

Intercultural Working Groups – Summaries of Recommendations Spring 2015

This quarter several members of the Kalamazoo College committee made a commitment to do focused work to build an inclusive campus environment through four working groups. The groups met for eight weeks to closely examine 1) intercultural work in student development, 2) opportunities for training and professional development, and 3) the creation of more spaces of belonging and 4) curriculum.

The working groups consisted of students, faculty, and staff. Each group has provided summaries of their recommendations to the community. This following includes each group's original charge and their recommendations moving forward. Separate documents include relevant attachments.

Members with an asterisk (*) next to their names have indicated that they are available to continue doing work in their areas for the next 6 – 12 months if asked to do so.

INTERCULTURAL WORK IN STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Charge:

- Help draft and finalize a job description and qualifications for a new staff member who will focus on intercultural work in Student Development
- Identify early priorities for this new staff member
- Provide guidelines for mission and work of a unit devoted to comprehensive co-curricular intercultural programming
- Create position paper designed to help onboard new staff member
- Identify strategies for infusing an intercultural perspective across the range of work in Student Development

Members: Anh-Tu Vu, Brian Dietz*, Cameron Goodall*, Dana Jansma, Erin Butler*, Jessica Magana, Kaitlyn Courtenay*, Karla Aguilar*, Kevin Vongsotsavanh, Margaret, Wiedenhoeft, Ronald Russell, Sarah Westfall*, Willina Cain

Recommended Actions Steps:

Post job description for Director of Intercultural Student Life as soon as possible. Have candidates come to campus in early August and finalize a person early September. Send out position paper to candidates who are invited to campus.

Rationale and Points of Consideration:

Timeliness and effectiveness of the position. The work is important and urgent.

Next Steps:

Complete a Position Paper (listed as part of the charge) as a way to help inform and orient finalists for the position.

Attachments (in a separate documents):

1. Draft position description
2. Guidelines
3. Early Priorities

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Charge:

- Review data and evaluations from Visions, ERAC/CE and other trainings
- Review the results of Student Commission's research on modes of training
- Propose a plan and schedule for trainings and professional development for students, faculty and staff, including expectations for attendance

Members: Anne Dueweke, Dylan Cramm Horn*, Eric Wimbley*, Jeff Bartz, Karen Joshua-Wathel, Kathryn Lightcap, Liz Cabrera, Mike Sosulski, Rian Brown, Samantha Weaver, Sholanna Lewis*, Van Forsman*

Recommended Action Steps and Timelines:

Develop a long-term partnership with ERAC/CE and Crossroads to develop a customized training structure to meet needs of faculty, staff, and students. This structure should include the following offerings:

- 1-Day Critical Cultural Competency
- 2.5-Day Understanding and Analyzing Systemic Racism
- Anti-Racist Pedagogy Across the Curriculum
- Transformation Team development
- Other trainings and technical support tailored to our needs

A contract with ERAC/CE should be finalized by August 1st, 2015. Please see **Attachment 1** for details.

Rationale and Points of Consideration:

Over the past several weeks we have researched training organizations across the United States (see table of organizations researched). We also learned more about ERAC/CE and the suite of services they offer. Based on this work, we have reached consensus that ERAC/CE is the organization best situated to meet our needs. Please see **Attachment 2** as well as **Attachment 1** under the rationale section

Next Steps:

In the next 6-12 months:

- Survey the current campus community to determine opportunity and need for training for 15-16 Academic Year
- Begin creating a K College Transformation/Intercultural Team who will facilitate campus programming and policy
- Beginning in Fall 2015, offer a 1-Day Critical Cultural Competency and 2.5-Day Understanding and Analyzing Systemic Racism training (schedule is flexible and may be broken up into a series)
- Begin integration into Shared Passages Preparation Curriculum
- Begin integration into current training structures across campus
- Begin the creation of a system for students to identify Faculty for trainings through course evaluation system and the Provost's office
- Develop a regular schedule for following years

In the next five years:

- Transformation/Intercultural Team will be fully functioning and identify ongoing needs
- The above 6-12 month deliverables will be in place and fully functioning

Attachments (in a separate documents):

1. Vision Statement
2. Review of Training Organizations Researched
3. ERAC/CE Offerings

SPACES OF BELONGING

Charge:

- Define the characteristics of spaces of belonging
- Create a set of recommendations for how spaces of belonging can be developed throughout the campus
- Research intercultural centers on other campuses and develop a framework that will provide further understanding of the functions of an intercultural center at K
- Propose the mission, purpose, and possible programming for an Intercultural Center including potential locations and processes for periodic assessment

Members: Georgetta Booker*, Dr. Lisa Brock*, Viola Brown*, Rev. Elizabeth Candido*, Dr. Kenlana Ferguson*, Marquise Griffin, Madeleine MacWilliams*, Sashae Mitchell, Asia Morales, Dr. Janelle Werner*, Kiavanne Williams*, Olasope Wilson-Oyelaran*

Recommended Action Steps and Timelines:

In regards to how spaces of belonging can be developed throughout the campus, we strongly recommend that the college:

- Adopt the findings of the Sense of Belonging Task Force report and “We Too Are K’zoo” for information on and defining characteristics of such spaces.
- Develop strategies for addressing significant mistrust between the college administration and marginalized groups on campus

In regards to an Intercultural Center (IC) at Kalamazoo College, we strongly recommend that the college:

- Adopt the proposed Mission Statement and Purpose for the IC
- Hire a full-time director by July 2015 and that this person work out of the Intercultural Center
- Consider physical spaces (Trowbridge LLH or an enclosed space in Hicks) to open a temporary IC (by Fall 2015)

Rationale and Points of Consideration:

We firmly believe that an Intercultural Center and the development of spaces of belonging on campus are necessary in order to demonstrate support for students of color at the college. The current effort to diversify the student body is not met by an increase of resources to support students of color throughout their college career, nor by a commitment to building an anti-racist campus culture. Similarly, the current model for support of students utilizes the framework of “all students”, an umbrella which comes at the expense of the particular needs of students of color on campus. This is an important moment for the Kalamazoo College community. As such, it serves as an opportunity for the college to step forward as a leader in the development of intercultural work on small, liberal arts campuses.

Next Steps:

- Open permanent IC (Fall 2016)
- Hire campus-wide constituency board to advise development of college intercultural work (during academic year 2015-2016)
- Implement first phase of program development (see attachment)

Attachments (in separate documents):

1. Intercultural Center Mission, Purpose, Programming
2. Group Research on Intercultural Centers
3. Site Visit Summary

CURRICULUM

Charge:

Focusing on equipping faculty and staff to infuse the experiences of a boarder array of humanity into all aspects of the curriculum

- Help define/refine the ideal “shifts” in curriculum and pedagogy across all academic areas (the WHATs)
- Brainstorm the HOWs for achieving these shifts
- Begin implementation of the HOWs
- Shepherd the faculty professional development and curricular portions of the recently awarded Mellon grant to support diversity and inclusion at K

Members: Abby Lu, Cassandra Solis, Celina Madden, Elizabeth Manwell, Maksim Kokushkin, Mickey McDonald, Mireya Guzman-Ortiz, Patrik Hultberg, Reid Gomez, Tanush Jagdish.^[1]_[SEP]

(Note on continuing involvement: While Gómez and McDonald will obviously have sustained roles in shepherding the faculty work under the aegis of the Mellon grant, we earnestly desire to see a burgeoning number of faculty engaged in this work year after year (through participation in communities of practice, a variety of opportunities throughout the ‘15-‘16 school year, into next summer’s department-based workshop and beyond). We all intend to be part of this project in various ways, and in differing capacities. In addition, the faculty members on the committee affirm the need, at multiple points in the continued development and implementation of these goals, to find a way to garner impressions, reactions, ideas and support from the students in our community, for whom we are engaged in this project.)

Recommended Actions Steps:

We have identified three primary areas where we believe that work ought to begin:

(1) The creation of Communities of Practice: We conceive of these as workshop and/or mentorship structures that will support conversations across difference. There would be a high degree of autonomy in determining what difference means for each community and the strategies it might employ.

Timeline: Participants in the Mellon funded workshop this summer will comprise the first cohort and will be instrumental in implementing these communities.

(2) Structures of Responsibility: For this work to be on-going, coordinated and responsive to campus needs and changes, it will require persons who are charged with shepherding it. These community members ought to collaborate intentionally with faculty committees whose charges intersect with this work (e.g. TLC, EEC, EPC, FEC and academic departments and pprograms).

Timeline: We foresee that those who are currently responsible for the faculty development portion of the Mellon grant (Gómez and McDonald) will initially oversee this work. We hope also that the summer workshop participants, through their collaborative labor, may recommend an appropriate structure to oversee on-going curricular work.

(3) Big Picture Conversations: We envision that this work will foster dialogue among faculty

members, across multiple disciplines and boundaries. The creation of groups who come together to discuss issues of difference may compel us to talk about broader issues (of curricular and institutional vision), stimulate on-going (re)assessment of our work as educators, and sustain open and transparent conversations about difference, broadly conceived.

Timeline: We recognize this piece as idealistic, but we hope that such conversations may percolate, as faculty members come into conversation with one another.

Rationale and Points of Consideration:

The process of rethinking the curriculum, both in terms of content and pedagogy, is one that will need to involve many more faculty and student voices, and on-going conversations and refinements. Thus, we present this document as preliminary work in what we hope will become a larger and more multi-vocal discussion.

As the group tasked to wrestle with the curriculum, we find that our subject is large, our concerns global and our approach to problems idealistic. We have attempted to balance this big picture with detailed line drawings: concrete, measurable and defined projects for implementation. Nevertheless, for us, the ends and means are inextricably linked, and we view the success of a project of this scope not as one with a single answer, but rather one that engages difference in various ways, that continues to develop and evolve as more voices are added, and that ecstatically revels in its multiplicity.

Next Steps:

We have identified a number of possible short and long-term goals. Given the nature of our charge (and the compressed time-frame in which we are working), we offer these as possible avenues for future work:

- (1) Rethink advising to build greater support for students from the beginning.
- (2) Rethink orientation to prepare students for the environment on campus, in all its varieties and multiplicities (including a reexamination of seminars, peer leaders, first-year forums, etc.).
- (3) Rethink faculty orientation, so as to provide them greater support, and additional models for engaging with difference.
- (4) Strengthen and broaden programs that exist to provide all members of our community with a sense of their value as part of the institution.
- (5) Use our language strategically and thoughtfully, especially when introducing or sharing guidelines for this work. That is, in all areas of communication, we recognize that guidelines convey not only information or argumentation, but can have an emotional impact.
- (6) Reduce costs for faculty to engage in this work, to facilitate their learning, engagement and ability to implement new approaches or material (including support via library resources, the Teaching Commons, workshops, brown bags, support for team-teaching, support for interdisciplinary teaching, rewarding such efforts in tenure and promotion reviews, and the like).
- (7) Provide clear and achievable first steps. These could include strategies for creating a sense of belonging in the classroom, increasing content that is relevant to students and offers differing perspectives, and leading conversations that complicate the language of “belonging” or our notions of the academy.

(8) Develop programming for the '15-'16 school year that will support departmental discussions about difference (including unmet student needs, pedagogy, student perceptions, etc. within departments) and prepare departments for the summer '16 workshop.

Attachments (in a separate document):

No attachments submitted. We aver that the creation and implementation of the curriculum reside with the faculty; yet, we welcome opportunities to converse with other campus constituencies that might support and enhance this work.