Black Faculty and Staff Association

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

12:00 Noon – JPL 4.04.12D

The President called the meeting to order at 12:10. Association members were present at the 1604 campus and via Skype from the Downtown campus. A listing of the meeting attendees is attached.

**New Direction for BFSA/Survey**

The President opened the meeting in discussion of the New Direction for BFSA. She challenged everyone to get engaged. She reported on faculty and staff who have left the university, citing dissatisfaction with jobs as the rationale. The President in previous discussion with a member was advised to “focus on the things we can control.” As a collective, we should determine “what do we want out of BFSA” and “what is it that we do.” BFSA provides avenues to networking opportunities, scholarship opportunities for our students and professional development.

The President proposed composing a survey to send to all Black Faculty and Staff, to gain insight as to what people are thinking regarding the organization. It was suggested that we should host a Retreat and use this time to focus on defining our mission and spend time together. Each of us can look within to determine how we can contribute to our organization. Everyone was advised to be on the lookout for more communication.

Logistics is also a factor in the overall success of our organization. We are separated geographically, Main campus and Downtown campus. Restructures across campus in various department. Faculty and staff are feeling disconnected, resulting in low morale. These are all matters of concern.

Positive outcomes on campus were communicated. There has been a push for more diversity in faculty hiring. There has been progress reported towards this effort. The Black Faculty, through the leadership of our Black Faculty Liaison, Dr. Moody, are reporting positive efforts towards faculty hiring. More Black faculty are being chosen to serve on search committees.

**Fall Social/Retreat**

The Fall Social will be held at the home of Dr. Natasha Burns, on Friday, November 15th, at 6:00 PM. It is a Potluck, and guests are requested to RSVP.

The discussion moved to general topics. How can we be more effective in working with our students? There is not enough time to learn all the students. Dr. Moody indicates she puts her focus on working with Black graduate students. We can’t meet the demands of our time. There are Black faculty assigned to each faculty recruitment committee. Dr. Clark indicated the service component of faculty evaluations should be reduced, to allow faculty to increase focus in other areas. He believes in the commitment of developing students to generate a pipeline into doctoral programs. Faculty are more socialized towards research, and less of a student enterprise.

Comments were made regarding our perceived negative image on campus. The need to get ourselves right first is essential, then we can have something to offer others. It was expressed how Black people see each other on campus and don’t speak to each other. We must show ourselves to be more friendly and approachable.

It was stated that the BFSA should be an informal group instead of a formalized organization.

**Elections**

 Results of the election is as follows:

President – Michelle Skidmore

Vice President – Vacant

Secretary – Karla Broadus

Treasurer – Wanda Guntz

Asst Treasurer – Carol Kindred

Historian – Yolanda Williams

Liaison of Faculty Affairs – Dr. Joycelyn Moody

The President communicated her vision; to promote the advancement of Black Faculty and Staff, to promote programming to celebrate our cultural heritage.

**Membership Drive**

More focus should be dedicated towards membership. The officers will work together to address this concern.

**Black History Month**

A Black History Month planning committee should be established. The BFSA needs a signature event to facilitate during Black History Month. The Knowledge Bowl was revisited, but there might not be sufficient time to plans towards this event. It was conveyed, though the numbers attending meetings may be small, if there are needs for work, individuals will volunteer to assist. Dr. Moody informed the group of a Black woman poet, Ariana Brown, who will be coming to campus on Saturday, February 22nd.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Wanda Guntz

Secretary