

Skyline College
Stewardship for Equity, Equal Employment and Diversity (SEEED)
Advisory Committee
November 19, 2007

MEETING MINUTES

Attendance: Rosie Bell, John Chavez, Barbara Daley, Nancy Lam, Vicki Morrow, and Phyllis Taylor. Guest: Gerry Frassetti. Recorder: Linda Ghio

Absent: Lori Adrian, Amory Cariadus, Donna Elliott, Melissa Komadina and Richard Soyombo

Review and approval of October minutes

A typo on page 3 needs to be corrected. The October minutes were approved with this correction.

Gerry Frassetti's proposal for diversity training

Gerry Frassetti has been working at the district level on diversity training and was responsible for a pilot project to provide *M.E.E.T. on Common Ground* training last semester. The goal of the project is to develop a cadre of people at each college to provide on-going training. Forty-one participants attended Skyline's two-day training. Gerry said it was a powerful experience and feedback from participants indicated an increased interest to continue to provide training. As a result of the Skyline workshop, he has presented the idea to Cañada College and the District Office. He thanked Skyline for sponsoring the workshop; another will be offered here in the spring.

Faculty indicated they wanted something they could relate to the classroom or include in their course content. Gerry met with Jing Luan and developed a proposal to invite faculty to include in their courses a study of factors that create an inclusive classroom and foster an environment conducive to learning. Jing feels that certain classes (e.g. Social Sciences) lend themselves to researching social issues and they would be a good starting point. Students could research the factors that contribute to or deny an inclusive classroom, either as an extra credit or a voluntary project. Instructors and students could then compile the information and pass those ideas to other classes (e.g. creative writing; composition) to create vignettes and dialogues illustrating those ideas. Once completed, they would be turned over to dramatic or communications arts classes where they could be produced and readied for presentation. The effort would culminate in a series of workshops presented by students and faculty to the college community. The vignettes could be videotaped and shared throughout the district.

The outcomes would be that instructors, both new and veteran, might recognize subtle problems that create a discordant classroom. They might become more aware learning styles favored by different groups and vary their teaching methods accordingly. It may alert everyone in the classroom that they have subtle biases they're not aware of. It benefits the students by working on a project that encourages more intensive contact and

deeper sharing among themselves. They may ultimately take the principles they've learned with them into society. Finally, college and district management would have an opportunity to hear voices they may not have heard before. Gerry is presenting the idea to get an understanding of potential problems (coordination, funding, etc.) and establish if it is worth developing.

Vicki suggested that Gerry present it to Skyline's and the other colleges' Academic Senates. She said that the spirit of the idea is good and she thinks it is important to recognize that many teachers already engage their students in these activities and that many teachers in a variety of ways work with diversity in the context of their classes. Rosie said that Social Science/Creative Arts division at Skyline already incorporates some of these ideas in their classes. She is concerned that while the proposal focuses on race and ethnicity it does not mention religion, ageism, or disabilities. Vicki added that Skyline is more diverse in terms of demographics and ethnicity than the other colleges. Gerry said the proposal does not intend to exclude any of the diverse groups.

Phyllis said the ongoing need as expressed on a broader level by Rosie is more apparent. She feels that Gerry is supported by classified staff, and if he were to develop a program that involves faculty and students, she hoped that classified staff would still be involved. Gerry said that while the project focuses on the classroom, classified staff would still be involved because many of the same principles would apply to their interactions with students. He asked how the proposal might be presented to faculty, especially when faculty are already overloaded and already deeply involved with diversity issues. Vicki said it would clearly be voluntary and would be an opportunity for interested parties, perhaps for a small group. Learning communities might adopt such a project. Phyllis added that there would need to be a good way to offer it generally to the larger campus community.

John asked if Gerry has researched how the project might improve student retention since this is not mentioned in the proposal. Gerry said there is abundant research available and he will certainly incorporate it in the revised proposal. He added that often diverse student with similar backgrounds cluster together for support, but sometimes that support group does not travel with them. This project might empower students to know how to deal with issues on their own outside the protective college environment.

Rosie said that the Social Science/Creative Arts Division is concerned with plagiarism and apathy, and questions whether or not it is related to specific groups. It would help faculty members if they knew more about learning styles so they might structure their classes. Gerry concluded that his plan is to present the proposal to Academic Senate and has talked to Carla Campillo. He concluded by thanking SEEED and Skyline College for the support he has received.

Earth Day, April 22:

Barbara reported that the One Book One Community project is underway. The first two choices of authors, Eli Wiesel (*After the Darkness*) and Jhumpa Lahiri (*The Namesake*) declined. The next option was to focus on topics about the environment. She talked to

Kathleen Beasley, who is behind the project and Al Gore is the first choice. However, instead of tapping into *An Inconvenient Truth*, he has a new book called *Assault on Reason*. The Peninsula Library System (PLS) decided if it does not do a fiction piece, they want a non-fiction book that reads like fiction. Barbara said it looks like the focus is off environmental issues and is on political issues. If Al Gore turns them down, they would choose Dave Eggers book, "What is the What," which is about a Sudanese Lost Boy or possibly something from Sherman Alexi, who has two new books. It will be discussed at their next meeting. The PLS decided that they want to "go big" and for the first few years they need to get really big-name people. Rosie asked who pays for the project and Barbara said the PLS has money from various sources. Isabelle Allende donated her services this year. Phyllis said if the choice is the Dave Eggers book, she is already planning on using it as a classroom piece.

Campus Read ideas for next year

When Barbara spoke with Kathleen Beasley, they discussed the idea of doing *To Kill A Mockingbird* for the Campus Read project. It was used in April for the Big Read project, but the projects are not the same. The National Endowment for the Humanities sponsors that event and they give a list of books to the community that they approve for the readings. *To Kill a Mockingbird* was used this year. Kathleen felt that the only people who were really interested in this book were older, white people who have great reverence for the book and film. Kathleen felt, however, that the book is dated and the characters are very stereotypical, and she strongly suggested that we consider other writers who could really speak to young people today. Vicki and Phyllis agreed with Kathleen's thoughts. Vicki suggested that if the college does a Campus Read project for 2008-09, SEEED should develop a list of book possibilities and Phyllis suggested that it be done soon so that Connie Beringer can have it early enough so that it can be incorporated into faculty's syllabi. Phyllis will get input on "hip" literature from faculty and Vicki would like to share it first with SEEED and then work on it with Academic Senate as we did last time.

Facing History and Ourselves

Rosie distributed handouts on Facing History and Ourselves, a project that she thought would be good for Skyline. She has worked with the organization for awhile and has gone to some of their presentations. They have good resources for the classroom and professional development workshops for instructors. She said they will come in and tailor their workshops for the community here. Vicki noticed that the handout indicates they work with middle- and high-school teachers and Rosie said that they work with her too. They are privately funded and Vicki asked if their fee is service based. Rosie said when she worked with them they did not bring it up. She said someone else is paying for their time. Rosie thought it might be something for faculty in lieu of Gerry's project. Barbara said she attended Gerry's first M.E.E.T. workshop and she felt like she had heard it all and did not go to the second one. Vicki said Skyline has a lot of new staff and this is an argument in favor of looking at something that is more classroom focused, which Gerry's was not. Phyllis felt that this project sounds like the mission that Gerry is trying to convey and why reinvent it if this prebuilt project would work for Skyline. Vicki asked the committee to check out the website and bring their ideas back to the next

meeting. Instructors can take a class online and they do have to pay for it, but it could be done through professional development, or as John suggested it could be a flex activity. Rosie said when she spoke to the director a few years ago he was interested in working with Skyline. They are located in Hayward and Vicki suggested that they be invited to the January 28 SEED meeting. Rosie said she will make the connection with them to see if they can come to the January meeting and tell us what they might be able to do.

Update on Nina Jablonski event

Vicki said the event was fabulous and the theatre was completely filled. Nancy will get the feedback from the esthetician teacher who brought students to the event. It was mandatory that the group went and a lot of other students in the cosmetology program attended as well. Vicki said it was videotaped and is supposed to be on Skyline's website. As soon as it is on the web, people can view it and use it as an ongoing resource. Barbara said there were students from Notre Dame and Foothill College at the event. Rosie said instructor Jennifer Merrill researched the contact information of all anthropology instructors within a 25-mile radius of Skyline and they were sent press releases about the event. Ms. Jablonski did not talk down to the audience, nor did she talk over their heads. Barbara said it was a mature audience and the questions were excellent.

SEED events calendar

Phyllis distributed a calendar of Skyline events held since September and it included an estimated count of attendees. The calendar will help SEED keep an eye on diversity-related events. She pointed out that one of the events held in Pacifica is on the calendar, but the Latin Film Festival showings were not. She asked how these decisions are made. Vicki said the Latin Film Festival group asked her if Skyline could be a venue for a film showing. It involved Jacquie Escobar so in effect it was a Skyline event. Vicki asked if SEED wanted to develop a process for reviewing which events would qualify. She thinks SEED should resist being a central contact for all events at Skyline, but she thinks SEED should have a calendar that shows all diversity events whether or not the committee has a hand in it. If it is at Skyline and the PIO office is publicizing the event, and it presents value to students in terms of diversity, then it should be on the SEED calendar. Rosie thinks it is a good way to get the community to see Skyline and it might be nice to distribute out a list to attendees of upcoming events that are open to the public. Vicki said it may be difficult because events change frequently, but perhaps it could be more of a handout. Phyllis said it could read, "Next Month at Skyline" or Vicki suggested "Coming Soon to Skyline." Rosie would like to see a website display of theatre and gallery openings and Vicki said that is being looked at as part of the website redesign project. Phyllis asked the group if it wanted to include something on Earth Day. Barbara said there is a book called *A Year Without "Made in China"* by Sarah Bongiorni, and while it is controversial, it may have relevance across several departments at Skyline.

Display space for event posters

- a. Bldg. 1 stairwell display case key: Linda Ghio will give Phyllis and Shelly Hausman the key. It will not be used by A&R, but just for event information.

- b. Other display spaces: Display spaces are needed in Building 6 and Vicki and Lori will work on it.
- c. The Main Theatre lobby is for use by Social Science/Creative Arts but Phyllis asked if there could be one section where SEED could put up poster displays.

Signage for Bldg. 1 and Main Theatre

This suggestion came out of a concurrent enrollment night and Kenny Gonzalez said the college needs to have better signage directing people to the Main Theatre and Building 1... Vicki will address it with CIP at its next meeting. Barbara said the signage needs to be apparent at both sides of the campus.

Other news

Phyllis reported Nate Nevado did a tremendous job coordinating the Hip Hop conference at Skyline. It went off seamlessly and the Saturday event was fantastic. Things were handled with integrity, promptness and thoroughness. Phyllis said one of the things that came up was developing curriculum around Hip Hop.

December and January meetings

The December 17 meeting will be cancelled. The next meeting will be January 28, 2008.