

President's Council on Culture

March 8, 2019

Meeting Notes

Attended: Tony Frank, Sue James, Blanche Hughes, Lynn Johnson, Tom Biedscheid, Kelly Long, Cori Wong, Tim Gallagher, Dan Bush, Diana Prieto, Pam Jackson, Toni Zimmerman, Laura Jensen, Tonie Miyamoto, Cara Neth, Jenny Morse, Vance Payne

Absent: Shalini Shanker, Barry Braun, Sonia Adame, Zahra Al-Saloom, Ben Withers, Shannon Wagner, Megan Skeeahan, Kathy Sisneros, Beth Walker, Mary Ontiveros, Rick Miranda

Celebrate CSU Award

- Will honor team that developed Principles of Community
- Will be an announcement of future award to recognize others improving culture across campus
- Working on developing criteria for future awards

Discussion on Prepared Paragraphs

Council members were asked via email to prepare paragraphs describing why work on the PCC is important to them, identifying at least one cultural strength and cultural weakness at CSU, and reflecting on what drives these positive and negative cultural norms/values. Members were then asked to share one piece of their paragraphs with the group.

- Drawn to PCC because of complexity in addressing microcultures and broader cultures within the university
- Committed to guiding students
- Would like to see fearless courage, standing up for values
- Worked in correctional systems prior to higher ed and view work here as an opportunity to prevent the situations that led people into the correctional system. Work on council is an opportunity to help students grow and build community. Students can explore other cultures here and bring what they learn here into their lives.
- When we ensure people feel included and have a sense of belonging, we elevate the services we provide.
- Research in power structures – how cultures create power structures and vice versa
- Based on family therapy research, management of privilege, power and respect are essential to functionality.
- Help people be their best and be accountable
- Reflecting on climate, Facilities employees probably have lowest responses due to perception of self, discrimination, and state classified employment. How do we elevate this group of people?
- As a student, only had the opportunity to read one author of color, never had faculty of color, and never interacted with international students. CSU needs to reflect the international world it is in.

- CSU is welcoming to many students but is less so for students/faculty/staff with marginalized identities. We need to make it more consistent.
- Anyone should be able to come here and succeed.
- Privilege allows some people to think that policy alone fixes problems, but that is not the case
- Culture is the life blood of the institution. It interacts with policy and structure.
- CSU has a collaborative spirit, but people can end up overworked due to passion and commitment without resources or space.
- Collaborative culture is unique to CSU, perhaps out of necessity due to lack of resources
- Many departments are stuck in the past with regard to tenure and promotion
- Tenure should be about academic freedom
- Grew up in equitable, interracial environment, was exposed to feminist thought, and feel open minded. Yet, still experience implicit bias.
- Struggle with have impact with state classified employees
- Wonder how best to have impact as a group when it can sometimes seem as though most effective impact happens within individual radius
- Even well-intentioned people struggle to make change beyond personal level
- Improving engagement, perception of respect
- Under President Yates, it was communicated that CSU should be a community of civility. A speaker last year discussed how we all have our humanity in common. We should incorporate the principles of civility and humanity holistically.
- Change goes beyond the local level. For example, Facilities staff get moved when complimented by those working in their buildings. This prevents them from building community with other units on campus.
- The state classified experience resonates with the non-tenure track faculty experience. NTT faculty are often prevented from participating. They often happen to be primary instructors and have to reconcile hierarchy when working with students.
- People want to do the right thing and want to go right to the top. It can be out of people's comfort zones, but others deal with the same issues on a regular basis.
- Say "it starts with me" instead of "us" to create more personal responsibility
- Inclusion work is considered part of the cultural norm on campus, but there is another cultural norm of apathy and resistance to this.
- Policy doesn't fix everything; for example, NTT contract changes are having negative impact on people who work hard to earn contracts.
- A grievance process survey included questions about why people didn't use grievance process and received a significant negative response. Negativity and distrust of the process is widespread and stable over time.
- There is a culture of whiteness.
- Culture either keeps people or drives them away. People who don't buy into the Principles of Community impact those around them and create other perceptions of culture. It is important to get buy-in.

Discussion of how to assess culture and whether to engage experts:

- Despite an effort on emphasizing culture vs climate, most research reflects climate.
- How do we glean data on culture?
- Do we use external experts?
- All culture is interconnected – we can't change just one piece
- Work here is also about intersectionality and addressing bias
- Need data beyond the climate survey, especially qualitative data
- Need to understand shared norms
- Work needs to go beyond diversity and inclusion (for example, considering structural rankings)
- Needs to include an intersectional critical analysis that considers the margins of the margins. Target our most vulnerable and marginalized groups on campus. It can feel overwhelming not knowing where to start, and this strategy can address intersections of structure, identity, etc.
- Need to have consequences for negative actions. Some don't or can't reprimand those who need it, and those who can don't always prioritize. The result is a lack of consequences. Perhaps we can create a policy to enable people to speak up?
- Be thoughtful about words. For example, "research" is a word that expresses value yet creates a lack of value elsewhere (in some circles research becomes valued over other university priorities, such as teaching).
- Students may be our most vulnerable population.
- Not everyone resonates with "social justice" and this can be a barrier to progress. How do we discuss without language becoming a barrier?
- Need to understand the perception of not addressing the bullying policy.
- The bullying policy is not the cultural problem. The cultural problem starts at the local level with those who use poor behavior.
- Even those who complain to people who provide services receive bad behavior, and having conversations with those who behave poorly can have an impact.
- There needs to be a system for face-to-face restorative justice for employees
- It is easy to focus on the bad apples rather than the margins of margins, and this perpetuates the problem.
- Direct energy and attention to those who need it
- There needs to be energy in both directions – lifting up those who need it, and addressing those who misbehave.
- CAVIP team is working to develop a process for evaluating culture
- With regard to experts, someone else can help understand CSU's culture, but this process may leave out marginalized identities.
- There is still room to build an understanding of creating a community with diverse staff
- "Outside expertise" sometimes is actually provided by CSU people, so we may have our own expert already.
- If someone internal does this work, we need to compensate them fairly.
- Email recommendations on this subject to Tony/Beth

Communication/Transparency Team Update:

- Developed ideas for moving forward at team meeting
- Communications plans start with goals, then strategies, then tactics
- Plan serves as road map to help us achieve our goals
- Lots of stories need to be told and they need to include broader context and framework
- Communication needs to be sustainable, communicate value, and repeat key messages.
- The idea discussed earlier that culture keeps people on campus or drives them away could be a key message
- Short-term ideas include:
 - Adding an input box to the website that will email Pam and Sue. Pam and Sue will respond to all messages.
 - Guest column by Sue/Blanche in Source
 - Discussions with culture center directors
 - Panels involving ASCSU
- Other teams should email Pam/Cara about what the communication team can help with
- We should communicate that we are wrestling with deeper issues and use the minutes as a tool

Accountability Team Update:

- The accountability team meeting will be held at a future date

Consistency Team Update:

- The consistency team meeting will be held at a future date

CAVIP Team Update:

- Values can be seen in strategic plan and at division/college levels
- Discussing how to collect data – could make use of various student surveys?
- Create norms in leadership by taking this work beyond the table
- Coordinate with other teams on how to help each other

What's working and what isn't within this group?

- How do we staff this group?
- Communication is a heavy lift
- Sue's dedicated time is very important
- Group needs appropriate resources and staff
- How do we address those who cannot be present? This is likely related to previous discussion of how collaborative culture leads to heavy workload
- Lynn's task force addresses workload by using dedicated staff and external help to help the task force maintain organization and focus
- For students, an excused absence could help with attendance

- We have already discovered some potential easy wins, such as addressing Facilities reassignments and displaying Principles of Community in buildings
- Perhaps the nonverbal communication class could tackle the Principles of Community in buildings project
- Be sure to share information about this group with your network and share operational feedback with the chairs

Upcoming Meeting Schedule:

- April 10th, 10:30 – 12:30
- May 22nd, 1 – 3
- June 24th, 10 - 12

All meetings will be held in the GLC room of Rockwell West.