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UC President's Task Force on Faculty Diversity offer key recommendations on increasing faculty diversity

The University of California President's Task Force on Faculty Diversity will present its findings and recommendations on the challenges related to recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty population at the President's Summit on Faculty Diversity in Oakland today (Tuesday).

A team of senior academic administrators, faculty and Academic Senate leaders from each of UC's 10 campuses will attend. They will serve as the key advisers to develop campus strategies in response to the task force's recommendations.

At the Summit on Faculty Diversity, there will be a keynote address by Christopher Edley, Jr., dean of Boalt Hall School of Law at UC Berkeley, and a panel that will explore successful diversity strategies on UC campuses. They will address the recommendations of the task force including the graduate pipeline, academic planning, accountability, institutional change, and leadership.

Among the task force's key findings is that while the pool of underrepresented minority scholars is getting larger, the demographic profile of the UC faculty has changed only slightly.

Based on its findings, the task force made several major recommendations including one calling for campuses to make diversity an integral component of academic planning for faculty hiring, research agendas, curricular development and program reviews.

"Faculty diversity is one of the most pressing issues facing the University of California today," said Dynes. "UC will remain competitive as a leading institution of higher education only if it is successful in addressing the underrepresentation of minorities and women among its faculty and academic leaders."

The task force would like to see university continue to address the barriers that prevent underrepresented minorities from pursuing academic careers in all fields, and particularly in fields such as science and engineering where the underrepresentation is severe.

Additionally, academic administrators should begin to provide annual reporting at the department, division and campus levels, coupled with monitoring and resource-based incentives for diversity efforts, the task force recommends.

Currently, UC is addressing faculty diversity in a number of ways including, the President's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program, which invests in scholars who will contribute to the diversity of the academic community through their teaching, research and public service. Since the implementation of a hiring incentive in 2003, more than 40 former program fellows have joined the UC faculty.

For more information about the President's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program: www.ucop.edu/acadadv/ppfp

Campuses also have responded to the challenge by appointing high level academic administrators with staff and resources exclusively focused on faculty diversity. For example, UCLA has created the UCLA Office of Faculty Diversity. This office has developed effective Web resources to address faculty diversity: faculty.diversity.ucla.edu

Almost every campus has an advisory committee addressing diversity and gender equity. One of the most active committees is the Breakfast Diversity Group at UC Berkeley, comprised of administrators, faculty and opinion leaders who meet weekly on diversity issues affecting all groups.

The President's Task Force on Faculty Diversity was appointed in May 2005, chaired by UCLA Associate Vice Chancellor Rosina Becerra, to conduct a program review of faculty diversity efforts on UC campuses. A complete description of the task force is at: www.universityofcalifornia.edu/facultydiversity/

The task force found that the underrepresentation of minorities in faculty careers is a national problem, not unique to UC. However, the task force noted that the University of California can make a significant

contribution to increasing the national pool of underrepresented minority faculty by focusing attention on the diversity of graduate students at UC.

“As the most diverse state in the nation, we have the opportunity to take the leadership in creating the most diverse faculty among institutions of higher education,” said Becerra.

Members of the task force were UC faculty and academic administrators from all 10 campuses and the chair of the Academic Council.

Faculty diversity is a critical issue for the University of California, the task force reports. Faculty diversity will foster an academic community that will reflect a diverse range of interests, abilities, life experiences and world views that will enhance the academic mission of the University of California.

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