

College of Arts and Letters Diversity Council meeting

December 4, 2014, 8-9 am

Harrison 1131

Minutes

Present: Andreas Broscheid (scribe), Erica Cavanagh, Jenny David, Sabrena Deal, Marilou Johnson, Iain MacLean, Besi Muhonja, Christine Robinson, Vanessa Rouillon

1. Announcements

- Iain McLean reported from the JMU diversity council meeting. Human Resources reported on the planned expansion of benefits to married same-sex couples. In addition, Human Resources reported on newly established Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). [Handouts about ERGs and the CMSS spring program preview will be circulated among diversity council members.]
- Four diversity council members submitted proposals to the JMU diversity conference; three of those members were present and reported on their proposals. Several council members expressed their willingness to join Iain MacLean's proposed session on the multiple and changing meanings of diversity and encouraged him to communicate to the conference committee that the session had the support of the CAL council.

2. Here 2 Help training

Following up on a request to check whether their departments had scheduled unit-wide training and/or identified information "point persons" who can provide information on Title IX and crisis response issues to their colleagues, several members reported that their units had either conducted training or had scheduled it.

Echoing what was expressed at the last council meeting, the discussion identified three desirable innovations to the existing Here 2 Help program:

- a. clearer information on who to contact and what office to go to in order to help students in a variety of difficult situations;
- b. clearer information on the legal responsibilities of faculty to help students and report crisis situations;
- c. applied training that addresses how faculty should interact with students in crisis, what they should say and not say, what errors they have to avoid to prevent worse damage to the students.

Andreas Broscheid reported that he had contacted David Onestak and Amy Sirocki-Meck with questions about adding more applied training along the lines of proposal c. to the H2H program. At the time of the meeting, David Onestak had

responded that Counseling did not have the resources to provide such training as they are overwhelmed with student demand for their services. [In a follow-up email exchange after the meeting, Amy Sirocki-Meck and David Onestak expressed interest in identifying persons on campus that can help us develop an applied training component. The result of the conversation is a meeting at the beginning of spring to explore the possibilities.]

Besi Muhonja promised to talk to several faculty members in graduate psychology to identify possible facilitators of applied training opportunities.

Marilou Johnson suggested that we communicate the need for applied training to the Title IX task force, which is chaired by Melissa Aleman. Andreas Broscheid promised to do so.

One thread of the conversation revolved around how faculty training should be delivered. Several council members expressed the importance of reaching faculty who are otherwise reluctant to participate in such training. Some thought training should be required, others noted that it would help if the dean asked unit heads to make such training a priority.

Marilou Johnson reported that the dean had invited Amy Sirocki-Meck to the next executive council meeting. The council recommended that the dean ask the unit heads to make it a priority to schedule Here 2 Help training for their units, if this has not already happened.

3. Oh well, the agenda has gone completely off the rails by now

But it was a productive discussion.

4. Diversity council mission and charge

To continue the council discussion of a statement that explains what the council does, Andreas Broscheid circulated two documents: First, a statement from a 2006/2007 diversity enhancement report by the college; second, a list of charges that Art Dean's office used in 2010 to collect information on diversity-related activities across campus.

The council found that charges to be informative as to the expectation for diversity-related activities in the college and across campus. Several council members expressed the sense that it was part of the council's task to support activities in all areas identified by the list of charges and to identify areas that need increased activity. Several council members also found that the list of charges was a useful way to think about the overall council mission.

Due to time constraints, the council was not able to conclude its discussion on these documents. It decided to dedicate the first meeting in Spring to them and to the

formulation of a mission statement. For that purpose, council members are asked to study the following documents over the winter break:

- a. the two documents distributed in the meeting
- b. the Diversity Task Force report
- c. diversity (mission) statements from other units at JMU