

Black Student Success Council (BSSC)

Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2020

Welcome

- 1:08pm
- Introduction of new members joining the committee (Marcella DeVeaux, Lissa Stapleton).
- Announcement of Mechelle Best as a co-convener for group 4.

Thematic Discussion & Review

Meeting Minutes 12-13-19

- Theresa made announcement regarding the Presidential Search Open Forum on Feb 3rd. She asked the committee to please share with students and staff so the BSSC can have a voice at the meeting.
- Elizabeth Adams noted that the search is closed and this would be the only opportunity to have input into the search.
- Ryan announced that he spoke to the Black Graduation Committee and solidified a Margret Brown Scholarship, which will be available starting Feb 1st. Black Graduation dates should be announced soon.
- Vera asked Ryan if they could include information on the new scholarship in the material used for the Black Expo on April 1st.
- Vera noted that a single-page resource guide for Black students has been created.
- Theresa asked that any corrections to the minutes be sent to her.

Provost Meeting Recap

The Role of the BSSC Convener

- Theresa and Debra met with the Provost on January 21st
- Discussion points included background on the BSSC, who is on the council, what the goals were for the first year, what the goals are for this year, the council's safety and security recommendations, the need to hear Black student voices, the council's desire to increase visibility on campus, reports being worked on, and the complexity of the equity gap and how BSSC workgroups are addressing this issue. The invitation was also made to have the Provost attend the BSSC at some point.
- The Provost wanted the Council to think about the recruitment of honor students to our campus, and what incentives might be offered to attract them. She was also interested in how we might honor student's accomplishments each year; not just at graduation. Additionally, she wanted the Council to think about what our funding needs might be for any projects we were working on. She was very receptive about the committee's current projects and expressed interest in how the results will be assessed. Other topics

brought up included the advising hub, meta-majors and positive messaging from faculty members. Overall, she was very open and receptive, and the meeting was positive.

- Therese suggested that it would be helpful to meet again with the work group conveners to gather input on what each group is doing, what the measurable outcomes are, and what their potential funding needs might be.
- Theresa asked for any questions/feedback.
- Debra spoke about the role of the convener. Groups are expected to meet outside of the main BSSC meetings, keep Debra and Theresa updated on what is going on in the group, and let them know if they need additional support, funding or reports from Institutional Research. Debra noted that they would like to have group reports submitted in a specific format. Debra and Theresa would be working on that format in the coming weeks.
- Theresa asked each of the groups to look at the current direction that they're taking to manifest their goals, and what they need to adjust in light of the equity gap and the 2025 Graduation Initiative. The Provost will be expecting an update.
- Elizabeth Gutierrez mentioned that the Provost may be able to assist with getting the BSSC website launched and other promotional items distributed around the campus.
- Debra noted that her graphics team has agreed to work on a logo for BSSC.

Group 4: Student Focus Group Discussion; Equity Gaps & Black Student Success

- Debra announced that Mechelle Best will be the co-convener for group 4, in light of the amount of work that needs to be done in conducting surveys and gathering focus groups.
- Lissa Stapleton and Marcella DeVeaux have also been assigned to join group 4.
- Jessica Fred was invited to report on the questions group 4 was developing for focus groups.
- It was decided that the council would take some time to help come up with focus group questions during the meeting.
- Theresa asked the council as a whole to identify specific categories of questions.
- **The council then moved into an extended time of open discussion.**

- Jessica noted that the biggest challenge for them is to figure out how they are going to reach out to the Black student population. The possibility of having the hub be a touch point for students was mentioned.
- Theresa asked Jessica what would be most helpful at this point? Jessica noted that help with developing questions would be good, but she would like to also meet with Mechelle since she is the new co-convener of group 4.
- Theresa suggested that the council begin to look at specific categories to assist with the development of questions: (from the white board)
- 1. What do we want to know?
- 2. Who are the constituents (student groups) we are focusing on?
- 3. How many students do we need to saturate the study? 10% or around 200 students for pilot study?
- 4. What are the questions we want to ask on the interview protocols?

- 5. How will it be done? Survey vs. Focus Groups vs. Interviews. Also, where will it be done and by whom?
- 6. Transcriptions/Output – We need to determine the process and cost for transcriptions, if needed.
- 7. Data Analysis – How will this process be completed. Who is responsible? More discussion needed here.
- 8. Survey Development – Need to have the survey questions decided upon asap. More discussion needed here.
- 9. Distribution of surveys and collection
- Concerns included the following:
 - How to reach all Black students.
 - The need to reach students after hours due to their schedules.
 - Offering an incentive for students to participate in survey/focus groups.
 - Difficulty of reaching students who do not feel connected.
 - Addressing their need for belonging.
- Suggestions included the following:
 - Reaching students by using the HUB, student organizations, student employees, Africana Studies, and pulling information on all students who self-identify as Black. Attending events, distributing information in housing, and using both email and social media.
 - Recruit students we know to assist with getting the word out.
 - Offer several focus group options for people to participate in.
 - Create a trendy hashtag that people could respond to.
- Debra noted that we need to reach out to a variety of areas, including housing, hub, staff, etc. Need to tap into where they (Black students) are and offer several focus group options.
- Engagement of student leaders vs. students who are harder to reach. Deion noted the difficulty of reaching students who don't feel connected, or see the need for participating in the focus groups.
- Theresa stated that the ultimate goal is to get more Black students on campus and help them be successful.
- Vera asked how many categories of students should we be looking at?
- Theresa responded that we need a broad representation of students in order to get a good data sample.
- Categories might include (Age, Student Leaders/involved, students who are not as involved, class standing, commuter vs. residential, athletes, working students, academic majors, student parents, etc.).
- Ryan recommended using the hashtag to help develop questions based on the feedback students provide.
- Marcella recommended spending time building relationships before asking for participation in focus groups. Dell recommended raising awareness of BSSC on campus before focus groups.
- Marcella recommended getting the help of people who already have relationships with Black Students and invite them to focus groups for the sake of time rather than trying to build new relationships from scratch.

- Janet encouraged the group to go for quality rather than quantity when conducting a survey, so we don't end up with a lot of data that is difficult to interpret. Dell recommended finding out who on campus may already be doing this type of research before starting the focus groups.
- Ryan asked if it was the committee's intention to formalize this study? He's concerned about the timing.
- Discussion about the IRB exempt category for the survey. Mechelle noted that Expedited Category takes 3-4 months. Janet does not think it will require IRB.
- Elizabeth noted that a survey she helped with last year was conducted via iPad. 200 responses were collected.
- Vera recommend using students we know already to participate in focus groups in order to save time.
- Ryan recommended turning over the question development process back to group 4. Theresa was concerned about the timing and amount of work being placed on group 4. Trying to get input from the entire council.
- Mechelle concerned about which students we reach out to in order to get honest feedback. She felt it was important to include students we don't personally know or share classes with.
- Dell recommended starting with those students we know and then going broader.
- Theresa – asked if we should conduct a survey before holding the focus groups.
- The council voted in favor of having a survey done before focus groups.
- Janet noted that there is a low response rate for surveys on campus. It can take longer to get a survey together than a focus group.
- Tiffany recommended conducting the survey through the Black Student Union to make the process faster.
- The focus group questions are designed to answer the main question, which is “what is the experience of Black Students on campus?”
- Vera offered to connect group 4 with Erin Knell from SOAR who handles surveys to help assist the group with creating the survey.
Debra to send out a doodle poll to group 4 and Erin Knell to get a survey meeting scheduled. Elizabeth Gutierrez and Tiffany Abodoh would like to be included. Jessica would like group 4 to meet before a survey meeting is scheduled. Vera offered to provide Jessica with the information they need for the survey meeting.

Break-Out Working Groups

- N/A

Working Group Report Out

- N/A

Announcements

- Deion mentioned several events related to Welcome Black Week including:
 - Monday, Feb 3rd Welcome Black Dinner
 - Tuesday, Feb 4th BSU Jeopardy
 - Wednesday, Feb 5th Conversation with Police
 - Thursday, Feb 6th Welcome Black

- Friday, Feb 7th Homecoming Live variety show
- Saturday, Feb 8th Homecoming Dance

- Presidential Search Open Forum on Monday, Feb 3rd
- Presentation of Selma on Saturday, Feb 1st at the Soraya

Adjourn