

**Diversity Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 26, 2007, 3:00 p.m.
Room 375 Witherspoon Student Center**

Committee members present: Felecia Baity, Valerie Ball, David Drooz, Thomas Easley, Melissa Godwin, Pat Grantham, Marjorie Griffiths, Marcia Gumpertz, Heather Huntley, Shannon Johnson, Sarah Kim, Carrie McLean, Nancy Whelchel, Dave Shafer, Dan Solomon, Rachel Stinehelfer, Dan Solomon, Bryan Wade, Alice Warren, Tonya Washington, Deidre Young, and Tom Younce.

University Presenters: Dr. Jose Picart, Vice Provost for Diversity and African American Affairs

Agenda Items:

I. Welcome

Vice Provost José Picart welcomed the members and asked them to introduce themselves. He then asked for motion to approve the minutes of the last UDAC meeting. Rachel Stinehelfer asked that the spelling of her last name be corrected. With no other changes, Dave Shafer seconded the motion and the committee unanimously approved the minutes.

II. Update on GLBT Center

Vice Provost José Picart provided an update on the GLBT Center stating that the dedication would be held on January 23, 2008, 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. Vice Provost Picart announced that the candidate search went very well and that a decision should be made by the end of the year. Hopefully, the new director will be in place in time for the dedication. Office space for the GLBT Center in Talley Student Center is currently being renovated and a graduate student employed in the GLBT Resource Center has been implementing the center's activities.

Vice Provost Picart announced that last year a tradition was renewed that allowed the Chancellor's African American Community Advisory Council and the African American Coordinating Committee to meet together. The meeting gives the diversity officers on campus the opportunity to share with the advisory council their unit's diversity highlights and challenges. Vice Provost Picart provided the UDAC members with a copy of the document, "Campus Diversity Highlights and Challenges." The document was compiled for the joint meeting of the Chancellor's African American Community Advisory Council and the African American Coordinating Committee.

III. The Campus Response to the Noose Incident

Vice Provost Picart shared with the committee a chronological collection of messages and news articles that had been generated in response to the noose incident.

IV. Follow-up Discussion to the Noose Incident and Student Concerns

Vice Provost Picart told the committee that shortly after the "noose incident" he met with three members of the African American Student Advisory Council. Later that same day he spoke at a meeting of the Society for African American Culture (SACC) to give an update of the most recent information related to the investigation. Some students felt that Chancellor Oblinger's response was not strong enough and that the use of the word "prank" was not an appropriate label for the type of incident. Some students expressed that a crime alert should have been sent out. Tom Younce, Director of Campus Police explained that crime alerts are published to warn the community of a potential or continuing threat, usually following a 1) murder, 2) sexual offense, and 3) burglary or robbery. In this case, Chief Younce decided that given the location and nature of the incident, no crime alert was required. A question was raised as to why the incident wasn't labeled as a hate crime. David Drooz, legal counsel from the Office

of Legal Affairs, addressed this question. David Drooz explained that in NC the hanging of a noose is not a crime. Furthermore, NC does not have a "hate crime" law. However, the hanging of a noose in a workplace can be punished under Universities policies that address harassment and hostile environment. This was a workplace incident.

Vice Provost Picart then engaged the committee in discussion about why it happened and what actions we should take to help prevent it from happening again. The subsequent conversation centered on increasing diversity awareness and sensitivity education for everyone. Alice Warren informed the committee that the McKimmon Center ensures that all employees receive diversity training. Pat Grantham stated that since 1980, Facilities Operations has been providing diversity education training to its employees. She also stated that Human Resources presents a diversity training session during the New Employee Orientations. Ms. Grantham remarked that an incident like the "noose incident" enhances our diversity awareness and sensitivity. Vice Provost Picart added that an incident like this affects the entire community. Valerie Ball, a team member of the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) stated that some effort has already taken place to prepare for incidences like this.

Carrie McLean asked how does one get others to feel the same level of threat or injury as the black community in response to the noose. She felt that speaking out and sharing the experience is very important. The CT Vivian workshop and Opening Doors programs were mentioned as resources for developing awareness and sensitivity for diversity. Sarah Kim asked if there is currently a class that students can get credit for that provides diversity awareness and training. Vice Provost Picart mentioned the proposed diversity and global knowledge requirements in the new General Education Program. In addition, he reminded everyone that there is an effort to establish a diversity certification program that students will be able to enroll in and receive acknowledgement for on their transcript upon completion. Felicia Baity expressed her desire to see a course that is required by all students, stating that she feels a required element is necessary to engage all students. David Drooz explained that making something mandatory can create political backlash and that it is better to begin with open dialogue. Marcia Gumpertz reminded members that Race Study Circles is available and provides an opportunity to participate in group discussions about race related issues and experiences.

The fact that the university now requires all employees to participate in mandatory harassment and discrimination training was mentioned. Rachel Stinehelfer expressed concern that the university's mandatory discrimination and harassment training is primarily focused on policies, regulations and legal matters. The training doesn't really provide diversity sensitivity and awareness. David Drooz stated that Ms. Stinehelfer was correct, but that it might be possible to include sensitivity and awareness training in the workshop. Carrie McLean suggested interactive training for students because they arrive with "trained thoughts" and it takes repeated interactions to undo "trained thoughts." Nancy Whelchel suggested that we include some specific questions related to diversity education and awareness in the Staff climate survey that is being developed.

Vice Provost Picart adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.