

MCCCD DIVERSITY INFUSION PROGRAM

SEMINAR MINUTES

Friday, April 21st, 2006
Scottsdale Community College

GRADUATION DAY!!

Members Attending: Cathleen Akers, Analicia Buentello, John Burk, Nanci Burk, Jason Gilpin, Susan Malmo, Amy Marin, David Alberto Munoz, Jean Pierce, Jeanne Saint, Armour, Scott Thompson, Amy Williams, Pam Ernst, Miriam Estrada, Gloria Hall, Daniel Kelly, Marisela Sosa, Marianna Szabo, Diana Hutchinson, Terry Mitich, Mauro da Fonte, Dritan Zela, Rufus Gasper, and Bonnie Gray.

Members Absent: Lisa Peace, Pamela Petty, Roland Walker, Amy MacPherson, and Rebekah Stultz.

I. WELCOME

A. Introduction of guests – A special welcome to Chancellor Dr. Rufus Gasper and to Dr. Dritan Zela.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY MATERIALS

A. Complete an on-line **Web page template** of how you infused your course. Part of this web page information includes a **summary of the results from your student evaluations**. After your students have evaluated your infusion of diversity into your course curriculum, please summarize the students' responses. Do NOT provide raw data, or a list of every response. Rather, you only need to create a short summary of how students responded and what they thought of your infused course. You may include a few direct student quotes if you think this will be helpful.

B. Complete an on-line **Analysis of the Diversity Infusion Project Process**. This is a short survey-type instrument which only requires checkmarks.

C. Complete an on-line **Aspects of Diversity Focused upon in infused classes**. This document requires you to simply list diversity aspects you infused in your course (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic status, and so on).

D. Complete an on-line **Faculty Evaluation**.

E. Finding the template on our Website:

Finding it on the Website: Our Diversity Infusion Program Website address is as follows: <http://www.maricopa.edu/diversityinfusion/>. At the bottom of the page (and every page on the site) is a button that says “Participant Support.” Click on this button. When you are on the support page, click on the “Contract and On-line Forms Submissions,” and that will take you to the accountability forms for the templates.

If you want to go directly to the Participant Support section, the address is: <http://www.maricopa.edu/diversityinfusion/support.htm>.

III. STILL PENDING

A. Pictures of faculty: Amy Marin, David Munoz, Pamela Petty, Jean Pierce, and Roland Walker.

B. Send a quote (testimonial) about the Program: Cathleen Akers, Analicia Buentello, John Burk, Jason Gilpin, Margaret Macias, Amy Marin, David Munoz, Pamela Petty, Jean Pierce, Jeanne Saint-Armour, Amy Williams, Sharon Blanton, and Pam Ernst.

C. Accomplishments – forms given out by Bonnie Gray. These forms are to be filled out regarding anything you have done related to Diversity. This helps Bonnie to monitor what people have done, and to acknowledge their accomplishments. If you were not present, please let Terry Mitich @ tlmtennis@cox.net know if you have been involved in any diversity activities.

IV. FACULTY MENTORING

A. Mentors are important because they help keep consistency within the program. Brand new faculty will begin the Diversity Infusion Program on May 11. All present participants are invited and encouraged to come to the meeting and share their experiences and how they infused their classes. There is no obligation to come but an open invitation is extended to all.

V. FACULTY AND STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

Mariam Estrada attends CGCC. Because she works full-time she found it difficult to find information about and get involved in extracurricular activities. Her project included developing a handout providing information for students regarding the Student Clubs that the college has to offer. This handout combined celebrating diversity with community service opportunities and scholarship opportunities. Mariam stated that she found out about the Diversity Infusion Program from a teacher and feels that the teachers may be a key element in informing students about the various clubs within the college.

She is currently waiting for information from faculty at the college to decide the best way to distribute the handouts to students. Her idea is to send it via an e-mail attachment and then faculty could make copies and distribute these to students at the beginning of the semesters. A member of our group had an excellent suggestion and emphasized the importance of having a powerful header if sending this as an attachment.

Marianna Szabo attends SCC and developed the Conversation Partner Program. This program encourages American and International students to come together to practice each other's languages and to develop new friendships. The goal is to help international students feel more welcome and less isolated. Therefore, they will be able to more easily adapt to the American culture by having support from an American student. The American Partner can benefit by getting exposed to different cultures and practicing their second language. In addition to coordinating the program, Marianna also participated in the program and had a partner whom she developed a friendship with. In spite of the fact that she will not be in charge of the program next semester, she hopes it will continue on. She states that this has been a great experience and that there are approximately 60 students involved in the program. A new handout is being developed for this program and Marianna will be writing an article regarding her experience with this program. The article is expected to be published in the school newsletter next semester.

Pamella Ernst is a student at PVCC. She initially spent several weeks thinking about her project. She decided to develop a diversity website at PVCC. Pam began her project by doing research and states that it was a learning experience. Pam did a power point presentation of this website which includes classes that address diversity with links to go to course descriptions as well as PVCC clubs, resources and helpful links related to diversity. She worked closely with a supportive and helpful web master at the college. She also credits the Vice President of PVCC for being supportive of her idea. Pam presented her project at the last DAC meeting and will present again to a leadership group in May.

Marisela Sosa is a student at SMCC and is involved in a dynamic learning program for teaching. This was her second semester working with a class of first graders at an elementary school. The first grade teacher she was working with is bilingual and very helpful. Marisela infused diversity into this class with bugs. Students were asked about similarities and differences of the bug that were presented. They compared bugs with people, and discussed how interesting it is that all bugs are different just as people are. The students wrote and drew pictures about this presentation on construction paper. Stickers were provided as rewards for this graded work. She shared with us one example of a first grade student who wrote about how a lady bug is different from the student's baby sibling. Other topics related to bugs were discussed such as geographic areas related to the size of ants and how climates relate to different

bugs such as mosquitoes. Marisela also read books with students both in English and Spanish.

Analia Buentello infused her class at EMCC. This semester she successfully included the topic of sexuality in addition to ethnicity and gender into her class. Her class which focuses on Chicano literature included group presentations done by the students. Her students critiqued articles related to ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, including Chicano homophobia. She incorporated machismo and the stereotyped people have. She states that it was difficult to find novels to weave sexuality into her classroom but recently received a book she can use. She will continue to tweak it until she is satisfied with it. Analia felt that this semester was successful and will continue to use peer editing. The peer editing she uses includes advice to the student authors on how to improve their paper as well as questions such as: Does the introduction make sense? Are there grammatical errors in the draft? Her final exam includes questions taken from the students' presentations.

VI. GUEST SPEAKER

Dr. Dritan Zela presented "Torn Between Two Worlds." Dr. Zela thanked Dr. Glasper for his support and shared that he has been a participant in the Diversity Infusion Program. His personal background includes being born in Albania and living in the United States for the past 12 years during which time he did not travel back to Albania. He discussed how life back in Albania was difficult for his family because of the communist government who attacked intellectuals. His grandfather and uncle served time in prison. His uncle was a doctor and was prosecuted because he was an American citizen and spoke his mind in Albania. When asked, his mother stated that the most oppressing part of communism was the class warfare. If you did not agree with what the communist party believed in you could be forced to live in exile. Electricity, food, and water were all limited in Albania. Citizens were prohibited to watch television channels that were not communist controlled.

Dr. Zela came to the U.S. after the Berlin Wall fell in 1993, and received his Ph.D. at ASU. He applied for and won a Fulbright Scholar grant to go back to Albania and wrote an article for MCLI regarding his experience. He approached his project with excitement and fear because he had not been back to Albania for 12 years. Dr. Zela experienced that time had stopped for him 12 years ago and so he felt as if he was 12 years younger than he actually was when he returned to Albania. He talked about the geographical location of Albania and that Albanian is a language in itself.

His presentation included his findings on the difference in cultures here in the U.S. and Albania. In Albania the respect by students for professorate, in general, is high but almost unquestionable. The lessons are mostly carried out on a lecture basis though a lot of effort has been made to use technology and

real life application. He feels that the Community Colleges in the U.S. tend to somehow “nurse” students, because we go out of our way for students. Our well meant approach could become a pitfall as students may take for granted the professorate’s goodwill. Students may begin to believe that they are entitled to that and may place blame regarding their own inadequacies on the instructors.

Albanian and European cultures put more emphasis on the role of the group like family, clan, or the nation, rather than on the individual. In Europe business is done through connections, so background is very important. Relationships are often seen as necessary building blocks for getting things done. The “rule of thumb”, is 70% of business meetings in Europe are spent drinking coffee and 30% doing actual business. Meetings over at coffee places are more of an opportunity to establish a relationship than to actually do business. Communication with respect to solving issues is more indirect than direct. The American tendency to “work the issue” is seen as hasty, as is the focus Americans may have on facts rather than on history. Americans may also have a low surface emotional attitude while Europeans generally have a higher one. Europeans talk more about history than facts. In America you can more easily move forward than in Europe where going forward is more difficult but your job connection is easier to maintain. Europeans pay more attention to appearance and are much more fashionable, but the American attitude of carelessness is strongly envied. Americans, as a general rule, are trustful of people and their stated intentions, whereas Europeans tend to be more suspicious which is a more of a self-protective attitude.

During his project, Dr. Zela also negotiated with companies, organized and participated in many conferences including diversity related conferences and held symposiums on mathematics and education. He met with Albania’s King, current Prime-Minister, and the U.S. ambassador. He became the lead attorney of Albania and Albania’s soccer champions.

Interestingly, there is a new program under which several leading U.S. companies will give employees a “World Citizens Guide”, featuring 16 guidelines for respect when traveling to other countries to help improve America’s battered international image. The guide offers a series of “simple suggestions” under the slogan, “Help your country while you travel for your company”. These suggestions can be found at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main>.

In closing, Dr. Zela shared pictures of his visit with the group. He defines respect as being sensitive, and trying to understand each other. It is in trying to appreciate everything that people can bring to the table and appreciating equality as well as differences. Celebrate and appreciate differences!!!

VII. FUTURE SEMINARS –

A. 1st Meeting of New Participants: **Thursday, May 11th**, 2006.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW BINDERS

A. Terry Mitich asked the group for any suggestions they had regarding the new binders. Suggestions for inclusion of more diversity-related classroom activities will be in the binders.

B. The Table of Contents will be revised to assist the new participants.

VIII. GRADUATION, REFLECTION, AND CLOSURE

A. Graduating participants were given awards for participating in the Diversity Infusion Program.

B. Dr. Gray spoke about the uniqueness of our program because we could focus solely on enhancing teaching and bringing new issues to students without politics being involved. Our group started out as strangers and became more like family. She reflected on what we have done and the exciting, moving guest speakers we have listened to who have caused us to think. We have gained new resources, and ways to become better instructors by incorporating new ideas into our own classrooms. Dr. Gray thanked the group for allowing her to learn from us. She hopes that we take away from this program a different way to look at other people and to be more respectful of how we treat each other, allowing for situational factors.

We also need to consider diversity of opinion and workplace diversity. Sometimes we need to be around people who are NOT like us and continue to exercise our brain by putting ourselves in different situations and listening to opinions that differ from ours. We need to challenge ourselves to have a rich life-long journey of learning by thinking and experiencing things in different ways.

In closing Dr. Gray leaves us with the following words:

Remember the lessons learned, the experiences shared, the people you have met, and the lives you have touched and which have touched you.

THANK YOU DR. GRAY FOR YOUR OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND GUIDANCE THROUGHOUT THIS PROGRAM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry Mitich