

Committee on Diversity Meeting Minutes November 30, 2011

Committee Members:

Kim Bobby, Lisa Ferrari, Zaixin Hong, Pepa Lago-Grana, Margi Nowak, Czarina Ramsay, Amy Ryken, and Kurt Walls were present at the meeting.

Minutes:

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m. Pepa Lago was appointed as the minute-taker. The minutes of the meeting were reviewed and approved with two minor changes to the list of members present.

Announcements:

- T Town Transgender Neighbors – a Portrait Exhibition is now available in Collins Library through the end of the semester. There will be a reception today at 4, followed by a panel discussion at 5. For more information see <http://www.southsoundgender.com/t-town/>
- Our 26th annual campus commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. will take place on Monday, January 16, 2012. Throughout the day of January 16, students, faculty, and staff are invited to participate in our annual MLK Day of Service, volunteering in a variety of locations throughout Tacoma and Pierce County. Our evening will begin with a reception in the Wheelock Student Center Rotunda at 5:00 p.m. Guests will hear student reflections on the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, acknowledge the recipient of the “Keep Living the Dream” award, and enjoy light refreshments. Following the reception, our formal celebration will begin at 7:00 p.m. in Kilworth Memorial Chapel. This year’s celebration will include words from President Thomas, gospel music by Navele & Friends, and a special keynote, *The Fire Within*, delivered by Puget Sound Alumnus and Board of Trustees member, Lyle Quasim ’70 and H ’05. Quasim is the President of Bates Technical College and a long-time social activist and political leader in the region.
- A diversity sub-committee (Amy, Lisa, Zaixin and Pepa) is looking at expanding the options for binary gender framing (M/F) on Cascade. Some options discussed are adding “Transgender” as a third option, among others. The sub-committee found that most forms where demographic data is requested are different, raising questions of inconsistency, and data-gathering methods. The sub-committee acknowledged the tension of allowing individuals to self identify in a broad range of ways versus having consistent categories for institutional analysis. The sub-committee also raised the question of the need and relevance of gathering gender data.

Climate Survey:

- The discussion focused on reviewing some particular aspects of the third and newest version of the climate survey, which will be going out the campus community in February. This version of the survey is shorter and organized around 10 identity groups, with 5 initial overarching questions. The goal is to pair it down while maintaining the integrity of the survey. Previous surveys revealed that the community feels good overall about the climate on campus, but when looking closely, some negative perceptions are revealed within specific identity groups. This survey attempts to identify those perceptions within the groups for a more accurate read of the climate.
- The group discussed the advantages and disadvantages of specific terms used to identify some of the groups, such as “socioeconomic status” and “nationality.” They also suggested the importance that demographic data in the survey match up with the categories and identity groups.

- The normal percentage of results for this type of survey is 20-30 %. It is important to encourage those around us to complete the survey once it's out. The upcoming MLK celebration was suggested as a good opportunity with a large audience to have a 5-minute mention of the survey.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50.

Respectfully submitted~

Pepa Lago-Grana