



President's Diversity Council Meeting Summary

Meeting Date	May 4, 2009		Meeting Time	8:00 – 10:00am	
Location	Schulz 1121				
Attendees	√			√	
Barnard, Melinda			Lopez-Phillips, Matthew		Suzuki, Joyce
Brodsky, Karen	√		Miller, Scott	√	Velasquez-Andrade, Elisa
Bruce, Rose			Morrow, Lynne	√	Merith Weisman
Espinoza, Rachel			Neville, Peter	√	Wright, Gail
Estrada, Kelly			Pierre, Derek		Guests:
Holmstrom, Laurel	√		Ochoa, Eduardo	√	
Ibarra, Maricela	√		Rhodes, Chuck	√	
Jordan, Myron	√		Roehrick, Tony	√	
Leeder, Elaine	√		Su, Meng-Chih	√	Recorder: Shawn Kilat

1) Introduction / Directions

Eduardo Ochoa welcomed everyone to the meeting. He gave brief direction to the Strategic Area Task Forces on item #2 of the agenda - break out sessions. Groups will discuss the feedback from the retreat and consider how to integrate those ideas and or suggestions into their draft plans.

2) Strategic Area Task Force Break Out Session

Task force groups were given 50 minutes to discuss changes to their draft plans in light of feedback received at the Diversity Retreat (April 3).

3) Reconvene and Report Back

Group I: Relating Across Differences

Elisa Velasquez reported on the group discussion. Rather than getting detailed about how to incorporate feedback from the retreat, the group expressed a need to consider the broader questions involving motivation, accountability and effectiveness of proposed diversity efforts. They also felt that their draft objectives needed to be more clearly articulated. They will plan a follow up meeting to more thoroughly address feedback from the retreat and revisions to their goals and objectives.

Group II: Promoting Diversity of Students, Faculty, and Staff

On recruiting diverse faculty -- departments should engage in a conversation about what is missing in terms of inclusive excellence prior to beginning a search for new faculty. Instructions to members of search committees should include a description of the "ideal candidate." Department conversations on what they want and need should be conducted prior to beginning searches. The search process should be characterized by intentionality. Build relationships with outside agencies and organizations with an ethnic or cultural focus for potential candidates.

On retaining diverse faculty – add under objectives faculty be given RTP credit for non-mainstream activities.

On recruiting diverse staff – ideas similar to those under faculty recruitment. Expand advertisements to publications representing diverse constituencies. Include specific goals and objectives for staff recruitment and retention as has been done for faculty.

On retaining diverse students – develop a mentorship program, publish a multicultural survival guide, and provide space for a “multicultural living room.”

Group III: Diversity in the Curriculum

Develop diversity guidelines that can be used by faculty and departments in curriculum development

Identify best practices and provide support for dissemination

Seek ways to communicate diversity efforts to new faculty and students

Group IV: Creating a Support Infrastructure for Diversity

The group reviewed the list of comments and categorized the responses under the following: resources, space for programming, support services, external community/environment.

Member discussed two strategies for providing additional resources, fundraising and alignment of support infrastructure. Specific initiatives will be developed once more is known about the objectives of the other groups. Support and infrastructure needs should reinforce specific objectives outlined in the Diversity Action Plan.

Ochoa asked the groups to revise their draft plans and forward a copy to him, Scott Miller and Shawn Kilat. He also asked that the groups consider finalizing their draft plans over the summer so that come September the council would be ready to propose a Diversity Action Plan to the campus community. Velasquez agreed that time over the summer was needed to adequately integrate the comments received from the various diversity forums. In looking towards next year, Ochoa also asked that task forces begin thinking about implementation plans that would go along with their objectives. Scott Miller suggested that our first meeting next year be devoted to developing an action plan for 2009-2010.

4) Next Steps

Multicultural Competence Workshop Conveners

A recurring theme from the various forums on diversity concerned the overall impression that faculty and staff don't necessarily have training or experience in best practices for promoting or responding to diversity issues that may arise in their classrooms. Faculty in the School of Social Sciences have offered this type of training through their, “Multicultural Competence Workshops.” Ochoa suggested that the PDC fund an expansion of that program and offer training to all faculty. Faculty would receive a stipend for participating in a four-hour workshop. Workshop presenters would also be paid. Ochoa suggested that we aim for participation from 60 faculty members this first year, and try to get all new faculty signed up. Ochoa will talk with Andy Merrifield and Irma Jean Sims, CFA representatives, about the idea. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will be distributed to give all faculty the opportunity to apply to lead the workshops. Joyce Suzuki asked that the RFQ be open to staff as well. Chuck Rhodes, Elaine Leeder and Ochoa felt these first workshops should focus on classroom management and instruction and for that reason they feel that faculty leaders with expertise in the areas of diversity and conducting difficult dialogs would be preferable at this time.

Inclusive Excellence Coordinator

PDC members agree that to move SSU's diversity efforts forward on a fast track will require hiring an Inclusive Excellence Coordinator. The coordinator position will offer support to the efforts of the PDC and focus on implementation of the Diversity Action Plan. Ochoa noted that the coordinator would work across all of the strategic areas and interact with various campus groups and members of the community. Elisa Velsaquez is working on a draft position description. Funding for this faculty release time position will come from the money the President has set aside for diversity efforts. Specifically, \$50,000 has been set aside to cover release time costs, faculty stipends and operating expenses. Members discussed how much release time this position would need to be successful.

Laurel Holmstrom brought up the strong need for a campus ombudsman and asked how this might fit in with the coordinator position. Ochoa commented that this position could identify situations where we do not currently

have a structure or person in place as the "go to" person to deal with that type of concern. Once the list was generated we could look at ways to address the gaps. Discussion on the role / definition of ombudsman followed.

Planning Ahead – 2009-2010

Summer 2009

- Task forces will review and integrate comments/suggestions gathered from the various forums on diversity. Ochoa said that this could be done "on-line," members agreed.
- Finalize position description for Inclusive Excellence coordinator.
- Work on implementation of the Multicultural Competence Workshops for Fall 09.

Fall 2009

- Finalize a draft Diversity Action Plan and disseminate among the campus community for comment.
Karen Brodsky commented that it will be important to update the campus community on the status, activities and accomplishments of the PDC and Ad Hoc committee.
- Prioritize objectives and initiatives and develop an implementation plan.

General comments about what needs to happen:

Lynne Morrow, emphasized the importance of articulating exactly what "success" means with regards to our diversity efforts. For example, in our first year success is defined as..., in the second year we hope to see improvement in..., etc. We must consider interim goals, and look at this process step by step.

Joyce Suzuki asked about "exit interviews" for students who are leaving campus. Rhodes said some have been done in the residential areas and what has been learned is that students leave for a wide variety of reasons. Morrow said that she has heard from students that harassment (sexual orientation, religious preference) and problems with their living situations (roommate issues, drug use) are reasons for leaving SSU, but she agreed that many reasons are cited for leaving. Still, this is an activity we may want to standardize in some way. Over time, the data collected will be useful and may be enlightening.

A thorough inventory of current diversity activities campus wide still needs to be done. This may be a task for next year.

Concern was expressed about the need to focus on activities that will promote institutional change. So much of what SSU currently does is short-term in nature. Hosting lecturers is good, but it doesn't necessarily lead to on-going institutional change. Velasquez shared Salisbury University's publication, "Panorama, A Cultural Events Publication of Salisbury University, Spring 2009." It lists all of the cultural events for the semester in one place. She suggested SSU might want to do something like this.

We need to find new ways to communicate; doing more of the same will not work.