Committee Charge:

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.

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved with changes in the following paragraph:

It was the consensus of the group that there will be an overall effort to incorporate diversity into the busy start up of the term and academic year. Suggestions included bookmarks to be provided with the Birmingham Pledge, JDCC’s Commitment to Diversity Statement, a diversity acronym, the Speak Up Pledge, or similar information for students, faculty and staff.

Committee members offered their comments about the December diversity activity:

- Overall, the feedback from the activity was positive.
- The breakout sessions were very helpful.
- The introduction by a team of four people was very effective at setting the proper tone.
- The video was well received.
- The small group format encouraged participation.
- People shared their ideas freely.
- People felt safe enough to share personal experiences.

It was suggested that the OUCH video be shown during student & faculty orientations and to student organizations.

Planning for next year’s activities should be started immediately to ensure our chances of securing a top-quality speaker.

The Diversity Council had the following suggestions for African American History Month and Women’s History Month:

1) African American History Month in February 2008 Theme—Carter G. Woodson and the origins of Multiculturalism
   a) Alabama Humanities Foundation Speaker
      i) Sisters in Science: Conversations with Black Women Scientists on Race, Gender and their Passion for Science — Diann Jordan
         Did you find science boring and uninspiring when you were growing up? Did you ever think about being a scientist when you were a kid, but someone discouraged your dreams? Are you a teacher who just wants to make a difference in all of your students’ lives by making science and math come alive for them? If you answered yes to any one of these questions, then you are in for a treat as author and scientist Diann Jordan puts a whole new twist on science and history. Come and hear the inspiring stories of a virtually unknown group of American women. In their own words, each scientist reflects on her early influences, her triumphs over obstacles of race and gender and her role as mother, wife and scientist. These pioneer women have carved
out successful careers and lives as they change the face of science in the new millennium. This lively lecture or interactive workshop will educate you on where it all begins for African American women scientists and give key strategies for what you can do to improve America’s future in the science global marketplace.

ii) Carrying On Oral Tradition: Fashioning Character With Folklore, Legends, Cultural and Family Tales — Wanda Johnson
Experience the power of storytelling while learning how to integrate folklore, legends, cultural and family tales into your character education program. Collect successful techniques and strategies for using stories to make instruction come alive, motivate students and reinforce values.

iii) The Serendipitous Power of Storytelling — Wanda Johnson
Storytelling is a timeless and timely tradition. This is a lecture on the nature and importance of storytelling. Using her craft, the presenter will untie the ribbons of child’s play and entertainment, which are often wrapped around this traditional art form. She will demonstrate how stories can touch hearts, lift spirits and teach powerful life lessons. The aim of this lecture is to build an appreciation of personal, family, community and cultural stories as lasting wealth, which should be passed on and preserved. This nationally recognized storyteller will excite and stimulate the imagination with her personality, humor and charm.

iv) Montgomery Bus Boycott: the Literariness of a Political Movement — Ramona L. Hyman
Montgomery 1955 is wrapped around my mind. More specifically, I find myself meditatively engaging the historical event that took place in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955, the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Over and over again, like a tired church woman singing the spiritually navigated tale of a blues people who fought for their right to be treated like equal citizens under American law by pounding the streets of Montgomery for 381 days, I think of how Rosa Parks, a wife, seamstress, secretary, and political activist, “woke up with her mind stayed on freedom” on December 1, 1955. This lecture and/or Power Point presentation explores the Montgomery Bus Boycott as a literary text. Hyman will examine the boycott’s literary features, i.e., theme, protagonist, characters, setting, plot and voice.

v) Rock in a Weary Land: The Black Church in 19th Century Alabama — Richard Bailey
In post bellum society, the Black church continued to play a fundamental role in Black life. With the end of slavery, former slaves established separated churches under the umbrella of the Baptist, Congregational, Lutheran, traditional Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion and other persuasions. To its credit, the Black church also participated in politics and educational concerns. Indeed, it played a crucial role in the establishment of the Alabama Republican party and the establishment of Black schools, with some of these schools later bearing the names of colleges and universities. In essence, persons and institutions of affluence in 19th century Alabama owed a huge debt of gratitude to the influence of the Black church. The presentation showcases the wide influence of the 19th century Black church in Alabama. Attendees will receive a bibliography, a list of church-related schools, a list showing denominational history and photos of several historic Black churches.
b) An event related to Africatown Celebration. Africatown is an historical settlement whose history is now celebrated in a festival. http://africa.wisc.edu/diaspora/Diaspora-Prichard_2006_International_Festival.pdf

c) A contest or game with trivia/facts from African American History

d) A student talent show

e) Check on the possibility of inviting representatives of “The Quiltmakers of Gees Bend”

f) Step show performance by members of fraternities and sororities African American Greek fraternities and sororities use step shows to preserve and promote their cultural history and to emphasize the importance of making a difference in their communities.

g) Have local talent display and be available to talk to students
   i) Ms. Bernice Sims display her art
   ii) Rev. Matthews—book signing

2) Women’s History Month in March 2008 Theme--Women’s Art: Women’s Vision.
   The group thought it would be a good idea to have Mrs. Sue Chapman to spearhead the celebration to include an art exhibit with local artists from Pensacola & Mobile and a guest speaker.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 20, 2008.