

SLAAC minutes 12/11/14

In attendance: Cody Watson, Kathryn Millis, Ellen Tinder, Claire Halffield, Smita Rahman, Hiroko Chiba, Julianne Miranda, Lynn Ishikawa, Fadi Fawaz

Guests: Carrie Klaus, Renee Madison

Carrie provided an update on **faculty training related to diversity, microaggressions, inclusiveness**, etc.

- In their planning, she and Renee (and others began with the question of whether the training should be mandatory and now realize that it probably does need to be mandatory.
- They just met with a group of chairs to talk about training; hopefully this will be a way to follow-up after the Day of Conversation.

Re: training, SLAAC's input is welcome. The plan now is to offer customized and interactive opportunities for training. They will work through departments for this; a call is going out to chairs and program directors to ask, "What is the place of diversity/inclusion" within that department and what are areas that need help or that could benefit from training. Responses will be "due" after the Day of Conversation, after which training will be designed. Departments might be paired in conversation, or there might be reading groups, etc. Conversations are happening with Amy Haug too regarding staff training.

Renee: Faculty and staff training will probably be separate, but will be planned with the other training in mind. A question has been raised regarding student input in these trainings. SLAAC could be a good committee to help with this input.

Carrie: Students could be helpful with potential "blind spots" that departments might have.

Julianne: If it's done on a department level, won't that make staff and faculty training very different, and create a division? A more holistic approach might be better, since we're all part of the same community.

Renee: Good point, and one that she's thinking about. It's important for everyone to be speaking the same language. There's also long-term planning that needs to happen, which would have to take that into account.

Kathryn: It is very important to think of staff and faculty in an inclusive way. Many staff in the library have a lot of student contact, for example, and that's probably true for many people on campus. Will the training be a "faculty thing" only? A separate "staff thing."

Carrie: It's not meant to be exclusive, but the curricular aspect is important.

Smita: Is the Day of Conversation meant to be a springboard for training? Will it be implemented in the Spring?

Carrie: Yes.

Smita: Are there models of training?

Carrie: We're trying to come up with a more customized model.

Renee: It can't be one person's job or one committee's assignment. Our hope is that we can all agree on some priorities and support those as a university and provide programs and training that is part of the structure.

Smita: What about the size of the department and the ones with more tenured faculty? Some untenured department members might feel uncomfortable.

Carrie: Individual responses could also be asked for, but there's still a question about this. Is that model going to mask certain viewpoints? There may be faculty who feel uncomfortable sharing their viewpoint.

Cody: There is sometimes a disconnect between students and faculty in terms of curriculum, diversity, learning, assignments, etc. As a residential campus, students see the campus as their home, and faculty come to that home, essentially. So in that sense, everyone needs to share a certain perspective.

Fadi: Some students are unhappy because they feel the issue of diversity doesn't concern them, and some students wonder why they weren't included in the conversation or planning for the Day of Conversation.

Renee has some concerns about how the day is being talked about. Her feeling is that it needs to be framed as a valuable part of a liberal arts opportunity.

Both short and long term goals/conversations are important, and SLAAC's feedback could be helpful with that.

Smita: SLAAC would like to get a report on the department feedback in Feb or March. Committee could be a sounding board since it contains staff, faculty, and students. Maybe Feb? SLAAC could be a kind of clearinghouse for information/ideas.

Kathryn: When will there be a plan for the day?

Renee: We probably won't know until January.

Kathryn: Part-time employees who have other jobs might not be able to attend Day of Conversation.

Renee: The general thought is that it would be the whole day, and that there would be materials, reporting, videos, etc. to provide for people who can't be present.

Hiroko: Is faculty/staff training geared toward how we deal with students? Issues can happen between faculty members as well. Or from students. Will this be included in the training?

Renee: That was a discussion point with the chairs. Yes, there can be that kind of conflict, so tools are necessary for recognizing those biases. Those are ongoing opportunities for training. And individuals can provide that feedback too.

(Carrie and Renee left)

Approved minutes

Smita: Schedule and agenda for next semester

- Feb 12, 26; March 12; April 9 and 23; May meeting will be called if necessary
- Kathryn: some committees do a handover meeting where old and new members can meet and talk
- Smita: We could do that for April 23 meeting if elections are done by then.
- Also, we need agenda items for next semester.
- Academic Integrity/Use of academic materials/electronic sources
- Kathryn commented on how the language might be outdated
- Is co-curricular excused absence/grade grievance issue coming to us in spring? Julianne says yes about grade grievance. Group meeting about the excused absence hasn't met yet.
- Julianne says academic integrity issue may need to be spread over the first two meetings. URC training is also going to be happening in the spring.
- Smita will send out the policy prior to the meeting.

Cody: Some conversations about perceptions about Greek Life among faculty and staff.

Smita: This issue has come up a lot, so we should think more about how this could happen.

Cody has suggestions about this.

Claire: Myrna Hernandez sent out a letter after the UVA incident, and she sees that it's possible that people might blame the Greek system for many of the problems on campus.

Cody: Issue has also come up regarding faculty canceling classes; some students feel like they're punished for missing class but that there's no accountability for faculty. Fadi suggested that this point is unlikely to gain traction with faculty.

Mtg. adjourned at 5:01