

MGH INSTITUTE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS
Diversity Council
Tuesday, March 8, 2016
10:30 am-12:00 pm

Minutes
[as approved at the May 3, 2016 meeting]

Members Present: Jan Bellack (presiding), E. Lorraine Baugh, Mike Boutin, Peter Cahn, Steve Ciesielski, Ginny Do, Mary Evenson, Amy Fuller, Judi Greenberg, Bonnie Halvorson, Patricia Lussier-Duynstee, Antonia Makosky, Paul Murphy, Erin Phair, Jorge Sanchez De Lozada, Audrey Tanner, Sarah Welch.

Members Absent: Charles Haynes, Oz Mondejar.

Staff: Natalie Lewis.

The meeting of the Diversity Council was called to order by Council Chair J. Bellack.

Announcements

J. Bellack began the meeting by welcoming G. Do, who has replaced John McDonough as Staff Council At-Large; A. Tanner, who is the new Dean of Enrollment Services; and S. Ciesielski, who replaced E. Omeler as School of Nursing Staff Representative. She reintroduced M. Boutin who is School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences Staff Representative. Finally, J. Bellack announced that this will be N. Lewis' last time staffing the Diversity Council meetings as she has been promoted and will be moving to a position in the School of Nursing.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the September 22, 2015 meeting were approved as amended.

Judi Greenberg

J. Bellack reintroduced J. Greenberg, Office of the General Counsel. J. Greenberg explained that she is taking a professional development sabbatical at the Institute, and will be attending the Diversity Council meetings while she is here. Her focus will be on exploring best practices to promote diversity and inclusion and advising how best to manage clinical affiliation agreements more efficiently, as well as selected other projects. J. Greenberg will report her progress at the next meeting.

Dignity & Respect Campaign Debrief

S. Welch and P. Murphy reported the Dignity & Respect campaign was another success from mid-January to early February. To practice the 30 tips of the campaign, they shared three programs that occurred:

- Winter Coat Drive – people brought winter clothing items to promote “lend a hand”, which were donated to Action for Boston Community Development, Inc. (ABCD);
- Yoga Classes were offered to faculty and staff to promote “take a healthy step” and was led by a student; and
- Students were welcomed back from winter break to promote “say hello” and were given KIND bars and informed about the Dignity & Respect campaign with brochures and flyers.

S. Welch and P. Murphy debriefed on how the students and the community responded with appreciation, and the Council discussed ways they could improve the campaign.

Report on “Eliminating Opportunity Gaps: Promising Data-Driven Diversity and Inclusion Practices in Higher Education” Conference

P. Cahn reported he attended a conference in November called “Eliminated Opportunity Gaps: Promising Data-Drive Diversity and Inclusion Practices in Higher Education”. He shared his takeaways from the conference. The Council had a robust discussion. See [Eliminating Opportunity Gaps: Promising Data-Driven Diversity and Inclusion Practices in Higher Education](#).

Perceptions of the Diversity Council

M. Boutin reported that he has had several conversations with students, faculty, and staff, and shared that several people have asked him about the Diversity Council and its role. He received the following questions and perceptions:

- What does Diversity Council do?
- The Council either is not getting a lot done, or what the Council does is not getting out there.
- What changes were made in response to the results of the climate surveys?
- Students are not aware of what is being done.

Strategy Session

The Council had a lengthy and robust discussion with the following suggestions:

- Set out suggestion boxes in student lounges, the Schools, the Office of the Provost, and the Office of the President
- Invite KinSHIP and OHANA groups to attend a Diversity Council meeting
- Make Diversity Council more known to students – set up a table at the Fall Barbecue
- Post a photo of each Council member on the membership webpage
- Consider hiring a consultant who could look at ways to improve our diversity webpage and resources to make them more visible, accessible, and useful to the Institute community
- Explore how we can ensure the Institute is a welcome place for all students, faculty and staff where they feel they can share their concerns about sensitive issues and suggest improvements without fear of judgment or lack of understanding or empathy
- Offer training and support for faculty who are not comfortable taking time in class to address or respond to sensitive or uncomfortable issues/situations outside their areas of professional expertise
- Normalize “comfortable” – college/learning new ideas and being exposed to differences is supposed to create discomfort which can lead to new learning, knowledge, perspective when people are helped to express, explore, challenge, and face their discomfort
- Raise awareness of and sensitivity to students’ perceptions when they don’t feel “safe” – when they experience discomfort, or a negative or biased interaction, how they are viewed (unconscious bias) or treated differently

The meeting was adjourned at 12:11 pm.

Natalie Lewis
Senior Staff Assistant