let me thank you the Committees for the fabulous work you are doing. Soon you will see the fruits of your labor.

March 25th is the date set for me to receive your committees' efforts in developing strategic indicators and outcomes. In our next meeting, we will discuss how we are going to proceed for the April and May meetings. Thank you”!

Adjourn:

Allan G. Richards

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Vanessa Jackson and seconded by Jane Kirschling. Meeting adjourned at 1:47 pm.