Diversity Task Force Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, Dec 5, 2012
Vice President’s Conference Room
SSW 2640
8:00 – 10:00 AM


Meeting was called to order at 8:15 am.

Dr. Kitchen and Jessica Rentto met to discuss proposed goals and initiatives for the Task Force. The President has recommended proposed initiatives for the Task Force to work on. The agenda lists the following examples of goals/initiatives:

* LGBT Center
* Disabled Community
* Student Recruitment
* Diverse Faculty / Staff RTP Process
* Cultural Competency

How do we integrate these? It will be important to include a recommendation on the LGBT Center for President Hirshman. Additionally, student, faculty and staff recruitment are key issues, as well.

Today, we will begin to brainstorm and come up with some idea(s), specific goal(s) to be integrated into the five page report. Strategic use of resources is very critical and we need to be mindful of this.

Nola wanted to have a brief discussion as a follow up to our last meeting. She submitted a story to the Chief Diversity Officer regarding foster youth. The article on the Diversity website did not include a photograph representative of the story’s theme.
The article was about African American foster youth and this wasn’t accurately portrayed. This is a good example of lack of cultural competency and the need for additional diversity training.

How do we integrate cultural competency into our diversity efforts? There is this need on all levels. Whose responsibility is this? There is a lack of awareness.

We need to have a system in place. This is a good example of a “teachable” moment.

There has been discussion at the Diversity Equity and Outreach (DEO) meetings regarding “standards” on disseminating information. What are the standards for cultural competency on disseminating information?

The larger picture is to promote a diversity agenda. Everyone needs to be onboard with this mission / agenda. This has been a conversation for many years and cultural diversity is not reflected in textbooks and children’s reading books, for example. It needs to be a focused, disciplined approach ...not an “add on.”

We need to establish a policy.

Are we responsible for connecting resources to our goals / initiatives? Other working groups are doing this.

Jessica advised us that Loretta Leavitt, AVP for Business & Financial Affairs, is sitting on the steering committee, and her role will be to assist in identifying resources.

It may be helpful if one of the recommendations is a process / mechanism for identifying annual priorities around diversity and establishing what existing resources are available to achieve these goals. If there is an ongoing group/institutional at this level that was responsible for working with the President’s Office and the Chief Diversity Officer, to make sure these priorities move forward and focus is maintained. Perhaps an advisory committee can be established to review, measure goals, provide a needs assessment, identify what is needed, funding, grants, basically to institutionalize our diversity task force work.

Dr. Kitchen agrees that our efforts need to be institutionalized. It will be the University’s responsibility to make sure it is institutionalized.
Perhaps we establish a “council,” that would allow the group to remain focused and moving forward.

*Cultural Competency* very important.

**LGBT Center** – It was recommended that we work with current stakeholders on campus, so as to avoid the perception that others doing this and not aware. Engage with those currently working on the efforts that include community, SDSU, faculty and staff.

Student Affairs is putting a great deal in our fundraising efforts to endow a position / funds. Need to move quickly with the building of the Aztec Student Union. One of Student Affairs’ roles is to identify a diverse pool, and we are making every effort in our search processes.

One of the Task Force’s main goals is that the committee is responsible for awareness, measuring it and staying on top of it. Whose job is it to maintain this, measure it, etc?

The Chief Diversity Officer should be involved in this process and monitoring our diversity efforts.

Thom Harpole, University Employee Relations, is working with Aaron Bruce and reviewing how job descriptions should read. Currently, Academic Affairs doesn’t want to utilize the online process for faculty searches. Voluntary ethnicity and data form is not sent immediately. Thus, ethnicity and diversity information is obtained late in the process. We are unable to identify the diversity of the applicant pool early in the process.

Another recommendation would be to have diverse experiences. Need something to be in the job description that references diversity.

Currently an issue on campus that some faculty doesn’t see diversity as a *priority*. Focus should be on the institutionalization, accountability of diversity. This needs to be implemented at the department level. The concern is about where do we elevate this issue as to the programmatic efforts?

How do we incentivize diversity to make it a priority? We need to make the “business” argument about diversity. Often, resources are diversity related.

How do we ask the “diversity” question? What have you done? In the RTP process, highlight your diversity contributions. We need to incorporate diversity into our workshops.
Can we mandate it? Then we can make it accountable.

Mandates are often costly. We need capacity and compliance. And a balance between the two. Mechanism for this is the RTP process for incentivizing faculty promotion.

Where is the moral argument? The moral argument doesn’t give the “how tos?”

How does it filter down from the top and becomes a compliance? Is the behavior there? One can attend the workshops and conferences, but is your heart in it?

Perhaps we can incentivize at the individual level and have capacity at the department level. Most faculty want to do the right thing. Staff need incentives too.

The moral argument is important too. Perhaps an award for faculty that facilitated diversity efforts.

What is the Moral Question? Very important and how can it support the mission? Collaborate approach with diversity, writing the “white paper,” perhaps should be considered? The “why” piece can be very important.

Need to be reflective about “why.”

In reference to the Hispanic Serving Institute {HIS}, what are the goals, if any? Are we recruiting students, supporting efforts, research?

HSI is often about funding, not serving. Needs to be community based. Faculty and student recruitment. Compact for Success a good example, but small.

Initiatives could be how do we replicate the “Compact” for all students and other ethnically diverse groups? How do we ensure our faculty is reflective of our community? Staff in City Heights reflects the community and a goal. How do we create satellites, support systems, such as the Azteca Center. How do we provide a support system for off site areas; how about a community forum? How do we get their voice?

What are our feelings about the university’s responsibilities or expanding of agendas to connect with cultural communities to expand with other groups? This could be limited, though how do we connect with students?

How do we find the linkages? Do we create those linkages with cultural communities?

Perhaps we consider a year long campaign on diversity, and engage the staff, celebrate diverse efforts across the university. Let’s look at the “packaging.”
How do you create university space in terms of cultural democracy? How do you create cultural democracy? When you bring different groups together, there is a potential for great discussion and tension.

The disabled group is an emerging community. Concerns about individual focus on the needs for collective cultural competency. Beth Chung doing some work on this? Might be a good foundation for us to review. Individual and organization imperative that needs to be examined. Addresses four areas of cultural competency: organizationally; teaching; research; service, other; RTP process; other areas that operate simultaneously. Push back comes when people don’t have the moral commitment and then these people move into leadership roles.

Attitudinal commitment – at the individual level.

The under-represented STEM student needs academic support. Many challenges in the entry level courses; tutoring makes successful students. Need the support system and academic support for success in this area.

It was also mentioned that we need a writing center.

How does the university link in context of their diversity agenda with area high schools? Need to mentor, transition and identifying the academic support before they get here.

Paradigm needs to shift . . . smoother transition for diverse groups coming into the university.

Looking at partnerships with community and get them involved during high school.

Leverage the relationships you have. Coming together on some mutual goals. Campus clubs can leave an impression in terms of university, academic goals.

High school support – recruitment effort, students can identify early in terms of diversity, academic goals.

It was suggested that we begin to work with our established programs, i.e., SHPE and high school conferences. Focus on getting the high achieving students into STEM; how do we do this? Use these student organizations to establish connections; students work with students; AVID a great way to work with high school students. Pair up “like” students together.

The cultural diversity course requirement is important. How do we evaluate this? Through field experience? Currently, not fulfilling what we want it to do.
Perhaps now is the time to review the language or cultural requirement. Students take cultural classes that would have a greater impact, gaining a greater integration of the cultural requirement.

Many graduate students have not meet the cultural competency coming into the College of Education.

Students must have a mandate to live in residence halls. Living space is part of the retention. Need to have cultural halls, African American, etc. halls; have the option to live there. Create a living space.

It was suggested that we partner with AS or departments for a mentor program. Create funding for cross cultural center to run a program to get you hooked up with someone like you. This would help with retention efforts. Institutionalize this.

Perhaps we need to review the cultural diversity courses to see if they are still appropriate and filling the needs of cultural awareness.

Is residential life translating culture shock?

Are the Resident Advisors sincere with their cultural competency training?

Taking the cultural competency knowledge and doing the work . . often, people don’t know how.

What is the concept of social support? What is the responsibility of the student group to assist with the acclimation?

Our next Task Force meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, December 12th; 9:00 – 11:00 am**, Student Affairs’ Conference Room, Student Services West, Room 2640.