**Task Force for Diversity Programming**

January 30, 2014 – 3:30 to 4:30pm

Manchester Room

**Present**: Dr. Sylvia Imler, Dr. Shearle Furnish, Dr. Helen Han, Associate Professor, Ms. Ellen

Jones, Dr. Jack Min, Dr. Joseph Mosca, Dr. Sal Sanders, Dr. Darlene Unger and Dr. Cary Wecht.

Dr. Sylvia J. Imler, Chair, Chief Diversity Officer/Interim Director, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, called the meeting to order and welcomed the committee. Those members who were not present at the initial meeting (fall 2013) were asked to introduce themselves and tell what they do in their college and why diversity is important to them.

Dr. Cary Wecht, Associate Dean, College of Creative Arts & Communication: Diversity is hugely relevant to all of the arts, theater, communication, and music. Diversity is representing various parts of the world. It is our mission and artistic vision.

Dr. Helen Han, Associate Professor, Williamson College of Business Administration commented that diversity is very important. She teaches diversity and it is also one of her areas of research.

Dr. Jack Min, Associate Professor in Biological Sciences shared that he was asked to attend the meeting by Dr. Martin Abraham, Dean. Jack shared that he believes diversity is important and stated that diversity education should start as early as kindergarten. He stated at this point he is not sure of what is required to fulfill the requirements to continue the vision, but expressed whatever is needed he will do his best to accommodate. He added he does feel that there has been a proportionate amount of diverse hiring in his college in the last couple of years.

Dr. Sal Sanders, Associate Dean, School of Graduate Studies and Research, stated that the School of Graduate Studies has a huge interest in trying to increase its international admittance and have a more diverse faculty in terms of their knowledge base in their discipline, as well as ethnicity - all across the board. They are working on an international admissions survey.

Dr. Joe Mosca, Dean, College of Health and Human Services, stated that diversity is integrated in their entire curriculum. Most of their students are going to work with patients or clients or folks they interface with in large numbers, and they will be people who are different from them in many cases. Human difference in diversity is critical for HHS students in their understanding and important for them in being able to deliver the care required in health care service settings, human services or law enforcement areas, etc.

Dr. Shearle Furnish, Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) stated that where you see diversity issues studied are in the college’s independent programs, because cultural studies has a large footprint: American Studies, Women for Gender Studies, Global Education Program, Model United Nations, Center for Holocaust and Judaic Studies, Africana Studies, Islamic Studies, and language programs. Diversity is rich all through the college.

Dr. Darlene Unger, Beeghly College of Education stated that she was on the committee because Dean Howell is probably over obligated, but her interest is in diversity as it relates to disability. She is a faculty member in the area of special education and work primarily with middle level and secondary education helping individuals who are receiving special education services and who are transitioning to college and/or into the work force. She is also the director of research at the Center for Autism Studies.

Ms. Ellen Jones, Assistant Professor of Theater & Dance, CCAC, is the new lighting and scene design director in the theater department and came to Youngstown from Minnesota in August 2013.

Dr. Imler stated that Dean DePoy and Scott Evans, the Vice President of University Advancement, had asked her to head up the Task Force for Diversity Programing, which fits into her duties as Chief Diversity Officer of YSU. The preliminary reports submitted by the Task Force will allow her to assess how we address diversity and inclusion as an institution. There are a lot of institutional reports that go out; not just on data, but we want to look at what we are doing as a university, individual colleges and how we fare collectively; and determine how the institution is addressing the myriad of areas of diversity.

She shared that there is a national recognition award for institutions of higher education called Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award. Out of the entire nation in 2012, three Ohio institutions received this award. In 2013, 7 Ohio institutions received the HEED Award. In investigating the criteria, she found there is so much the award involves; from the Board of Trustees, to hiring practices, to faculty, to students, vendors, etc. It is so in-depth with many layers. At some point, Dr. Imler would love for YSU to be recognized nationally for the HEED Award. In looking at the application/criteria, there is a lot that YSU would have to do. It gives us a way to gauge what we are doing and look at our individual colleges, SPAS, etc. - looking at the different programs and what is being done for accreditation.

Your preliminary reports were shared with the president. The report that will be done at the end of the year (May 2014) will be used to develop a matrix of sorts to align what is being done to see where there are gaps that need to be addressed institutionally. Another purpose of this task force is to assist Dr. Imler in providing pertinent information to Scott Evans (Vice-President of University Advancement) and Bryan DePoy (Dean of CCAC), co-chairs, Cornerstone for Regional Engagement (YSU 2020 Strategic Plan).

**Overview of the 2014-2015 Template**

The next report will be the Final Report for 2014. Some of the information will be a projection of the upcoming diversity/inclusion programs for the academic year (fall 2014 – spring 2015).

*List what you are planning to develop for the new academic year (2014-2015).* A template will be sent to you electronically after the meeting. Please note the highlighted areas and just fill in the template. You will be able to list programs dealing with co-sponsorships. Dr. Imler defined by example what she desires to be completed on the template and added that anything you think would fit into the template should be added. The report is due the end of the semester by May 9, 2014. If you have tentative events, just state that also. Programs that you want to have included in the Community Diversity Program Series *must be* *free of charge*. This will help us to intentionally plan events, workshops or training sessions. Submit anything you think will fit into the Series (relative to diversity and inclusion).

Dr. Mosca asked Dr. Imler when reviewing the report on the national recognition award for Higher Education Excellence in Diversity if she found the schools included in the listing had offices of inclusion or were they divisional offices?

Dr. Imler stated that they have centers, whereas hers is an office. They had a Diversity or Multicultural Affairs and Diversity & Inclusion Center. Some had large staffs to assist them. Awardees ranged from community colleges, colleges the size of YSU and larger colleges. There were seven awarded in 2013. It seems to be a much larger commitment and they have the budget to address many areas. The University of Akron has a great model (recipients 2012 & 2013). They have the funds to make those changes.

Dr. Imler will be using some of the criteria from the HEED application to tighten up her draft of a diversity plan for YSU. She has submitted her draft to the president who is in agreement with the need to provide incentives to colleges making effective changes and progress in the areas of diversity and diversity initiatives, according to those standards that will help guide the university towards a more effective climate of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The focus is to align and work on a strong plan for the university. The draft of the diversity plan will eventually be taken to the University Diversity Council (UDC) for discussion and input. All of what we (Task Force members) are doing is connected and we are trying to connect the dots, see where our strengths are, and see where we need to improve, fill in the gaps, and move YSU forward. Ultimately, Dr. Imler would love to see YSU apply for and receive the HEED Award. When we reflect on the Dr. Dunn’s 3 E’s, this would definitely fall under excellence (and enrichment and ultimately enrollment) and show that we are not just talking about diversity and inclusion; it is not just on paper, but we are showing evidence that what we are doing in the area of diversity and inclusion goes beyond programs and events, but includes looking at our students: how we are bringing in international students and the underrepresented populations, etc.

Sal Sanders commented we are not enrolling populations near us to a proportion of what it could be; if we make a concentrated effort to make it better, it would certainly help our enrollment as well.

Dr. Imler shared the Diversity Leadership Recognition, March 27, 2014, is focusing this year on individuals with disabilities, and our guest speaker is Dan Horacek, as alumnus of YSU, Beeghly College of Education; that he has cerebral palsy and a learning disability. She is looking at 2015 to focus on poverty and socio- economic status and trying to pull in a national celebrity whose story fits that focus. Each year there will be a different focus in order to build awareness and inclusion. There is so much to do, increasing awareness, enrollment and excellence. What we are trying to do will bring a lot of enrichment while we are very much aware of the lack of funds.

Dr. Imler explained the timeline of the plan isn’t rushed. Presently, we are doing foundational work. The internal report is given to Dr. Dunn for review and then after he gives his feedback, I can strengthen the draft. It will not be by the end of the summer. This is a long process. In time, it will go to the Board of Trustees with hopes of it becoming an institutional document. So your help is very critical. It will be a process and as you submit your work to me, I will be able to review it and look at it with the president. There no doubt will be some other layers to the process. Again, one of the goals is to provide some kind of incentive to programs and colleges for their efforts. So any creative ideas you may have will probably be another phase to include where we can develop innovative workshops, programs, etc.

There are some really great things we are doing, so anything that can go into the Community Diversity Program Series, we welcome them. If we can increase and double the programming series for next year would be great. We had about 34 listed this academic year, which doubled from the previous year. We want to reach beyond the Youngstown community and include the 5-county region area and beyond.

No further business to address.

Meeting was adjourned 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Cheryl Levy, Administrative Assistant

**DEADLINE TO REMEMBER**: Task Force for Diversity Program Final Report 2014 due May 9, 2014