

**Skyline College**  
**Stewardship for Equity, Equal Employment and Diversity (SEED)**  
**Advisory Committee**  
September 18, 2006

**MEETING MINUTES**

Members: Lori Adrian, Rosie Bell, Amory Cariadus, John Chavez, Barbara Daley (attending on behalf of Linda Allen), Donna Elliott, Melissa Komadina, Vicki Morrow and Richard Soyombo. Recorder: Linda Ghio

Absent: Linda Allen

New committee members

New committee members were introduced and they are: Melissa Komadina, Counseling, who is replacing Jacquie Escobar, and Richard Soyombo, Director of the Center for International Trade Development. Barbara Daley, Senior Library/Media Technician, attended the meeting on behalf of Linda Allen.

Briefing on SEED activities to date

Last year the committee reshaped itself and changed the name from Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee (EEOAC) to Stewardship for Equity, Equal Employment and Diversity (SEED). This reflects the committee's interest in taking a broader look at diversity issues and not just employment issues. The committee charge was rewritten. The committee developed the idea of having some sort of focal event that would broaden the college's look at diversity and concluded that in order to do this work, a coordinator would need to be appointed. The President's Office received donations that would support this position. The President worked with the Academic Senate to create a prospectus and the Senate screened the applications. Two highly-qualified candidates were interviewed and Rosie Bell accepted the offer. The committee has now set the dates for the spring diversity event, which are on the master calendar for April 18-19, 2007. The goal now is to give shape to that event and the committee's work for the day is to talk in more detail about the plans for this event.

Approval of Minutes of August 21, 2006

Lori wanted to clarify her statement on page 2, second paragraph, in the first sentence and change it to read, "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." The minutes were approved with this change.

Planning for Diversity Event

Rosie said that an evening activity will be planned for the evening of April 19 so that evening students and faculty can participate.

Music presentations: Rosie suggested holding a concert and arranging for a keynote speaker. She spoke with Music Instructor Jude Navari and he is working on a project

called “Music of America.” He has put the April 19<sup>th</sup> date on his calendar and will talk to his choir about doing a 30-minute performance that would feature songs of America, such as *Shenandoah*, *New York, New York*, etc. She also contacted Frank Markovich in the music department and he would like to be included as he teaches on Thursday. She will also speak with Billy Robinson who directs the bands. A variety of American music could be performed and Lori said this could include jazz, gospel, and hip hop. Rosie said she will talk with the instructors about the venue and what the committee would want them to do. The choir might sing three to four selections and the bands could do two to three selections. It could go a little longer because we are looking for participation from the classes that are here from 7-10 pm. The presentation could also feature a keynote speaker that would talk for less than an hour.

Richard asked what the committee is trying to achieve with the event. He asked if the committee would want to present something reflecting cultural diversity through dance and song and if so, what about presenting something on the history of that region or people who are being featured. Rosie said the focus is “Who Are We, A Cross-Cultural Adventure” and said we would feature songs and dances native to the U.S. She would like to speak with Diana Cushway about the dance component. Richard is concerned that the event would not speak to most of the ethnic groups at Skyline.

Vicki said that Richard’s comments are similar to what Lori is saying about the event because we have such a strong cross-cultural, immigrant population in our student body. She expressed a concern that two of our committee members who are immigrants are raising this issue. Lori asked for clarification of what the committee means by “native” and what it means by culture. Vicki said she was referring to music that has a long history in the U.S. but said that most of this music has come from somewhere else. She said there is a way to knit all these ideas together, but the committee will have to really think about how it would be done. Donna Elliott added that music is different throughout the states because of immigration patterns. Rosie said she would like to look at putting together a good cross-section of music and show how music has changed and evolved over time. Barbara said American music is made up of music from all over the world and is recognized the world over for its diversity.

Richard asked what the Skyline student population could take from all this. Vicki said the music is possibly a great starting point. She asked if the college’s music faculty can come up with a keynote speaker and a look at a variety of music. John said the program would have a lot of the information about these connections between music and immigrants and this could be included in the archives for this event in the new student center. Richard suggested talking to the jazz station KCSM once we further define the music presentation.

Book suggestions and Photo Collage: Rosie spoke with Language Arts Instructor Rachel Bell, who developed a list of 25 books that would be good possibilities. Rosie chose two from the list: *The Color of Water* by James McBride, a black man’s tribute to his mother who was a white, Jewish woman that married a black man, and *What Are You? Voices of Mixed Race People*, by Pearl Fuyo Gaskins. Most of the reviews were good on these

books. Another option would be *Part Asian, 100% Hapa*, by Kip Fullbeck, who is part Asian and Irish. It is a compilation of photos that show what people are and Rosie thinks it would tie in with the idea of the photo collage display that was proposed at the last meeting. She said that Art Instructor Bridget Fischer wants to bring this author to Skyline next fall. Barbara Daley said it is a similar idea to the film shown at the spring MOT Film Festival that covers these issues. Barbara also added that the San Mateo Library is doing talks around *The Kite Runner* and Rosie said the San Francisco Library is doing something similar around *The Hummingbird's Daughter*. Vicki said that idea of “one college—one book” was in our discussion early on, but there was reservation about defining a book choice that tightly. The committee asked John and Jacquie Escobar to speak with the Academic Senate and the senate liked the idea of a book, but did not want it so formally constrained as to only focus on one book. Vicki asked if the committee wanted to feature a book and essay-writing component and whether the essays might be compiled in a book format. The committee talked last month about a display in the gallery theatre. Barbara said the college did a similar display several years ago in the Library. Richard suggested that the college interview and videotape people who may be in mixed relationships and display that.

Vicki said that in time we may want to ramp up the degree of resources that we dedicate to this work and put it in the budget for funding. Right now, however, the committee wants to keep the event small but great. The committee needs to make smart and strategic choices. We could do something that features photos of Skyline people, but it should be very concentrated this year and broaden it over the long term. This first year, we have to make hard choices about what to include and exclude, but really inspire people to look forward to this in future years. Lori said that there is a lot of interest in a book and photos are also of interest.

Keynote speaker: Rosie’s student assistant, Priscilla, has gathered a list of potential keynote speakers, and San Jose State seems to have a nice collection of people in their American Studies and Geography programs that might be good possibilities. Rosie has not contacted them yet and she wants SEEED to look at the list of names that Priscilla compiled which also provides highlights of what they are doing. Rosie searched on the internet for information on an anthropologist and a cultural geographer. She will also ask Priscilla to research a possible ethno-historian and music historian.

Collage and other displays: The committee talked about a campus-wide collage and thought it could be displayed in the Gallery Theatre and in the new Student Support Center cafeteria, however Amory said there will be no bulletin boards in the new center. Barbara said the Library has two display cases and Donna Elliott suggested they be displayed in multiple buildings. Vicki said that the display cases throughout Building 1 should be used as well as those in front of the Learning Center. Vicki said the collage should be dispersed throughout the campus.

Cookbook: The committee discussed creating a cookbook at the last meeting and Priscilla will be a good resource if we decide to do this as she has compiled one before.

Publicizing the event: Rosie will meet with Sandy Irber and Shelly Hausman to discuss the timeline for publicizing the event and determine ways in which information will be disseminated. Vicki said the college has upgraded its ability to get information out so now it should work smoothly. Shelly is fast, accurate and reliable and it should be an improved process.

Program content ideas: The committee resumed discussion on the content of the program and Lori said we might want to consider the area of research and how we could include faculty or student research as it relates to culture and diversity. We should find out what is interesting to the students and one of the areas that is very popular is cross-cultural dating. Rosie said that cross-cultural parenting is also a good idea. Vicki said these ideas are responsive to our full-range of students and the adults who are here because we have a wide array of student ages at Skyline.

Student Involvement: Richard asked if we can approach the student body and Rosie replied that she has met with the ASSC and they are enthused about the project. She asked them to be ambassadors and come to the classes and hold a 2-3 minute talk about the essay and photo collage. Both Amory and Rosie agreed that if you get the students to ask the students you will get a better response. Richard suggested that we include student's work in the area of culture and diversity and they could do their own presentation. Rosie suggested having students, faculty and staff bring in photos or ask the photography students to take photos of people on campus. The college would need to have release forms signed and Vicki said it would depend upon our intention. She asked what the photo collage would be designed to depict. Richard said it would give some ownership to students. Vicki said this project would give that ownership because it includes everyone and their cultural origins. It has that power. It is conceivable that someone like Arthur Takayama may assign a photo project to his students that might show the faces of Skyline, but it would be separate from the event. Donna would like to photograph and interview the groups that assemble together on campus and find out and who they are. Vicki said this is a good idea for the future. Rosie will talk to Arthur to see if he would like to dovetail into this project either this year or next. Melissa said that the student involvement piece might be successful if instructors actually make the assignment to the students. She suggested that we ask a student rep from ASSC to join the SEED committee to also help with student involvement.

Book themes and how they relate to the inclusion and diversity focus: Vicki said we need to choose a book very quickly (before the next meeting) so that faculty can build it into their curriculum. The committee needs to resolve it today or electronically in the next week. Melissa is the Academic Senate link on the SEED committee and she said that Carla Campillo wants the book recommendation as soon as possible. The senate meets this Friday, September 22. Rosie suggested that Melissa approach the senate with the recommendation of the two books that were discussed: *What Are You?* and *The Color of Water*. Amory wanted to know how *What Are You?* relates to the original, regional focus of the event and are we moving away from that focus with that book. Rosie said we are moving away from the cross-cultural country adventure. Vicki read the minutes from August which said that the committee liked the overarching title and what

we are debating is the cultural cross-country regional theme. Donna liked the US regional focus, as did Rosie, but Rosie said that if the majority of the committee does not want to go that way we should look at it differently. Vicki said that it is important that this event does something for everyone across the campus and it has to make sense with our immigrant students. The key is to frame it so that we make it inclusive and the inclusion piece that we decided on last month was the campus-wide essay-writing project. Lori said, however, that diversity is a very important focus and you cannot talk about regional differences without talking about it. It is hard to fit all that we think is important into that regional coverage. Vicki said if we do not include an obvious discussion about culture and diversity we won't capture people right away. Rosie suggested that we focus on something like "Who are we - an immigrant perspective." Amory said it might help people who are Caucasian to think of their own family's travels to this country as well as be inclusive to immigrants as well. Amory said when some of us talk about traditions and ethnicity that we have a conversation that includes that reality for those people that have been here for hundreds of years. Melissa said everyone's roots are different and how far back do we want to go. Our word choices, for those who are native to the Americas, are important. Rosie wants to be careful about our words but we have to come up with something that is general enough and she suggested Roots and Remembrances. Vicki said that the committee likes "Who are we" but is still struggling with the second part, which needs to include the immigrant perspective. She suggests that the wording be Roots and Remembrances for now until the committee meets again. Barbara and Lori agreed that this wording is non-offensive.

Melissa will talk to the senate about the two books prospects and she will report their recommendation to the SEED committee. It will go to all faculty to see which faculty would like to include it in their curriculum. Amory asked if these books are still the best fit given the discussion on inclusion. The committee agreed that *What Are You? Voices of Mixed Race People*, may not be. Rosie will find another book to replace it. In addition to getting the senate's blessing, Rosie said we should talk to Connie Bering about getting her buy-in. John suggests that we approach Connie in order to encourage the faculty. Vicki asked that Rosie forward Rachel Bell's list to the SEED committee and come up with three possibilities that could be sent to Rosie. A suggestion was made to include a book on how to write one's memoirs, like oral histories. Vicki suggested that we speak to Sandy Irber as one of the WOW! Authors wrote *Your Life as Story*, which is a good reference for writing memoirs. Lori said could we have a workshop on how to document your roots and remembrances. Eric Brenner has taught a class on Oral History. Eric could do a workshop on writing memoirs or genealogy. The committee agreed that this topic would fit this year's focus and Amory said that it would help provide an understanding of your roots and history so you can identify who you are.

Speakers: The committee agreed to still look at speakers centering around the music theme and possibly around the theme of remembrance.

Photo Displays: The committee still approves of the idea of having a photo collage but will need to determine where to set that up. John asked if there is going to be a description of what we want students to describe in the photo collage and is it similar to

what is shown in the book *What Are We?* Rosie said we are we talking about putting the photos near the essays. Lori will try to get a copy of *Faces of America* as an example.

Cookbook: It should be posted to our website, Melissa said, so that recipes could be added from year to year. Rosie will talk to Shelly Hausman to set up a website. Amory said the nice thing about printing the cookbook or the photo collage is that we could sell these items which would help fund the program in the future. John said it could be a simple website too that posts information for now, with links to the components as we know them. The college could sell the cookbook in other places, have autographed copies, or give out as gifts. Vicki said we could create a physical cookbook later so that it could be given out eventually.

Richard expressed a concern about what it is that SEED is presenting. Are we asking people to document their roots and remembrances and tie them to what our society is now and, if so, how would these ideas be merged together? Richard also said that he received an email from Georgi La Berge at the SMCCC Foundation that mentioned that people can apply for grants. Richard said we could submit a grant to invite State Assembly members who are women or minorities to present information about their backgrounds, and, if not for this event, perhaps as a separate event. Rosie said that Common Ground held a forum like this a few years ago. Richard is interested in this, but not for this event.

Essay-writing project: Rosie said faculty, staff and students could write a reflection paper about what they remember best. The theme for this year could be Roots, Remembrances and Reflections, but the committee will discuss this in a future meeting.

#### Other news

Barbara Daley announced that Skyline's Museum of Tolerance is holding a film festival, called "Diverse-ability: Culture and Community," on Wednesday, October 18. This first film is about hearing impaired and the February film festival will focus on little people.

#### Next meeting

The next meeting is on Monday, October 16. Prior to the next meeting the committee should make three book recommendations and decide how to characterize the reflection paper.