

Diversity Planning Committee Meeting Summary
February 1, 2007
CSS 302

Present at the meeting were - Yolonda Barnes, Karyn Benner, Mike Cairns, Matt Chaney, Tyrone Collins, Matthew Eickhoff, Susan Fogarty, Karen GreenBay, Warren Hills, Thuy Karafa, Russell Leonard, Eunice Merwin, David Pilgrim, Kent Sun, Luzia Tartari, Troy Tissue, Patty Terryn, Leroy Wright. Absent - Christy Brewer, Micala Evans, Pat Klarecki, Todd Stanislav

Minutes were distributed and approved from the January 18, 2007 meeting.

The DPC began with a discussion of the definition of diversity. There was some support for the following definition:

“Ferris State University (FSU) is envisioned as a truly diverse institution that does not, simply, tolerate diversity, but activity embraces, infuses, and celebrates diversity as a core value. At FSU, diversity includes, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, social class, age, physical ability, religion, national origin, and political beliefs. Creates a culture of healthy diversity is one in which people value individual, group differences, respects the worldviews of others, and communicates openly.”

Next, the Committee discussed what should and should not go in Ferris’ Diversity Plan. The following goals were proposed and discussed:

- 1) Create a campus that is safe for and welcoming to diverse populations;
- 2) Assess the current state of diversity at the University;
- 3) Recruit, retain, and graduate a diverse student body;
- 4) Hire, retain, and promote a diversified workforce: faculty, staff, and administrators;
- 5) Enhance the effectiveness of diversity-themed organizations, including strengthening inter-organizational communication, providing resources, and promoting relevant activities;
- 6) Encourage and support the introduction of diversity sensitive pedagogy into the courses taught in all seven colleges;
- 7) Create a system of implementation that includes accountability, division of labor, timelines, and monitoring;
- 8) Infuse Diversity Plan into the University’s Strategic Vision.

The DPC debated and finally agreed to add a ninth goal, “Improving Relations between the FSU community and surrounding communities.” Also, Eunice Merwin asked that we add “Special Populations” to goal number three. David asked her to present a sentence that would explain the use of the phrase. The members volunteered to serve on sub-committees that addressed each of the goals. David will meet with the subcommittees next week to give them their charges. The sub-committees and their members are listed below:

Campus Climate - Karen GreenBay, Eunice Merwin, Luzia Tartari, Christy Brewer,
Shandolyn Lewis, Blair Carson
Current Assessment - Mike Cairns, Thuy Karafa, Russell Leonard, David Pilgrim, Abdul
Ahmed
Student Body Diversity - Karyn Benner, Matt Chaney, Luzia Tartari, Troy Tissue,
Micala Evans, Melissa Holman
Faculty/Staff Diversity - Yolanda Barns, Matt Chaney, Karen GreenBay, Warren Hills,
Russell Leonard, Todd Stanislav, Kent Sun
Diversity Organizations and Activities – Yolanda Barnes, Karyn Benner, Matt Eickhoff,
James Mikula
Diverse Classrooms - Susan Fogarty, Todd Stanislav, Troy Tissue, Leroy Wright.
LaTasha Walter, Lisa Kemmis
Community Relations - Karen GreenBay, Matt Eickhoff, Warren Hills, David Pilgrim,
Leroy Wright, Maurice Webb, Calvin Parham

Subcommittees will be asked to make reports at each meeting. We are looking for problems/challenges and recommendations from each subcommittee.

Emerging Issues/News –

A Diversity Office webpage is being developed. Matt Eickhoff and Karyn Benner presented a rough draft of ideas the Diversity Action Team (DAT) had for their website. David will meet Matt and Karyn to discuss ideas about the Diversity Office webpage. The DPC agreed that the Diversity Office webpage will include the fledgling Diversity Plan because the University community should have the opportunity for feedback.

David distributed a progress report and it was reviewed. The Progress Report is a working report of the progress that the University and DPC are making as relates to diversity. The report will keep the DPC focused on accomplishments and areas that need attention.

David reported on issues related to making the campus more welcoming to GLBT students. The Executive Board of D-SAGA expressed concerned that the FSU Counseling was not able to meet the needs of GLBT students. David Pilgrim met with the FSU Counselors and reported:

- 1) Our Counseling Center does have two people trained to handle GLBT students;
- 2) The Counselors agree to meet annually with the D-Saga group to discuss concerns;
- 3) The Counseling Center will annually host a panel to the general student body to discuss GLBT issues;
- 4) The Counseling Center is willing to house some books and other resources that deal with GLBT issues.

General Discussion –

David distributed two articles concerning sustaining diversity dialogues at universities. He also, asked the committee for some suggestion on how to engage the Ferris community in dialoguing about diversity. Warren Hills mention that Summer University is always looking for ideas and

he wondered if this year's topic could be diversity. His suggestion is for a keynote speaker and break out sessions. The following committee members agreed to meet and brainstorm on some ideas for Summer University: Luzia Tartari, Warren Hills, Leroy Wright, Mike Cairns, and David. Todd Stanislav suggested that Faculty Week would also be a good time for concurrent sessions about diversity.

The DPC next discussed the climate for different groups and agreed to create a list of people that David should have one-on-one meetings to discuss how Ferris might become more welcoming.

The next meeting is February 15, 2007.