

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)

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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. The chair raised a discussion on processes needed to be put in place for the diversity counsel pertaining to taking feedback. Discussion followed on the proper channel of communications when there is feedback for the Council. It was noted that some constituents may interact with UDC council members in an informal way and thus it would be beneficial for the committee to determine the proper channel to take feedback.
 1. It was noted in the discussion that the UDC does not take HR or EEO complaints and to be mindful when creating processes for these comments. This was viewed as an opportunity to identify the way that schools handle concerns relating to topics covered by the UDC. 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. Discussion also included the

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reminder 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. Thus, the UDC may want to use 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.

2. The UDC formed a subcommittee on communications, consisting of Ms. Blanco Raynal, Mr. Ethell, Ms. Coleman, and Chair Richards.

V. School and department updates and areas of support

A. Chaplain's Office

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,

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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.

C. Student Affairs

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

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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, the director of diversity and inclusion for the Seaver student government association, 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.
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 and viewed as an authority on the subject. Students were be interested in having a dialogue about the Dean's role in this event.
 - a) The SPP representatives shared that this event is a partnership with the diversity committee and the Dean's Office and will share his concern.

E. Libraries

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.

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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.

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-aggressions 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.

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 and the new structure is working well. 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.
2. Ms. Cupid gave an update from the Communication department. They are working on programs to make sure that diversity is not an afterthought and

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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 Meera Deo that featured racial disparities in tenured professors. The school has also partnered with HBCU to increase diversity of applicants. The school has been committed to regularly hosting open 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.

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

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