

**PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY
(PCAAEOD)
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
November 16, 2013**

Members Present:

L. Broxton, C. Carter, M. Cascarano, M. Coleman-Carter, C. Cottle, C. Drost, N. Duarte, B. Gano, A. Gomez, H. Haines, D. Harris, A. Jeffers, D. Keiser, B. Lin, D. McMorrin, C. Meneghin, B. Milton, W. Poon, M. Re, G. Rivera, D. Rodak, T. Seaboch, L. Whitaker, T. Zurlo.

The general membership meeting of the PCAAEOOD was called to order at 12:10 p.m. by Cindy Meneghin, Chair. She welcomed new and returning members.

Meeting with President Cole

Meneghin reported that the PCAAEOOD Executive Committee met with President Cole on October 1, 2013 in order to get clear direction and insight on how she envisions the future direction of the Commission. Meneghin gave the following summary of the meeting:

Dr. Cole stated that she appreciates the work that the Commission does. She recognizes the fact that the Commission deals with some difficult issues and welcomes the Commission's recommendations and actions.

Gilbert Rivera, Interim VPHR, will serve as the Commission's advocate for issues that need to be presented and addressed at the vice president level, and he will bring issues to President Cole if necessary.

Dr. Cole approved of the Commission's new meeting schedule for this academic year. Three meetings will be held, and constituency representatives will be expected to reach out to their respective constituencies and gather information on areas of concern that fall within the Commission's purview. The constituency representatives will then present those issues to the Executive Committee for discussion and recommendations.

Remarks from PCAAEOOD Chair

Meneghin stated that the Commission is the most diverse group on campus and has been in existence for nearly 40 years. She emphasized the fact that all Commission members are equal and that while we may have diverse opinions on issues, some that are very sensitive, that we should treat each other with civility and respect. What is said at Commission meetings is confidential and no one should feel uncomfortable about speaking up on issues that are

presented, for we are here to learn, understand and share. Meneghin stated that if any member feels uncomfortable about anything discussed at a Commission meeting, that s/he should present their concern to the Executive Committee.

Meneghin also stated that the Commission will no longer have standing committees, (Diversity, Recruitment & Retention; Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action) and that adhoc committees will be formed on a need basis instead. There are presently two active adhoc committees -- Sponsorship and Mentoring.

Meneghin reported that Linda Smith, and Bob Jones have resigned from the Commission. Smith's alternate, Chris Drost will become the voting member for the Persons with Disabilities constituency. Jones served as the alternate member representing the managerial constituency. Jeff Indiveri-Gant, serves as the voting member for this constituency. Meneghin stated that Neil Vastola from the Division of Finance & Treasury, and Sharon Mahoney from the Division of Facilities Services have been recommended as possible members to serve on the Commission.

Committee Reports

Sponsorship Committee – Cottle reported that the Executive Committee approved two requests for sponsorship funds to provide monetary support, in the amount of \$750 each, for two EOF program activities – The Boyz to Men Conference, and the Young Women's Leadership Conference. Cottle stated that there is still \$1500 available in the Commission's budget to sponsor special programs on campus.

Affirmative Action Day

Meneghin reported that 2014 will mark the 40th anniversary of the PCAAEOD and that this occasion should be celebrated in a special way. No date has yet been set for Affirmative Action Day 2014, but it will be celebrated in either February or March. There will be a flag raising ceremony, and Meneghin asked Commission members for suggestions in ways in which to celebrate the 40th anniversary. She stated that we are prohibited from paying an outside speaker, but perhaps we could reach out to a faculty member to do a presentation on the history of Affirmative Action. Meneghin further stated that whatever the Commission does, student participation is vital because they play a valuable role on the Commission and in support of the Commission's program activities.

Rivera made a suggestion to honor past presidents of the PCAAEOD. Other suggestions included having buttons with a catchy slogan ordered (e.g. "We're All Here"; "Everyone Matters"), and/or having flags or posters with a diversity theme placed around campus.

McMorrin agreed to chair the Affirmative Action Day Committee. Zurlo, Whitaker, and Milton will also serve on the committee to plan next year's Affirmative Action Day program activities.

Other Business

Meneghin reported that the position of Vice Chair is now vacant, due to Linda Smith's resignation from the Commission, and she asked Commission members for nominations. A self-nomination was received from Harry Haines, and Jeff Indiveri-Gant was also recommended. Meneghin stated that she will prepare a ballot and email it to Commission members.

A concern was expressed about students being denied access to take courses outside of the University and that this policy is having a negative impact on EOF students. This matter will be looked into by the Executive Committee.

Another concern was expressed about the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions in the Facilities Department. Milton explained that most positions in the Facilities Department are non-traditional positions for women, but that if women apply for these type of positions they should not be subjected to any form of discrimination. Then Rivera reported that a female manager may be joining the Facilities Department as a new hire.

Announcements

Rodak introduced Nick Duarte as the new student representative for the Veterans constituency. She also reported that Veterans and Military Student Recognition Week will be celebrated November 11-17, 2013. This is the 5th year that the University has celebrated this occasion and a flag raising and proclamation reading will be held on November 11. Rodak stated that there are presently 20 military students on campus.

Abreu reported that she was part of a delegation of staff and students who recently participated in the 3rd Annual President's Interfaith and Community Service Campus Challenge that was held at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. MSU's student delegation represented the Muslim Student Association, Hilel, and the Newman Catholic Association. Abreu stated that MSU was invited to the event and was recognized for the variety and level of programming it has done to foster interfaith collaboration and inclusion and that 130 colleges and universities were represented at this conference.

Abreu also announced that Diversity Week will be celebrated November 2-8, 2013. She highlighted some of the various programs and activities that will be held during this time, including a special program entitled "Kristallnacht," (Night of Broken Glass), and the 13th Annual Higher Education Conference with the American Conference on Diversity.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,
Barbara J. Milton