Social Justice Committee Meeting Notes

Tuesday, December 6, 2011

In attendance: Shana Agid, Katayoun Chamany, Doris Chang, Chris Crews, Keisha Davenport, Sydney Kopp-Richardson, Tim Marshall, Judy Mejia, Karen Merson, Amy Minter, Monique Nri, Earl Scott, Jesse Villalobos, Tsuya Yee

- Introduction
 - Welcome back
- Sub-Committee Updates: Next Steps
 - Ad-Hoc Transgender Subcommittee
 - Focus has been on name change issues at TNS
 - Gender Taskforce has been formed by students in regards to all-gender housing and bathrooms
 - Subcommittee will refocus work as supportive of student Taskforce, subcommittee members can participate, but agenda of subcommittee will be geared towards Gender Taskforce issues
 - Communications Subcommittee: Website and Blog
 - Feedback is needed on new blog component to website: identity categories, visuals, etc.
 - Links to other websites, announcements of employment, listing of social justice resources including social group identities and different areas SJC should cover will be posted; information will be tagged using these subcategories
 - Area for journals, hubs, and collections of information available alongside student-specific sites
 - Blog will be tagged with identity categories
 - Aim is to have blog and website running by beginning of next semester for new and continuing students to interact and talk
 - SJI office will be working on administering blog, student RA will be working on blog upkeep
 - Encouraged for SJC members to have a link to the Social Justice Committee website on faculty/staff email/website links
 - Proposal: Have the Social Justice Initiatives blog go live by the beginning of Spring 2012 semester, and SJC members can provide feedback once blog is up. Members will also provide feedback regarding social identity categories to Communications Committee by January 4, 2012; Agreed

Review Existing Committees

- Communications Subcommittee
 - Senior Leadership Proposal: Post the leadership position proposal under the "Desegregating Diversity" report on SJC web page?
 - On the Provost's website: Why not on the SJC site?
 - Mission and Promotion of SJC: Discussion of identifying a theme that SJC works on throughout the year extending beyond University; or connect to campus groups that are

- already doing this work in order to prevent replication of community work
- Important to have SJC more connected to campus and beyond in order to promote SJC presence, possibly through Civic Engagement Committee and SCJ members of both
- Mission: University does not have a stated mission, and SJC can work on helping TNS develop its mission; whole section of the Middle States Review is currently focusing on TNS mission
- Website: Integral to promoting work and presence of SJC, can use to engage the larger community around social justice issues
- Workshops are on priority list
 - Educate SJC Committee on issues first before reaching out to community?
- SJC Open House: Serve as a vehicle through which people come to talk about emerging and continuing issues on campus, use the blog points to bring dialogue to the SJC
 - Opportunity to welcome people into SJC space
 - Open meetings up in different ways while maintaining current meeting times or extending SJC monthly meetings to two hours
- Student Involvement
 - Friday night student group racism discussion, should be captured by SJC: How can Committee support these dialogues?
 - Use Communications Subcommittee and new blog to connect to students: Where is the centralized space and connection to student organizing?

Faculty and Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee

- Social Justice Teaching Award: going forward to the Provost for approval
- One or two representatives from Faculty of Color Group have been asked to join SJC
- Discussion of creating Diversity "Score Card"
 - Accountability tool assessing criteria speaking directly to social justice issues in faculty search, hire, and retention
 - Part of faculty searches, reviews, and promotion
 - Difficult to address score card without first addressing an accountability to the University's social justice mission (nonexistent currently)
- Discussion of adding evaluative questions to course evaluations regarding social justice teaching and issues of race, gender, class, and climate, to help inform faculty evaluations
 - Evaluations need to go through UAW Process, which can be difficult to get approval for changes

- Middle States Review deadline has been extended one more year
 - Bring revisiting the University Mission to the Subcommittee as a pressing matter?

Teaching and Learning Subcommittee

- Last meeting took place Spring 2011
- On hold, little success gathering people for meetings
- RA research has identified best practices around social justice learning and teaching
- Have SJC members meet with RA to provide feedback on research in the next few months in order to move forward with research recommendations

Ad-Hoc Social Justice Leadership Subcommittee

- Asked to write a proposal to President for senior leadership position, goal was met
- Follow-up from President still required, information can be posted to SJC website
- Subcommittee can continue to press for Social Justice Leadership Position due to recent student and campus issues and hold President accountable to discussion

Ad-Hoc Transgender Subcommittee

 Shift in subcommittee orientation: Less focus on action steps, more of a connecting role to maintain accountability to goals of Transgender Task Force

Review of Subcommittees: Active, Dissolved, New?

- Active Subcommittees: Communications, Faculty Recruitment and Retention, Ad-Hoc Transgender group working with new Task Force
- On Hold: Teaching and Learning Subcommittee
- Ad-Hoc Social Justice Leadership: Waiting to hear from Provost regarding steps forward
- SJC Mission: Used for subcommittees to revisit goals
- Subcommittees: Draft work plans for upcoming Spring semester through Fall, 2012, and bring to next SJC meeting
- New Committee Proposals: Staff Subcommittee, Student Subcommittee
- Student Recruitment and Retention
 - Interested in subcommittee:
 - Jesse, Earl, Doris, Keisha, Karen, Sydney
 - Which degrees, curriculum, and content can attract a more diverse student body and also address diversity retention?
 - Diversity not currently addressed with SJC
 - Much of SJC work talks to bringing diversity of numbers, but the issue of student support and services affects retention
 - Two-prongs: Diversity through numbers, and services/curriculum that supports diversity of student body
 - If President is numbers-driven, might be relevant to bring diversity issues to his attention on a quantitative basis first
 - Qualitative data has been produced from students of color

- based on experiences at Milano, largely unheard: Provost in a position to hear these testimonies
- Bringing in more diversity might help force the issue of curriculum and services addressing needs specific to students of color
- Only addressing content around social justice might not bring in the wider range of student diversity
- Roadblocks
 - Difficult to assess diversity involving financial aid, recruitment ability, and other data if that information is not readily available
 - Access to this information and accountability around it are key in SCJ moving forward with this issue

Next Steps

- Subcommittee Meetings
 - Every subcommittee come together before next SJC meeting of 2012
 - Draft proposal plans for each subcommittee's work through Fall 2012
- Spring Semester Meetings
 - Co-Chairs and Provost will come up with meeting times set for Spring semester
 - Members are encouraged to submit any schedule conflicts to Co-Chairs
- SJC and Subcommittee Membership
 - Working Process
 - Subcommittees must define how they hope to address membership within each area
 - Last big hurdle to SJC self-organization