

**Comments Made by the Academic Senate's Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity (AHDC)
10/1/09 Academic Senate Meeting**

OVERVIEW:

The members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity have operated from a passionate commitment to issues of diversity and a hope that our efforts in the past twelve months will make a difference. There has been a high level of consensus in the committee on almost all steps that are being recommended. Each of the following reports represents the best thinking of the members of that the sub-committees (but do not necessarily represent the views of the other members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity).

We know that several programs and many people at SSU are engaged in excellent work in support of diversity, but we need to take action with intention and coordination in order to move forward. There needs to be a designated person who is responsible for the recruitment, retention and graduation of students from diverse backgrounds with a comparable position designated to work with faculty and staff.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OPEN FORUMS SUB-COMMITTEE

Elisa Vélasquez-Andrade, Chair

1. Align goals, funding, and policies to ensure a sustainable diversity infrastructure.
2. Create a centralized campus resource to effectively communicate and coordinate diversity-related activities and actions.
3. Recognize that majority professors, staff, and students have a crucial role in moving the diversity agenda forward.
4. Create opportunities for instructors to share their successful teaching practices in infusing multicultural content and pedagogy AND offer professional development in this area.
5. Obtain funding to offer training on best practices for creating effective learning environments in which students feel safe, respected, appreciated, included, motivated, and effective human beings and learners; this includes facilitation of difficult dialogues.
6. Provide enough funding to programs that specifically support diverse students: CCGS, EOP/Equal Opportunity Program, Summer Bridge, History Month Celebrations, Multicultural and other clubs serving underrepresented groups, Commencement celebrations (Black, Raza and Rainbow), and Disability Services for Students/DSS.
7. Advance the multicultural competence of all SSU community members to foster effective and respectful personal and professional interactions among and between all people; across all settings, situations, and aspects of campus life.
8. Establish a prompt and effective system of immediate response to acts of racism, sexism, homophobia, etc., by opening campus dialogue through workshops, town halls, open forums, etc.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDENT DATA SUB-COMMITTEE

Sharon Cabaniss, Chair

9. Initiate whatever process is necessary to bring permanence to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (SAEM) position by Spring 2010. Permanence will empower this position to make critical decisions with regard to the management of the diversity programs within SAEM. Further, permanence will allow the Vice President to advocate for change regarding these programs within the rest of the University community.
10. Restore funding to SAEM at all levels such as advising, career, counseling and psychological services, Disability Services for Students (DSS), Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), University Support and Preparation Services (USPS) and Campus Life as outlined in the entire report. Of particular importance is the necessity to provide more resources for Outreach and Recruitment.
11. Request that the Student Affairs Committee (SAC) work closely with SAEM to help implement the relevant recommendations in both this and the Open Forums reports and work with both SAEM and academic departments to help improve advising, which is critical to retention efforts.
12. Designate one person to coordinate diversity efforts across the University with designated individuals in Academic Affairs, SAEM and Administration and Finance and have an open search process to fill the vacancy. According to the SSU Educational Effectiveness Review Portfolio¹ prepared for the Fall 2009 WASC visit, “The Division of Academic Affairs has adopted several diversity related initiatives. First, it will create 50% time base faculty position for an Inclusive Excellence Coordinator. Once the Diversity Strategic Plan [of the President’s Diversity Council] is in place, the coordinator will help implement its initiatives and serve as a member of the PDC. The coordinator will also develop a series of professional development workshops for faculty, such as how to incorporate multicultural competence into the curriculum.” However, it seems as of Fall 2009 that this effort has been postponed.
13. Delegate responsibility and allocate funding to the appropriate division for the design of on-going training for all faculty and staff on issues of diversity, “difficult dialogues,” and multicultural competency and ensure that it is implemented. [This may be done by the new position mentioned in #12.]
14. Continue training students in the residential community regarding cultural sensitivity.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FACULTY AND STAFF DATA SUB-COMMITTEE

(Barbara Lesch McCaffry, Chair)

15. It is recommended that Employee Relations and Compliance (ERC) consult with Faculty Affairs and Employee Services in generating the Affirmative Action Plan to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the analyses and that relevant data (including historical trends) be shared with the Cabinet, SSU Managers, and the chairs of academic departments.

¹ http://www.sonoma.edu/aa/portfolio/ee_review/EER_Final/7-Diversity.pdf, page 13

16. It is recommended that relevant and accurate information about the diversity of SSU faculty and staff, as well as strategies for increasing the diversity of our workforce, be shared with department chairs/managers and search committees as searches are initiated.
17. It is recommended that the University ensure that its Affirmative Action Plan complies with current federal regulations, as well as state and/or system-wide guidelines, and is an accurate reflection of the current workforce.
18. It is recommended that ERC provide accurate data to the university and recommend proactive solutions for any issues related to diversity that are identified (and that the Division of Administration and Finance support increasing the staffing of the ERC for compliance support as soon as budgets permit).
19. It is recommended that Faculty Affairs continue to support academic departments and tenure-track search committees including, but not limited to, researching and recommending best practices for enhancing the diversity of SSU's faculty and recommending pro-active solutions to the disparity in both the representation of ethnic minority faculty at SSU (as compared both to current availability and to other CSU campuses) and the differential in salaries of male and female full and associate professors at SSU. It is also recommended that an analysis be conducted to determine if comparable salary differences exist for ethnic minority v. non-minority faculty. It is further recommended that as soon as budgets permit, the Division of Academic Affairs increase the staff in Faculty Affairs available to support these functions.
20. It is recommended that Employee Relations and Compliance, in conjunction with Faculty Affairs and Employee Services, analyze data regarding current faculty and staff with disabling conditions and recommend any necessary pro-active solutions to barriers that are identified.
21. It is recommended that the Academic Senate follow-up on the recommendations in this report, conduct an analysis of our current curriculum (in conjunction with EPC) in terms of diversity issues, and on an on-going basis review the University's progress in addressing diversity issues and increasing the diversity of its faculty. Such a committee might work in conjunction with EPC, Faculty Standards and Affairs, and the Student Affairs Committee (and also look at issues that affect SSU students).

ACTION ITEM: We are requesting permission from the Senate to complete our analysis of recently received faculty and staff data for SSU (and the CSU) and provide a final version of this report to the Senate before the end of the Fall 2009 semester.

BRIEF COMMENTS ON THE HISTORY OF DIVERSITY PROGRAMS AT SSU
Sharon Cabaniss

ACTION ITEM: We are requesting permission from the Senate to send the draft report to the Campus community via Senate-announce and Stafflink to obtain feedback prior to October 31st and provide a final version of this report to the Senate before the end of the Fall 2009 semester.

CLOSING REMARKS:

Diversity has been identified as one of the top priorities of this campus by different entities and it

is included in several strategic plans, materials, and reports, as well as the charge of several committees:

- The President Diversity Council (PDC),
- The Academic Senate's Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity,
- CFA's Affirmative Action Committee (Sonoma Chapter),
- The University's responses to WASC in 2007 and 2009,
- * Academic Affairs Strategic Plan,
- GE Reform plan,
- Current reports from the Academic Senate's Academic Planning and Educational Policies Committees,
- University 102 classes (specific learning objectives),
- New Student Orientation programs (diversity education component), and
- Mission statement of several divisions on campus (including Administration and Finance) and in the University's Mission Statement.

However, the question remains: how can we maintain the morale and trust of our SSU community if we do not start taking immediate action despite the current budget crisis? If diversity is a top priority, what will it take to be effective in obtaining funding to move the diversity agenda forward in a coordinated fashion?

We need to align our goals, resources, and actions to invest in and support our current students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds and focus on their success in order to create a truly welcoming, inclusive environment (that is also mirrored in the surrounding community). Only then can we make significant progress in terms of recruitment, retention and graduation or promotion and create an increasingly diverse community at SSU.

Submitted by Elisa Vélasquez-Andrade, Barbara Lesch McCaffry, and Sharon Cabaniss on behalf of the Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity