

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE

Committee on Equal Opportunity and Inclusion
(Final; Action)

EQ.12.01 Report on Certain Diversity and Equity UIUC Campus Issues

1 – Annual Report for 2010. On April 26, 2010, the Senate Committee on Equal Opportunity and Inclusion presented to the Senate its Report on Diversity and Equity Initiatives (EQ.10.01). In the present report, the Committee wishes to identify and amplify additional issues and concerns.

2 – Stewarding Excellence. In a letter dated November 12, 2010, to then Interim Chancellor and Vice-President Easter and Provost Wheeler the Committee expressed its concern by stating that “The UIUC Senate Committee on Equal Opportunity and Inclusion (EQ) has noticed with profound concern that the Stewarding Excellence process has ignored the very important and ever present diversity question in its reports. This makes it appear that diversity is not a priority item from the Administration’s point of view to be sacrificed for budgetary expediency reasons.” While the Chancellor replied affirmatively the Committee sees no visible campus motion on increased efforts in retention and/or new hire procedures.

3 – The Strategic Plan of 2006-2011 commits the University to an increasingly extensive national and global constituency. However, with growth and expansion we have also increased the inequities in development opportunities provided to students by race, gender, socio economic status, region, and country.

Student Enrollments. It is critical that an analysis of the University's traditional entry requirements (all campuses) take place to align with our new commitment to cultivate justice, enhance social mobility, and improve the quality of life for all. Currently, the University's traditional entry requirements do not promote values that respond to local, national, and global needs equally for both traditional and non-traditional students at the undergraduate and the graduate level. For instance, enrollments for international students have increased, but domestic (Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, and American Indian) student enrollment decreased since 2005 (Hamer & Perez, 2010).

Strategic Goal V: Access to the Illinois Experience requires new entry policies that recognize knowledge learned through work experience and other nontraditional methods. Traditional metrics, curriculums, and methods of teaching should also be revised to hold the University accountable for a successful learning experience, hence successful graduation rates of all students.

References:

- Gutierrez, K.D., & Rogoff, B. (2003) Cultural Ways of Learning: Individual Traits or Repertoires of Practice. *Educational Researcher*, 32 (5), 19-25.
- Hamer, J.F., & Perez, V.H. (2010) *Elusive Equity: Graduate Education at Illinois' Flagship University*. Urbana: Center on Democracy in a Multiracial Society, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.
- University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. (2010) *UIUC On-Campus International Students by Country and Gender Fall 2010*. Urbana: Division of Management Information.
- University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. (2010) *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Strategic Plan Progress Report*. Urbana: University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.
- University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. (2010, April 11) EQ.10.01, Resolution on Diversity and Equity Initiatives. Retrieved from Academic Senate: <http://www.senate.illinois.edu.eq1001.asp>

4 –Student and Faculty Recruitment. The administration should affirm the importance of recruitment and retention of underrepresented minority and women undergraduate and graduate students, and the significance of a welcoming academic and community environment in achieving this goal. Apparently the Graduate School is moving back to a coordinated recruitment weekend for underrepresented minority admits, and the Committee concurs in this as a good way to welcome potential new students as long as ample time is made in the scheduling for those students to also have access to potential departmental mentors and graduate colleagues. Recruitment and retention of underrepresented minority and women faculty, with particular attention to the importance of mentorship of non-tenured faculty is of paramount importance. The protection of faculty, especially those hired in joint-appointments, from being overburdened with service assignments that might obstruct their time for research and teaching innovations is crucial to achieving tenure. Departments should be encouraged to think strategically about the importance of placing faculty from underrepresented groups on hiring committees.

5 – Ethnic Studies Programs. The most obvious issues surrounding the Ethnic Studies Programs (which include the Department of Latina/Latino Studies, the Department of African American Studies, the Department of Gender and Women Studies, the American Indian Studies Program, and the Department of Asian American Studies) are the following:

Space. It is clear that the office space is substandard, especially in comparison to the facilities provided to other units on campus. For example, in Latina/Latino Studies, TA's have their office space in the basement, with no windows. One concern in grouping the Department of Latina/Latino Studies, the Department of African American Studies, the Department of Gender and Women Studies, the American Indian Studies Program and the Department of Asian American Studies together in a new building is that this will further diminish their individual identity.

Faculty Diversity. The number of faculty of color is also a perpetual concern. Transparent and reliable data on tenure track and non-tenure track faculty is needed for a complete evaluation of diversity trends.

Diversity Initiatives. It is also apparent that the issue of diversity is cyclical and repetitive, that comes and goes with each set of administrators. It is never part of their permanent plan. It needs to be incorporated into a general plan, where goals, and achievements can be measured and evaluated.

Transparency. Issues related to developing advanced degree programs in the ethnic studies units need to be addressed by the units and supported by their deans. Though it is clear that these units need to start thinking about how they are to be providing PhD's in the future, the academic discussion has stalled, if not disappeared. Rumors abound on campus as to the physical amalgamation of the units, to the extent that the clear distinction between the support programs for Latina/Latino students, and the academic units, is again disappearing. This lack of transparency affects hiring, promotion, etc.

Distinction Between Academics and Support. The clear distinction between the support programs and the Departments needs to be maintained. The best way to maintain this distinction is the physical separation of the two types of units. Support Programs are under the Office of Student Affairs, and Departments are under the supervision of the department heads, academic deans and the provost.

Recommendation: The Senate Committee on Equal Opportunity and Inclusion recommends that the UIUC Academic Senate receive this report and that the Clerk of the Senate transmit the Report to Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost Richard Wheeler, Vice President and Chancellor Phyllis Wise, President Michael Hogan, and members of the Board of Trustees.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND INCLUSION

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