

USI Board of Trustees

Diversity Committee Annual Report

March 1, 2012

Diversity Committee Formation and Objectives

The Diversity Committee of the University of Southern Indiana was created in response to House Enrolled Act 1256, authorized by the 2007 Indiana General Assembly (IC-21-27-8-7) which requires that each public institution of higher education create a diversity committee to meet this legislative mandate. One of its requirements is an annual report to the Board of Trustees.

The University's existing Affirmative Action Committee was adapted to meet the requirements of IC 21-27-8-7. The Diversity Committee currently consists of the following members:

Kirat Baath-Contract Assistant Professor of Biology, Pott College of Science and Engineering

Cynthia Brinker-Vice President for Government and University Relations

Melissa Chavez-Student, Student Government Association Representative

Katherine Draughon-Executive Director, Office of Planning, Research, and Assessment

Donna Evinger-Director, Human Resources, and Committee Chair

Douglas Goeppner-ADA Coordinator, Human Resources

Pamela Hopson-Director, Multicultural Center

Timothy Jones-Manager, Foundation Accounting

Ronald Rochon-Provost

Marcia Kiessling-Associate Provost for Student Affairs

Rose Scruggs-Electronic Services Coordinator, Library Services

Joseph Uduehi-Associate Professor of Art Education, College of Liberal Arts

Deborah Carl Wolf-Assistant Dean, College of Nursing and Health Professions

Diversity Committee Objectives

As previously reported to this Board, the Diversity Committee incorporated and expanded upon the legislative mandate by establishing the following objectives:

1. Define the University's vision of diversity and recommend methods to integrate that vision with existing University policies and procedures;
2. Collect information on University programs and initiatives and community resources;
3. Review University employment policies and processes and recommend improvements intended to increase hiring of diverse candidates;

4. Review University complaint policies and processes concerning diversity issues and recommend improvements;
5. Review University programs and processes, developing recommendations as appropriate for improvements to existing programs and processes and for new programs and initiatives that promote recruitment and retention of diverse students, faculty, and staff;
6. Recommend methods that increase awareness of the University's commitment to diversity;
7. Assess University diversity training and communications need and make recommendations;
8. Develop methods to assess the University's diversity efforts; and
9. Provide Annual Reports to the University's Board of Trustees.

Diversity Committee Accomplishments and Plans

Accomplishments of the Committee through FY2011 include:

- Development of the University's vision of diversity
- Communication of the vision of diversity and the Committee's role throughout the University community by meetings with the President's Council; faculty, administrators, and support staff; deans and department chairs; Staff Council; Faculty Senate; and Student Government Association
- Information-gathering about existing University programs and initiatives that support diversity and research on community organizations that offer programs and activities related to diversity that may be of use to University faculty, staff, and students
- Research on aspirational peers for comparative policy, process and program ideas
- Revision of the University's diversity/EEO-related advertising messages
- Establishment of University diversity web pages
- Affirmation of and affiliation with the strategic plan initiatives toward University's strategic plan diversity goal – to increase the diversity of faculty, staff and student body. The Diversity Committee urges the Strategic Planning group to identify leadership and focus on significant progress on this goal.
- Preliminary evaluation of complaint processes of the University and benchmarking of best-practice complaint process characteristics
- Review of Human Resources' implementation of the PeopleAdmin software for real-time information on diversity of applicant pools
- Creation of a University-wide learning opportunity through diversity professional/speaker Kevin McDonald, Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion at the Rochester Institute of Technology

The Committee has asked Dr. Linda Bennett to report to this Board on the progress made to date on the strategic plan diversity initiative. The Committee looks forward to continuing its liaison efforts with the University diversity initiatives in FY2013.