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 | Mathmatics Associate Professor

the blueprint to impose a definition because that might have led to adverse responses by some. Secondly, the working definition would have become the focal point of debate, preventing a deeper discussion of the ideas presented. As such, the diversity 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 analyz-

ing 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 conclud-

ed 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.

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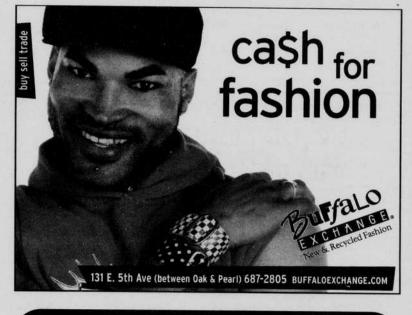
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2001 1999 A number of students The University hires WE 2005 Western Michigan protest in front of Johnson 2004 President Elson Floyd to Hall, spurred by concerns 1999 MANT assess the racial climate that the University is 2002 After an extensive The Office of of the University and wavering in its commitment Institutional Equity and The settlement for Joe Wade, director to create a diverse campus. issue a report. The University taps Greg Diversity presents its of the Office of 2001 Wade's lawsuit is report's primary Protesters demand that the draft of the Five-Year Vincent as the vice Academic Advising finalized. It awards Wade \$114,537 per University enact sensitivity recommendation is to provost for Diversity Plan, the training for faculty and and Student institute "a new position culmination of six Wade files a racial institutional equity year from 1997 to allocate at least \$1 million Services and a of Provost for Institutional discrimination and diversity. years of protests. 2001 and \$98,500 to University employee Responsiveness (or to help student groups lawsuit in the Vincent's first goal lawsuits, external his pension fund. The equity) at the University." meet their diversity goals. Lane County is to draft a reports and internal from the University. President Frohnmayer settlement also Circuit Court five-year diversity talks. Less than two stipulates that the meets with 75 protesters to against the University. weeks later, Vincent University create a discuss short-term announces his temporary five-year demands. resignation from the Office for Institutional Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity. Equity and Diversity

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