

President's Commission on Diversity

Agenda

June 4, 2007

2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Boardroom

Members Present: Jean Jewell, Tina Vivian Christian, Loretta Ferguson, Amanda Schaeffer, Kelly Blackwood, Susan Davis, Diana Holz, Jorge Ramirez, Louise Hull, Ron Wheadon, April Jensen, Sylvester Niel, Gail Himes, Josh Gertsman, Rich Rutkowski, Fia Elliason, Lesley Hogan, and Jean Carmack.

1. Reaction to the forum on The Current article from March 9th

Susan Davis commented she thought there were a lot of positive things said to the editor of the current. Gail Himes complimented April for her facilitation of the open forum and Rich for making everyone feel welcome. Gail felt that the BSU representatives were very articulate. She felt however that maybe we failed Ryan in not having had discussion with him prior to the forum. Tina shared that she felt the forum really got the issue of racism out in the open; she feels there is a lack of understanding regarding the use of the 'n-word.' Sylvester complimented the college for implementing the process and not sweeping the issue under the rug. In his opinion the dialogue and process speaks volumes to the college's commitment to diversity. Loretta shared that she heard the students were feeling glad that we were finally having the discussion and would like to continue having forums. Jorge shared that a letter to the editor was submitted to the Current. The letter basically called Ryan a racist. The BSU reviewed the letter and wanted to have conversation with the current editorial staff. So the BSU and the editorial staff did meet prior to the current issue of the Current being published. The Current did republish the cartoon and several letters received regarding the matter. Rich commented that he was pleased to see most of the commission members in attendance at the forum. He asked the commission what the continuation of the forum would look like. He talked about supporting the courageous conversations program. April has agreed to find the funding needed to support this program on campus next year. Tina stated that Bellevue Community College can provide the training to GRCC staff members. The training will train staff members in how to assist students in having open and honest conversations about issues related to race. The idea of the program is that the conversations are continuous. Diana added that in addition to the courageous conversations program, forums should also be continued, and both should be student driven. Susan talked about the diversity dialogues that used to be open forums that were student driven. Ron asked if students attended. Diana responded that it was mostly faculty that attended. Loretta added that at MECs (Multi-cultural Equity Council) last meeting they talked about inviting student senate representatives to meet with MEC to organize forums and panel discussions for next year. Jorge suggested that if any topics for forums emerge from the subcommittee work of the commission members to please forward the topics to him. Ron wondered how the commission could get suggested forum topics from the students. Jorge thought this was a good transition into the next agenda item.

2. New membership

A Black Student Union (BSU) member is planning to submit an application. Jorge is working with Dani Chang to perhaps have the Diversity Services CLEO member serve on the commission. The commission still needs a third student position filled. If you

identify a student please refer his/her name to Jorge and Diana and they will make recommendations to Rich. Ron repeated that what makes courageous conversations work so well is that it keeps going. He would like to keep the forums on a periodic basis throughout the next year. Jorge announced that Jean Jewell will be stepping down as her term is over. He asked Susan if she could recommend any faculty members to serve on the commission next year. Diana clarified that Vik Bahl will be returning to the commission next year, and she would like to see him serve as a faculty representative and asked that Loretta and Tian continue on as the MEC representatives next year. Kelly Blackwood will be serving as the designee for the Vice President of Human Resources next year. Lesley suggested the Philip Neal or someone from Outreach should be asked to serve on the commission next year. She also suggested having someone from the Work Force Education office serve on the commission as well. Amanda will be vacating an instructional/administrator position on the commission as she is leaving the college. Diana thanked Amanda for her work on the framework and the Washington center.

3. Review of the Framework

Diana explained the tree project. Each commission member was given a construction paper blossom/bud, flower, and fruit. The commission members were asked to think about the work they have been involved with this year and label the construction paper cut outs depending on where they are at with the work thus far. The cut outs signify the following:

The blossom/bud-Your work is in the budding stage. You have planted your ideas and are waiting for them to blossom.

Blossom-Your efforts have blossomed and are in full bloom.

Fruit- You planted the seed, it blossomed and your idea has come to fruition. The fruit of your efforts are evident.

The commission members reported as follows:

Diana placed a blossom on the tree for I-BEST. The fruit represents the thirteen students that are completing the CDA (Child Development Associate) program and attending commencement. Five students of color are graduating.

Kelly placed a blossom/bud on the tree for the work the human resources office has done in revitalizing the recruiting process, updating the web page and job announcements to show the college's commitment to diversity as well as the increased community outreach the department has participated in over the last year.

Amanda placed a blossom on the tree because the sociology faculty members and she just recently hired a new AMES adjunct faculty member. She then laughed and said Loretta reminded her that she should put a fruit on the tree as Amanda and Hank Galmish hired Loretta!

Loretta placed a bud on the tree to signify the work of the physical environment sub committee. The blossom represents all the positive feedback Loretta has gotten regarding the functions/events the MEC hosted this past year. The fruit signifies the open forum the commission hosted regarding the article and cartoon published in the Current.

Tina placed a bud on the tree to signify the courageous conversations program starting at

Green River. Her blossom is for Dr. Bank's lecture, and the fruit is for the forum.

Jean Carmack placed a fruit on the tree to represent the immigrant scholarship.

Lesley placed a blossom on the tree to represent the adjunct faculty mentor program.

Fia placed a bud on the tree to signify the commission's process being aligned with a lot of what we already do.

Rich placed a bud on the tree which represents the work in progress on the overall commission report.

Josh placed a fruit on the tree representing the outreach team that has been established over the past year. In addition, he placed two buds on the tree one for the multilingual marketing publications and one for the CAP (Commencement Assistance Program).

Gail placed fruit on the tree signifying the work completed on the scholarship application form; the form is now more user friendly. Last year the foundation received 298 applications; this year the foundation received 370 applications.

April placed a blossom on the tree representing James Bank's being the keynote speaker for in-service day, and she placed a bud on the tree to signify the work being done on the hiring and recruiting process at the college.

Ron's blossom represents the Lighting a Fire Fanning the Flame workshop offered to faculty as well as a blossom for the food stamp program, supplemental instruction program and the human services provider breakfast the college hosted earlier this quarter. In addition, Ron also placed a bud/blossom on the tree since the strategic plan now has diversity in it.

Louise placed a bud on the tree as AMES is now a separate department. The fruit she placed on the tree represents the Diversity Studies Certificate that IC (Instructional Council) passed today. The certificate was endorsed by the English, Social Science, and Humanities Division. Diana talked about the Early Childhood Education program wanting to include the diversity studies certificate in the AAS-T degree they hope to offer.

Jorge added several blossoms to the tree. One represents the continued work on the policy development when issues occur. Another for the sign committee's work as it always includes a discussion of diversity. In addition Jorge wanted to recognize the CAP as well of the commission report almost being to the fruit stage.

Susan shared the Multi-Cultural and Equity Council permanent art collection brochure. Diana asked the council members to email her any other buds, blossoms, and/or fruits they think of after the meeting to her to be included on the "tree."

Ron suggested getting the monitoring reports from David.

4. Direction – where are we going?

Third Year Timeline

- December 2007 – complete and publish report.

- Assess the success of the strategies developed in response to that data and information that was collected.
- Identify top priority issues for the Commission to focus on.

Jorge discussed the above bulleted list. Fia distributed a handout that outlined the report structure for the commission report. Jean Carmack suggested pulling in others doing diversity work across campus. April talked about how Josh's group went to those doing the work and talked to them about the work they are doing. Jorge suggested the commission members on campus over the summer continue to work and update the reports. Fia added that everyone has done a lot of good work. Diana talked about how the commission was originally set up by picking leaders from across campus that could draw from other areas; she doesn't want to see the membership get too big. Jorge urged the commission to continue work on action items. Tina talked again about the courageous conversations program in that is started as a way to establish where students with issues can go for support and conversation on the tough issues. Jorge asked if it would be implemented in the fall. Tina responded she thought it would be implemented later on due to the program's intensive training. April asked Tina to schedule some time with her to talk about this program over the summer. Loretta added that MEC's focus is to create awareness on issues. Two ideas from MEC include the courageous conversations program as well as suggesting Peggy McIntosh being invited to campus to speak about white privilege. Jorge stated he thought he heard more blossoms to add to the tree. Amanda asked about community members on the commission. April stated that the membership list is to be filled by Rich. Gail talked about the website needing to be updated. Amy added that she had worked with Lansing earlier this quarter, and the website has been updated. Jorge thanked everyone for a good year. Diana echoed that and added she felt that everyone here is committed but no one has a lot of extra time. She urged the commission to think about retention and to recognize the individual needs of our students.

5. Continue draft updates from section sub-committees over the summer.

Next meeting: October 1st, 2:00 p.m. in the Boardroom

November 5th
 December 3rd
 January 7, 2008
 February 4th
 March 3rd
 April 7th
 May 5th
 June 2nd

6. Closing remarks – Rich

Rich stated he felt the commission was in the final stages of its work on the report and should move it ahead. He acknowledged that the commission members didn't have a lot of extra time, but he urged them to move the commission's work up on their priority list. He thanked Diana for her creative exercise in showing the work of the commission. He feels the forum activity was a good one. He also thanked Louise for her persistence in getting the certificate passed and acknowledged that as a perfect example of leadership.