

April 24, 1998
Committee on Community and Diversity
Annual Report

Members: Gerald C. Horne, Chair; Audrey E. Johnson (1998), Evelyne H. Huber (1998), Joyce W. Sparling (1998), Svein U. Toverud (1998); Soyini Madison (1999), Adam Versenyi (1999), Gang Yue (1999); John B. Stephens (2000), George Retsch-Bogart (2000), Virginia Shea (2000), Cecil Wooten (2000).

This Committee got off to a late start, only convening this year; yet, despite this, we have made significant progress. Below you will find a letter we will be forwarding to the Chancellor on the Campus Diversity Training Project, which we feel is an initiative worth preserving. We have met extensively with Prof. Pat Fischer, who is retiring, and our conclusions about CDTP are encapsulated in the letter below. Likewise, he have met extensively with Robert Cannon, the Affirmative Action/ADA Officer on campus. A number of issues arose that we will be pursuing in subsequent meetings; for example, departments may want to engage in self-analysis to determine e.g. if they are producing minority and women PhDs at the same rate as peer institutions; National Science Foundation data can be consulted. Moreover, the AA/ADA office can be extremely helpful in providing such data. Another issue that was noted was the extent to which UNC's lack of provisions for "domestic partners" may place this campus at a competitive disadvantage in recruiting. Likewise, receiving attention was the extent to which the Provost should provide incentives and/or disincentives to spur on Departments in improving their record on diversity matters. In sum, though getting off to a late start, this Committee is focused tightly on a number of pressing concerns and fully intends to press forward in the coming academic year.

From: Evelyne Huber

To: Committee on Community and Diversity

Subject: Letter to Chancellor

Dear Fellow Committee Members:

Below is my suggestion for a draft letter to the Chancellor on the Campus Diversity Training Project. I kept it quite short; any suggestions for additions and changes are most welcome. I shall try to integrate them all and send a second draft to you.

Dear Chancellor Hooker:

We, the members of your Advisory Committee on Community and Diversity, are writing to you to ask for your support for a program that has been strengthening our university community by helping to prepare members to deal more effectively with diversity and that is in danger of losing its funding, the Campus Diversity Training Project. Our committee is firmly convinced of the necessity of diversity training. Diversity is a goal the university is and should be striving for, but

most of the members of the university community, be they students, faculty, or staff, are not particularly well prepared to deal with people from diverse social backgrounds.

There have been a number of diversity initiatives on campus, e.g. faculty development for curriculum integration sponsored by the Ford Foundation, the cultural studies course requirement instituted in 1994, infusion efforts in various academic departments, and some diversity training offered to staff and students by a variety of offices. Diversity training is clearly central, and the major initiative in this area has been the Campus Diversity Training Project. The Project has been reaching between 1,400 and 2,000 people per year, or a total of 7,000 people since its inception. It has also instructed 90 people in Train the Trainer programs. The overwhelming majority of those attending the workshops have been students, but staff and faculty have been involved as well. The majority of those getting instruction as Trainers have been staff members. So far, the Campus Diversity Training Project has been funded by Pan-University funds, but this is the last year of committed funding, and Professor Patricia Fischer, the Director of the Project, was informed that funding would not be renewed. Our committee feels strongly that funding should be renewed at a level adequate to support a full-time director with necessary office support and with resources to develop a sequence of training activities. We are basing our recommendations on our own commitment to diversity and our conviction that the forging of a real community out of people from a variety of backgrounds requires not only learning about different cultures but also practical training in how to interact in a respectful and honest way with people who are different from oneself.

The Diversity Training Evaluation Report done on campus by Linda Brooks, Tracey Gersh, David Currey, and Elaine Davis, during the spring semester of 1996, funded by the Hewlett Foundation, found that the programs offered by the Campus Diversity Training Project are effective but need to be expanded. The Report found, on the basis of 204 completed surveys, that the introductory workshops had a highly beneficial impact on creating awareness among participants of a wide variety of forms of prejudice and discrimination. It also found that those who had such awareness expressed a need for follow-up workshops with more concrete skills training regarding appropriate interventive behavior in situations where prejudice and discrimination are expressed or practiced. This suggests that there is a need for the establishment of a sequence of training activities. In sum, we strongly recommend that the Campus Diversity Training Project be put on a secure financial basis, with a full-time director's position, a half-time clerical assistant, a part-time student in charge of creating liaisons with student groups, and the resources required to establish a sequence of training activities and to raise the visibility of this program on campus.

We thank you for your attention to this matter and for your continued commitment to promoting diversity on campus.