

## **Meeting Minutes: Student Affairs Diversity Review Day July 13, 2015**

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**Present:** Angela Palmer, Nicholas Campau, Leroy Wright, Cindy Horn, Angela Roman, Kristen Salomonson, Renee VanderMyde, Michael Wade, Mark Schuelke, David Pilgrim, Sara Dew, Nick Smith, Cindy Vander Sloot, and Kathy Lake

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Leroy Wright, Dean of Student Life, began by welcoming everyone to our annual Student Affairs Diversity Review Day and thanking them for their continued commitment to diversity, and for the submission of their departmental reports. A reminder was given that the current report that we are reviewing today is a draft document at this point in time. Each presenter shall reflect on their 2014-2015 diversity successes and challenges. The group, with support from David Pilgrim, Vice President for Diversity & Inclusion, shall provide feedback to each other and offer recommendations that might assist each area in resolving existing challenges and accomplishing future diversity endeavors for 2015-2016.

David Pilgrim shared that the ongoing University wide diversity audit is now complete and the report is up on the website. He communicated that it is time to start the process for developing a new diversity and inclusion plan and looking for ways to engage the campus community. Currently the committee is reviewing 14 other state universities to see what they are doing in terms of their diversity and inclusion plans. Dr. Pilgrim would like FSU to have a LGBTQIA center as well as a safe place for all religious groups to interact. He would also like to see sustained dialogue happening with our staff and/or students within monthly meetings to talk about difficult or sensitive issues. It was suggested that Dr. Pilgrim attend one of the Student Affairs Administrative Council meetings to have an open dialogue about themes/opportunities gleaned from the diversity audit. He also offered to assist in obtaining any training videos or resources that anyone finds or needs.

Dean Wright asked the group why diversity and inclusion is important in the Division of Student Affairs. A discussion was held to answer the question.

Dean Wright turned the attention to the first part of the report where the 2014-2015 Projected Major Diversity Initiatives are highlighted. He asked the group to communicate with him or Angela Palmer if they see any initiatives that are not included in or should be taken from this report.

### **University Recreation – Cindy Vander Sloot:**

#### **SUCSESSES:**

- Cindy was the first to present and she highlighted that the University Center partnered with the School of Education and the College of Business to offer a camping trip for a group of international students.
- The Club Sports program continues to expand its diverse representation (figure skating, fencing, wrestling, etc.) and has added more opportunities for females to participate in intramural sports this past year.

- The University Center now displays 16 banners representing social Greek organizations in the Interfraternity and Panhellenic Councils.

**CHALLENGES:**

- The ropes course is not universally accessible.
- The Student Recreation Center is limited shower and restroom accessible doors. Currently, patrons with disabilities must go through the pool area, using a non-accessible door to access the restrooms or locker room area.
- Intramural sports does not currently have programs for students with disabilities, with the biggest roadblock being the cost of equipment.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- It was recommended that Cindy Vander Sloot contact Dr. Pilgrim to set up a time where he can visit the facility and take a look at the accessibility issues. He will also invite Jerry Scoby, Vice President of Administration and Finance, and Jeanine Ward-Roof, Vice President of Student Affairs to assist in solutions.

**Office of Multicultural Student Services (OMSS) – Matt Chaney/Michael Wade:**

**SUCSESSES:**

- The Office of Multicultural Student Services (OMSS) collaborated with others on campus to coordinate several activities that focused on diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion throughout 2014-2015.
- OMSS created the Black Male Network (BMN) which is an initiative that seeks to promote an environment where black male students can excel as leaders by connecting them with other students, faculty, staff, and alumni. The mission of BMN is to increase the retention, progression, and graduation of black males at Ferris State University.
- The GEAR Up Program has increased by 15% in physical participation and 25% in online activities. GEAR Up has exceeded all state benchmarks per the Annual Performance Report.
- Two TOWERS students participated in a Study Abroad experience. Jasmine Nettles traveled to Italy and Tamira Owens participated in a trip to Costa Rica.

**CHALLENGES:**

- The lack of funding to support required diversity programs and to support a growing diverse student population continue to be a challenge for the office.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Dr. Pilgrim feels that TOWERS is a great program and should become a best practice.
- Dr. Pilgrim recommended that the office create an OMSS scholarship and seek out ways to raise funds externally for these type of initiatives.
- Dr. Pilgrim suggested that a representative from the office get involved in doing training at the Staff Center for Training and Development.
- It was recommended by Dr. Pilgrim to have sustained, continuous conversations with students regarding sensitive topics. Dr. Pilgrim has offered to assist in facilitating these efforts.
- Dr. Pilgrim communicated that he will assist in purchasing resources for training purposes and suggested the video, "Arc of Diversity."

### **Birkam Health Center & Personal Counseling Center-Renee VanderMyde:**

#### **SUCSESSES:**

- The staff of the Birkam Health Center and the Personal Counseling Center has participated in several all-staff training opportunities that focused on diversity topics and issues.
- One counseling staff member participated in professional training to address the unique needs of student veterans, especially those who have returned from a deployment in a combat zone.
- Birkam Health Center and Personal Counseling Center rolled out Student Health 101, a well-accessed electronic student health and wellness magazine.
- Birkam Health Center participated in Wellness Wednesdays with the Center for Leadership, Activities, and Career Services. The goal was to address various health-related topics to a wide array of students from stress-management to sexual health and wellness.
- Birkam Health Center underwent a peer review by the American Health Association to identify strengths and challenges. The office is currently implementing changes based upon some of the results and recommendations. They were specific to health disparities and care associated with LGBTQA.
- Renovations were performed in the main reception area of the Birkam Health Center that included ADA compliant check-in counter which increased the accessibility for a wheelchair-bound patient. In addition, the office purchased an ADA accessible exam table that can be adjusted to several heights and has support handles for patients with physical challenges.

### CHALLENGES:

- There is a continual challenge with addressing and educating diverse student groups about medical and mental health care disparities.
- There is a need to continue to create a welcoming and inclusive environment as well as direct services for all clients and patients.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- It was recommended that Renee continue to encourage her staff to be professional when serving all clients and patients.
- Dr. Pilgrim suggested that Renee coordinate with others in regards to starting a LGTBQA Center.
- BHC is implementing a Follow-Up Friday program as a continuation from information provided at the Wellness Wednesday Program.

### **Enrollment Services (Admissions, Financial Aid, IRT, & Registrar's Office)-Kristen Salomonson:**

#### SUCSESSES:

- The University has earned the "I'm First" designation which is an online resource and community geared toward supporting first generation college students and highlights colleges and universities who have achieved excellence in serving this group. Currently, Ferris is one of only four member universities in Michigan. First generation coffee meet and greets have also been formed at New Student Orientation.
- The Office of Admissions coordinated 33 group visits with more than 600 students from schools, churches, governmental agencies, and community-based organizations with predominately black or Hispanic memberships.
- Kristen was able to set aside \$7500 this year as part of a plan to offer transportation to select groups on a limited basis to visit our Big Rapids campus. This past Spring, the University hosted a visit from Detroit Edison Academy, utilizing the funds to provide bus transportations. The Office of Admissions also hosted and provided transportation to a group of 30+ students from the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) which is composed of migrant students from the Shelby/Hart area who are working toward their GED or high school diploma. The presentation was given in Spanish and English. The department unveiled a comprehensive Virtual Tour to showcase our main campus facilities which is available in Spanish and Arabic languages in addition to English.

- Krissy Workman, Financial Aid Advisor, serves as our Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for the State’s foster care caseworkers and school district McKinney-Vento Liaisons to assist with unaccompanied homeless youth.
- The Registrar’s Office recently implemented an electronic transcript ordering process. This new electronic transcript ordering process allows “touch-free” processing and delivery of an official and secure .pdf in as little as 10 minutes from order to the inbox of the recipient.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Financial Aid continues the struggle of making school affordable for low-income and undocumented families.
- Attracting and maintaining a diverse workforce remains a significant challenge. It is critical for the Enrollment Services area to have a workforce that is reflective of the students we wish to enroll and recruit.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Dr. Pilgrim would like to seek out opportunities to better serve our homeless youth. A suggestion was made to possibly collaborate with the Masters of Social Work program regarding graduate assistant/internship opportunities.
- It was recommended that we look into using MapWorks as a resource or tool for retention challenges.
- Dr. Pilgrim offered to assist with bringing back the annual “Bus Tour” for underprivileged students who may not be able to afford transportation to our campus.
- Dr. Pilgrim suggested that the Financial Aid office visit various offices, such as OMSS and Center for Latin@ Studies to share information regarding financial aid options, general assistance, University processes, and important deadlines.

**Center for Leadership, Activities and Career Services/Angela Roman:**

**SUCSESSES:**

- The Center for Leadership, Activities, and Career Services (CLACS) partnered with Educational Counseling and Disability Services to have walk-in hours for career counseling.
- CLACS coordinated community townhall meetings to help understand the needs of the local Big Rapids community and how our students can assist by giving back to the community via volunteer service.

- CLACS worked closely with the Academic Career Programs Specialists to get minority students into majority career programs (i.e. Women in Technology programs).
- CLACS posted a world map in their office for students, faculty, and staff to put up color push pins that symbolized the various places they come from, have visited, or where they would like to go.
- Nicholas Smith served as an advocate for our transgendered students. As an advocate, he was able to assist our transgendered students in getting their Ferris email changed from their birth name to the name that they identify with as a transgendered person.
- CLACS paid for the President of the Black Greek Council to attend the Association of Fraternal Leadership Value (AFLV) conference in Covington, KY along with other Greek leaders.
- Introduced weekend and late night activities during Spring 2015 semester. The goal was to offer a healthy and safe programming opportunity for students who stay on campus during the weekend. Many of our international students attended these activities.

#### CHALLENGES:

- Greek Life's historically predominately white organizations have posed some issues for some of our chapters in regards to inclusion.
- There is a challenge in getting diverse student organizations to collaborate.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Dr. Pilgrim suggested that the current internal fraternal system seems outdated. He would like to see the attitudes of such student organizations become all-inclusive and welcome those who might otherwise not feel comfortable coming into the organization.

#### **Office of Student Conduct – Nicholas Campau/Erik Wessel:**

##### SUCSESSES:

- The Office of Student Conduct continues to provide training on culturally sensitive conduct practices as part of the Conduct Case Manager training.
- The Office of Student Conduct continues to modify their practices to be in compliance with the Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex.

- The Office of Student Conduct has revised its Code of Student Community Standards to ensure compliance of policy and procedure with 2014 guidance, 2014 Whitehouse Taskforce guidance, and new requirements following the implementation of VAWA amendments to CLERY.

#### CHALLENGES:

- There is a need to continue to find ways to provide and improve proactive measures to eliminate gender-based bias and violence in our community.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Dr. Pilgrim recommended the use of campus conflicts as a topic in staff training.

#### University Center – Mark Schuelke:

##### SUCSESSES:

- The University Center held a job fair at the end of October 2014 to fill 18 new student positions and over 150 students attended and applied. The positions were filled by 61% female students and 22% students of ethnic minority
- The University Center supported a variety of diverse cultural, social, and educational events throughout 2014-2015. Some of the signature events included MLK Tribute and Freedom March, BLACK Image Awards, Minds of Flame, Festival of Arts Grand Opening Reception, YBBW Fashion Show, and the International Festival.
- The University Center supported 1,993 reservation requests for 2014-2015.

##### CHALLENGES:

- Due to the facility being new, there was a challenge for University staff to meet the needs of different organization. The challenge was to help the organization visualize what the event space would look like set up.
- The audio/visual equipment also posed great challenges for the staff.

##### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- It was recommended to display art on the walls of the University Center.

Leroy thanked everyone for their efforts and attending. He asked the group to review the report and send Angela Palmer any changes or revisions by Friday, July 24, 2015.

Submitted by: Angela Palmer,  
Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Student Life