

Diversity Council Visioning Session
March 8, 2018
Newcomb Hall Commonwealth Room
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Present: Cecil Banks, Maria Chee, Frank Dukes (facilitator), Kathryn Duvall, Tabitha Enoch, Melissa Frederick, Vicki Gist, Jennifer Harmon, Keisha John, Jack King, Rebecca Leonard, Marcus Martin, Jaronda Miller-Bryant, Phylissa Mitchell, Kristin Morgan, Tobiyah Morris, Gary Nimax, Diane Ober, Zakiah Pierre, Gail Prince-Davis, Faran Saeed, Rachel Spraker, Lindy Steiner, Adettra Thomas, Maurice Walker, Derick Williams

- I. Gathering
- II. Goals of this session
 - a. The goal of this meeting is to envision the future of the Diversity Council (DC) and brainstorm how this council can be more proactive.
- III. Introductions
 - a. Each attendee stated their hopes for today's session. Those hopes fell under a few different themes:
 - i. Purpose of the DC
 1. Get a sense of what the purpose of DC is, the ultimate mission, and how to accomplish that mission. UVA has a clear mission around diversity, equity, and inclusion. Want DC to have a clear voice in that mission.
 2. Discuss our role not only at UVA but in the Charlottesville community.
 3. Learn how to help through DC work and how to use the resources of the council.
 - ii. DC Initiatives
 1. Work with school leaderships to include curriculum courses and seminars that talk about human diversity and why we have diversity—to understand shared humanity. Ideation can transform how we interact, so this should involve students, faculty/staff, and administrators.
 2. Push the university forward. How can we have actionable things that result in change in the culture here? How can we have an impact on retaining diverse faculty? Making an impact so people realize the culture is changing.
 3. How do we reach everyone to make sure they feel included?
 4. Advocate for a staff person dedicated to faculty and staff diversity training.
 5. Pass down diversity to program level and staff level.
 6. Include medical center and facilities staff in initiatives.
 - iii. DC Operations
 1. Make sure the DC has a unified structure we all understand.
 2. Discuss how we can become a collaborative unit.

3. Learn what everyone wants from DC meetings.
4. Have new UVA president to a DC meeting.
5. Think of DC as community of practice that studies itself and its actions. DC as a place for sharing ideas, getting input from council, and coordinating all diversity efforts in one place.
6. Position DC well going forward, especially with the new president coming in.
7. Define diversity in broad manner, including different types of diversity.
8. Keep communicating with the new president.
9. Lean on experts in the field.
10. Increase knowledge and expertise. Have more training, and have experts teach us so that we can be experts in our roles.
11. Do things in proactive way.
12. Have one unified voice.
13. Consult at the presidential level so we can carry out work more effectively.

IV. Experience of Diversity Council to date: what has been most valuable and what have you wanted to do more of?

a. Most valuable experiences:

- i. Having a space to see people doing this work.
- ii. Just showing up.
- iii. Consistency of meetings.
- iv. Actionable items followed through from 2009 strategic plan.
- v. Good space to give ideas and get feedback.
- vi. Opportunity to be engaged in change early on and be able to influence decisions.
- vii. Come in contact with groups from across entire university.
- viii. Hearing from student members of council and faculty/staff senate members.
- ix. DC reaching out to facilities staff and other groups not always included.

b. Do more of:

- i. Document accomplishments.
- ii. More connection to Charlottesville community outside UVA.
- iii. Clarity on whether this group is action orientated or just for idea sharing and an opportunity to listen and meet with other representatives. This is a critical issue moving forward.
- iv. We want to be action oriented but time is limited.
- v. Create understanding of what this commitment is when someone joins DC, giving clarity for each person's commitment. Have expectations for DC membership—then you can decide to join or not, or someone else in your office could join instead.
- vi. Gain clarity on responsibility of a DC member as a representative back to their department or group in terms of communicating what DC does.
- vii. Solicit collaboration from across grounds.
- viii. Determine the role of DC and the role of Dr. Martin and his replacement.
- ix. Be a bridge and become voice of authority.

- x. We want to be looked to as group that gives recommendations when things happen. Instead of making a new committee, look to this group that was created to advise on diversity.
- xi. Develop understanding of issues that need UVA voices and craft a message to send to the president in these situations.
- xii. Maybe some members can be on a response team—not the whole group but some people who could take action if needed. Why could DC not be looked at to respond after August 11/12 instead of making a new group (Deans Working Group)? No one from DC is on Deans Working Group. People on DC could get work done, instead of having the new group not push forward change.
- xiii. Create advisory group from DC members for new president. However, when creating advisory groups we divide into different spaces so that may be a concern.
- xiv. How can we empower the DC so we know that whatever is said here is done and reported to higher authorities? Rather than splintering off people from this group, how can we work with what we have?

V. Review of 2009-10 Diversity Council Strategic Planning

VI. Envisioning the role of Diversity Council: what would it take for us to have the influence we need to have?

- a. Part One: Post August 11/12 Needs and Opportunities
 - i. We must talk about how this isn't the first time this has happened.
 - ii. Value the work of committees, and prioritize people with central fund.
 - iii. Stop having programs, speakers, and panels preaching to the same choir. Educate people about systemic problems that exist in our community and world so that they'll want change. Communicate this message to different people.
 - iv. Hold faculty/staff workshops and training, and classes/curriculum that students have to take.
 - v. Events didn't have actionable impact. How do you make those things impactful? If there's a mission and people are being paid for this work?
 - vi. Challenge ourselves to be an inclusive space. Also, define "inclusion." We don't have a common training so people may have different ideas.
 - vii. White supremacy needs to be addressed and made known to other people so people knows it's there.
 - viii. Provide leadership.
 - ix. Make overarching framework for getting things done. Provide ideas and leadership, and then delegate to carry out actions instead of everyone working separately.
- b. Part Two: Impactful Actions
 - i. Expand role and influence of DC.
 - ii. Define mission.
 - iii. Learn how to be more inclusive.
 - iv. Fund time on DC in order to show value of DC and each member's time.

- v. Funded position for training/skills/education for diversity.
- vi. Meet with president and make recommendations once per semester.
- c. Part Three: Prioritizing
 - i. Everyone put dots next to the action items on the poster that they felt were most important.
 - ii. DC wants to expand role, update mission, and have the president's ear.

VII. Moving forward: what next steps need to be taken to meet these priorities?

- a. Think about what we can do in terms of actionable steps. Don't forget about this until the next meeting. Follow up is important. We will discuss more at the next meeting and further define and provide structure to action ideas.
- b. Address August 11/12 more.
- c. Make DC more known to the university community.
- d. Bring up questions.
- e. Continue and broaden work already done. There are more personal and professional steps to take.
- f. Maintain energy.

VIII. Closing

- a. At the next meeting in April, two people are scheduled to present. If possible they will be moved to May in order to continue discussing all the ideas and questions raised today.