Diversity Advisory Council April Minutes
April 27, 2017 11am-1230pm
Location: University Center Room 327

In Attendance: Laurie Walker, Wilena Old Person, Shaunagh McGoldrick, Julie Biando-Edwards, G.G. Weix, Adrianne Donalds, Debra Earling, Joel Iverson, Caitlin Freeman, Marcie Briggs, and Marja Unkuri-Chaundhry

Welcome
- Welcome discussion about how we are maintaining a non-anxious presence in our work and staying engaged in diversity work during challenging times.
  o Themes included focusing on balance, resilience, and renewal.
  o Ongoing engagement in self-reflection, finding a balance between engagement and self-care, being available to support colleagues and students, and taking breaks from the news.
  o Stories are powerful and create a “network of experiences;” we build understanding by understanding each other.
  o Focusing on Native American Studies, celebrating Islam, and other communities strengthens all of us.
  o See the positives in diversity and talk about success stories, such as staff that have been hired back to the University after lay-offs.

Old Business

Approve of Minutes:
- Unapproved minutes were published online, but will be removed until they can be approved at the May meeting. Laurie will edit the meeting minutes before they are re-posted. Council consensus that minutes need to be published (after editing) to maintain transparency and keep the campus community updated on our work. All minutes will be edited in 2 weeks and put in UM Box so the rest of the council can comment or edit.

- The council will move in direction of best practices – Co-chairs aim to email monthly agendas to the council 2 weeks before the next meeting and arrange the order and speakers on agenda 1 week before meeting.

New Business

- Evaluating the Diversity Awards Process Used This Year
  o DAC funded 13 groups this year, which council members report is more than in the past. Our process was for whole council to review awards this year instead of sub-committee vetting – pros/cons?
    ▪ Pros –
      o Being able to ask real-time questions as whole group – good practice for us and student groups
      o Enjoyed listening to work of student groups; this was also an effective way to get student voices in the room.
      o In terms of our resiliency it picked up our energy levels
      o Adds transparency to the process
      o We all have different perspectives, and can collectively bring more to the table
- DAC was an initial investor in student projects (such as who created the Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women documentary. They are now applying for more funds to make full-length documentary and have additional investors/donors and grant applications in review).
- DAC co-chairs will start a year end report document in UMBox to record highlights from the year including the Diversity Funding Awards
  o Cons and suggested changes for future –
    ▪ Could we invite students from great proposals to present with us at a cabinet meeting on their work or at award event?
    ▪ We need to advertise the awards sooner and do more advertising -> Kaimin (student newspaper), campus communications, and UM publications. More advertising can make the awards more competitive. DAC could utilize a scoring card with clear criteria (communicated to groups beforehand) for granting award money.
    ▪ Liked grouping the presentations together at the end of meetings, but too many in 1 day made us rush our agenda and overwhelmed our meetings near the end of the academic year. Maybe establish 3 deadlines throughout the year to provide structure to those meetings where we are hearing student groups.
    ▪ Need to communicate to faculty and staff that the awards are available to them as well.
    ▪ May need to rediscuss this in the fall when we know our budget. Our budget has gone from $10,000 to $3,500 over the years. The majority of DAC budget is spend on Diversity Funding Awards.

- Updates

  o Position Opening Executive Officer – Secretary for 2017-2018 School Year
    ▪ Roz has been appointed to the Academic Programs and Administrative Services Prioritization (APASp) Task Force, which is a time consuming commitment.
    ▪ Secretary position is open to those who may be interested. Option for co-secretary roles.
    ▪ Additional need to fill regular council seats/vacancies – need more consistent student voices and participation.
    ▪ Laurie & Wilena will request a meeting with President Sheila Stearns. The council members suggested discussing the differences between an advisory council to the President’s Office and a committee.

  o General Education Course Updates
    ▪ Joel attended this meeting, which focused on the schedule for reviewing learning outcomes and assessment. DAC may want to get involved when Indigenous focuses come under review.
    ▪ Need more conversation about diversity General Education requirements. Might be too much to ask each professor to assess diversity as line item in curriculum.
    ▪ Potential suspension of curriculum review next fall due to prioritization task force – this would transform conversation and timing of further discussion.
    ▪ General Education committee may be open to DAC joint meeting next fall. General Education is a 12-person committee with faculty and student representation.
    ▪ Chair Spring 2017: Susann M. Bradford (Sue.Bradford@UMontana.edu)
    ▪ New General Education Chair Fall 2017: James Randall (James.Randall@mso.umt.edu)

  o Reviewing and Sharing Diversity/Inclusivity Related Syllabi Statements
    ▪ Looking for as many example statements as possible to post on the DAC website. There are different ways to communicate information about inclusion and diversity - no matter your role on campus – such as faculty, staff, and administration.
      ▪ Discussion about faculty/staff concerns about what you can and cannot say on campus and in classrooms given faculty experiences with student and colleague
complaints. Sara Drake was mentioned as a possible resource as UM’s mediator in Human Resources.

- Can ask Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Office for information/support regarding campus non-discrimination policies.
- The Social Work Department Diversity Committee compiled different views on microaggressions, which has been used in Faculty Development Office and Pedagogy Project Trainings at UM and Missoula College.
- SARC also offers presentations on microaggressions.
- Conversation about stopping microaggressions in classroom versus the importance of not censoring dialogue so that learning can occur.
- The conversation included various perspectives and therefore the committee will likely take more time in subcommittee in the fall before posting any syllabi statements on a website.
- The DAC co-chairs are collecting syllabi statements, posted office/department signs, and statements read by departmental leaders over the summer for ongoing dialogue in the fall semester.

**Sample Inclusivity Statements for Syllabi that We Could Post on the DAC Website:**

**Bachelor of Social Work Classroom Climate and Inclusivity:**
The University of Montana (UM) Bachelor of Social Work mission names a commitment to prepare graduates, “to assume a variety of social work roles to address social issues, promote social justice, contribute to a just and humane society, and to be lifelong learners.” Therefore the instructor and students in the course will form a community where we encourage each other to critically examine issues related to power, privilege, and oppression. In order to have the most supportive environment possible, we must all commit ourselves to fostering an inclusive, anti-oppressive space where each person takes responsibility for their own language, actions, and interactions. The instructor will work with guest speakers and those enrolled in the course to create a classroom climate where we listen to each other and pay attention to how our words and actions have an impact on each other and the learning environment. We share the task of negotiating developing our professional voice, respecting one another, and being open to diverse perspectives and ideas. We recognize that all people make mistakes, may unintentionally offend others via microaggressions, or be triggered when interacting in multicultural groups and therefore these interactions will be viewed opportunities for mutual learning and discussion. The UM Diversity Strategic Plan recognizes and embraces several different identities including: “age, ideas and perspectives, disabilities, creed, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, national origin, race, religious and spiritual beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, and the socioeconomic and geographic composition.” Overt slurs, microaggressions, or disrespect in relation these identities or world view, immigration status, size, marital status, political affiliation, or any other identities, will be addressed directly as appropriate. The direct conversations may occur individually, in a group, or in writing (such as via email or written feedback on assignments). As a result, some class discussions may be difficult, challenging, or uncomfortable. We will negotiate and renegotiate guidelines about class discussions throughout the course, as needed. Students are encouraged to dialogue with the instructor and their classmates, as they are able, to create an inclusive and engaging classroom climate where all students are actively engaged in learning that respects diverse perspectives and is culturally safe.

**Master of Social Work Classroom Climate and Inclusivity:** The University of Montana (UM) Master’s of Social Work mission names a commitment to prepare graduates, “who will promote and support the profession’s historic commitment to social justice and equality through direct-practice activities and community-based efforts that reflect the needs and dignity of all people. The program educates students to become competent, ethical, and collaborative practitioners, community leaders, and researchers who appreciate diversity, use critical thinking skills, and understand the intersection of rural and global contexts. Graduates will embrace advances in knowledge and practice, promote the well being of people, and create a more humane society.” Therefore the instructor and students in the course will form a community where we encourage each other to critically examine issues related to power, privilege, and oppression. In order to have the most supportive environment possible, we must all commit ourselves to fostering an inclusive, anti-oppressive space where each person takes responsibility for their own language, actions, and interactions. The instructor will work with guest speakers and those enrolled in the course to create a classroom climate where we listen
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**Statement of Inclusivity and Diversity:**
This classroom is a hate-free zone, and is part of Women’s Gender and Sexuality Study commitment to addressing and redressing racism, Islamophobia, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, anti-Blackness, and all systems of privilege and oppression in our classes, in our academic units, and in higher education.

*Optional statement:* Anyone in violation of this statement will be asked to leave and will receive no credit for the day.