Spring 2014 Report of the Commission on the Status of Minorities
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
Presented to the Administrative Council
April 18, 2014

Officers:

Chair: Arthur Garrison, Department of Criminal Justice
Vice Chair: Thomas Robinson, Department of Psychology
Treasurer: James Jackson, Department of Psychology
Secretary: MaryAnn O’Neil, Department of Elementary Education
Webmaster: Soo Goh, Department of Music

Commission Members:

Qin Geng, College of Business
Jose Molino, Latino Caucus
Kiara Richardson, Student President of BSU
Ryan Wheeler, Black Student organization representative
Louis Rodriguez, Latino Caucus
Karen Deysher, Graduate Student Representative
Christopher Wentzel, Non-minority Student Government
Jackie Fox, Office of Social Equity
Rhonda Branford, Division of Multicultural Services

Mission:
As stated in the By-laws of the Commission:
“The Commission on the Status of Minorities (CSM) will have, as its focus, the monitoring of
the recruitment and retention of students, faculty, staff, and administrators of color at Kutztown
University. “Minority” or “People of Color” is defined as any student, faculty member, staff, or
administrator of African American, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Latino, or Native
American descent officially affiliated with Kutztown University.”

Website:
The CSM maintains a website. Dr. Soo Goh is the current webmaster. Past CSM meeting
minutes, events and committee updates can be found at
http://www.kutztown.edu/committees/csm/2011/home.shtml
Change in Officers:
At the beginning of the 2013-2014 academic year (September 24, 2013), the following officers were elected and/or reelected by the members of the CSM:

*Chair:* Arthur Garrison, Department of Criminal Justice  
*Vice Chair:* Thomas Robinson, Department of Psychology  
*Treasurer:* James Jackson, Department of Psychology  
*Secretary:* MaryAnn O’Neil, Department of Elementary Education  
*Webmaster:* Soo Goh, Department of Music

Meetings:
The CSM 2013-2014 meeting dates:

- September 21, 2013  
- October 15, 2013  
- November 19, 2013  
- January 23, 2014  
- February 18, 2014  
- March 25, 2014  
- April 15, 2014  
- May 8, 2014

Summary of CSM 2013-2014 Policy Agenda:

While the mission of the CSM is to monitor “the recruitment and retention of students, faculty, staff, and administrators of color at Kutztown University,” the CSM determined that the 2013-2014 and the 2014-2015 academic school years would be dedicated to the issue of minority student retention. While the recruitment of “faculty, staff, and administrators of color” is an important issue to the CSM, it was determined that focusing on the environment of our students of color and the impact of that environment on their retention would have the priority of the CSM attention and resources.

The CSM met with Natalie Snow, Director of Institutional Research, who provided the CSM with data on student retention. The data showed that the highest retention rate for African American students was in 2006 and 2007 (77.6%) and the lowest rate was in 2011 (58.8%) with a range of 76.6% in 2002 and 58.8% in 2011. Hispanic students had a higher retention rate with the highest being in 2002 and 2008 (80%) and the lowest being in 2011 (59.2%) with a range of 80% in 2002 and 59.2% in 2011. The CSM discussed possible reasons for the low retention rate of both student populations. White students had a range of 77.8% in 2002 and 74.2% in 2011.
with the highest retention in 78.8% in 2005 and 2008 and the lowest retention rate in 2002 at 74.2%. The CSM discussed the impact of low academic performance (GPA below 2.0) on retention and financial aid. The CSM was informed that students can maintain attendance to Kutztown longer than they can maintain financial aid with a low academic performance. The CSM has been in contact with the Office of Financial Aid regarding how students are informed of threats to financial aid based on low academic performance and the services that are available to students to improve their academic standing.

The CSM also determined that part of the environment that students of color function within is life within the various residence halls and apartments. The CSM determined that it wanted to engage students living in the residence halls to determine if the environment was such that it made them feel welcome and secure at the university. The CSM met with the Director and Deputy Director of Residence Life to discuss how a series of meetings with students could be organized to determine what views and perceptions students of color who live in the residence hall have. Residence Life provided the committee with data on the number and percentage of students of color who live in the various residence halls and apartments. The CSM has developed a preliminary plan for the meetings. The CSM intends to conduct the meetings in the fall of 2014. Residence Life has also invited the CSM to work with them in developing and participating in the upcoming training of its adult and student staff, specifically focusing on its diversity and sensitivity training.

The CSM also met with Kimberly Scranage, Vice President for Enrolment Management. The CSM discussed with Ms. Scranage the availability of data regarding student of color retention after freshman year. Ms. Scranage made clear that the data was available and that she would work closely with the CSM on any requests it had regarding the student of color acceptance, retention, academic success and graduation rates of students at Kutztown. She also discussed University policies regarding admission to Kutztown as well as how financial aid that is made available to incoming students as a means of attracting them. She also discussed surveys that are currently being analyzed regarding student perceptions of the quality of service received from departments under her direction; Public Safety, Housing and Residence Life, Financial Aid, Admissions, Registrar and the Bursars Offices.
Funding:
The CSM provided financial support ($800) to an event by the Commission on the status of Women and the Commission on Human Diversity which hosted Nani Agbeli a dance and music instructor from Ghana. In addition to a performance he conducted a seminar for some Kutztown University music students.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Arthur Garrison
Criminal Justice Department
Chair, Commission on the Status of Minorities