

Affirmative action report remains in limbo

By KELI OSBORN
Of the Emerald

It will be at least several weeks before the University faculty takes action on a report that charges little or no campus gains in affirmative hiring.

The report, prepared by the University Affirmative Action Compliance Committee and released last Wednesday, makes several recommendations to im-

prove the University's progress in affirmative hiring and recruitment of under-represented groups in graduate school and to reduce sex-race biases.

The report must first be accepted by the Faculty Senate, which is scheduled to next meet Nov. 29, before the recommendations can be implemented, according to committee chairer Patricia Schmuck.

"Our charge was to look at the

University's progress," Schmuck says. "We were to evaluate and report to the faculty and president. Now what happens is that it goes to the Faculty Senate and they will take a stand," Schmuck says.

Responses to the committee's report have been mixed. Following its official release in a University Assembly meeting last Wednesday afternoon, University Affirmative Action Director Myra Willard rose to address the state of

affirmative action at the University.

Despite objections that her statement was "out of order," Willard continued with her criticism of the report's "ambiguities."

She claimed the report paid little attention to the leadership role the University president and vice presidents should play in administering an affirmative action plan.

"Affirmative action and non-discrimination are legal mandates and University policy," Willard said. "The president and vice presidents... must be exhorted to treat it as such, to obey the law, and to take steps to assure the implementation of the program as they have with respect to other laws and policies."

The University administration is taking responsibility for affirmative action, counters Pres. William Boyd.

"Mine is the ultimate responsibility for the affirmative action program on campus, both in terms of legal requirements and moral commitment," he says.

Boyd says the administrative method he has chosen to implement the affirmative action plan successfully is to have a special assistant — Myra Willard — responsible for monitoring the policy achievements.

No job search on campus can lead to an appointment, Boyd adds, unless Willard "signs off on it."

Boyd says he is pleased with the report.

"I have confidence that the faculty will accept its recommendations."

Until it does, Boyd is meeting with the Faculty Advisory Committee and the Council of Deans to determine the best way to implement the report's suggestions.

The committee report also criticized low representations of women and minority graduate students at the University.

Affirmative action in graduate admissions is a problem jointly tackled by the University departments and the Affirmative Action Office, according to Norama McFadden.

McFadden, who works for the Affirmative Action office, says it is now advising departments on how best to develop graduate school forms to avoid any violations of University anti-discrimination policy.

Whatever the Faculty Senate chooses to do later this month, Schmuck says it is apparent that the process needs some changes.

"We've (the committee) got absolutely no clout whatsoever. That's why we asked that this committee be changed and be made advisory," she says.

As things stand, she says, only time will tell what the impact of the committee's report will be on affirmative action policy on campus.

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