UNAPPROVED MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY
August 21, 2003

Present: Pat Covey, Keith Ayers, Barbara Broome, Isabel Brown, Diane Dixon-Works, David Johnson, Hattie Myles, Shelton Perry, April Dupree-Taylor

Excused: Jeanne Maes, Harvey White

Guests: Keith Nicholls, Kathryn Petersen, Bob Shearer

Dr. Covey introduced Dr. Keith Nicholls, Director of the Polling Center, and Kathryn Petersen, attorney in the University Attorney’s office.

1. Motion for approval of Minutes of May 8, 2003, with typo corrections, by David Johnson, unanimously approved by the Committee.

1. Survey of University Community: At the last meeting it was suggested that a survey of faculty and staff be done to solicit ideas or suggestions on how we might recruit and retain African-American faculty and administrators at the University. Ideas on how to reach the faculty and staff to attain their questions in order to compose the survey were discussed: mailings, email (which is not anonymous) or web-site (which is anonymous). Dr. Keith Nicholls, Director of the Polling Center, will help create and conduct the survey. Dr. Nicholls informed the group not to be surprised if the response was low and also people will respond with “feelings” not just suggestions. It was suggested that Deans and Chairs could alert their faculty that the survey would be coming and to please respond. It was also suggested that the web-site be set up with informational items with bullet points of what has been done thus far and ask for ideas or suggestions for the Committee and assure them that they will receive feedback. They may respond better when they see what the Committee has worked on. A suggestion of having a general meeting inviting the University community (with the possibility of inviting an expert speaker) was decided against. Such a forum may get off track of the real issues of the charge of this Committee.

Dr. David Johnson suggested a subcommittee that he volunteered to chair, and invited Keith Nicholls to serve as an ad hoc committee member. This subcommittee will work on finalizing the issues of questions for the survey and the best way to conduct the survey. Shelton Perry, Hattie Myles, Diane Dixon-Works, and Keith Ayers volunteered to serve on the sub-committee.

Dr. Hattie Myles suggested taking the racial composition of faculty and administrators numbers and comparing them with the number of African-American students - more data could be helpful.

1. Proposed Statement of Philosophy: Dr. Barbara Broome submitted a proposed Philosophy Statement:

    The philosophy of the University of South Alabama includes the following ideals:

    Recognition of the strength a diverse faculty, staff and administration bring to the institution
Belief in the importance of diversity in enriching the education, research and community environment

Commitment to the ongoing recruitment of a diverse faculty, staff and administration

Commitment to the retention of a diverse faculty, staff and administration

The Committee unanimously approved the Philosophy Statement.

4. Progress Report and Discussion on Action Items:

A. Keith Ayers and David Johnson are working on the web-site.

A. Any new strategies for key objectives and recommendations will ultimately be sent to the President.

A. The Senior Vice President is in the process of meeting with the college deans and their respective chairs to discuss diversity issues and to reinforce the University’s commitment to increasing the number of African-American faculty and administrators.

A. The deans will remind each search committee in their respective college of the University’s goal of increasing the number of African-American faculty and administrators and each search committee will be apprised of new policy concerning approval for interviewing additional candidates if African-American.

A. By asking each Vice President and Dean to develop strategies and provide progress reports on the hiring and retention of African-American faculty it will keep them conscious of reinforcing our commitment to diversification of faculty and Administration.

A. A host committee for recruiting African-American faculty and administrators has not been appointed yet. Dr. Covey will work on this.

A. A job web-site showing positions available at the University has not been set up yet due to some technicalities. It will be in place by mid-Fall semester. Dr. Covey will keep the Committee informed.

A. The Advisory Committee on Diversity has been added to the 2003 Faculty Handbook.

A. Reemphasize that the policy promulgated to deans and search committees that if an African-American is among the faculty applicant “short list” (top 5), funds will be provided for interview.

5. USA Racial Composition of Faculty and Administrators: Important to provide update at least once a year.

6. Other:

Dr. Hattie Myles would like to know if we could get information on African-American faculty - tenured or non-tenured. Dr. Covey answered affirmatively. To the
best of her recollection she thinks that during her tenure in Academic Affairs, all African-American faculty in Academic Affairs that have been up for tenure have been granted. She does not know how many, if any, African-American faculty were “non-reappointed” prior to tenure. Dr. Covey said to get this information may take some digging but it will be worked on, because it is important information. Dr. Myles stated that potential recruits would like to know whether or not they may be able to make tenure.

Meeting Schedule: It was decided to wait until after the subcommittee meets. The next meeting will be the end of October or first part of November.


The meeting adjourned with Dr. Covey stating she will some get back to them about the date of the next meeting.