



## President's Diversity Council MEETING SUMMARY

<b>Meeting Date</b>	November 3, 2008		<b>Meeting Time</b>	4:00 — 6:00 PM		
<b>Location</b>	Terrace Room, Commons Building, Sonoma State University					
<b>Attendees</b>	✓			✓		
Barnard, Melinda			Leeder, Elaine	✓	Roehrick, Tony	✓
Brodsky, Karen	✓		Lopez-Phillips, Matthew		Su, Meng-Chih	✓
Bruce, Rose	✓		Miller, Scott	✓	Suzuki, Joyce	✓
Espinoza, Rachel	✓		Morrow, Lynne		Velasquez-Andrade, Elisa	✓
Estrada, Kelly			Neville, Peter	✓	Villarreal De Silva, Ricardo	
Holmstrom, Laurel	✓		Pierre, Derek	✓	Wright, Gail	✓
Ibarra, Maricela	✓		Ochoa, Eduardo	✓		
Jordan, Myron	✓		Rhodes, Chuck	✓	<b>Recorder:</b> Shawn Kilat	✓

### Welcome

Eduardo Ochoa, co-chair, welcomed everyone to the President's Diversity Council. He expressed his appreciation to the group for their interest in participating as a member of this council. He believes this group will be instrumental in developing and advancing campus diversity efforts. President Armiñana feels very strongly about the charge for this group, which includes developing a Strategic Diversity Plan for SSU. Scott Miller, co-chair, added his thanks to the group on behalf of the faculty. Miller talked briefly about the AAC&U Diversity conference that was attended by seven council members. He touched on the new direction of diversity efforts towards "inclusive excellence."

### Introductions / Small Group Activity

Council members formed small groups to share information about themselves, why they have chosen to participate on the council, and the challenges they expect to address. Many shared stories relating to the personal connection they feel with diversity issues.

### First Steps – Defining Our Purpose and Goals

Currently, there are several campus groups discussing the campus climate in relationship to diversity. Ochoa noted that the Academic Senate has formed an Ad Hoc Diversity Committee and that the CFA also has a campus group focused on diversity efforts. Ochoa feels it will be useful for the Ad Hoc Diversity Committee and the PDC to hold a joint meeting at some point in the future.

Ochoa talked about the current focus on diversity issues. He noted that several environmental factors are driving institutions to address diversity. Legal issues, a changing labor force and shifts in demographics make it imperative for institutions of higher education to address low minority

representation. Sonoma State's location is a bit of a handicap when it comes to having a diverse community on campus; however, our local service area is shifting towards a greater proportion of Latino students.

Ochoa directed the group to review the table ("Table 1. Three Models of Organizational Diversity Capabilities in Higher Education") shown on page 5 of Damon Williams' article, "Strategic Planning for Diversity and Organizational Change – a Primer for Higher-Education Leadership". Dr. Williams shows the evolving paradigms on diversity within higher education. The article goes on to discuss the notion of "inclusive excellence" as a way to "manage diversity in all areas of organizational life."

Ochoa asked the group to refer to Dr. Damon's "strategic change levers" shown on page 10 of the article. San Jose State University's process for developing a campus diversity plan modeled this approach. At SJSU engaging the campus community in the discussion was a primary focus in the beginning of the process. As we move forward, SSU will need to develop a process that fits our institution.

President Armiñana has approved Ochoa's request to bring Dr. Damon Williams to campus to help guide our initial diversity planning efforts. February 27, 2009 is the tentative date for this. Ochoa would also like to invite Dr. Rona Halualani, director of Institutional planning & Inclusive Excellence at SJSU to share her experience in developing a campus diversity plan.

Elaine Leeder noted that it will be important to have a complete assessment of diversity efforts already taking place at SSU. This will add to an informed discussion on next steps. It was agreed that baseline benchmarking of current efforts is essential.

Council members brainstormed on potential next steps in this process. Ochoa asked if the group was comfortable with the notion of "inclusive excellence?" Chuck Rhodes commented that this conversation about diversity and inclusive excellence goes hand in hand with the current campus discussion on our mission and what it means to be a liberal arts and sciences college. Others talked about the need to understand the community engagement piece and cautioned that implementation strategies aimed at involving the various campus communities will be critical. Rhodes asked if this group is representative of all stakeholders?

Elisa Velasquez-Andrade let the Council know that she participates on the Senate's Ad Hoc Diversity Committee in addition to this one. It is her understanding that the Ad Hoc committee will be responsible for benchmarking current diversity activities. Leeder suggested that the Council consider forming small "work groups" to address specific tasks once those are defined.

Getting back to the broader discussion on diversity Laurel Holmstrom cautioned against a narrow focus. She talked about students being uncomfortable with certain classroom discussions or topics, and how they sometimes see that as an infringement of their rights. Joyce Suzuki often deals with the faculty side of this and she offered another perspective. At times faculty have been in danger of violating the non-discrimination policy; when this comes up some faculty are resistant to complying with recommendations. Still, from a student development perspective we

cannot allow students to shape the curriculum just because they are uncomfortable with what is being discussed.

Leeder likes the definition of diversity that SJSU uses. She would include, "...in the service of learning." Ochoa recognized that this discussion on defining diversity may be too soon. It may take time for the Council to develop a convergence on perspective. He suggested that Council members continue to think about this and begin to formulate what diversity means to them. It was suggested that the Council start a blog where comments and thoughts could be posted. Holmstrom offered to set the blog up. Council members are also encouraged to offer suggestions about possible work group topics and structure.

Suzuki stressed the importance of open dialog in a civil manner. She suggested the group define what this looks like for them.

Meeting adjourned at 6:07pm

**Reading Materials:**

"Creating an Inclusive Excellence, Campus Diversity Plan: Vision to Reality" by Dr. Rona T. Halualani and Hugh Haiker

"Strategic Planning for Diversity and Organizational Change" by Damon A. Williams and Charmaine Clowney

**2008 – 2009 Meeting Schedule**

November 3    December 1    February 2    March 2    April 6    May 4