

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

Members Present:

Chalak Richards, Chair (Caruso School of Law)
Sara Barton (Office of the Chaplain)
Kenzi Bishara (Seaver College)
Luisa Blanco Raynal (School of Public Policy)
Rebecca Campos (Student Affairs)
Lila Carlsen (Provost's Office)
La Shonda Coleman (Student Affairs)
Tanya Cooper (Caruso School of Law)
Bryant Crubaugh (Seaver College)
Jamila Cupid (Seaver College)
Robert deMayo (Graduate School of Education and Psychology)
Dawn Emrich (Public Safety)
Melissa Espinoza (School of Public Policy)
Nate Ethell (Integrated Marketing and Communications)
Alex Forero (Integrated Marketing and Communications)
Sandra Harrison (Office of Student Accessibility)
Seta Kahjarian (Office of Institutional Effectiveness)
Valerie Nowacki (Graziadio Business School)
Mark Roosa (Libraries)
Maria Wright (Graduate School of Education and Psychology, Guest)
Monique Smaby (ex officio)

Members Absent:

Natalia Escobedo-Molina (Seaver College)
Jeannie Gentile (Provost's Office)
Lauren McGrath (Human Resources)
Michael Shires (School of Public Policy, Proxy)
Mark Tribbitt (Graziadio Business School)

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

Eric Wilson (Ex-Officio, University Church)

AGENDA

- I. Call to order
 - A. Chalak Richards called the meeting to order at 8:32 AM.
- II. Opening prayer
 - A. Maria Wright led the opening prayer.
- III. Review and approval of UDC minutes from November 10, 2020 meeting.
 - A. Ms. Richards noted that updates from schools that were not covered in the last meeting were submitted via email and included in the minutes. Copies of the minutes can be viewed on the diversity website [here](#).
 - B. La Shonda Coleman moved for approval.
 - C. Robert deMayo seconded the motion.
 - D. The Council unanimously approved the minutes from the November 10, 2021 meeting.
- IV. Diversity Council Member interactions at individual schools or departments
 - A. Ms. Richards wanted to discuss if new processes needed to be put in place for the diversity counsel pertaining to taking remarks. She asked Luisa Blanco Raynal to share an interaction she had that sparked this conversation topic.
 - B. Ms. Blanco Raynal, shared that it is the responsibility of the Council to work with the school's faculty, staff, and students. She would like to find the proper channel of communications when there is feedback for the Council. She has interacted with a faculty member that strongly disagrees with the definition of diversity that the University is using and the approach that the University is taking toward diversity. This faculty member has interacted with Ms. Blanco Raynal for the last two years in an informal way, expressing their disagreement with the University and expressing their different views. She has been approached multiple times while in the copy room or getting coffee and filed a grievance with human resources (HR). HR replied that since she is a representative of the UDC she is

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

responsible to listen to their concerns. In turn, Ms. Blanco Raynal stepped down from the UDC for a semester to protect herself from these interactions. The Provost Office provided support that she should avoid those interactions and should not endure complaints every time she runs into this faculty member. She would like to work with committee members to determine the proper channel to intake these types of disagreements and also for positive feedback.

1. Ms. Richards wanted to clarify that the UDC does not take HR or EEO complaints and to be mindful when creating processes for these comments. She recommended that if there are future complaints the UDC member should reach out to a member at another school to have an outside voice included.
2. Nate Ethell: Asked if there is a point that HR thought it would move from a conversation to harassment and did HR give feedback on when that line would be considered crossed.
 - a) Ms. Blanco Raynal responded that she wants to focus on having the right processes in place for people to share their thoughts without informally approaching UDC members.
3. Ms. Coleman, thanked Ms. Blanco Raynal for sharing her experience and offered feedback on what we can do moving forward. She noted that Title IX has some differing regulations on how that information is shared and managed. If there are concerns to potential sex discrimination please bring it her attention to start the correct process. She clarified that staff are not responsible to determine if it is a Title IX issue but Ms. Coleman's office can assist in advising each person's rights and options. HR has policies in place to address concerns of race or other concerns. For these concerns the Equal Employment Officer would be the point of contact (they are currently hiring for that position right now, Sarah Viera is the contact at this time). She shared that the UDC has the opportunity to identify the way that schools handle concerns relating to topics covered by the UDC.

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

Providing a list to the schools of what are appropriate concerns to bring to the UDC's attention would be helpful and specific identifying the line where it becomes an EEO or Title IX concern. She suggested that the UDC create a way for feedback to be submitted and to make it clear that it is not appropriate to submit feedback outside of that form.

- a) Ms. Richards, thanked Ms. Coleman for the insights. She agreed that it would be helpful to have a process set up on how to provide feedback so members are not approached at inappropriate times.
4. Ms. Wright added that when you open up the window for feedback that can create a responsibility to finding solutions. It would be important to make it clear what the expectations are when submitting feedback and how these will be handled or solved. She suggested learning about existing processes that are available and appropriate contacts for complaints that do not pertain to the UDC as there may be a need to redirect certain complaints out of the Council's scope.
 - a) Ms. Coleman added in chat that the Council may want to designate someone on the UDC to serve as point person for reviewing the concerns and then present them to the Chair or UDC.
5. Mr. deMayo, thanked Ms. Blanco Raynal for sharing her story and is sorry she experienced that. He would like to note that there is a history of similar experiences to Ms. Blanco Raynal's in this type of space that is often common. Those who represent diversity councils are then subject to receive offensive complaints. A standardized format to submit concerns would be helpful to offset this. He raised the concern that UDC has had a confusing role at the University of what falls under their responsibility and role of the representatives. In his time on the UDC he has had to redirect many complaints to the correct process. He asked how to differentiate when to bring a concern to a school's diversity council and when to bring it to the UDC.

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

- a) Ms. Richards thanked Mr. deMayo for his concerns. She noted that in this meeting we are raising the concerns and the will of the Council to explore those processes. See noted that Ms. Wright brought up in the chat what about the roles that each school's diversity council handles.
 6. Mr. Ethell asked if the UDC has ever had a formal feedback method in place? He suggested having an email in place where we can direct concerns to. The Council agreed that there has not been a formal feedback opportunity in the past. Mr. deMayo added that there has always been confusion on the responsibility that UDC has. Sarah Harrison agreed that it is ambiguous on each school's diversity council role and the UDC role.
 - a) Rebecca Campos added that bias response would be a concern since that takes training and does not want to create an expectation that there would be a response.
 7. Ms. Richards summarized this conversation that there will be a need for clarity and precision in language when crafting a feedback option. She suggested 2-3 individuals to look into the scope of this project and solutions such as creating an email address, putting a line on the website, or a google form.
 - a) Ms. Coleman suggested defining the scope of what concerns will be addressed at each school level, UDC level, and HR level. This will help to avoid issues being submitted that are not related to the UDC. She also suggested to provide examples of what is appropriate to submit in this feedback channel.
 - b) **Action Item:** Mr. Ethell volunteered to assist on this project as well as Ms. Blanco Raynal and Ms. Coleman.
- V. School and department updates and areas of support
- A. Chaplain's Office

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

1. Sara Barton shared that they hosted with the Center for Faith and Learning and religion and philosophy divisions an opportunity for faculty and staff to and learn from Willy Jenkins' book *After Whiteness* and attend an event. Over 150 attended the event. Feedback has been received to invite Willy Jenkins to speak again and discuss what belonging means in our classrooms. The event created conversations about how higher education is influenced by whiteness.
2. Ms. Barton also shared that a spiritual life survey was distributed across all schools in December. Feedback was received from over 600 Seaver College members and 600 surveys from other schools. It focused on the spiritual fortitude scale. It was found that, Black students reported the highest levels of spiritual fortitude. Further research on that data will be done by a GSEP student in the marriage and therapy program.
3. She shared that the Chaplain's office is hosting a new series, targeted specifically for student affairs and Seaver faculty called Stories of Hope. Speakers will be invited from across the University to share how they overcame something in life and came out with hope. The first event is on Dontá Morrison, a phd student at GSEP, will be speaking on Wednesday, February 17, 12 PM <https://pepperdine.zoom.us/j/89080530102>. She is looking for a staff member to speaker and is taking nominations.

B. Office of Institutional Effectiveness

1. Ms. Richards introduced Seta Kahjarian from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness as the newest member of the Council. Ms. Kahjarian shared that she is excited to take over Jasmin's role and has reviewed the latest minutes and the OIE updates that Jasmin submitted are correct.
2. Ms. Richards added to suggest to each school's community to complete and share the climate survey that OIE put together and shared in the last meeting.

C. Student Affairs

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

1. Ms. Coleman shared an update for student affairs. They are actively working to have conversations around equity, diversity, and inclusion. They have had a number of events and training, one particularly on implicit bias. Connie Horton has been working to make diversity a priority in training new employees. They have asked each area in student affairs to submit a report on where they are prioritizing diversity and where there are gaps that the school can help bridge. University leaders have met with students about what are the next steps that can be taken toward equity, diversity, and inclusion. They identified the next step would be an event setup as a roundtable talk with faculty and students to talk about these issues and to engage in meaningful dialogue to make changes as a community.
2. She also shared that two opportunities have been created for students to heal. She highlighted a dance healing event called Afrojoy. There has been positive feedback from students, this event will be happening again on February 16th & 17th.
3. Ms. Campos also shared another recent event, an Open letter to estrangement, about recontextualizing Dr. King's letter. There was a successful open mic poetry night. This month one is scheduled specifically for Black students and partnered with BSA. There are two new race and identity based clubs, the feminist club, and Tiawanese club. There is also a partnership with IMC for an event on [Women of Color in STEM](#).

D. Seaver Student Perspective:

1. Ms. Richards invited Kensie Bishara to share about the student perspective and areas that they need support. He commended student affairs for showing how much they care and hosting Black student leaders appreciation night. He added that the initiatives that Ms. Campos mentioned have been very helpful.

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

2. Mr. Bishara wanted to bring a concern to the radar of the Council.
Students have been frustrated about a school of public policy event that Dean Peterson is moderating the panel on racial diversity for Black professionals. He shared that he was shocked that the Dean would be moderating the event and viewed as an authority on the subject. From his perspective it looks like a PR opt and it is upsetting. He would be interested in having a dialogue about the Dean's role in this event.
 - a) Ms. Blanco Raynal, thanked Mr. Bishara for being a part of this committee. She shared that this event is a partnership with the diversity committee and the Dean's Office and will share his concern. She will connect with the Dean's office and follow up with.
 - b) Ms. Wright validated what Mr. Bishara shared and noted that he is not alone. She has received feedback from faculty and staff about this event. Many are concerned that Dean Peterson will be moderating on this topic. Mr. Bishara responded that is concerned that Dean Peterson's lack of judgement will be forgotten because it is an online forum.
 - c) Ms. Espinoza noted that this is not the first race related event that Dean Peterson has hosted. He has moderated diversity panels in the past. She invited the Council to watch recent events he has moderated on the SPP website. She added that Mr. Bishara's statements are valid. Ms. Richards added it is a difficult time for SPP, they are under scrutiny, and the Council is here to be supportive to move the projects of the SPP diversity Council forward.
 - d) Ms. Campos highlighted that Mr. Bishara is the director of diversity and inclusion for the student government association.

E. Libraries

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

1. Mr. Roosa shared an update from the libraries they have been busy implementing their 9 step DEI action plan. On March 11, they are pleased to sponsor with office Intercultural affairs the second annual Larry D. Kimmons memorial lecture. It will feature Professor Brenda Stevenson from UCLA.
2. He added that a special edition of the library newsletter was just sent out that featured Black History Month. One piece features book selections that focus on Black history. The newsletter also highlights recent acquisitions that celebrate Black heritage.
3. He gave an update on new acquisitions, they are in the process of acquiring a collection of Watts and South Los Angeles authors. There are about 10 items in the collections and will be added to special collections.
4. Lastly, he shared that the libraries received a grant from the California Humanities Council to conduct community based archiving in South Los Angeles. The project will be implemented once they are cleared to be back on ground. Members from the Council are invited to participate. The team will be conducting community based interviews to collect memories about life in South Los Angeles of the past and current.
 - a) Mr. Crubaugh asked about the Larry D. Kimmons memorial lecture, hearing that the President's office is taking it over after this year. He wanted to learn more about the context and if anyone has concerns about that?
 - (1) Mr. Roosa shared that as the President's Office was preparing a series of DEI events the same time the library was playing their second annual Larry D. Kimmons memorial lecture. The President's office connected with them and offered to take on this important event as part of their annual events and promote it to the entire community. The library will be working with the President's Office on

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

this event in the future. Mr. Roosa added that they are always looking for speaker recommendations for this series. He highlighted that the library also adds a volume to the collection dedicated in Larry Kimmons name each year.

- (2) Ms. Richards noted that the Belonging Awards hosted by the School of Law will have an award in the name of Larry Kimmons Justice Award featuring an alumni or student that is doing important work toward racial or social justice. This award is supported by the President's Office. She shared that this is an example of how the school is remembering him and making progress.

F. Graduate School of Education and Psychology

1. Ms. Wright gave an update on GSEP, they have prioritized and focused on racial justice and social justice this year. They have featured events on micro-agressions and intergenerational trauma in the Black community. She highlighted that they were able to partner with the School of Law on an event discussing deconstructing one's views as it relates to social justice in the Christian worldview. She added that they have been running a successful book club, recently they read *How to be Anti-Racists* and are currently reading *The Color of Water*. GSEP has had many impactful discussions and events.
2. She suggested that one unique challenge GSEP faces is that they are two schools in one. That presents a challenge to the diversity council to support and understand each school. They are working to figure out how to support one community that has two entities. She shared that they are working to redefine their scope and structure to serve better. There has also been a recent interest in students on how they can influence curriculum, in response they are showing students how to advocate for their education.

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

G. Seaver College

1. Mr. Crubaugh shared that Seaver college has had lots of events and projects going on outside of the Seaver Diversity Council. He shared that the Seaver Diversity Council tried new subcommittees this year. In the past the committee has only had the capacity to accomplish one or two things at a time. This new structure is working well. The Dean's Office has been very responsive with resources and working with them on how to change things. Proposals have been one way they have made progress, the subcommittee will work on proposals for the Dean's office to review. He is encouraged by this process being effective. There are five subcommittees.
2. In addition, he added that there have been lots of exciting events at Seaver. The student success center has taken on a DEI mindset for their events this semester and how these issues present themselves in the classroom. The Seaver Diversity Council spends time each year figuring who they are. He noted that there has been concern that the Seaver faculty association has been trying to take over the committee.
3. Ms. Cupid gave an update from the Communication department. They are working on programs to make sure that diversity is not an afterthought and at the forefront. She shared that there are several searches for new faculty and looking at diversity as an important hiring factor.

H. School of Law

1. Tanya Cooper shared the School of Law update, they have brought in multiple diversity focused events into the student life programming. She highlighted a recent event with Professor Mera deo that featured racial disparities in tenured professors. The school has also partnered with HBU to increase diversity of applicants. She added that the diversity council does not have a defined role to receive complaints but will bring it back to them. The school has been committed to regularly hosting open

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

conversations for the student body, their most recent topic was how to get to unity if you cannot agree on underlying facts.

2. She shared that the school is continuing SEED at the law school and would like to continue it at the school of law next year. Great conversations have come out of it. Ms. Cooper added that in 2019 the school of law partnered with the school of public policy for training on domestic violence and what healthy relationships look like. She would like to continue to partner on events/ training with the School of Public Policy on their same goals and bring these hard topics to light.

I. School of Public Policy

1. Ms. Blanco Raynal shared that SPP has its first diversity committee meeting this week, the meeting produced great ideas to promote diversity and inclusion at the school. The three main discussion topics were, workshops for students, important policy issues relating to racism, and a mentorship program that will partner minority students with professionals.
2. Ms. Espinosa highlighted an upcoming event on 22th discussing Racially Diverse Leaders. It will discuss the challenges of being a Black administrator. On the 18th one of the student organizations will feature a discussion with two public policy leaders and their experience being African Americans in that field. Finally, the SPP diversity website is now live.

VI. Upcoming programs, events and activities

- A. Lila Carlsen shared in the chat that the Provost's Office is taking nominations for the [Howard A. White award](#), featuring outstanding teaching faculty. This is the highest award given by Pepperdine for teaching. The nomination cycle is open now and will continue through March.

VII. Adjournment

- A. Ms. Richards concluded the meeting asking that departments who did not give an update can send an email update that will be added to the minutes.

University Diversity Council

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 – 10 a.m. PT

Zoom meeting

B. Ms. Richards adjourned the meeting at 10:03 AM.