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Meeting Minutes - September 2010

Commission for Blacks

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Minutes for Commission for Blacks Meeting September 1, 2010

Call to Order: Dr. Hall called the meeting to order at 12:05pm.

In Attendance: Tiffany Barnett (Graduate Student Representative), Mariah Benimon (Undergraduate Student Representative), Ernest Brothers (The Graduate School), Wanda Costen (Retail Hospitality and Tourism Management), Dawn Duke (Spanish and Portuguese, Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures), Vern Granger (Admissions), Sekeenia Haynes (Program for Excellence & Equity in Research (PEER)), J. Camille Hall (Chair), Annazette Houston (Office of Disability Services), Tanisha Jenkins (Office of Minority Student Affairs), Joann Jeter (Career Services), Ferlin McGaskey (Graduate Assistant), Valuri Reid (Athletics), Charles Rogers (Community Representative), Maxine Davis (Student Affairs), Joan MacLeod Heminway (Faculty Senate), Charles Houston (Black Faculty and Staff Association), Mary Papke (Commission for Women), Anton Reece (Council for Diversity and Interculturalism), Marva Rudolph (Office of Equity and Diversity) Rosa Thomas (Student Health)

Additional Guests: Johnathan Kinnard, Linda Davidson (Development), Avery Howard, Anderson Olds (NAACP), Karla McKanders

1. **Welcome:** Dr. Hall welcomed everyone and asked for brief introductions.

2. **Review of May minutes:** After review, the May minutes were approved without change(s).

3. **Report from the Chair:** Camille Hall reported that both the Chancellor and Provost are supportive of the CFB and its endeavors. Dr. Hall provided her vision of how the goals/objectives (emailed prior to meeting) of the Commission will be accomplished during the 2010-2011 academic year. Highlighted areas included increased community outreach effective use of committees to determine and address the concerns of faculty, staff, and students, and promoting the Commission as proactive versus reactive organization.

4. **Status of Black Faculty, Staff, and Students:** Marva Rudolph began the discussion by speaking to the progress UT has made in the overall number of Blacks employed. Over 500 individuals employed by the university are Black. She acknowledged however that the number of Black faculty and executive staff have changed little over the years. Marva stated that there are efforts afoot to examine the campus climate as it relates to faculty and staff and that the university is part of the national COACHE study of faculty experiences.

Joan Heminway, Faculty Senate President presented a report on opportunity hires and Law school enrollment. Of the five opportunity hires this year, two were African American with one pending hire. In terms of entering Black law students, there was a slight decline in the number who chose to enroll this year.

Ernest Brothers reported on the Graduate School's efforts to coordinate the recruitment and retention of underrepresented students. The numbers of Black graduate students at UT has decline substantially since 2005 from a high of 600+ to 400+ students of color.

Dr. Brothers stated that he helps departments and programs identify events where a critical mass of underrepresented students are present and a Graduate School rep, a graduate student rep, and a faculty rep attend these events to give prospective students a more complete view of the UT graduate student experience.

Vern Granger reported on the current statistics on incoming students and the numbers based on race. Vern stated that the number of incoming African American students has been relatively flat for several years. He provided the Commission with details regarding a number of recruitment programs that are used to recruit minority students and spoke of Admission's holistic approach to evaluating student application to the university.

5. Development: Linda Shreve Davidson from the Development office wanted to solicit the Commission's help with increasing the number of Black alumni who either donate time or money to the University. She also spoke of the recent efforts in the Development office to increase the diversity of their representatives.

6. Community Forum: Dr. Hall reported on the efforts of the Commission to plan and execute the Community/University forum. She asked that the commissioners share any of their idea regarding format, publicity, or individuals to invite with either Charles Rogers or Ferlin McGaskey.

7. Announcements: Charles Houston reported on the progress in planning the 50th anniversary of African American Achievement at UT celebration. Anderson Olds reported on the plans of the NAACP, MAP, and ME4UT to host a Black faculty, staff and undergraduate student mixer. Dean Maxine Davis announced that August 31st was Safety Day and invited the commissioners to participate.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10pm