

Ferris State University
Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant Application

I. Identification

Name of Primary Applicant: Michael Berghoef
Members of Team: Nathan Veeneman
Anthony Baker
Wendy Samuels
DSAGA
Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society
Social Work Association

Department or Unit: Social Sciences
Campus Address: ASC 2108
Telephone: 231-591-2765
E-mail address: berghoem@ferris.edu

II. Event Title (25 words or less)

Exploring the Seven Passages: A conversation about LGBTQ spirituality

III. Specific core value, strategic initiative, or goal related to diversity that the event will address. (See the University Strategic Plan and the Diversity Plan)

This student event will address the complex issues facing individuals who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) in regard to finding a balance between their sexual orientation and spiritual beliefs. This event will provide a learning opportunity where students can engage in a discussion about current issues surrounding not only the LGBTQ community but also members of faith based communities. This event is a collaborative effort between multiple student groups and faculty designed to foster open respectful dialog that will hopefully create a campus climate that is more respectful and inclusive of all individuals.

IV. Abstract (150-200 word, use additional paper if necessary). If the application is approved the abstract will be posted on the Diversity Office's website.

The film Seven Passages is a summary of an ethnography that explores the texts of the Bible commonly used to condemn homosexuality and compares these passages with the lived experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) individuals wrestling with issues of spirituality and religion. After a viewing of the film version of the theatre production of Seven Passages, one of the films central characters will facilitate a discussion about the issues raised. Students will be challenged to reexamine their views on the relationship between Christianity and sexuality. This film and the discussion that follows will hopefully engage students in a broader conversation dealing with contemporary political and social issues that our nation is currently debating. Family?

V. Event Narrative (up to 4 pages single-spaced)

- a. **Conceptual framework** This event will augment Ferris's long-term commitment to diversity by creating an opportunity for students to gain a new perspective on what is often a polarizing issue. It will provide a platform where student can discuss the range of human differences especially in regards to sexual orientation, religious and ethical values and political beliefs.
- b. **Goals and intended outcomes** This event will create an environment for students to learn and debate these and other complex and controversial issues while maintaining a respectful and safe environment. Another goal is to promote collaboration both within the university between groups and with those outside of the university community. It is also a direct resource for students struggling with their religious beliefs and/or sexual orientation. This event also provides the opportunity to advocate and educate for the LGBTQ community.
- c. **How the event relates to the curriculum** This event is certainly consistent with the social work curriculums emphasis on diversity but we hope to attract many students outside of the social work discipline.
- d. **Timeline:**

September 7, 2009 – advertising for this event will begin, to be followed up with campus calendar, MTVU, the Torch, Campus Wide postings, UWNs and Facebook.

October 14, 2009 at 6 PM a viewing of the movie “Seven Passages: the Stories of Gay Christians” will be followed with a discussion facilitated by one of the films main characters. Evaluation of the event will occur at the end of the evening.

December 7, 2009 Final report will be sent to Diversity Office.
- e. **Description of the target audience**, including the estimated number of participants. This event will be targeted to the entire student population and will be of special interest to students affiliated with DSAGA, Phi Alpha and SWA and their associated majors but also to any student who identifies with the LGBTQ community and/or a faith based community. We hope to attract between 150 – 200 students.
- f. **The expected impact** that this event will have on the Ferris community is to provide an opportunity for the beginning of a conversation about a topic that is often hard to discuss. We hope that the dialog that this event initiates will continue past the event. It is our goal that this event will prepare students to be members of an ethical community where issues and topics can be debated with an open mind and in a respectful manner.
- g. **Plan to assess the impact** We plan to assess this event by distributing evaluations asking participants for their feedback and suggestions concerning this and future events.

VI. Budget

- a. Anticipated expenses
 - \$1500 stipend for speaker
 - \$300 Advertising
 - \$500 food and beverage for students
- b. Funds anticipated from other sources N/A
- c. Total amount requested from Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant \$2300

VII. Final Report

A final report is required and it will appear on the Diversity Office’s website. That report is due no later than three months after the funded activity. The final report should address:

- a: A self-evaluation
- b: Results of the event assessment
- c: Attendance figures
- d: Final budget

Applicants’ Signatures:

Submission Date: 3/30/09

Submit applications to Patty Terryn, Diversity Office, CSS 312. Review of applications will begin upon receipt and continue contingent on available funds.