

## Strategic Planning Committee’s Annual Report

### 1. Committee Goal

The ECCC’s stated goal is to:

Identify initiatives that enhance the campus climate and culture for persons of varying abilities.

The ECCC was established by the President at the conclusion of the strategic planning process to provide opportunities through which the SDSU campus culture can be enhanced for individuals of varying abilities. The committee has been exploring and discussing various options for the direction of its efforts to enhance the SDSU campus culture and climate.

**ECCC GROUND RULES - RESPECT. LISTEN. ALL EQUAL. ENHANCE. OPEN TO NEW IDEAS. FLEXIBILITY. OPTIMISM. PATIENCE. SEEK and ACCOMPLISH OUTCOMES.**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS	
NAME	ROLE/DEPARTMENT
Reggie Blaylock	Co-Chair/AVP Student Affairs
Louis Frick	Co-Chair/Community Member
Dana Newton	Student
David Augustine	Student
Cyndi Chie	Enrollment IT Services
Nan Hampton	Professor, ARPE Department
Claudia Martinez	Administrative Support Coordinator, Student Affairs
Caren Sax	Chair, ARPE Department
Bob Schulz	AVP, Operations
Bill Snavely	Director, School of Communication
Pamela J. Starr	Director, SDS and University ADA Compliance Officer

## 2. Rationale

To increase and integrate an awareness and visibility of persons with varying abilities into the SDSU campus culture.

## 3. Objective(s)

The committee has been holding monthly meetings to identify issues, discuss possible directions, and become well-versed in the current status of the campus culture as related to disability and access.

Input from various members of the university's community such as faculty, staff, students, etc. as well as input from the broader community has been solicited. This includes people with various types of disabilities, community stakeholders and other that access facilities on campus.

The committee is gaining valuable input, both internal and external to the university, by engaging interested members of these communities. This information is contributing to the planning process and will ensure that the culture on campus is inclusive of people with varying abilities. The goal is to ensure all people, regardless of ability, are valued as part of the fabric of the university. Our aim is to change the mindset of “meeting minimum compliance” to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment, both physically and attitudinally, on our campus.

The ECCC has been focusing much attention on an initial assessment of SDSU's culture and climate for persons with varying abilities. This assessment includes the following:

- Concerns and issues relating to physical access to and around campus;
- Concerns and issues relating to programmatic access for individuals with disabilities;
- A review of campus policies and procedures and the identification of any necessary yet absent policies and procedures; and
- Evaluation of current university programs and services for individuals with disabilities.

## 4. Activities

### Access

As part of its assessment of physical and programmatic assess, the ECCC has completed tours of Storm Hall West, Nasatir Hall and Conrad Prebys Aztec Student Union. These tours provided the committee members the opportunity to learn about the access of the buildings, the compliance with the ADA and gain a better understanding of what goes into the construction or remodel of a campus building.

The ECCC plans to tour additional facilities during upcoming meetings, including the new building for the Interwork Institute located at 6367 Alvarado Ct., to help identify access issues across campus. The purpose and value of these upcoming tours is to continue the assessment and gaining of understanding of compliance and access to campus buildings and how this aspect of SDSU affects the climate for persons of varying abilities.

### Policy

The ECCC has identified the need for a university policy for requesting interpreters for campus events (including guest lectures). Currently, if a student or employee with a hearing impairment wants to attend a campus event, the student or employee will work with either Student Disability Services or Employee Relations and Compliance to ensure the necessary interpreter services are provided. However, there is no policy that provides how a community member would request such services. The lack of policy has created frustration and confusion by individuals planning events and/or attending events. The new policy will focus on disability accommodations for access to campus events and will include requests from the general public, as well as Academic Departments, Faculty/Staff members and students. The biggest impact from the policy change is a pool of institutional funding to cover the cost, not the individual event sponsors. The anticipated implementation date of this policy is to be immediate.

Given the complex organizational structure at SDSU, the ECCC has identified the need to name deputy ADA compliance officers across campus to assist the university's ADA Coordinator. The deputy officers will serve as resources to individuals seeking accommodations as well as providing a network of trained

university representatives who will help ensure our campus is accessible. The ECCC is in the process of identifying individuals in the following areas: representatives from each college, Operations, Auxiliary Services, Aztec Shops, Housing, Faculty Affairs, AS, Athletics, ITS, Library and staff-at-large. The deputy compliance officers will be provided with training opportunities, as discussed below. The committee anticipates that the list of deputy officers will be identified by August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

## Training

To increase and integrate an awareness and visibility of persons with varying abilities into the SDSU campus culture, the ECCC has determined the need for training. The committee is currently in the process of identifying a training program to further the committee's goals as well as identifying qualified trainers. The committee anticipates the completion of a training plan by August 2014.

## Program Evaluation

Student Disability Services is currently evaluating its current services. SDS is utilizing the AHEAD evaluation tools to gather information from stakeholders in the SDSU community to determine a baseline for current services for students with disabilities. Once completed, the evaluation will provide information about the current culture with respect to services and outreach provided by Student Disability Services to students, and administration. SDS anticipates the evaluation will be completed by end of Fall 2014.

The committee is currently assessing the need and value of a campus-wide survey to gauge the awareness and attitudes of students, faculty, staff, and administration regarding disability and access issues. A survey could be a valuable resource by providing a baseline for the current climate of campus and would help to guide future efforts for committee actions.

## Campus Programs

ECCC is in the process of identifying campus programs that will further the committee's goal of increasing and integrating an awareness and visibility of persons with varying abilities into the SDSU campus culture. One program that was rolled out was Aztecs for Autism. In recognition of Autism Awareness Month, SDSU offered two programs in April – Light It Up Blue and Aztecs for Autism Research. Both events hosted guest speakers and were open to the

campus community. In addition, during Light It Up Blue, Hepner Hall and CPASU were lit in blue lights to raise awareness of Autism. The intent of these events was to bring awareness of individuals with Autism as well as the research that is currently being conducted.

ECCC also collaborated with the Integrative Diversity Committee for Aztec Night Programming. The committee provided recommendations for performers, speakers and movies whom could provide positive representations of individuals with disabilities.

## Cart Service

In response to student concerns relating to the unavailability of cart service in the evenings, Student Disability Services began providing extended cart service operation during the Fall 2013 semester. This service was started as a response to ARPE moving on to campus, offering evening classes and the higher number of students with disabilities who are enrolled in this program of study. As a result, SDS budget was increased to support this service. The current staff member who is responsible for this service currently covers as the professional staff on-call during the evening hours, accruing CTO at a rate of 20%, and/or loss of availability for tasks already assigned to her. Currently, there are two student workers during the evening hours, and our concern is that we do not have a staff member dedicated to work during the evening cart hours. This situation poses potential risk to our student riders and student workers as there isn't a staff member present to rely on should there be an emergency. The ECCC committee has recommended and supported the hiring of a part-time professional staff for Fall 2014.

The ECCC supports a recommendation to purchase a wheelchair accessible cart to add to the SDS cart fleet. Currently, SDS does not have a cart that can provide safe and fully accessible transportation for individuals using wheelchairs. The purchase of a cart will provide access and transportation throughout and off campus to individuals who use wheelchairs.

In response to concerns relating to the availability of employee cart service, ECCC representatives worked with Student Affairs and Business and Financial Affairs to determine the best and most efficient way to provide cart service for employees. As a result, Student Disability Services will begin to provide cart service for employees and the Office of Employee Relations and Compliance

will transfer possession of its cart currently used for this purpose to SDS. This collaboration will allow faculty/staff access to cart service during SDS cart hours, M-F, 7:45 am to 11:00 pm and on Saturdays, as needed.

## Other Services

In response to a recently voiced concern regarding 911 access for individuals with hearing impairments, the ECCC is working with SDS and Public Safety to review options for emergency communication for individuals with hearing impairments. The group will determine if there is a system which will allow individuals who are deaf to have two-way communication with police dispatch through the 911 system.

## **5. Impact**

The activities of the ECCC have a direct impact on the SDSU culture by showing commitment to providing and ensuring access, providing opportunities to learn from/about individuals with varying abilities, evaluating current practice of providing support to students with disabilities and adjusting according to the outcome of the AHEAD evaluation. The committee is in the process of determining how best to measure the current culture and climate so that the university can measure future impacts.

## **6. Next Steps**

The plan for 2014-2015 is a committee retreat in August to provide the opportunity to create a plan, identify goals and objectives for 2014-2015 and determine opportunities for collaboration, as well as to create activities to enhance awareness of people with varying abilities and incorporate into cultural events on campus.