Council for Diversity and Interculturalism
Meeting Minutes
April 16, 2014

The monthly meeting of the Council for Diversity and Interculturalism of 2013-2014 was held on April 16, 2014 in the Gordon Ball Board Room at the Brenda Lawson Athletic Center. Present at the meeting were Chancellor Jimmy G. Cheek, Vice Chancellor Rickey Hall, Adam Cureton, Alecia Davis, Maxine Davis, Tim Hiles, Annazette Houston, Tyler Johnson, Joel Kramer, Damien Pitts, Anton Reece, Rita Smith, Tyvi Small, Eric Stokes, Paul Troy, Pia Wood, John Zomchick, and Brian Thomas.

I. Remarks from Chancellor Jimmy G. Cheek

The chancellor began by speaking on how proud he is that we now have a Vice Chancellor for Diversity. He touched on what he looked for when doing the VC search and how the CDI reports to the VC now. He is pleased with the CDI Unit excellence award and he is proud it is named after Dr. Marva Rudolph while also paying his respects to her and her legacy to this University. He then spoke on student recruitment on campus and the affordability of the University of Tennessee. The University of Tennessee has 33% of its student body Pale Grant eligible which ranks 7th in the top 25. If there is one thing that this university needs to work on is student retention. 14% of freshman end up leaving after the first year. The Chancellor emphasizes diversity among the faculty and staff, with regards to race and gender. The diversity on campus has made significant progress over the last 5 years but we need to continue in that effort. The chancellor spoke on the new hires on campus as well as individuals who have recently been promoted, including our own Maxine Davis. He touched on the employee engagement survey that Rickey Hall has been working on. There are new diversity questions that Rickey has added that will appear on the survey in the fall. The chancellor made the statement, this university is on a mission to become better.

Q: Does the available data have demographics on the 14% population we are losing?

A: The data did not show anything except for characters of these types of students. Those characteristic include such factors like income bracket, math ACT scores, distance from home, and parental education. Dr. Reece added other reasons why students may leave include the size of the university, as well as not making connections with other students.

Q: Could Rickey elaborate on the new questions being added to the Employee Engagement Survey?

A: The proposal for the new questions is progress and a step in the right direction. The questions that we saw at last meeting will be similar to the final product on the survey.

Q: What has the university done to help students who find difficulty is traveling home for breaks?

A: Student Life subsidizes buses for students to travel to various locations in the state for Thanksgiving and winter break.
Q: Thanked the chancellor for the support of the office of disability services and students with disabilities.

Q: Talk about diversity is included in performance reviews of DDDH?

A: The chancellor asks everyone for an update on diversity for each. He also keeps reports and charts to help him monitor the diversity efforts. John Zomchick helps with the diversity of search committees and potential candidates.

Q: What happens after the employee engagement survey is submitted?

A: This is the second go around of the survey. The chancellor’s cabinet will call a meeting to try and make sense of the data. They look at the data and see what the university needs to do better. He identified communication as one area of improve the university needs and is working on the implementation of a strategy that will help with improving in that area.

Q: What does the chancellor mean by diversity? Are there plans to expand?

A: The chancellor means mostly racial and ethnic categories. While there are no plans in place to expand, he hopes that more categories will be added.

II. Update from Commissions

Commission for Blacks
The commission will be hosting a home owner’s seminar on April 24. Mike Sutton will be hosting the event. There are also plans for another reception for those who are unable to attend on May 8. More information is available on our website, http://web.utk.edu/~cfb

Commission for Women
News on the commission for women can be found at http://cfw.utk.edu/.

Commission for LGBT people
Phyliss Shey and Joel Kramer have been re-elected as co-chair. The lavender graduation will be held April 24 at the BCC. For more information and other news on the LGBT, please visit http://lgbt.utk.edu/.

BFSA
News on the association can be is located at http://web.utk.edu/~bfsa/.

III. By-Laws Update

The by-laws subcommittee looked at wording of the by-laws to better reflect the vision of the vice chancellor. They also looked at the composition of the members and how to the make up should be constituted moving forward. The proposal is to have the Vice Chancellor’s of each area appoint someone that represents them, the commissions, and the student representation as required members.
The other areas would be made up of those members who wish to apply. Discussion took place on why certain areas are represented on the council while other areas are not. Dr. Cureton made the suggestion that a person of disability would be a required membered on the council.

**IV. Co-Chair Nominations**

May 16 will be the deadline to submit a nomination. A vote will be taken at the next meeting.

**V. New Business**

The commission for LGBT people is looking to pass a bill for gender neutral family-style restrooms in all new buildings. The commission has asked the council to sign on in support of LGBT’s letter to the chancellor was voted on and passed.

**VI. Next Meeting**

The Council will meet on Wednesday, May 21, 2014 at 3:30 p.m. in the Gordon Ball Boardroom, Brenda Lawson Athletic Center.