MINORITY EDUCATION

According to the bylaws of the university, the “...functions of the University Faculty shall be to consider questions of educational policy which concern more than one college, school or separate academic unit, or are general in nature...”

Responsibility of: Committee on Minority Education. The Committee provides oversight of minority education, including review of proposed and ongoing special programs, and monitors the overall educational experience of minority students. It reports to the Faculty Senate.

April 10,2002, Records, pp. 9478-9482S, Appendices 6-8

Professor Anthony Ingraffea, Civil and Environmental Engineering, and Chair, Committee on Minority Education, reported on the Committee’s deliberations over the last two years:

RECRUITMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS: Encourage colleges to continue their support of hosting programs, and to further test their effectiveness by assessing the benefits of expanding programs from once per year to twice where requested. Encourage increased faculty awareness of these programs, and increased faculty participation as defined by those in charge of the programs. Involvement of current URM students should be strongly encouraged.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Encourage colleges to continue these programs, and expand and strengthen after effectiveness has been evaluated. Assess whether more and different faculty want to be involved in such programs. Assess effectiveness of websites for their influence on recruiting students of color.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Encourage colleges to continue to support existing pre-college outreach programs, to leverage external funding to create additional programs of this type, and to institutionalize them in various ways including through extension services where applicable. Other units should consider institutionalization and direct faculty responsibility as an innovative approach to recruitment. Faculty with formal extension appointments in youth development could focus more effort on recruitment of URMs. Cornell University has extension offices in each county of the state and in New York City. The Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension should consider how to work with recruitment staff to better take advantage of our extensive network.
RETENTION

RECOMMENDATIONS: Colleges should consider how to more effectively use mentoring for URMs. This might involve mentoring faculty in the ways of mentoring URMs. Appropriate rewards should be given to those who assume the informal responsibility of mentoring and advising large numbers of URMs.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The University should continue to support and encourage existing and new efforts that foster student-student and student-faculty interaction and support.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Course instructors should be alert for students in difficulty and refer them to the Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT) as well as appropriate staff in the colleges. Where not currently done, new students should be informed during orientation of the existence of these resources. Recommend continued strengthening of strategies for increasing awareness of student needs for particular types of academic or personal support, as well as appropriate methods for providing such early intervention in a timely fashion.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Colleges should evaluate the opportunities for URM involvement in research, and encourage both students and faculty to attend meetings where URMs gather to present their findings. Cornell should have a visible presence at national meetings of this type.

PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING STUDENT CONCERNS

RECOMMENDATIONS: Each college should develop Safe Haven-like mechanisms where students, both undergraduate and graduate, can find support and share concerns without fear of retribution, and students/faculty/staff should be made aware of the existence of such programs.

Professor Ingraffea then moved adoption of the Committee report:

WHEREAS, the Faculty Committee on Minority Education has completed a two-year study of issues of recruitment, retention and conflict resolution focused on undergraduate students, and
WHEREAS, this Committee has met with students from underrepresented minority groups, and with admissions and minority programs staff, and

WHEREAS, this Committee has solicited and compiled a report with recommendations on the best practices in these areas among all the colleges at Cornell,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate:

1. Requests that all colleges implement all applicable recommendations in the Committee report (Recommended Best Practices for Recruitment, Retention, and Addressing Concerns of Students from Under-Represented Groups).

2. Requests that the University supply the resources required for all colleges to implement these proposals in a timely manner.

3. Urges that the Committee review the responses to these recommendations in three years time.

The resolution carried.