Faculty and Staff Reports and Communications

Issues, Proposals, and Recommendations

7-16-1973

Computer Science Department 1973 Report on Recruiting

Commission for Blacks

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TASK FORCE ON BLACKS

COMPUTER SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

1. Describe in detail the efforts made to recruit Black faculty for academic school year 1973-74.

   We took the iniative in recruiting Mr. Floyd Eaves, Head of the Computer Technology Department at the State Technical Institute at Chattanooga, Tennessee. We have several letters of correspondence with Mr. Eaves in addition to conversations with him at professional conferences. Mr. Eaves is interested in joining our faculty but not until Fall Quarter of 1974. We plan to pursue negotiations with him sometime during the latter part of this year. His primary interest in coming to The University of Tennessee at Knoxville would be to obtain a Ph.D. while working here.

2. What do you consider to be the most significant limiting factors to such recruitment?

   The most limiting factor, in my opinion, is one of availability of women, Blacks, and other minorities in the Computer-Mathematical area. I am farily well acquainted in Computer Science circles across the nation, and I know very few Blacks who have chosen Computer Science as a profession; few progress in their education to the point where they are qualified for full-time faculty appointments.

3. Can you suggest alternative methods of recruiting that might increase chances of success in this regard?

   I cannot suggest alternatives that might increase the chances for obtaining women or Black faculty members since it is a matter of availability as I indicated in Number 2.

4. Do you have any special procedures for recruiting Black students in your Department?

   We have not as yet adopted any special procedures for recruiting Black students; however, we have done very little to recruit students in general. During the past two years we have had more students than we have had faculty to accommodate the students. We hope this situation will be changed this coming year since we will be obtaining new faculty members. I might add that I have encouraged students who have finished their work under Mr. Eaves' department to pursue their undergraduate degree in some area related to computer science at The University of Tennessee at Knoxville (there are several Black students studying computing at the State Technical Institute at Chattanooga).

5. What is your conception of affirmative action?

   My conception of affirmative action is that we should make special efforts to make known to women, Blacks, and other minorities the opportunities that exist at The University of Tennessee at Knoxville and that given a Black or woman candidate is equally (and, of course, better) qualified than a non-Black or non-woman candidate that special preference be given to the woman or Black.

6. What is your impression of the relations between students and faculty?

   My impression of the relations between students and faculty would be that they are not satisfactory. I attribute this largely to the rapid growth that The University of Tennessee at Knoxville has undergone in the past 10 years and to understaffing. Students and faculty seem to be forced to do things other than concentrating on intellectual inquiry which is the natural area of common interest between students and faculty.

   Dictated but not read —

   Gordon R. Sherman