

Minutes of the Student Life Committee

February 26, 2013

Wheelock Student Center, Room 201

Present: Student Rep. Katy Appleby, Student Rep. Ian Latimer, Student Rep. Ryan Del Rosario, Prof. Bruce Mann (chair), Dean of Students Mike Segawa, Prof. John Wesley, Prof. Lisa Fortlouis Wood. Guest: University Chaplain David Wright.

Bruce Mann called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

The minutes from January 29, 2013 were approved as written.

Bruce Mann turned the meeting over to Mike Segawa in order to continue the committee's review and discussion of the Campus Climate Survey (comparing data collected in 2006 with data from 2012).

The committee discussed two graphs related to respondents' perception about the frequency and quality of their interactions with people who are "very different" from them in terms of race/ethnicity. Graph 7A captures the reported frequency of "serious conversations" between respondents and those they perceive to be different in terms of race/ethnicity. Graph 7B illustrates respondents' perceptions about the degree to which their interactions on campus are confined to people of the same race and ethnicity. Both graphs compare data from the two time periods.

The discussion addressed several points.

- a. Katy Appleby underscored the challenge we face as a predominantly Caucasian community in fostering interactions across racial and ethnic boundaries. For example, she noted the awkwardness of "targeting" people from different ethnic or social backgrounds in order to support a sense of openness, or to increase ones own experience of diversity.
- b. The committee discussed the tendency of students to gravitate to those who are similar in background. In particular, Ryan Del Rosario, who has worked as a resident advisor, noted the difficulty in getting students to attend campus events showcasing culturally diverse artists and performers.
- c. Bruce Mann raised a general question about whether we, as an institution, are doing enough to foster discussions across cultural/social/ethnic boundaries.
- d. In discussing new avenues for broadening contact and conversation across different social groups, the committee considered avenues for our students beyond campus borders. Lisa Wood noted the possibility of collaborations with other local campuses such as UW Tacoma. Dave Wright discussed a number of possible programs in the works where our students may have opportunities to interact with community members from different ethnic and class backgrounds.
- e. Katy Appleby described the powerful impact of the videotaped interviews that were shown during the training for student leaders. She found the interviews with students discussing their experiences of discrimination and racism on campus to be very moving and important to her awareness of the experiences of those from different backgrounds. The committee discussed possible avenues for expanding the use of videotaped interviews by campus members in building a more diverse experience for students, especially those who might not engage in conversations about difference and discrimination. Dave Wright indicated that more media projects such as this are in the works.
- f. Following up on ideas for off-campus experiences, the committee discussed civic-learning, and the role of work-study in supporting awareness and understanding of diversity.
- g. Mike Segawa emphasized that the diversity initiative is a central to the institutional mission and the education we offer at Puget Sound. He noted that students need preparation for working and living in globally diverse environments. Lisa Wood supported this comment by adding that education regarding

diversity not only increases individual success, but also makes our students better able to serve the needs of others.

h. Lisa Wood and Bruce Mann briefly touched upon the difference between an individual's goals and attainment of success or privilege, and the presumption of privilege in relation to ethnicity and/or class.

The meeting adjourned at 5 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Fortlouis Wood