San Diego State University  
Strategic Planning Committee  
Community Engagement Task Force  

Campus Climate Working Group  
September 28, 2012  
Open Forum Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order

The co-chairs of the Campus Climate Working Group, Reginald Blaylock and Jose Preciado called the meeting to order at noon in the Leon Williams Room (430/431) in Love Library.

The following Task Force members were present:
- Thom Harpole  
- R.D. Williams  
- Stephen Roeder  
- James Tarbox  
- Marian Leibowitz  
- Danielle Ingoglia

The following staff and faculty were present:
- Sarah Mercado  
- Heather LaPerle  
- Erin Morey  
- Elvira McCaip  
- Deb Beaulieu  
- Catherine Love  
- Michelle Guerra  
- Janet Abbott  
- Beth Dombrose  
- Gloria Rhodes  
- Ron Hostick  
- Stephen Schellenberg  
- Andrea Redd  
- Christine Cook

II. Introductions

The Working Group co-chairs introduced themselves and reviewed the purpose of the meeting and the goals of the Campus Climate Working Group. The group members present were asked to introduce themselves.

III. New Business

Reginald Blaylock referred to the handouts that were given to all. First was the Strategic Planning Committee organization chart and he explained its structure. Second was the “Charge…” memo which explains the purpose of the Community Engagement Task Force of which Campus Climate is one of four Working Groups, a flyer with information on all three Open Forums and finally the feedback and suggestions form for this meeting.

From the “Charge…” memo items 7 and 8 were highlighted on the feedback form and co-chair Jose Preciado read out item 7 and mentioned that this acknowledges what we are facing, especially if Proposition 30 fails. Item 7 reads:

*The economic challenges of the current period have significantly impacted the morale of our faculty and staff members. What initiatives can we undertake to embrace faculty and staff morale despite our financial challenges?*
He also asked “What other ways can we offer professional development?”

In an attempt to address the morale issue Working Group member Marian Leibowitz suggested we institute a “Rush Hour” series of offerings from the various Arts Departments that will target faculty and staff when they typically end their working day. This has the added benefit of bringing together faculty and staff that normally would not meet. These events can also be publicized to the surrounding community. It was also suggested that a list of “Best Kept Secrets” about SDSU be compiled and distributed to make people aware of the many and varied offerings SDSU has that they may not know about.

Item 8 reads:

#8 The University’s location within the College Area community provides opportunities for our faculty and staff members to live near the university. At the same time, we have an opportunity to develop the College Area by helping our students who reside in the area develop into good neighbors and responsible citizens. What can we do to support faculty and staff members who wish to reside near the University

Similarly, what can we do to build on our current initiatives to help our students be responsible members of our community?

R.D. Williams read out item 8 and led the discussion. He stated that the campus community extends outside the campus proper and posed the question, “What can the University do to increase the livability of the surrounding area?” He mentioned that there are several programs in place that address this issue. One, “The Good Neighbor Program” educates students who live in the surrounding neighborhoods on proper behavior toward their non-student neighbors.

Mr. Williams also mentioned the ongoing redevelopment and the opportunity this presents for greater communication of its impact on our neighbors.

A member of the audience said that the construction is “mostly positive” but it “feels like more and more apartments are being built”.

A discussion of the Children’s Center and the difficulty of placing children included the observation that even priority placement of younger siblings of children already at the Center may be delayed as long as a year.

Marian Liebowitz observed that we want to include as many people as possible in these Open Forums to help us choose the three initiatives we will put forward but people are often so busy they cannot leave their offices, even during the noon hour.

R.D. Williams: “What other campus services services can we promote?”
It was noted that other universities help new faculty and staff, especially those from outside the area, acclimate with list of popular vendors and those that give discounts to SDSU personnel. In an attempt to encourage living near campus we could also identify nearby apartment buildings that do not rent to students. Mr. Williams suggested that we already receive reduced rates at some local hotels and that this could be negotiated with local apartment building owners as well. An attendee noted that list of preferred vendors that provide services specifically for persons of color (beauty shops, ethnic restaurants, etc.) would be useful and could be shared with students new to the area as well. An attendee that she had shared her preferred vendors and received a very positive response.
It was observed that most campus communication is via email and often you never have the opportunity to meet the person face to face. Reggie mentioned that very few campus events bring out a good majority and we could provide better incentive to attend and mingle after the event.

Reggie Blaylock posed the question, “What are some things that already exist that we can use better, expand on, and advertise to get more participation?”

An attendee mentioned that people are in their “silos” and even if they attend events they tend to sit with people from their department. To encourage mingling some events could include assigned seating.

Stephen Roeder and Marian Liebowitz commented on using technology to increase familiarity by including a person’s picture with their email. It could be uploaded from their Red ID.

Danielle Ingoglia started a discussion of how to encourage participation from the Imperial Valley campus. This included the observation that it kills the day to come here and that some sort of support is needed to allow faculty and staff to rotate attendance at events. Stephen Schellenberg asked how the University facilitates travel between the two campuses. Danielle Ingoglia answered that we have vans and also use state cars.

Reggie Blaylock asked “What can be replicated on the Imperial Valley Campus?”

Jose Preciado observed that there are no faculty here (except Marian and Edith) and we would appreciate your input on ways to increase participation at the next two Open Forums. Reggie Blaylock said that they appreciate your attendance and please invite others in your department to attend our Open Forums and by way of encouragement we will have snacks!

Edith Benkov stated that she is here because she is on the steering committee and that the faculty are continually asked to do more with less along with the expectation of research and meeting external funding goals.

Beth Dombrose suggested we look at the long standing walls between faculty and staff and with upper management and the extra burden people feel due to the hiring freeze.

Reggie Blaylock stated that if you don’t participate you can’t complain and that this is the place to complain and come up with ideas. It is an opportunity for voices to be heard and that all have been asked to do more with less. Rarely do we get the opportunity to come together like this. The last time he remembers something like this was Shared Vision sixteen years ago.

Edith Benkov observed that we are meeting on Fridays and many faculty use Fridays for research and are not on campus.

Marian Liebowitz said that the faculty department chairs could assign a representative to attend.

Reggie Blaylock noted that the comments section of the Strategic Planning website is open 24/7 which gives ample opportunity for all to contribute.

An attendee asked if notes and comments from the various Open Forums will be posted to the website and Reggie Blaylock answered “Yes.”
III. Concluding Remarks
The co-chairs thanked everyone for attending, encouraged all to complete a feedback form, and noted the date, time and location of the next two Open Forums and adjourned the meeting.

IV. Adjournment
The co-chairs adjourned the meeting at 1:00PM