

Memorandum

To: Academic Senate
From: Terry S. Kogan, Co-Chair
Re: University Diversity Committee
Date: May 3, 2013

During this academic year, the University Diversity Committee ["UDC"] has undertaken one of the most ambitious projects in its history.

At the request of President David Pershing, the UDC joined last Fall with the Office of Equity and Diversity to develop a long-term Strategic Plan for Diversity aimed at advancing diversity goals at the University. Realizing the broad scope of this undertaking, representatives from various campus units (including Undergraduate Studies, Human Resources, Student Affairs, Administrative Services, among others) joined as ex-officio members of the UDC to participate in this important undertaking.

This initiative, which will take at least two years, aims at assessing the successes and challenges that have faced and continue to face our University in recruiting, retaining and creating a supportive environment for faculty, students, and staff who are members of underrepresented minority communities. In addition, at its completion the project will propose new strategies and recommendations aimed at increasing the representation of such minorities on campus and enhancing the quality of the experience that members of these communities have at the University of Utah. In part, this project was undertaken in light of the imminent decision of the United States Supreme Court in the *Fisher v. Texas* case, which will in all likelihood have a significant impact on the question of race-based admissions at public universities.

In the first phase of this project undertaken this year, we have developed a Report for President Pershing that assesses the past and present situation of minority faculty, students and staff at the University. To accomplish this, the expanded UDC has broken down into four Subgroups: the Faculty Subgroup, the Student Subgroup, the Staff Subgroup, and the Assessment Subgroup. Each subgroup has devoted significant attention to developing its particular section of the Report, often meeting several times a month in this endeavor. In addition, one member of the UDC has written an in-depth history of the treatment of minorities at the University.

The draft Report should be delivered to President Pershing within the next several weeks. With his permission, the UDC will share a copy with the Executive Committee of the Senate. (Because of the sensitive nature of the issues, at this early stage the UDC and the University administration view the Report as confidential.)