Social Justice Committee Meeting Notes

Wednesday, September 14, 2011
In attendance: Keisha Davenport, Shannon Logan, Melissa Holmes, Chris Crews, Jesse Villalobos, Amy Minter, Darrick Hamilton, Sydney Kopp-Richardson, Karen Merson, Shana Agid, Earl Scott, Tim Marshall, Tsuya Yee
Facilitator: Tim Marshall

- **Welcome back**
  - Committee made progress over the past year, this year hope to get to where everyone feels comfortable on the committee
  - SJC was an attempt to reframe the work of the Diversity Committee from preceding years
  - Darrick Hamilton and Tim Marshall are stepping out of co-chair positions; Committee will decide on process to select new chairs through election

- **What are SJC hopes for the upcoming school year?**
  - Social Justice Leadership Institute Retreat was inspiring, hope for more student-led organizing stemming from retreat--hope for more student-led work and more student presence and voice on the SJC
  - Want to be able to refer more to existence of SJC and work accomplished
  - Hope to start a subcommittee that looks at students and student advising
  - More collaboration between SJC and Civic Engagement Committee
  - Revisiting discussions of structural role of social justice in institution
  - Begin to gather data around assessment of social justice and how it guides our work
  - Hope to move ahead on proposal to President on space for students of color and LGBTQ students
  - Establish a more concrete agenda for the committee (engagement process with the students)
  - Identify where we are, where we are headed, and focus on concrete goals
  - Establish a more clear collective voice across constituencies
  - Promote greater awareness of the committee and what purpose is around campus and in the community
  - Hold forums to engage people on and off campus with any connection to University
  - Take SJC's work and direction back to Parson's \
  - Re-visit Paul Gorski's work and his recommendations, begin to address those issues including systems identified that are perpetuating structural inequality on campus
  - Utilize SJC to build coalitions across the University
  - Implement more things in the upcoming year
  - Provide a space to expose opaque processes within the University
  - Promote student activism connected to faculty and staff
  - Address the role and commitment of the Provost to the SJC

- **Co-chair expectations**
  - Through SJC, promotes social justice throughout the Academy
  - Leads coordination of committee activities

- Serves as primary contact
- Plans meetings effectively, draft meeting agendas, makes sure priorities receive precedence
- Possesses knowledge about issues of equity and diversity, attempts to practice social justice ethic, through effective facilitation
- Involvement with sub-committees
- Two co-chairs with separate roles?
- Advocate for and promote the work of the SJC in the University at large, increase visibility
- Possibly useful to have a separate facilitator as the co-chairs have wider role in the central community
- Three co-chairs (staff, student, and faculty) can provide significance in signaling our model for joint leadership
- If new model is adapted for upcoming year, do not write into the by-laws until the model has been evaluated

- **Nominations**
  - Process for electing students to SJC--what is it?
  - Three co-chair representatives will be elected via SJC online
  - Form allotted to vote and to provide a paragraph on relevancy to chair-person position within two weeks
  - Important for SJC members to show group commitment
  - Nominations completed by September 21 at noon through online voting form, voted in via voting poll by Monday, September 26; results announced by evening.
  - Members can include self or not, can accept nomination or not, and everyone will be given space to define the degree of desire they have to be co-chair
  - Committee members are encouraged to write paragraphs to get to know one another better and for voters to be most adequately informed; but people can be nominated and voted for whether or not they complete this paragraph

- **Social Justice Leadership Institute Retreat:**
  - 27 students across divisions and graduate levels (from all schools except Jazz, Mannes, and Drama) gathered to retreat in upstate New York, Labor Day weekend
  - 7 Trainers, 5 guests visited
  - 4 intensive days of discussion/debates/organizing/energy/networking
  - Report-Back event: September 20, 8:30 pm, Keller Auditorium; opportunity for students to further network and get information and dialogue out to the larger student body
  - Question: Who determined selection criteria?
  - Over 100 students applied, but only 20 spots were available
  - Raised allotted amount to 30 students
  - Selection criteria was: 1) essay, and 2) socio-economic diversity of the group
    - 8 reviewers of students, faculty, and staff looked at applications
    - Second review was conducted of people that came out of that group
    - Retreat participation became highly selective due to limited resources
    - Important to conduct outreach around various interests from all the

interest shown in the applications, frame September 20 as kick-off event
    - Need to bring in the students who didn't come to retreat in order to model something from a more socially just perspective
    - Space on the SJLI blog for people to post on retreat?
  - Retreat Next Steps: Need clear way to link both existing student groups and link the students at the retreat to the work of SJC
  - What are concrete ways to bring students into the committee space?

- **Communications Subcommittee:**
  - Website: Social Justice Committee page almost complete, from that page there is going to be a blog
  - Hopefully website completed by next week
  - Committee needs to agree on which reports can be included on the website for the public, can discuss at next meeting

- **Next Steps:**
  - Complete elections of three co-chair positions (student, faculty, and staff) by Monday, September 26
  - Discuss bringing speakers such as Bob King to panel discussion sponsored by SJC regarding social justice at The New School (Look at Social Justice Conference held past few years at TNS)
  - Discuss Communications Subcommittee questions
  - Discuss formation of new subcommittees, including issues surrounding student involvement and events or speakers
  - Identify ways to get SJC "name" out to a larger audience in TNS and NYC community