

**Skyline College**  
**Stewardship for Equity, Equal Employment and Diversity (SEED)**  
**Advisory Committee**  
August 21, 2006

**MEETING MINUTES**

Members: Lori Adrian, Rosie Bell, Amory Cariadus, John Chavez, Donna Elliott, Vicki Morrow. Recorder: Linda Ghio

Absent: Linda Allen; Administrator to replace Susan Andrien to be appointed.

**Introduction of Rosie Bell and farewell to Susan Andrien**

Vicki introduced Rosie Bell who will coordinate the SEED Diversity Days event. Susan Andrien has left Skyline and another administrator will be appointed to take Susan's place on the committee.

**Review and approval of May 15, 2006 minutes**

The minutes of the May 15 SEED committee were approved as written.

**SEED Diversity Days event**

The main focus of the meeting will be the April 18-19 SEED diversity event. Vicki thanked the committee for their help last year in planning this event. Vicki and Rosie Bell met and Rosie had a chance to review the committee's work. Rosie created a planning sheet, which she distributed to the committee, that outlined her ideas for the event, including a proposed title, "*Skyline College... Celebrating Our Differences!*" that would be the master title of the event. From year to year the event title would change. She proposed a title for this year, which is "*Who Are We? A Cultural Cross-Country Adventure*."

Rosie's proposal started with looking at this country and addressing regional differences as opposed to ethnic differences. Many of her students need this instruction on regional differences, which includes a look at such things as geography, language, politics, and cooking. She and Vicki discussed revisiting topics raised in the diversity training video, M.E.E.T. on Common Ground. Lori liked the ideas and saw it as educational, but expressed concern that some recent immigrants may not see that they are part of a larger culture and she asked how we would discuss culture within a culture so that we engage them. Vicki agreed and asked how we would frame the event so that it is about cross-cultural and regional variances within the US while making it personal for Skyline's students.

The committee talked about focusing on the central idea, "Who Are We" this year and focus on the culture within the culture in the next year. A suggestion was made to select two or three cultures in the second year. Vicki said if we focus on a regional breakdown (a few regions to start), we could explore the immigrant story for that region in the first year. She wants to get away from the idea that this would only be about someone if they

are from the US and Rosie said that was her goal too. Rosie does not want to just focus on race. Vicki said if we focus on a regional area (or a few to start) we could in the first year explore the immigrant story for that region.

Lori said that racial and ethnic identities are key components of one's social identity and, therefore, have to be a part of any conversation on diversity. Donna said what is being proposed is celebrating our differences and finding out what our differences are, finding out about our own country and about the different kinds of people within the US. John said he wanted to know more about the learning experience that the event would offer and is not as concerned about the connection. Rosie said she left out the multicultural differences. She wanted to focus on diversity in the various regions throughout the country and not diversity in people.

Lori doesn't disagree, but wants to make sure the event is inclusive. She said as an academic experience she feels fine with it, but doesn't feel connected as a person and wanted to know how we would connect and engage a student with this.

Vicki said based on SEED's year-long discussion on this event, she feels that diversity was central to the discussion. She said people may say that this can be construed broadly but she shares Lori's concern that the event needs to be for all of our students, that it is inviting and it is instructive. Vicki asked if the committee thinks there is a way to knit together the regional approach with something that would tie in to all of our students. Vicki suggested that there might be a location somewhere on campus, maybe in a central spot in the new student center, where the college would hang a huge display where people would be invited to make their mark and to describe themselves, where they come from and what languages they speak. We would probably need multiple venues, and someone to document it all, and collect it all. John said we do want to record and have a good description of what happened this year so students can refer to these recorded videos and information from year to year.

Lori asked the committee to come back to the goal and decide what it wants to accomplish in those two days. Within a region, who are the people, how did they get there, what are the different languages they speak, what contributions have they made? The focus of the main keynote could be about regional differences. Rosie said there may be two different programs here: an individual focus and then a larger, regional approach and Vicki wanted to know what the event would look like if we start with an individual focus. Rosie thought it could be a reflective piece that talks about the individual, their ethnicity, what they like about their culture and what are the rituals that they like. She said this could be the inclusion part that Lori is talking about and we can draw people in to the events with this reflective piece. Vicki said if we have a round of writing before the event, perhaps in early winter, then hold the event and then ask the faculty to invite students to write again following the event. It was suggested that the essays could be a part of the archives.

Vicki said that the focus of "who we are" could be incorporated into a college-wide writing assignment where faculty, staff and students would describe their cultural origins.

Rosie suggested the assignment could also include a photo collage along with the 2-3 page essay. This could be on display in the gallery theatre and the classes could come in and view it. The committee liked the idea of including a picture collage with the written essay. Writers could submit the photos electronically or Rosie would have a student assistant scan them. The photo collage/writing assignment would be followed with the celebration on campus and Vicki asked Rosie to consider the details of the celebration, which would probably include food. The first day of the event could be a cerebral or educational day and the second day could focus on the celebration with diverse foods. Vicki suggested creating a Skyline cookbook. In addition to asking students for the photo collage and story, we could also ask them to share a family recipe. She said that people are so inherently interested in themselves and their stories that it may not be hard to get them to participate.

#### Book suggestions:

The Academic Senate approved the introduction of a book for the event, but wanted the event moved to the spring in order to manage the book ordering process. The textbook deadline is October 31 and Vicki asked if there is a single book that would be read across campus. The book would have to be cross-disciplinary. Vicki asked Rosie if she has a book in mind for the regional focus and Rosie did not but thought it should be decided by department and we should give faculty a little leeway on this. Vicki said there are two ways to approach this: It would be a richer experience for students if the book is shared across disciplines and they get it coming up in other classes, like a learning community. On the other hand, faculty may prefer more flexibility and variety. Lori suggested selecting a book about differences. Rosie said Kathleen Feinblum in the Language Arts Department or Dennis Wolbers in the library would be good resources to provide recommendations.

#### Keynote speaker

Donna suggested that we find a keynote speaker who has written a book. Rosie asked if the keynote speaker could be somebody who knows about the myths and realities of stereotypes and then work in the regional differences of stereotypes. Amory said we have to find a way that people learn a lot through discussion, and there has to be a forum so you can process the feelings that people are going to have especially if you are discussing stereotypes. Vicki suggested bringing in a cultural geographer and Rosie said she will ask Donna Bestock. Rosie said that we might have one or two panelists, perhaps one who is knowledgeable about stereotyping and one who is a geographer. Lori said that one keynote is better but why not build the discussion into our programming and offer two sessions: one for those who just want to hear the keynote and then a separate one for those who want to hear the discussion afterward. Someone suggested holding the celebration over a two-week period culminating with the highlighted speaker on April 18 and festivities on April 19. Vicki suggests that we invite the keynote speaker do both a day and evening presentation so all students can participate.

#### Summary

- The committee liked the idea of a coordinated essay writing event, which would include faculty, staff and students. The essay would be entitled “Who Am I?” Details of guiding questions to be determined.
- A picture collage would be built from photos that members of the community would bring and we would set it up with help from Rosie’s student assistant.
- The committee liked the idea of a Skyline cookbook with members of the community submitting a favorite family recipe as a window into our backgrounds.
- Keynote speaker would talk about stereotyping and cultural differences. Vicki said if we invite the keynoter, maybe they can do a daytime and an evening presentation.
- The two-day event April 18-19 would include an intellectual component on the first day and a festivities component involving food and music on the second day.
- The committee will explore a general book or books on differences. The SEEED committee should email book recommendations to Rosie. She will contact Kathleen Feinblum and Dennis Wolbers and others that may be able to provide suggestions. The senate will be working on book ideas in September. The SEEED committee should have a recommendation prior to the next SEEED meeting on September 18 so that there is time for review before the book-ordering deadline on October 31.
- The committee liked the continuing, master title: Skyline College Celebrating Our Differences, with the 2007 event title, which is “*Who Are We?*” *A Cultural Cross-Country Adventure*.
- Ongoing discussions will be held with the Academic Senate to look at offering it as a “bank” assignment where students could earn extra credit points for participating in the program.

