

April 8, 2009

Dear Dr. Chilton,

The Task Force on Diversity in the Curriculum appreciates the trust you have placed in us to deal with the crucial issue of improving the diversity climate at Tarleton through our academic activities. We have thought long, hard, and seriously about the ten recommendations in our report; some go beyond the charge you gave us, but all reflect our belief that improvements are possible, and all have our unanimous support.

You will note (under Recommendation #2) that we have one more bit of business to report on before we are completely finished.

Respectfully submitted,

The Task Force

Dr. Pat Zelman, Task Force Faculty Chair

Dr. Wilmara Harder, COAHS Faculty Representative

Dr. Hussain Jafri, COBA Faculty Representative

Dr. Calvin Lawrence, COE Faculty Representative

Dr. Keith Emmert, COGS Faculty Representative

Dr. Marilyn Robitaille, COLFA Faculty Representative

Dr. Chris Higgins, COST Faculty Representative

Dr. Michelle Dietert, T-CT Faculty Representative

Ms. Trina Geye, General Studies Faculty Representative

Ms. Cathy Wilterding, Access/Equity & Library Representative

Ms. Dana Moore, Student Life Representative

Ms. Jennifer Nsepong, Student Government Representative

Ex Officio: Dr. Karen Murray, Assistant Vice President for Curriculum & Assessment

Report of the Task Force on Diversity in the Curriculum

GETTING SERIOUS

Having studied the history of attempts to make the Tarleton campus more inclusive and friendlier to minorities, the task force is appalled. We find so much effort expended to so little effect! In hopes that our report will not be yet another well-intentioned exercise in futility, we believe accountability for diversity initiatives must be built into the University's organizational structure. While this recommendation goes beyond the scope of our charge, we believe that only a campus-wide effort will move us in the right direction.

With the intent of helping Tarleton State University achieve the goal of adequately preparing Tarleton graduates to function effectively in today's global society, the Task Force on Diversity in the Curriculum presents the following ten recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION #1. Put someone in charge of Tarleton's diversity efforts.

The current restructuring of the Center for Diversity Initiatives presents an opportunity to create a position with broader authority that could work with faculty and staff as well as with students. This person should answer directly to the University president, be held accountable for helping the University plan and carry out diversity initiatives, and act as the collection point for student demographic data.

This recommendation concurs with earlier task force reports. The Task Force on Campus Diversity and Inclusion's 1999 report, the 2007 Diversity Climate Survey, and the Focus Group reports that followed its publication, as well as the 2004-05 Ad Hoc Faculty Search Committee all indicate that top-level leadership is essential to making change occur.

DIVERSITY IN OUR CLASSES

The task force considered and rejected the idea of a diversity class, required or not, mainly because we believe the subject is too large for any one class. We see diversity as a topic that crosses disciplinary boundaries and evolves in a variety of contexts. Diversity should not be isolated nor trivialized as a set of ideas students must be trained to parrot. Because we are a university, we should aim to approach the idea thoughtfully, from multiple (diverse!) perspectives.

Further, Tarleton State University has multiple existing offerings that cover diversity issues from a variety of perspectives. Improvement and expansion of these offerings will best be stimulated by organized discussion.

Therefore, we recommend:

RECOMMENDATION #2. Discover and highlight our current diversity offerings.

We will conduct surveys to determine the extent to which faculty believe existing course offerings cover diversity issues. After extensive consideration of options, we concluded that the

curriculum committees of each college are the most knowledgeable groups we could feasibly consult for a reasonably accurate survey.

To that end, task force members will survey each college's curriculum committee and submit the results as an addendum to this final report. In addition, the survey responses should help us compile a list of courses with diversity components, which can be published on the University's web site.

We will deliver this information as an addendum to this report.

RECOMMENDATION #3. Improve our diversity teaching skills by facilitating organized faculty discussions.

The best single step we can take at this time to upgrade our diversity offerings is to promote regular discussions among the faculty in both formal and informal settings. Numerous individual faculty members on our campus have skills developed from experience and from the knowledge base in their disciplines that could help other faculty struggling to develop their own best practices. As turnout and comments at the Faculty Focus groups last spring indicated, Tarleton has a sizeable number of faculty deeply committed to improving the campus diversity climate. These self-selected individuals can provide an important base from which to develop conversations; they need help getting organized so that they may communicate and share their ideas.

The current discussion of a possible Faculty Development component housed in CITDE suggests an excellent venue for these conversations. The position created by RECOMMENDATION #1 could help advance these conversations, providing assistance and funding as required; if this position is not created, the Provost's office should organize these discussions.

The initial discussions may be followed by panels, workshops, visiting speakers or other activities as determined by the participants. The important part of this first step is getting people to "buy in" to this process in a way that maintains and enhances academic perspectives.

RECOMMENDATION #4. Continue to support and nurture international academic programs.

Both study abroad opportunities and the presence of international students in our classes are invaluable sources for expanding the horizons of our students.

RECOMMENDATION #5. Support and nurture service learning components for undergraduate classes.

Service learning will involve students in communities, providing opportunities for them to encounter, interact with, and observe persons who may be unlike themselves in economic or family background, culture, religion and other ways.

In this process, theoretical ideas about diversity can be shored up and augmented by practical, realistic dealings with people.

RECOMMENDATION #6. Provide incentives for faculty to enrich courses with diversity content.

Depending on the scope of the project, incentives could include cash awards or release time to perform research into ways to enrich their courses (*e.g.* incorporating service-learning components, preparing study abroad courses, attending relevant conferences, visiting universities with strong diversity programs).

MONITORING OUR PUBLIC MESSAGE

Convocation and commencement ceremonies, the most public of our academic activities, offer opportunities to demonstrate our values. Such ceremonies need to be carefully reviewed to remove unintended discriminatory messages, such as those conveyed by religion-specific prayers, comments and invocations.

RECOMMENDATION #7. Review content of academic ceremonies and remove discriminatory messages.

DIVERSIFYING THE FACULTY

Diversifying our faculty is a critical curricular issue because it will offer students opportunities to

- encounter role models that may have been absent in prior educational settings,
- explore differences through classroom interactions and exchanges,
- expand boundaries created by media depictions of minority groups, and
- encourage opportunities to self-examine and look outward for evidence of humanity's interconnectedness.

We recommend two ways to move toward this goal:

RECOMMENDATION #8. Standardize faculty search procedures and adjust the budgeting process.

We strongly reaffirm the recommendations of the 2004-2005 Ad Hoc Faculty Search Committee regarding search timelines, costs, committees, and procedures.

Following the findings of this Committee, we recommend that:

- Administrators decide positions and funding well in advance of the hiring date.
- Positions beginning on September 1 must be clearly defined by October of the preceding year. Placing authority for creating faculty positions under the control of the academic deans might speed up the process, but further modification of the budgetary process would also be necessary. Haphazard "emergency" authorization of positions

compromises the search process and minimizes the chance that diversity will be created with the new hire. Late hiring also requires faculty to relocate on short notice, a difficulty which may deter desirable applicants such as persons with school-aged children, or those from other countries.

- A handbook outlining expected and required steps in faculty searches should be developed and distributed to search committees.
- Search committees should be formed according to campus-wide guidelines.
- Deans and department heads should attend periodic training sessions on conducting faculty searches.

Details for each of these recommendations are explained in the attached copy of the ad hoc committee's final report. (Attachment A)

RECOMMENDATION # 9. Increase faculty salaries.

Raising faculty salaries to a level competitive with other Texas universities would help us attract, as well as retain a well-qualified and diversified faculty. As the Attachment B indicates, faculty at Tarleton State University earn less than the state average for comparable Master's granting institutions. (Attachment B)

RECOMMENDATION #10. Create a campus support network to assist new faculty in acclimating to the campus and the community.

This network would help all new hires, but can be especially important for minority and international faculty. A "faculty first-year" program, as is being proposed for CITDE's new focus, would satisfy this recommendation.

Attachments A & B



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July 28, 2005

TO: Dr. Gary Peer, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
FROM: Dr. Jane B. Dennis, Chair, Ad Hoc Faculty Search Committee
RE: Final Report of the Ad Hoc Faculty Search Committee

Successful hiring in an academic setting means there is a clear understanding of the academic skills needed in the position to be filled. Hiring should be focused on the evaluation of the candidate's abilities and competencies required for the position. To that end, an ad hoc committee was formed to review the process of faculty searches at Tarleton State University. Specifically the committee was challenged to investigate ways of 1) strengthening of the diversity of our faculty, 2) conducting a more robust search to fill vacancies and 3) creating a more uniform set of procedures in the hiring process across campus. The committee was encouraged to have candid discussions with deans and department heads across campus to develop a sense of current issues, practices, etc. in the hiring process. The committee looked at policies and procedures on the Tarleton State University campus and how other Texas public universities addressed the issue. Several common challenges were identified: search timelines, search costs, search committees, and search committee procedures.

It is important to note that the recommendations of the committee are not designed to constrain any department in its ability to conduct a substantive search. Rather, our goal is simply to recommend a set of common practices that can be applied across campus when searching for new faculty and in doing so, try to address the best methods of securing diverse, highly qualified candidates.

Search Timelines: Recognizing the general rule that responsible faculty searches require a minimum of six calendar months from initial approval to successful hire, Tarleton faculty searches that do not formally begin prior to January each year, should be undertaken with a clear understanding that the search process will not be compromised. Furthermore, every attempt should be made to avoid emergencies. If a satisfactory hire is not completed by the position's advertised beginning date, (a) some combination of adjunct, overload and/or temporary appointments will be utilized while the search continues; and (b) the permanent position will remain firmly in the departmental budget as a vacant position until it is filled.

Search Costs: How a university conducts a faculty search sends an important message to applicants. It is recommended that (a) a budget of \$35,000 per year be established in the provost's budget for faculty searches, including the cost of advertising open positions; (b) that the current university rule regarding payment to applicants be revised to include payment of travel, per diem, meals for up to three applicants per search brought to campus for a formal visit (the estimated total cost of each visit to be approved in advance by the search committee chair and provost); and (c) a standard template for the structure, content and conduct of campus visits be utilized in every search. The campus visit should also have a planned tour of the community including housing, schools, medical facilities and recreation.

OVER

Search Committees: When a faculty vacancy or new position is announced, the department head shall confer with the dean regarding the qualifications and duties to be defined in the vacancy announcement and pursued in the search process, recommend a chair for the search and committee membership from within the department, including the department member to be designated as the committee's affirmative action facilitator. The dean will approve the recommendations or modify them, name an "outside" member from within the college, but outside the position's home department, notify all parties in writing of their appointments and attach a copy of the position description to the written notification.

Search Committee Procedures: To insure consistency of university practice in faculty searches, a handbook outlining the expected or required steps in searches should be developed from the relevant documents and materials in the report such as the Tarleton HR documents, the Ohio State University guidelines and the Texas A&M – Commerce material. This handbook should allow for some flexibility and variation among departments while still laying out standard required procedures. Sample rating criteria would be helpful to department search committees as they develop their unique position criteria. A small group should be appointed by the provost and HR Director to develop this handbook and recommend it to the president for final approval. Once approved, the handbook should be widely distributed and discussed throughout the academic division, followed closely in all subsequent faculty searches and modified only with approval of the Director of Human Resources, Provost and President. Furthermore, it is the recommendation of the committee that mandatory training sessions be conducted periodically by Human Resources for deans and department heads on how to conduct faculty searches both legally and ethically.

The Committee

Dr. Jane B. Dennis, Associate Professor of Human Sciences and Committee Chair

Ms. Angela Brown, Director Human Resources

Dr. Samuel Dodson, Assistant Professor of English

Dr. Joe Gillespie, Professor of Health and Physical Education

Dr. Dena Johnson, Assistant Professor of Computer Information Systems

Dr. Carol Thompson, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Department Head

Dr. David Weindorf, Assistant Professor of Agronomy

Average annual salary by academic rank (in thousands). Tarleton State University is in boldface.

| University | Professor | | | Associate Professor | | | Assistant Professor | | | Instructor | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | All | Men | Women | All | Men | Women | All | Men | Women | All | Men | Women |
| Abilene Christian U | 75.7 | 76.5 | 69.9 | 61.4 | 63.4 | 55.9 | 54.6 | 56.3 | 51.4 | 43.4 | 50.1 | 40.2 |
| Angelo State U | 72.9 | 73.1 | 72.6 | 61.2 | 61.8 | 60.1 | 54.2 | 54.2 | 54.2 | 38.9 | 38.4 | 39.4 |
| Hardin-Simmons U | 64.0 | 63.9 | 64.8 | 53.9 | 57.3 | 49.5 | 46.1 | 46.2 | 46.0 | 38.6 | — | 37.8 |
| Lamar U | 82.7 | 84.0 | 77.0 | 66.4 | 66.1 | 66.7 | 55.7 | 58.2 | 52.4 | 43.4 | 39.6 | 44.8 |
| LeTourneau U | 68.6 | 69.2 | — | 56.7 | 56.8 | 56.7 | 52.1 | 53.7 | 47.5 | 45.1 | 47.8 | |
| Our Lady of the Lake U | 67.7 | 70.5 | 65.1 | 60.2 | 64.0 | 56.0 | 51.1 | 54.9 | 49.8 | 41.1 | 44.3 | 37.8 |
| Prairie View A&M U | 80.5 | 83.2 | 71.9 | 65.8 | 66.5 | 63.7 | 57.6 | 59.1 | 54.9 | — | — | |
| Sam Houston State U | 81.8 | 83.5 | 75.2 | 64.4 | 66.2 | 61.9 | 55.0 | 56.0 | 54.1 | — | | — |
| St. Edward's U | 85.2 | 85.6 | 84.5 | 68.8 | 69.7 | 67.9 | 55.1 | 56.3 | 53.8 | 44.0 | — | 45.2 |
| St. Mary's U | 96.2 | 99.1 | 87.5 | 63.1 | 61.8 | 65.1 | 58.0 | 57.7 | 58.4 | 52.5 | 51.5 | 53.8 |
| Sul Ross State U | 68.2 | 68.3 | 67.6 | 52.5 | 52.3 | 52.9 | 46.2 | 46.0 | 46.5 | — | | — |
| Tarleton State U | 77.5 | 78.2 | 75.5 | 62.9 | 63.5 | 62.0 | 53.9 | 55.8 | 52.2 | 42.2 | 41.3 | 42.8 |
| Texas A&M International U | 83.9 | 85.0 | — | 64.9 | 65.8 | 63.2 | 57.2 | 59.6 | 54.1 | 41.3 | 42.5 | 40.6 |
| Texas A&M U at Kingsville | 71.9 | 72.7 | 68.2 | 61.0 | 62.1 | 58.6 | 55.1 | 56.1 | 53.5 | 44.9 | 44.9 | |
| Texas State U at San Marcos | 85.0 | 85.3 | 84.3 | 68.3 | 69.4 | 66.8 | 57.4 | 60.7 | 54.1 | 41.2 | — | 34.2 |
| Texas Wesleyan U | 79.6 | 80.8 | 77.2 | 66.4 | 72.6 | 62.5 | 55.2 | 52.4 | 57.5 | 76.3 | 96.1 | 62.4 |
| Trinity U | 102.8 | 105.6 | 92.8 | 70.6 | 72.9 | 67.4 | 55.3 | 55.7 | 54.8 | 43.6 | — | 39.3 |
| U of Dallas | 65.2 | 66.0 | 59.6 | 56.1 | 56.7 | 54.2 | 46.2 | 46.9 | 45.3 | 30.8 | 26.6 | 32.3 |
| U of Houston-Clear Lake | 87.1 | 88.9 | 80.1 | 67.6 | 66.8 | 69.0 | 62.2 | 69.4 | 57.4 | 44.5 | — | — |
| U of Houston-Victoria | 86.9 | 86.9 | 87.1 | 74.1 | 78.5 | 67.3 | 63.5 | 66.4 | 59.6 | — | | — |
| U of St. Thomas | 86.8 | 88.9 | 83.3 | 67.4 | 65.6 | 74.3 | 54.4 | 55.7 | 53.2 | 42.9 | — | — |
| U of Texas at El Paso | 90.1 | 91.0 | 87.5 | 67.5 | 68.0 | 66.0 | 61.3 | 62.6 | 59.8 | | | |
| U of Texas at San Antonio | 108.4 | 110.9 | 100.4 | 78.5 | 80.7 | 73.3 | 67.0 | 71.3 | 62.4 | 47.2 | — | — |
| U of Texas at Tyler | 77.5 | 77.5 | 77.8 | 63.7 | 64.1 | 62.9 | 56.0 | 58.6 | 52.8 | 44.0 | — | 44.1 |
| U of the Incarnate Word | 74.3 | 76.7 | 72.7 | 64.7 | 64.6 | 64.7 | 59.0 | 59.1 | 59.0 | 50.0 | 51.0 | 49.4 |
| Mean salary | 80.82 | 82.05 | 77.50 | 64.32 | 65.49 | 62.74 | 55.58 | 57.16 | 53.79 | 44.80 | 47.84 | 42.94 |

*data from the American Association of University Professors as reported on The Chronicle of Higher Education's website