



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

REPORT TO ACADEMIC SENATE

To: Academic Senate

From: Dr. Ferdinand Arcinue, Chair

Re: Activities of the **Campus Climate Committee**, 2006-2007 academic year

Meetings

The Campus Climate Committee met 12 times during the academic year. Minutes were recorded at each meeting and are attached to this report. Meetings were scheduled bi-monthly. Holidays and other events disrupted the meetings at times.

Campus Climate Committee Members

Simon Kim; Associate Vice President, Student Services (ex-officio)

Betsy Decyk; Director, University Ombuds (ex-officio)

Perrin Reid; Director, Equity and Diversity (ex-officio)

James Saucedo; Director, Multicultural Center (ex-officio)

Ferdinand Arcinue; faculty, Counseling and Psychological Services

Tammi Baltin; staff, Information Systems

Aaron Cargile; faculty, Communication Studies

Marina Freeman; staff, University College and Extension Services

Sheila Henry; lecturer, Black Studies

Elena Macias; administrator, Office of Governmental and COMM Relations

Nancy Meyer-Adams; faculty, Social Work

Carlos Piar; faculty, Religious Studies (Academic Senate Executive Committee liaison)

Robert Wendt; staff, Career Development Center (Staff Council representative)

*no student members were assigned

Activities

The mission of the Campus Climate Committee is to promote mutual acceptance and respect and to celebrate diversity in all its forms. The charge of the Campus Climate Committee includes monitoring the campus climate and making recommendations to improve the campus climate. Other responsibilities include encouraging educational programs that increase the understanding of equity and diversity issues. Members of the committee were selected to represent the diversity of the campus community.

Discussion of the committee focused around two central issues: campus civility and campus safety. In addition, at the start of the year the Campus Climate Committee made recommendations to the Faculty Personnel Policies Council on including and promoting diversity in the new Retention, Tenure, and Promotion (RTP) document.

The committee reviewed the current RTP document and noted that the current document does not address issues of diversity. For example, the document does not explicitly include activities that promote diversity or aid in the development or retention of minority students. The committee reviewed RTP documents from other universities for examples of how diversity may be included. Since a new RTP document was in development, the committee members decided that meeting with a member from the FPPC council to make general suggestions and recommendations would be important. Margaret Merryfield was invited to discuss these issues with the committee in November, and subsequent memorandum was sent to her and the chair of the FPPC council in February.

Regarding campus civility, a number of incidents and issues were raised during the 2006-2007 year that had an impact on campus climate. Examples of issues that were relevant to the campus climate include the ongoing conflict between two religious based student groups on campus, the presence of off campus religious groups targeting the LGBT students, articles in the campus newspapers that were perceived to be discriminatory and offensive, anti-Semitic publications by a professor, and interpersonal conflict between staff and faculty.

In September, members of the committee met with representatives from the local Jewish community, the Council for American Islamic Relations, and the President's Office to discuss ongoing concerns over the conflict between the Beach Hillel and the Muslim Student Association on campus. The group discussed the actions and behaviors of the two student groups, and the policies and guidelines needed to facilitate this conflict. In October, the Office of Equity and Diversity sponsored a panel presentation on "Hate Speech on American Campuses" in October.

Dr. Kirstyn Chun, faculty advisor to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Resource Center, was invited to speak to the committee to support the upcoming proposal to include "gender identity" in the non-discrimination policy. In addition, the committee also discussed the perceived campus climate for LGBT students. A number of off-campus religious groups have been granted access to campus, and have been displaying anti-LGBT signs. There have been verbal confrontations between students and these off-campus groups. Dr. Chun and the committee expressed concern regarding the access to campus these groups have been given, and the impact they have on our students and the campus climate.

To address these issues on civility and behavior, the committee invited Dean of Students and AVP of Student Services Mike Hostetler and Director of Student Life and Development Dr. Jeff Klaus in March. Dr. Hostetler and Dr. Klaus outlined the issues involved with a groups' access to campus and rights to speak freely. The group discussed the boundaries between language and actions that might "personally offend" individuals or groups. In addition, the Dr. Hostetler and Dr. Klaus discussed the fact that CSULB is a public university on state property, and how this also shapes the policies and guidelines that must be followed. Regarding student groups and activities, the committee expressed

the important role that faculty advisors should have with their organizations, and the advising needed to help guide the students' activities.

Campus safety became a prominent issue on campus following three sexual assaults that occurred in the Fall semester. Overall campus safety became a national issue after the shootings that occurred at Virginia Tech University in April. Committee members attended the university town hall meetings held during the Fall semester, and provided feedback and support.

In April, Dr. Marcela Chavez was invited to update the committee on programs being developed to combat violence against women and sexual assault. While the university experienced some high profile assaults, Dr. Chavez and the experts on the town hall panels noted that acquaintance rape and partner violence are more prevalent issues on college campuses in comparison to the sexual assaults that occurred on campus. Dr. Chavez described the work that Project Safe has started through a partnership of on-campus departments and off-campus agencies. Project Safe will be providing trainings for faculty and staff on sexual assault and partner violence. This program has received a two year grant and will meet Executive Order 93 from the Chancellor's Office that mandates prevention programs and training for students, faculty, and staff.

Following the violence at Virginia Tech, the university held three town hall meetings to address the concerns of the campus community. Members of the committee attended the town hall meetings. Concerns were voiced regarding safety on campus, the resources and emergency plans for these types of situations, and the communication infrastructure needed. In addition, university community members expressed concern about workplace civility and violence. The incident at Virginia Tech has pointed out the vulnerability of universities across the country, and safety will continue to be a climate issue.

Recommendations

1. Student representatives: The Campus Climate Committee did not have student representatives from ASI this past year. It is important to have students on the committee to provide a different perspective and to give feedback on the universities' actions and policies.
2. Budget: The charge of the Campus Climate Committee includes organizing and co-sponsoring events that promote diversity and awareness. The committee has no budget allocated for this purpose. Funding would allow the committee to co-sponsor programs initiated by other campus departments, or to initiate programs ourselves. For example, the committee could organize forums, panel discussions, and guest speakers to discuss issues related to religious conflict, date rape, etc.
3. International Students: The Center for International Education has requested to have a representative on the committee to advocate on behalf of the international students.

4. Dean of Students: The Dean of Students should be an ex-officio member of the committee since this office is in charge of campus regulations and judicial affairs. Issues related to student behavior and civility would be addressed by this office.