The committee’s charge was reviewed as the first item on the agenda:

Create and assist in the implementation of a plan to foster a campus climate in which there is a proactive commitment to diversity as a basic value of the college. This will include coordinating awareness and training activities. In all our initiatives, we must emphasize the development of good character and must model the values of inclusion, mutual respect, and cooperation.

There was a discussion of the well-received presentation by Ms. Wanda Johnson, *The Serendipitous Power of Storytelling*, from the Alabama Humanities Foundation Road Scholars Program on February 25, 2008 in Neal Auditorium. Committee members offered several positive comments about Ms. Johnson’s strengths as a motivational speaker. It was suggested that her name and contact information be kept for future use in securing speakers for college events.

A general discussion followed about how to improve attendance at diversity related events on campus. The following suggestions were made:

- Contact student organizations to encourage attendance.
- Whenever possible, try to schedule events around other student activities such as baseball and softball games, club meetings, and sponsored events.
- Encourage instructor participation—perhaps by targeting certain classes that may have a particular interest in the event being sponsored.

Events for Black History Month and Women’s History Month in February and March respectively should be planned prior to the December break, perhaps in October and November. The group will plan activities at least 3 months in advance. It was the consensus of the group to take advantage of Women’s History Project posters that promote each year’s theme. The posters for Women’s History Month will be ordered in October if available.

It has been suggested that bookmarks be ordered for New Student Orientation - these should be purchased in advance.
The tentative budget for diversity was discussed, which will be a component of the Human Resources budget. The funds will be subject to all financial guidelines, thus they cannot be used for prize money or food. Funds will be used for such expenses as nominal speaker’s fees, training videos (on a case-by-case basis), promotional materials, etc. It would be necessary to forward all requests for proposed amounts, with accompanying rationale, to Ms. Martin for approval.

The discussion of Chapter 13, “Laying the Groundwork for Change,” included the need for selecting a core leadership team. According to Loden, “the core leadership team is the single most important factor in predicting implementation success.” With Loden’s principles in mind, Dr. McBride and the committee chair will meet and assess the composition of the core leadership team.

Implementation Principle #12 The ongoing involvement and preparedness of the core leadership team is the single most important factor in predicting implementation success. (128).

The group reviewed the suggestions for Women’s History Month and decided to proceed with the display of artwork by Sue Chapman and two students who have earned their bachelor of art degrees and are being mentored in an effort to strengthen their art skills.

The Diversity Council contributes to the ongoing education and personal development of its members and is an integral part of promoting in the college culture a “valuing diversity” mindset. Since its inception, the council has reinstituted Black History Month celebrations and provided several other cultural events related to the diverse composition of our students, faculty, and staff. It has also instituted diversity awareness meetings that have provided enrichment for faculty and staff.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 21 2008 at 1:30.