

## COE Diversity Committee Meeting

May 6, 2016

### MINUTES

Present: Melissa Mariani, Dilys Schoorman, Laura Cushing, Rina Bousalis, Jillian Powers, Patty Kirsch, John Hardman.

John reported on the launch of the FAU Diversity Council (FAUDC). The notes in italics below were shared at the inaugural meeting to provide the 15 or so attendees from different colleges with an initial sense of the directions being considered:

1. *FAU's diversity initiatives are detailed in our 2015-2025 Strategic Plan for the Race to Excellence. As a refresher, our goals include:*
  - *identifying and promoting opportunities to diversify our students, faculty and staff; building institutional cross-cultural competencies (p. 6); and*
  - *becoming the national model for diversity of the student body to:*
    - *Ensure continual inclusion as a Hispanic Serving Institution*
    - *Pursue diversity in all academic disciplines, leveraging proximity to Latin America and the Caribbean to internationalize enrollments (p. 7)*

*The role of the council will be to:*

- *Serve as a proposal reviewer and funding body for research, activities, and events that foster cultural competence*
- *Serve as a "think-tank" to identify competency-based cultural programs for students, faculty, and staff*
- *Serve as reviewers of current policy and procedures to ensure policy and procedures are inclusive and consider cultural differences*
- *Make recommendations that will lead to the fulfillment of the Diversity Platform goals*

#### Discussion

A concern was expressed that the council not get sidetracked by 'avoidance' strategies such as conducting an exhaustive review of policies and procedures that does not lead to an effective action plan. It was also requested that information be brought to the committee on the identities of the council leadership, and the extent of administrative support for the initiative.

Dr. Corey King emphasized that one of the main priorities of the FAUDC will be to connect faculty and staff across colleges and units at FAU. Dr. King mentioned the number of student engagement

opportunities currently available, and contrasted this with the lack of events, activities, and opportunities for faculty and staff to connect on diversity issues.

The COE Diversity Committee agreed that promoting collaboration among faculty and staff should be supported. From the discussion, a number of potential action items in several areas emerged which should be discussed at the department level for feedback. Some of these were:

### **Diversity Forums**

- Dilys mentioned that the previous FAU Diversity Council had convened faculty forums on diversity, an initiative that could be begun again.

### **Student Advising**

- The committee recommends – aligned with the shift in focus by FAU Student Advising Services – that faculty advisors should add building meaningful relationships with students to their advising practice.

### **Professional Development for faculty and staff on:**

- safe-zone training (contact: Emily Calfo, LGBTQ Resource Center of the Office of Multicultural Affairs) – John to contact
- Appreciative advising (contact: Jenny Bloom) – John to contact

### **Research**

- Research could be explored at the level of both faculty and students, for example:
  - Identification of doctoral students whose dissertation interests include issues of diversity and provide opportunities for sharing
  - Sharing of diversity-focused research by faculty, through events such as brown bag lunches, cross campus forums, etc.
- The committee discussed the possibility of engaging in a research project aimed at understanding the current FAU climate and culture and how this is impacting inclusiveness and shaping the 'FAU experience' of students, faculty and staff.

### **Curriculum**

- It could be of value to update the diversity curriculum audit conducted 2007 – 2009 for the NCATE accreditation review that was suspended due to the transition to CAEP. It was also suggested – now that we have successfully completed our latest accreditation – that we can encourage students in our courses to engage in collaborative efforts on issues linked to diversity.

### **Recruitment**

Faculty and Staff

- For the 2007 NCATE visit, the Diversity Committee created a Manual for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Faculty and Staff. The subsequent recession and hiring freeze severely constrained the ability of departments to honor the approved policy, though it is believed that many of these did make good faith efforts to follow its guidelines. It is now time to revisit this importance practice to ensure that we are hiring the best possible faculty from all types of backgrounds by expanding our marketing practices to a broader range of constituencies.

## Students

- With nine other colleges of education across the country, the College continues to participate in the Networked Improvement Community (NIC), the purpose of which is to recruit African American and Hispanic males into education. The Dean is spearheading this initiative, and is particularly interested in the implementation of the Holmes Scholarship for students of color with special merit as a recruitment and retention strategy. The initiative has still to show real results, and one of the concerns is the adoption by the NIC governance committee of a 90-day goal setting cycle for all college task forces that is seen to be limiting the rollout of longer-term strategies.

## **Selected Improvement Plan (SIP)**

- This was formerly the CAEP Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). The committee feels that the SIP database and reporting capacity is beginning to offer good potential for identifying and supporting students who are struggling. The most recent iteration of the system – which included adding a text box to each student record for notes and remarks – could be shared with other colleges as a way to establish a stronger collaboration on student (diversity) issues across the university. Patty Kirsch and Laura Cushing expressed their willingness to work with faculty and department chairs in order to develop approaches to student advising that would serve to strengthen student retention and success.