

Date 1/27/63

TO THE PRESIDENT

From: J. KIEFFER

SUBJECT:

Employment of Negroes

In Reply to Your Request

For Your Information

For Your Approval

Comment:

Discussed with Dan Clark

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
DEAN OF FACULTIES

Dear President Flemming:

attached is a memorandum on
of Negro scholars & students — which
to send to deans and department heads if you
approve. It is, of course, subject to amendment.

R. D. Clark



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
EUGENE, OREGON



DEAN OF FACULTIES

November 22, 1963

To Deans and Department Heads:

President Flemming has expressed his concern that the University of Oregon, by assuming a passive role towards the recruiting of Negro scholars and graduate students, has, despite its liberal intent, exercised discrimination against them. The facts seem to bear out this conclusion. In the twenty years I have been at the University, only two Negroes have been regular members of the faculty (one appointed this fall), one has taught in the summer session, a small number have been research assistants or associates, and a handful have served as graduate assistants. In addition, a Negro scholar two years ago accepted an assistant professorship in one of the departments of the College, but died unexpectedly before he reached the campus, and another, offered a position refused to accept it.

The record, confirmed by my personal experience, suggests not that the University is hostile to Negro applicants, but that its method of recruiting does not bring forth the names of Negro candidates, either for academic positions or for graduate assistantships.

Recently, as President Flemming's representative, I attended the first session of the newly organized National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges. The Council of Presidents had a frank and extended discussion of the problem of training Negro scholars. Both white and Negro presidents participated freely. The most relevant points of the discussion were these:

1. Many competent Negroes are not encouraged or given the opportunity to develop their abilities as scholars and teachers.
2. The Negro colleges of the South, despite gains in the integration of Southern universities, will continue for many years to serve a large clientele of Negro students and are in desperate need of competent faculty members, most of whom will be Negroes.
3. The Northern university will have to assume the major responsibility for educating these teachers and will have to find the means not only to encourage but to help subsidize them during their graduate studies.
4. Universities will make a serious mistake, however, if they compromise standards in a misguided effort to help. Highly publicized programs leading to failure of the participants will blight the enterprise and the aspirations of able Negro students. The most vigorous spokesman for this position was a Negro president of a Southern school.

What can the University of Oregon do to assume a greater responsibility in the education of Negro scholars? I should like to offer the following suggestions for discussion and possible action.

1. Make known to the graduates of Negro institutions the opportunities for assistantships at the University. This suggestion has serious implications. To my knowledge no school or department now sends its announcements of graduate assistantships to Negro colleges. This is not intentional discrimination. In an effort to meet regional responsibilities and to secure the best candidates, of whatever race, the departments send their announcement to Western institutions and to the best colleges and universities in other sections of the nation. Relatively few Negro students see them. But to send the circulars to colleges where standards are low is to encourage applications from poorly prepared students and to invite charges of discrimination if students are denied assistantships or fail in their graduate studies. It should be possible to guard against these dangers. Many departments and schools now require a student to submit, as a part of the application for an assistantship, his score in the GRE or the Miller Analogies test. If all departments insisted upon this requirement and if, further, they indicated the approximate score necessary to a successful applicant and if they required an essay or other appropriate test, they would have reasonably objective and satisfactory screening techniques. A list of Negro institutions is attached.

2. Department heads and deans, by correspondence or conversation, could make it known to appropriate scholars at other institutions that they would welcome Negro candidates for academic positions or graduate assistantships.

3. Members of the faculty who have responsibility for bringing visiting lecturers to the campus could make a conscious effort to invite qualified Negro scholars and artists. These men can make a contribution in their own right and, in informal conversation, suggest prospective staff members and graduate assistants.

4. Those departments which provide half-time instructorships for doctoral candidates might select some of these candidates from the faculties of Negro colleges. In view of the assigned responsibilities, these instructors are chosen very carefully for their high qualifications. In extending the opportunities to Negro faculty members, it would be necessary to maintain standards, for two reasons: a) to meet the needs of our students; b) in order that candidates not be brought to the campus from long distances at considerable expense to themselves only to be confronted with failure. It ought to be possible to assure reasonable standards through the screening processes listed above and by limiting choices to faculty who, in their M.A. programs, have made good records in good institutions. An age limitation might also serve to prevent the imposing of severe economic hardship in families unable to adjust, temporarily, to the limited income of the half-time instructor.

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I should like to invite your discussion of these proposals and your reaction to them. If they are practicable, we should be able to make a modest beginning which would grow with success.

Since drafting this memorandum, I have received a report from the Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges of a Conference on the Improvement of Opportunities for Negroes in Higher Education. The conference reviewed the need for an extensive program and surveyed the resources of institutions, foundations and the government. Estimates for "crash" programs ranged from \$10 million a year to "billions" of dollars. I am attaching a copy of the report (circular letter #22, October 23, 1963, pp. 3-7).

Since it is possible that foundations may be willing to accept "modest" proposals from selected institutions of higher education, I should like to suggest that we discuss the above steps as items in a program we might propose for support. We might, for example, ask the foundation to provide travel grants for perspective graduate assistants and half-time instructors whom we would select and assure positions. We might also ask the foundation to provide half-time salaries for a limited number of faculty members; such stipends matched with a half-time lectureship at the University of Oregon would provide a reasonably adequate living standard, an opportunity to pursue graduate work for one or two years, and the experience of serving as a working member of our faculty.

Let me repeat that I do not offer this latter suggestion as a substitute for our own program of action. We ought to move forward to contribute something to the solution of this problem. But we undoubtedly could act with greater strength and effectiveness if we had outside support. Reactions, please!

Robert D. Clark
Dean of Faculties

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