

REPORT TO ACADEMIC SENATE

To: Academic Senate
From: Bitu Ghafoori, Chair
Re: Activities of the **Campus Climate Committee**, 2008-2009 academic year

Meetings

The Campus Climate Committee (CCC) met 6 times during the academic year. Minutes were recorded at each meeting and are posted on the academic senate CCC website. Meetings were scheduled monthly. Holidays and other events disrupted the meetings at times.

Campus Climate Committee Members

Mary Ann Takemoto; 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)
Collins, Keith; faculty, Liberal Arts
Bitu Ghafoori; faculty, Advanced Studies in Education and Counseling
Ami Rzasa; staff, University Police
Thomas Washington; faculty, Social Work
Kim Machan; lecturer, Kinesiology
John Hamilton, staff, Student Athlete Services
Debra Gleason, staff, Educational Equity Services
Mary Jones-Harley, staff council representative, UCES
Julie Rivera, CFA representative, Chicano and Latino Studies
Deaka McClain, Student representative, Associated Students Inc.

Activities

The mission of the Campus Climate Committee (CCC) is to promote mutual acceptance and respect and to celebrate diversity in all its forms. The charge of the CCC 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: The charge and responsibilities of the committee and homelessness.

Regarding the charge and responsibilities of the committee, a number of incidents and issues were raised during the 2008-2009 year that had an impact on campus climate. Examples of issues that were relevant to the campus climate include conducting a needs assessment of the campus climate, possibly reviewing existing surveys conducted by Perrin Reid's office, the issue of veterans returning to school, and the issue of homeless on campus. During the first two meetings, the CCC committee thoroughly discussed the charge and priorities in relation to the issues that were brought up by the committee. Praveen Soni, chair of the Academic Senate, attended the CCC meeting on 10/30/09, and reviewed the charge and priorities of the CCC committee with the members. The committee chose to focus on one issue, homelessness on campus, due to the growing number of homeless students and individuals on campus.

On December 4, 2008, Bita Ghafoori was elected chair of the CCC committee, and the committee began investigating the short and long term issues of homelessness, particularly as this issue related to students. A subcommittee was formed to focus on homelessness, and it included: Mary Anne Takemoto, Betsy Decyk, Julie Rivera, Deaka McClain, and Debra Gleason. They met on January 9, 2009 to begin understanding how other universities are currently dealing with homeless students. In addition, the committee began thinking about what kinds of activities could be done to increase awareness of homelessness and resources for homelessness at CSULB. On 2/19/09 the committee invited Elsa Ramos, Multi Service Center Coordinator for the City of Long Beach to discuss resources available for homeless individuals. Ms. Ramos' presentation included information and resources (in the form of a lecture, flyers, and pamphlets). Rachelle Ang, LCSW and David San Fillipo, director of Disabled Student Services attended this important meeting.

After gathering much information on homelessness, the CCC decided to initiate the following projects: 1) establish a website; 2) provide a referral on campus for students and/or staff/faculty that may be experiencing homelessness. Rachelle Ang from DSS and the CAPS was designated as the point-person for referral; 3) increase knowledge and awareness of the campus community on the issue of homelessness and possible resources (via campus events).

The CCC was able to work with Rachelle Ang from DSS in regards to establishing her as a point-person for referrals of homeless students in need. In addition, the CCC promoted awareness of homelessness by staffing a booth with brochures and literature on homelessness at two events: 1) Disability Awareness Day 2009 (held on 4-16-09) and staffing a booth at the Police Event at University Open House on 4/21/09.

Recommendations:

- (1) The committee could continue to work with the Academic Senate to establish a website with resources, information, and referrals for students and/or community members seeking information regarding homelessness.
- (2) The committee have more members who are willing/able to devote time to carry out the charge of the committee.
- (3) The committee have some sort of budget for programs, guest speakers, etc.