Memorandum

Date: May 16, 2008

To: The Executive Committee of the Academic Senate

From: Terry Jones, DELO & Chair, and Faculty Diversity & Equity Committee

Subject: Executive Summary of the DELO’s Annual Report to Ex Comm

This report covers the activities of the Faculty Diversity and Equity Committee and the DELO for the 2007-2008 academic year. Topics covered include the Tenure-track Search Orientation, the Diversity Symposium, diversity plan activities, the search for an EEO director, DELO activities, the status of tenure-track searches for 2007-2008 and selected recommendations. As you will see, this has been a year of high energy, excitement and accomplishment.

Tenure-Track Search Orientation
One of my first tasks was to present at the Tenure-Track Search Orientation for 2007. Approximately 55 search committee chairs or search committee members attended and were briefed on best practices in conducting a successful search. This session is enriched by a walk-through of the Tenure-Track Search Procedures & Resources Manual and a question and answer period. This orientation has proven to be very valuable to search committee members as is evidenced by the positive feedback received from the evaluations of the event. In an effort to get searches started as early as possible in the fall, future tenure-track search orientations will be held in the late spring thereby, increasing the probability search committees will be able to begin searches earlier.

New Role for Diversity and Equity Committee
In the spring of 2006, the Diversity and Equity Committee was asked to rethink its mission and mandate. After the Committee consulted with the President and the Chair of the Academic Senate a new role was endorsed and the Committee began its work. With the endorsement of the President and the Chair of the Academic Senate FDEC decided that an appropriate new role was to be to take the lead in formulating a strategy for inclusion of the University community in the development of a diversity plan for the University.

In the 2007-08 academic years the Diversity and Equity Committee continued on its mission of leadership in the development of a diversity plan for the University. Most all Diversity and Equity Committee meetings this academic year have focused on the goal of working with the campus community to develop a diversity plan for the University.
In an attempt to sensitize the University community to best practices in diversity and to set the stage for a ground up diversity planning process, the Diversity and Equity Committee invited Dr. Damon Williams, Vice Provost for Multicultural and International Education at the University of Connecticut to be the keynote speaker. Williams is an authority on issues of diversity and equity and diversity planning. This keynote address was followed by the university community participating in “world café” sessions to provide designed to illicit input about the best ways to make the campus a more inclusive, diverse and multiculturally sensitive institution. All discussions were recorded and FDEC members have sorted the materials and attempted to align findings with the Missions and Mandates of the University. In a further attempt to be inclusive, FDEC has expanded and invited representatives from the six (6) divisions of the University to assist in the development of the diversity plan. To this point there have been two very productive meetings. Through the efforts of FDEC and the division liaisons, a Diversity Forum is being planned for May 29, 2009. From this forum will come further evidence and input for the development of the University Diversity Plan. No time line has been established for the completion of the diversity plan at this point.

EEO Search Committee
As Chair of the Diversity and Equity Committee (FDEC) I served on the search committee to hire the new Equal Employment Opportunity Officer (EEOC). After several interviews, an outstanding candidate was offered the position and accepted. Ms. Linda Nolan, previously in a similar position at the University of Southern California accepted the position and joined the University in early May. She comes with a wealth of experience and should be a valuable asset to us as we continue our efforts to become a more inclusive and diverse population sensitive to all students, staff, faculty and administrators.

Assisting Tenure-Track Searches
In performing my responsibilities as DELO, I visited with every search committee in the four university departments to assist, advise and counsel them through tenure-track hires. The primary purpose for these discussions was the expectation that each search committee would submit a faculty recruitment plan. While I believe I was somewhat helpful in carrying out these responsibilities, what became clear in the process was that the task is too large for one person to complete effectively. The end result is that we have more of an advising process and less of a monitoring one. Given the need to diversity the faculty and the value of every tenure-track hire, it is not reasonable that the monitoring process of tenure track hires should not be enhanced. Prior to hiring the EEO Director we were unable to adequately enforce our own state and federally mandated EEO rules. With the new EEO director on board, it is time to rethink the monitoring function of that office, the role of the DELO and how we might more effectively monitor the hiring of tenure-track faculty in the future.

Tenure-Track Search Results
Out of the forty-one (41) searches authorized for 2007-2008, thirty-one (31) have resulted in successful hires. Some searches are still in process at the writing of this report. I will
report under separate cover what information is available on demographics of this population.

**Recommendations and Reflections**

It is not enough just to orient search committee members in the tenure-track faculty hiring process. An effective search begins long before position descriptions are written and search committees are elected. Effective searches begin with careful consideration being given to the nature of the position, the missions and goals of the University, affected departments and the communities we serve. There should be a direct connection between the mission and goals of the university and requests for tenure-track positions. With this in mind, deans and the librarian director, in their calls for tenure-track position requests, need to be much more instructive and selective, with an eye toward diversity and multiculturalism, in terms of approving requests for positions. Perhaps an orientation similar to the one provided for search committee members would be appropriate for deans and the library director. This orientation should be provided before calls for tenure-track positions are solicited.

Serving on the search committee for the EEO officer sensitized me further to the idea that this position, or at least the equal opportunity function in its broadest sense, needs to be expanded and elevated to a higher level in the University. Buried deep in the Human Resources Department sends an unintended message about the importance and value of issues of diversity, multiculturalism and equal opportunity. This position warrants more of a high profile and should be moved to the Presidents’ office and the title elevated to that of a vice president. In many universities the EEOC function is handled by a vice president with a staff.

Becoming a truly diverse, multicultural institution where all are valued and welcomed to the table takes more than lip-service and clichés. It is a developmental process that must be embraced by all, especially those in leadership positions in the University. The Diversity Symposium, especially the keynote address by Dr. Damon Williams, provided inspiration and focus, but the hard work is left for us to accomplish. If inclusion and diversity is at the core of all we do, if we really believe it will make us stronger, we will all have to begin behaving as if we believe it. Business as usual will have to stop and we will have to engage a new way of thinking and behaving as we tackle the task of becoming a diverse, multicultural institution, e.g. all strategic planning must be infused with accountable measures for inclusive excellence. The work we have all engaged in over the past year is but the foundation of this important effort.