

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE**

Committee on Equal Opportunity
EQ.03.01 Annual Report for 2002-03
(Final; Information)

The Senate Committee on Equal Opportunity (EQ) is responsible for developing, encouraging, and evaluating the development of equal opportunity and affirmative action programs and guidelines that are intended to increase the numbers, and improve the status, of minority groups in the University community. The following is a summary of issues concluded or considered at length by EQ during the 2002-03 academic year.

A. Networking

EQ decided that it should ensure that it participates in, and receives information from, other campus committees that deal with equal opportunity. In this way, EQ can serve a senate liaison function, bringing faculty and student perspectives to bear on the various committees' work and, if appropriate, suggesting further supportive action by other senate committees or by the senate as a whole.

A key example of the networking relationship is the participation of a representative from EQ on the Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Women (CCSW) during the fall and spring semesters. EQ has reviewed the Annual Report of CCSW to find ways that we may reinforce CCSW's work, especially in terms of bringing a wider faculty perspective to that work. For example, CCSW is developing a recommendation regarding flexible tenure-track appointments of faculty. The University already has a modified duties policy to give a semester off (relieved of teaching duties but tenure clock does not stop) to the primary caregiver after the birth of a baby. A flexible tenure-track appointment might also address community service responsibilities and provide a more flexible period over which the tenure clock would run. Such a proposal is complex and would require a *Statutes* change. To assist in the study, EQ has agreed to work with CCSW by developing a faculty survey on the flexible appointment issue. A subcommittee of EQ will work on this survey.

In addition, EQ invited Kathleen Pecknold, Associate Provost, to provide an update on the various administratively appointed committees' efforts to support recruitment, retention and advancement of women. Pecknold provided an update on the Recruitment Practices Committee's 2002 survey, the Provost's Committee on Retention, and ongoing administrative discussions about the flexible tenure-track appointment proposal under development in Engineering and by CCSW.

B. Consideration of Campus Diversity

EQ devoted considerable attention this year to consideration of campus diversity. EQ recognizes that achieving diversity of student, faculty and administrative bodies is essential to sustaining the intellectual community of the University. In that regard, EQ reviewed a number of issues, as described below.

1. Self-Segregation Among Housing Units

Last year, student members of EQ raised some concerns about housing assignments and the potential fragmentation of the residential community if students predominantly choose to live among other students with whom they identify most closely. One proposed response was mandating random housing assignments for all students. EQ continued the review of this concern this year. One counter to the concern about self-segregation is the importance of creating a living environment that provides students, especially minority students, a sense of security and of being "at home" that each of us seeks in our living environment. EQ concluded that random housing assignments would not result in an improved campus environment.

2. Campus Diversity Committee (CDC)

EQ invited James Anderson, Chair of CDC, to attend a meeting to discuss the campus diversity initiative. Anderson's discussion with EQ covered the following areas:

- CDC has considered a range of diversity issues relating to concerns about gender, race, and disabilities.
- The biggest challenge is to educate faculty, teaching assistants, and staff so they are aware of what needs to be done and how to accomplish it. Proper training will create a campus atmosphere that supports and makes all faculty and students feel welcome.
- A CDC student member has made a video of students on campus discussing their diversity experiences/problems in the classroom.
- Faculty who are members of disadvantaged groups essentially have a tougher job since they must carry on their full-time teaching/research responsibilities and also spend a considerable amount of time counseling minority students and serving as an important role model to them. In addition, minority faculty are often asked to participate on many department/college/campus committees to ensure that there is diversity in the views represented there.
- Women faculty have similar demands. Women may also have difficulty with some students who do not view them as an authority figure and rank them lower on the ICES form based on their gender. Students may not realize that the ICES forms have an impact on faculty, especially those without tenure.

EQ identified some concerns that may require further review or action by the Senate. In particular, EQ supports inclusion of diversity discussions in teaching orientation programs and training within the University. It is not clear how best to further that goal. One consideration might be development of a faculty video addressing experiences of faculty with particular focus on diversity. EQ also decided to arrange for a viewing of the student video.

3. Same-Sex Partner Benefits

EQ reviewed the status of the proposal to provide equal benefits for same-sex couples that was approved by the Senate last year and sent to the Board of Trustees. The Board has not yet acted on that proposal.

4. University Nondiscrimination Policy

EQ considered whether the University's Nondiscrimination Policy should be revised to be more inclusive of gender issues. EQ continues to explore possible modifications with appropriate University personnel.

5. Recruitment Practices Committee

Kathleen Pecknold, Associate Provost, provided copies of the Recruitment Practices Committee membership roster and the 2002 Recruitment Survey. Anonymous surveys were sent to individuals identified on affirmative action forms as finalists at UIUC during the period of time from 1996-2001. Individuals were asked about their experience with the recruitment process including source of information about positions, communication processes, interview procedures, and factors relevant to acceptance of an offer. A workshop on recruitment is being planned to address some of the issues noted by the survey. Because the data collected does not identify particular departments, the survey cannot be used to address issues of special concern regarding particular departments. Consequently, the positive statements by recruits (friendly departmental staff, welcoming attitude towards spouses) mirror many of the negative statements by recruits (gruff departmental staff, unhelpful in working through spousal hire situation).

6. Retention

Copies of the Provost's Committee on Retention membership roster were distributed. The Retention Committee collects information from departing faculty via anonymous mail surveys and personal interviews. Over the years, the main reason for leaving has been location. The number of faculty that left last year, including retirees, were 42 assistant professors, 20 associate professors, and 63 full professors.

7. Child Care

The expanded Child Development Lab opened in January. The University is working with local daycare providers to provide drop-in child care service. The University is working with the United Way and local businesses on sick child care. EQ was pleased to see the progress on these issues and believes the University is moving in the right direction in providing expanded care.

8. Elder Care

The Faculty/Staff Assistance Program offered a four-part program on dealing with elder care issues. Again, EQ views this development as an important addition to the University program.

Membership commitment was in evidence by near perfect attendance at every meeting. Although EQ has not developed specific solutions for any of the problematic issues addressed, the committee has moved forward on identifying areas where Senate input can be of benefit. In particular, EQ believes that the establishment of networking arrangements with existing campus committees and administrative personnel ensures that EQ can be of assistance when needed. EQ intends to carry forward over the summer and into next year its review of flexible tenure-track appointment considerations and its consideration of potential revisions of the University's Nondiscrimination Policy. EQ believes that the topics addressed this year are extremely important to the future of this campus.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

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