Job Place Bullying and Harassment Sub-Committee

October 24, 2011

Present: Carolyn Fallahi, Kathy Hermes, Eva Vrdoljak, Sally Lesik, Kate McGrath, Meg Levvis

Guest: Candace Barrington, Faculty Senate President

Missing: Susan Gilmore, Jacqueline Cobbina-Boiven

Carolyn Fallahi and Sally Lesik have volunteered to chair this committee.

Candace Barrington is interested in issues of civility and is dismayed by the training that we have here on campus. She hopes that our committee might consider finding ways to make anti-bulling and civil discourse part of the training that we all receive at CCSU. Kathy Hermes mentioned that she went to a diversity training led by Dr. Jane Fried a few years ago and some of the issues she dealt with might be important in such a training. Carolyn Fallahi will contact her via e-mail and invite her to our next meeting. Someone also mentioned that Victoria Ginther might be doing some work on bullying with the incoming freshman. Carolyn will also reach out to her and see if she might consider attending too.

A lengthy discussion on what should be included in the training ensued. The following was a beginning list: legal issues, hypothetical situations that are applicable to the university, real-life situations that might be encountered on campus; industrial organizational psychology feedback. We should be able to draw upon expertise already available at CCSU. For example, Jane Fried and/or Meg Levvis who has published in sexual harassment. We may need to look into getting people from CCSU certified to provide the trainings. The committee liked the idea of presenting trainings from a team approach that included prevention, ethics, psychology, etc. Some examples were provided: intentional versus unintentional bullying, e.g. people who do not respond to a person. What do you do? This is an example of the perception of bullying.

Several committee members wondered about the extent of workplace bullying on campus. University of Connecticut is doing a civility study now that is sponsored by the President’s Office. A recent speaker at CCSU, Vicky Magley, talked about UConn’s study that is dealing with gender harassment and other workplace issues. Maybe we want to consider running a study here at CCSU. Carolyn will try to contact UConn to get a copy of the survey questions. Candace suggested that we apply for the Provost’s grant. We might consider tying civility as a necessary condition for retention of students.

Two years ago, sexual harassment policy was drafted by CCW. We want to revisit that policy and see if we need to update anything. Once updated, we will forward it to the administration for consideration. If adopted into policy, we want to make sure that it is available in the faculty and staff handbooks. Kate McGrath will send around the policy for our feedback.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 21st, at 12:15 p.m.