



1973

1973 Dick Nash and Ralph Boston Responses to Questionnaire

Commission for Blacks

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STUDENT COUNSELING CENTER

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
Knoxville 37916
974-2196



MEMORANDUM

TO: Vice Chancellor Howard Aldmon
FROM: Dick Nash, Student Counseling Center and
Ralph Boston, Coordinator of Minority Services
SUBJECT: REPLY TO QUESTIONS FROM TASK FORCE ON BLACKS

I have asked Ralph Boston to respond to items 3b (off-campus housing), 6 (community affairs), 8 (human relations), and 9 (information and perspectives). I feel that I could respond to some of these items but wanted Ralph to provide information in these areas for he has a responsibility and a position to "tune himself in" on these specific areas of concern. Also, he is one of the few Black professional staff members in our division and his kind of input should be included in a Student Affairs Division report to the Task Force on Blacks. I will try to answer the questions on counseling objectivity but must admit that my reporting will often be opinion and not factual.

2. Counseling

a. Are there any Black counselors on campus in the categories listed by Howard (Counseling Center; The Corner; religious) in the colleges?

As far as I know there are no Blacks on campus performing counseling duties in the religious area. However, Black students can and do to some limited extent use Black ministers off-campus.

The Corner has no Black students working at their Center. I do not believe that any Black student has ever involved himself in that program.

The Counseling Center has no Black staff members. We have tried to find Black graduate students in clinical psychology and counseling who would be interested and qualified for an assistantship at the Center. However, our graduate programs in these areas do not seem to attract many Black students. This is partially the result of the low compensation awarded graduate assistants at UT. The few Blacks that do go into counseling are in such great demand that our Center is unable to compete for them. Even Black counselors with a strong

master's degree program in counseling or closely related disciplines are very limited in number.

The University does have some Black staff members in non-counseling areas that are used by students for counseling. Several Black staff members in the residence halls do perform some counseling functions. Ralph Boston in the Office of Special Services also does a commendable job in this area. Many of the Black students who come to the Counseling Center are referred by Ralph.

b. What efforts have been made to recruit in this area?

The Counseling Center had one position opening in 1969 and one in 1972. At both times a description of the position was sent to about 100 schools that have training programs for college counselors. In 1969 one Black male counselor inquired about the job, was interviewed, and rejected the position for a better position at the University of Cincinnati. In 1972 one Black female inquired about the job but her training and preparation did not meet the job description. There may have been other Black applicants for these two positions but these were the only two known to be Black.

c. What counseling mechanisms, if any, exist for Blacks at neighboring colleges and universities?

Many of the neighboring colleges and universities have no counseling services for any student except that provided by a few faculty members (usually from psychology department) on their own time. Knoxville College does have a counseling service for its students. It is staffed primarily by one person who is doing doctoral work at UT.

d. To what extent are abortion referral and sex education services on campus utilized by Blacks (breakdown by sex)? Are there any Blacks involved in providing such services?

I know of no data that provides information about utilization of abortion referral and sex education services by race. Several offices on campus work with students in the area of abortion referral such as the Counseling Center and Health Center. The Sex Information and Referral Service (SIRS) which just began operating in January does provide information to students about abortion referral and sexual concerns. There is no way of knowing the race of these inquirers since most of this service is via telephone. No Blacks are involved in this service. All volunteers are students or adults who go through a rather intensive selection and training program.

e. Are there other counseling services available on campus, e.g., dormitory advisors? If so, to what extent are they used by Blacks? Administered by Blacks?

These questions are covered under topic a. of this section.

f. To what extent, if any, does racial bias appear as a factor in the problems of students (Black and White) who seek psychological counseling?

Racial bias does not appear as a significant factor in the problems of students who seek psychological counseling. This does not mean that in the course of counseling students won't complain or talk about racial problems or bias - such as a problem in a residence hall or in a classroom.

g. Counseling: Special counseling for students with personal problems. Many students need a Black professional to relate to and express personal needs and desires. This person should be experienced in direct and indirect counseling techniques. Special courses should be offered for advisors and head residents for the purpose of increasing their background and ability to deal with problems of minority students. A merit system should be used to insure attendance of these courses.

Although I do not feel that a female student needs a female counselor, a Jewish student needs a Jewish counselor, a White student needs a White counselor or a Black student needs a Black counselor, I do believe that Black students do often feel that they can only relate to a Black counselor. Thus, since they feel this way, the presence of a Black counselor will often determine whether they seek counseling.

I do not believe there is a need for special courses in counseling techniques related to race or sex or creed. However, there is a need for "culture awareness" courses or studies to increase understanding of the various sub-cultures of our student body.

RLN/sbh
Tuesday
1 May 1973