

# Diversity: Some feel plan would be another bureaucratic financial drain

Continued from page 1  
early to tell.

"I did consider leaving, and if anything like this plan will be implemented I will continue to think very hard about this," Kleshchev said.

Kleshchev, a Russian immigrant, says the plan conjures up memories of his former homeland.

"Look, I am personally not going to be interrogated about my thoughts, and I am not going to go to reeducation camps either," said Kleshchev, alluding to the Five Year Diversity Plan's requirement that faculty participate in a summer diversity seminar.

"I've had enough of that in my previous life in the Soviet Union, and I just will not have this again. I tried freedom now; I liked it, and I am not about to give it up," Kleshchev said.

For the most part, criticism of the diversity plan has come from professors in the sciences. Twenty of the 25 co-signers of the open letter are in the sciences; 14 of those are math professors.

Phillips said the Five Year Diversity Plan is a "terrible idea" because it "calls for us to judge new faculty hires first and foremost by the color of their skin."

More than that, Phillips believes the Diversity Plan would create a bureaucracy the University cannot afford. The Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity already costs approximately \$1.5 million per year.

"This plan calls for millions per year in extra spending. What will happen to faculty salaries then?" said Phillips.

Of primary concern for the AAUP and some faculty members is the

plan's use of the term "cultural competency," which is not defined within the plan's text.

John Shuford, the interim associate director for the Center on Diversity and Community (CoDaC) said that cultural competency was not defined for two reasons: It would not be appropriate for the drafters of

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ALEXANDER KLESHCHEV | Mathematics Associate Professor

iversity work group, led by former Vice Provost for Institutional Equity and Diversity Greg Vincent, decided not to include a definition. Shuford said that various definitions of cultural competency could be found because it is a popular concept.

Byron Kunisawa, a lecturer and academic who specializes in analyzing the relationship between people and institutions, helped popularize the term cultural competency. He first used it in his seminal work "Designs of Omission," in which he concluded that "bias and discrimination are endemic to the structure and methodology of every system and institution in America."

Although he had no direct role in the drafting of the Five Year Diversity Plan, he said he was thrilled that

another institution was taking steps to rectify racial biases.

"I'm glad the University is trying to do something measurable," said Kunisawa.

Kunisawa said cultural competency is a generic term that describes the importance of utilizing the elements of culture to assess and interact with diverse populations. He said it has been most helpful in the medical field.

"Bottom line, it forces one to acknowledge that culture is an important factor to consider whenever a multicultural situation presents itself," Kunisawa said.

Currently, President Frohnmayer said he is taking the AAUP's suggestion and creating an executive council of faculty members to review the Five Year Diversity Plan in order to define key terms, assuage faculty concerns and iron out the wrinkles.

**1999**  
A number of students protest in front of Johnson Hall, spurred by concerns that the University is wavering in its commitment to create a diverse campus. Protesters demand that the University enact sensitivity training for faculty and allocate at least \$1 million to help student groups meet their diversity goals. President Frohnmayer meets with 75 protesters to discuss short-term demands.

**1999**  
Joe Wade, director of the Office of Academic Advising and Student Services and a University employee for 27 years, is fired from the University.

**2001**  
Wade files a racial discrimination lawsuit in the Lane County Circuit Court against the University.

**2001**  
The University hires Western Michigan President Elson Floyd to assess the racial climate of the University and issue a report. The report's primary recommendation is to institute "a new position of Provost for Institutional Responsiveness (or equity) at the University."

**2002**  
The settlement for Wade's lawsuit is finalized. It awards Wade \$114,537 per year from 1997 to 2001 and \$98,500 to his pension fund. The settlement also stipulates that the University create a temporary five-year Office for Institutional Equity and Diversity.

**2004**  
After an extensive search, the University taps Greg Vincent as the vice provost for institutional equity and diversity. Vincent's first goal is to draft a five-year diversity plan.

**2005**  
The Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity presents its draft of the Five-Year Diversity Plan, the culmination of six years of protests, lawsuits, external reports and internal talks. Less than two weeks later, Vincent announces his resignation from the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity.

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