

Diversity Committee Minutes January 21, 2011

The Diversity Committee met January 21, 2011 in H113 and AF 103 at 11:00 am. Those present were Rodney Williams, Bruce Dietsche, Joan Stirling, Charlotte Knox, Mary Ellen Hawkins, Kendra Smith, and Cheri McKee-McSwain.

The agenda:

1. Discussion of Diversity events for this semester at each campus/site
2. Diversity Committee Budget
3. General discussion (basically catching up) of next fall's International Day

Minutes:

There was no meeting in December so December minutes were not read.

New Business

Item One: New Business

Diversity Activities for the Spring Semester

Discussed first were activities for the spring semester. Mountain View plans to have a Russian Mardi Gras presentation. Russian Mardi Gras begins February 28. Arrangements have been made for music and an art display. Various members planned to discuss with people they know in the community the possibility of presenting slides or displaying items from trips to Russia. Rodney suggested contacting a Greek or Russian Orthodox minister to participate due to Mardi Gras' religious origins.

Rodney also mentioned a presentation sometime this spring about domestic abuse through the eyes of a victim of domestic violence. The victim will be of Hispanic or African-American heritage.

Rodney asked for suggestions for activities for the Melbourne campus this spring such as a roundtable discussion group. He encouraged us to think in broad terms of diversity, including those stricken with poverty and those with learning disabilities.

We need an activity for each site, including Mammoth Spring.

Rodney also suggested we link diversity and a lecture concert series. We could bring in small groups to present at any or all of Ozarka's locations. There is a need for a fundraiser to provide for this idea.

Item Two: New Business
Budget

Joan stated that there is a National Endowment for Humanities grant currently available for application, though the deadline is in two weeks. The grant, though, is for \$50,000 if matched with \$100,000 from the community. An additional hurdle, other than the timeline, regarding this grant opportunity is that it doesn't directly fund activities and only the interest money can be used.

Rodney stated that we need to set a budget for the Diversity Committee. We need a reliable budget. It was agreed upon to ask for \$1,000 annually. The process for request, according to Joan, is to approach Tina Wheelis and Dr. Richard Dawe regarding the need.

Discussed was the need for a grant to supplement the budget and allow the Diversity Committee to expand its activities on all four campuses/sites. Rodney stated that, "We're (Ozarka) growing out of our adolescence into adulthood. Who do we want to be in 10 years? We need to establish our identity and place in this community." All commented that they liked the reference to Ozarka outgrowing its adolescence and felt it reflected where we are as a college and member of the community.

Item Three: New Business
International Day

Next on the agenda was the discussion of International Day this fall. Japan is the highlighted country.

Mieko Uchida Peek, a Japanese instructor at Lyon College, has agreed to present lectures on Japan this fall at all four locations. An abundance of Japanese artifacts and items are available both from faculty and community members to display.

It was agreed to hold International Day on two days each week for two weeks instead of four days in one week. Mountain View and Melbourne will host International Day one week and Ash Flat and Mammoth Spring the next week. Dates are yet to be determined.

Cheri's art class will provide Japanese art for the occasion. Joan has four Japanese block prints to be displayed.

It was suggested that the English Department host a Haiku poetry contest. The contest could also be open to faculty. We will need to discuss with instructors how to incorporate Japanese studies into their lesson plan this fall and present displays for the International Day depending on the department.

We need to contact the culinary arts department as soon as we know the dates so they can incorporate the event on their schedule.

Rodney asked that we all be thinking of who should be the chairperson next year. Be thinking...

Item Four: New Business
Diversity Survey

Finally discussed was a diversity survey. It was agreed that on-line was the best method. We should ask instructors to encourage students to participate. The survey will be available after spring break in the same format as before so as to render consistent results. The only change to the survey discussed was a follow-up question regarding discrimination (both experienced and witnessed).

Bruce moved to adjourn. Joan seconded it. Meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Minutes written by Kendra Smith, and respectfully submitted on January 25 by Judy Cannady/Recorder.