Committee Members Present
Cynthia Amaya Santiago, Kayla Brown, Ken Butler, Janine Chi, Sue Clemens, Matt Dicken, Troy Dwyer, Melanie Ferrara, Corey Goff, Luis Garcia, Karen Green, Randy Helm, Kathy Harring (guest), Chris Hooker-Haring, Callista Isabelle, John Ramsay, Kate Richmond, Robin Riley-Casey, Adrian Shanker, Zachary Tanne, Jeremy Teissere

1. Strategies for Increasing Enrollment of Underrepresented Student Groups (cont’d)
Mr. Chris Hooker-Haring reported that there are many variations in the market as to how race/ethnicity is reported. He presented four ways that various colleges are reporting the numbers of their students of color. The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) requires all educational institutions to report their data in the same way so that all institutions can compare data consistently. However, any self-reporting multiracial student is required to check a box titled, “Two or More Races,” which gives us little data about their ethnicity. Colleges report their data to IPEDS, but also use other counting methods to give both themselves and the public a more complete picture of their student body; for instance, Bryn Mawr College reports students in every category the student checks on their application, ‘double counting’ multiracial students (which Bryn Mawr then notes with the data). Though it artificially inflates the total number of students, it gives a more accurate picture of the different ethnicities present on campus. Another way to report numbers is to disaggregate the “Two or More Races” category, listing the instances of students with more than one race (for instance, African American/Black & Hispanic/Latino), followed by a number representing the number of students on campus who checked that racial combination. Mr. Hooker-Haring said that there is also a single-category method, where any ethnic designation trumps a white designation in a ‘two or more race’ individual. He does not feel this final method is a desirable counting method, and the Committee agreed. Mr. Hooker-Haring then took a number questions from the Committee. Dr. Jeremy Teissere asked if it would be possible to combine options B and C, double-counting multiracial student reporting and listing the different combinations of racial heritage. Discussion followed. Dr. Janine Chi said that she thought the small numbers of multiracial students might be discouraging to the students in those groups, but Mr. Troy Dwyer countered that those students might just as easily be encouraged by the institution's recognition of their particular blend of identities. Rev. Callista Isabelle asked if it would be possible to list the different racial combinations, but not to add the specific numbers of each combination. More discussion followed. Dr. Teissere suggested that, regardless of what the administration decides to use for the public, we use a hybrid Option B+C for the Committee’s purposes.
2. Report of the Data Subcommittee

Dr. Kathy Harring joined the Committee to report on the work of the data subcommittee, which was charged to review the data that is currently available, and to design survey questions for the Diverse Learning Environments Survey (DLE) which the College will give to sophomores and juniors this year. Dr. Harring distributed a slightly amended list of additional questions the Committee would like to add to the DLE survey our students will take. There was a very long discussion about other questions that might be added, and what questions would then have to be eliminated, since we are limited to a total of 20 questions. A number of small edits were made to the questions, but no questions were added or deleted. Though Dr. Harring initially thought that the survey could take place in October, discussion with the administrators of the survey revealed that we may not have access to the survey until as late as next spring. Dr. Harring said she believes we will be able to administer the survey in this academic year, but that, regardless of whether our students take the survey in the fall or spring, results would not be available to us until Fall 2014.

Dr. Harring said that the Committee has discussed broad research questions for use by the Committee in its work: interaction with faculty and staff; interaction with students; general learning goals; and student diversity experiences. Dr. Harring and her research student are in the process of identifying items on current student surveys that align with these questions and will then analyze the data to compare majority versus non-majority student responses.

The Committee discussed at length the appropriateness of the term “multicultural” when applied to individual students. Alternate terms such as “students of color” and “ALANA students” were mentioned, but there was no consensus reached about a preferable term. President Helm noted the importance of groups and individuals being empowered to determine their own names.

In further discussion, Dr. Richmond asked if the Data Subcommittee if their proposed questionnaire should consider “social justice” as an additional way to assess student perceptions of the campus, rather than simply using the word “diversity.” President Helm responded (briefly, though at greater length in a later communication with the committee) that this was problematic because “social justice” is defined rather broadly by the general public, while academics have a more nuanced theoretical and ideological definition of the term that is not generally understood by the entire community. Mr. Zachary Tanne said that he thought most students would not know what the term means in this context.

A Committee member related the details of a recent incident on campus where a racial slur was used, and wondered what recourse a community member might have in such circumstances. Other Committee members expressed dismay at this event, and displayed an eagerness to take some action in response. President Helm reminded the DSPC that many members of the Committee are active in diversity work on campus in many different roles, but that the DSPC itself is a planning group, not a “rapid response team.” He asked Dean Karen Green to update the committee on her efforts to create a Hate and Bias Response Policy which will guide campus responses to such incidents. Dean Green said that the revisions to Title IX had necessitated a complete re-write of an earlier draft, but that the new policy should be ready for review within a
few weeks. President Helm suggested that the Committee member consult with the appropriate member of the President’s Staff about the incident.

Mr. Dwyer distributed two readings to the committee: an article by Ms. Isabel Wilkerson and Dr. David R. Williams on unconscious bias from the September 2013 issue of *Essence*; and an article by Dr. Chi and Dr. Connie Wolfe on the importance of positioning social justice at the center of collegiate diversity initiatives.

The President said that topics for our next few meetings should include a presentation from Provost John Ramsay on faculty recruitment; a presentation from Vice President for Human Resources Anne Speck on staff recruitment; a report from the subcommittee headed by Ms. Cynthia Amaya-Santiago to develop an inventory of current diversity programs on campus; a second report from the data subcommittee on their survey plans for students, faculty and staff; a plan for scanning other institutions’ diversity plans for ideas and initiatives; and a review of community input from the visioning exercise questions.

The meeting was adjourned 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Butler  
Recorder