

Student Equity and success Council

August 23, 2019

In attendance: Josh Scott, Dwayne Hunt, Michael Wyly, Byan Stewart, Michelle Smith, Sarah Donovan, Lisa Neeley, Beatriz Caderas, Jocelyn Mouton, Sarah McKinnon, Heather Watson-Perez, Mauricio Avello, Rebecca LaCount, Isabel Anderson, Rachel Purdie, Erica Beam, Lauren Taylor Hill, Maria Isip-Bautista, Craig Yamamoto, Jack Schouten, Atticus Frey, Jose Cortes, Melissa Reeve, Claudia Tenty, Candace Roe

1. **Call to order** – Josh Scott & Dwayne Hunt, co-chairs
 - a. **The meeting was called to order at 12:06**, and began with a quick round of self-introductions.
2. **Comments from the public.**
3. **Discussion of Power Structures of SESC, voting members, roles of co-chairs.** The Student Equity and Success Council is two years old, and before that, many of us were involved in the Basic Skills Committee. When we first created the SESC, we envisioned co-chairs, with the faculty chair (Josh) leading some meetings and the administrative co-chair (Dwayne) leading others. This sounded good to most of us, and the Senate
- 4.
5. Approved the structure, but in reality, these roles created another version of siloing, where neither of us were able to work together fully in support of our students and equity more generally. We also created a voting membership which we believed was inclusive, but again, which in hindsight may have alienated or ignored key voices, especially those in our part time or temporary staff and faculty roles. We want to take this opportunity at the beginning of the year to assess what's worked over the past two years and what we need to change so that this council can work as effectively and inclusively as possible in support of our students as well as the many part time, full time, permanent, and temporary faculty, staff, and administrators who support, teach, and empower our students.
 - a. Josh and Dwayne began by reviewing the history of how the current committee and co-chair structures were formed, as well as some of the shortcomings that have become evident in that system.
 - i. Meetings that were supposed to be complementary instead started moving in different directions.
 - ii. Became unclear whether we were focused on “equity” or “success”—how are those goals different and where do they overlap?
 - iii. Conflict that emerged on a personal level between co-chairs Scott & Hunt, seeing each other as roles and job descriptions, through the lens of institutional power dynamics (most of which pre-date Dwayne's presence here) instead of as human beings with many shared goals.
 - iv. Key positions are filled with temp or part-time positions, which has also challenged the structure of a stable voting membership. The formal structure of voting membership isn't as fluid as the actuality of who is here and in what role at any given time—the result is that important voices have at times been shut out.
 - v. If this committee can't have conversations about equity, power, inclusion / exclusion, etc., then who can? We have to be the place where these dialogues can transpire.
 - vi. How do we move from data about DI populations, to actions to begin to close those gaps? And how can we most effectively engage students, faculty, staff, management in a unified pursuit of equity?

- b. Discussion time with prompts: Considering power dynamics and structure of council, what's working? What's not? What new voices do we need to include in SESC, and how do we call them in? A sampling of responses:
- i. Can we call it "equity and success," and drop "students"—so we can focus on all levels of the institution
 - ii. Part-timer representation
 - iii. Member commitment: if you can't be present, send someone in your place
 - iv. We don't always honor different ways people show their commitment to the college—we need to see all types and modes of contributions as valuable
 - v. Our preferred mode of discourse in this kind of committee alienates various people for a number of reasons, including differences in temperament, perceptions of status, etc.
 - vi. How can we find ways for students to participate in a way that's non-competitive?
 1. Collaborative moments, same as we do in classrooms and as we have often done here—small group discussions with a clear goal, then moving to larger conversation
 - vii. How do we create opportunities to know each other more deeply / build relationships?
 - viii. New campus group forming: Students for Equity, which as it emerges and forms, can be an opportunity to include or represent student voices in this council
 - ix. How do people become voting members? Are PT, temp, and students able to be voting members?
 1. As a sub-committee of the Academic Senate, we are supposed to have the structure of a voting membership. But as a "council," we have a broader scope and want to include more people to be able to vote on issues that come up and which relate to their interests
 2. Josh and Dwayne will work within their respective spheres to try to draw in additional representation if there are areas where we see it lacking
 3. Are there other ways to empower and value more voices besides the voting structure?
 - x. Only thing we actually voted on last year were the financial proposals, and the process was both unwieldy and hasty. Maybe a smaller group should be charged with that. Voting was by acclaim.
 1. Especially in the second process used last Fall, where management participation and input was also merged with the committee vote, there was not really the opportunity for dissenting opinions or for management oversight about how to implement and support projects that were approved.
 2. But the earlier process, where management had their conversation separately from the council, made the council unhappy because we felt our votes carried no weight if there was a secondary management discussion, in which those who had submitted proposals were not even called in to defend or explain their proposals. So transparency was a concern.
 3. All the proposals came from people who sit on the council—so where is the opportunity for anyone else to feel they have the opportunity? As well as coaching so that someone who hasn't had experience writing proposals can feel empowered to do so?
 - xi. Classified staff need a voice—they are on the ground with students every day. Yet there has been a perception that only faculty and managers can talk about equity.
 - xii. Sometimes we expect people to come to us—maybe we need to do broader outreach efforts, taking the conversation to people who haven't seen themselves as part of it

- xiii. Start with the goals of the Equity Plan developed last year, in guiding any proposal or spending decisions this year—we spent a lot of time on that, so let's not re-invent or re-start
- xiv. Why don't our applicants become our students? And what causes disproportionate impacts? What do students say they need—what would have made the difference, to get them to the college and to keep them here?
- xv. Money should be a secondary conversation. The main focus should be on better understanding needs.
- xvi. Students who participate in institutional conversations are those who have already gained a sense of power within the system—the voices we need to hear are those who feel powerless. How do we reach out / call in?
- xvii. Incarcerated students – is there a way we can go in and listen?
- xviii. Listening tour to Vallejo, etc.
- xix. To be continued...

6. **Creating an Equity Framework.** Dwayne Hunt will introduce us to the concept of an “Equity Framework,” and then we will begin to discuss how best to build one and a timeline for doing so.
- a. Dwayne's observation is that we don't even have a shared definition of Equity within this Council or an campus more broadly
 - b. In order to get to a common understanding, we need to have some conversations where we can address the issues getting in the way
 - c. Goal is to create a sub-group to work on the framework, to then come back to this group
 - i. But, isn't having a sub-committee contrary to the goal?
 - ii. Maybe the sub-committee should focus on how to have the larger conversation
 - 1. Sub-committee could plan a retreat / day-long off-site meeting, to then draw more people in to a more inclusive and in-depth conversation
 - iii. Other ways of collecting input from different constituent groups
 - 1. Invite people to email input if they can't be present or don't feel comfortable
 - 2. Graffiti boards around campus, with prompts and paint markers
7. **Brainstorm Topics for the 2019-2020 Academic Year.** This item will take the bulk of our time as we consider the year ahead. Our committee's mission, primarily, is to support student success generally and to work, in every way possible, to eliminate equity gaps, especially amongst our disproportionately impacted populations. We want to hear from each of you—what brings you to this committee? What are the tasks, questions, or causes that motivate you? What do you hope we achieve this year? This discussion will be the starting point as Dwayne and I develop a thematic meeting schedule for the upcoming year.

Topics that emerged from the group:

- a. Population with HS GPA <1.9; how are they faring in post-AB705 English, math, and across all courses for that matter?
 - i. What can we do to support & appropriately support and place students with cognitive disabilities? Or any other students who W or fail all classes in their first term?
- b. Students who are parents—Isabel has data re: their numbers and their challenges—These are predominantly women and students of color, but we don't even keep data on them locally—don't even have a way to identify them.
 - i. Our child development center is awesome, but totally inadequate to the demand

- c. Develop a stable place on campus for LGBTQ+ students. It needs to be a physical, visible place, not something that comes and goes depending on whether a student leader/champion is available.
 - d. How do we embed these conversations into procedural conversations which we mistakenly think of as “objective”—for example the Curriculum review process?
 - e. How are we creating support independent of “programs” which are then infused into every conversation? For example student parents are infused throughout existing programs- they don’t need to be corralled into a new “program,” but rather support needs to be infused to all the places where they already are.
 - f. How about support for part-time faculty, including support for those who are parents—child care, etc.
 - g. Vallejo & Vacaville—but especially Vallejo
 - h. How do we get people excited about equity, and to accept and embrace our responsibility to equity?
 - i. Restroom inclusivity
 - j. Recognizing and supporting Muslim students: holidays on the campus calendar, a safe, stable & appropriate place to pray
 - k. How to strengthen or bolster existing programs that are under-resourced
 - l. Testify!
8. **Adjourn.**