

Black Student Success Council (BSSC)

Meeting Minutes

August 11, 2020

Welcome

- Theresa and Debra welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Website, Logo, Promotional Materials Update

- Theresa extended thanks to Shay, Abram, and Elizabeth G. for their work on the website.
- Shay provided a tour of the website, noting that it is active and currently being edited to include a space for news, resources, the mission statement, and the BSSC members. Website should be ready in two and a half weeks when the semester begins. The address is www.csun.edu/bssc. Paul Schantz in Student Affairs IT created an example of how the site would look with the BSSC logo. Elizabeth G. and Abram have been going through photos of various Black Student events provided by Theresa. Shay asked if any Council members have photos they want to suggest for the website banner, to please send those to Debra and Theresa. The BSSC email is also active and on the website.
- Elizabeth G. and Abram are working on the social media platforms.
- The event section is still being worked on with Paul. The plan is to highlight important news and events on the main page. Shay asked the Council to submit new event information two weeks before the event date, so that there is enough time to promote it on the website. She will be sending out a recurring email to remind people.
- Regarding the list of committee members on the website, Shay asked the committee to please contact her if their name, title or contact information should be corrected.
- Michael will send Shay the current list of committee members.
- Ryan asked if we wanted to highlight the students on the list of BSSC members? Shay expressed concerned about the student's emails appearing on the list.
- Vicki suggested listing the two co-chairs and the students first in alpha order, before listing the other BSSC members below. Debra asked if everyone was in agreement and the committee approved that suggestion.
- Deion requested clubs and orgs be added to the resources page with links to their Matasync page. Debra asked Vicki to provide the links.
- Theresa recommended adding internships and the statements of support from various departments for *Black Lives Matter*. Theresa also highlighted the importance of having ADA compliant documents on the website and referred the Council to the Universal Design Center if anyone needed help with that. Also wanted to ask that we highlight student achievements and accomplishments on the website. Asked the council to share those stories with her and Shay.
<https://www.csun.edu/universal-design-center>
- Shay asked that all submitted student success stories include a caption which will be added to the website.
- Shay noted that under Resources for Faculty and Staff, she hopes to add the Black Faculty and Staff Association (BFSA), but could not find a link to the webpage. Dell asked that Shay please use her email address for the time being.
- Shiva confirmed with Shay that she received the statement from EOP regarding Black Lives Matter.

- Elizabeth shared information on potential promotional materials, including a table runner, water bottle, and a stylus for iPads and notebooks. Asked for feedback from the Council.
- Aaron suggested a sticker with the logo for student's water bottles or notebooks.
- Vicki suggested a camera cover for personal laptops.
- Theresa suggested popsockets for student's phones. Council members are asked to recommend companies or organizations that have promotional items that can be donated. BSSC can place stickers on those items and offer to students. .
- Elizabeth G. shared information on the new Instagram account. The handle name is currently blackstudentsuccesscouncil. BSSC was not available.
- Kandace suggested a shorter handle and include CSUN in both the handle and in the bio information.
- Deion suggested CSUNBSSC as a possible option.
- Abram suggested CSUN_BSSC.
- Debra feels it is important to include the BSSC initials and CSUN if possible.
- Theresa recommended having all the social media accounts named in a similar way.
- Elizabeth G. will look into the CSUN_BSSC option after the meeting.
- Snapchat and Twitter have not been created yet. The Council recommended adding Twitter and LinkedIn for the time being. Theresa recommended adding a YouTube channel eventually.

Black Matador Outreach Updates

- Vicki noted that we held a total of eight training sessions. 16 people were trained and several others have requested training. We will be providing a video of the training, which is currently being edited and captioned and can be sent to those who are interested in helping. Outreach will continue until 8/28. Please send any referrals of people interested in assisting to Vicki.
- Vicki shared a copy of the communication that went out to students to let them know that someone would be calling on behalf of the BSSC. Michael will forward the communication piece to the Council.
- Ryan confirmed that the text messages should be sent out in the next two days.
- Debra asked for help from the Council in contacting students.

Black Matador Outreach Campaign Response Team

- Theresa noted that one of the most important aspects of the campaign is the output and data collection; what we learn from the students. Qualtrics will be used to capture the essence of the conversations and to discern common themes. The goal is to respond to these themes in a methodical and constructive way. Theresa asked for assistance from BSSC members to be on the response team, who will be responsible for examining the themes that emerged, and decide how we should respond. Elizabeth Riegos, Rashawn, and Kent offered to help Debra and Theresa on the response team.

Student Voices

- Rocky shared the Black Student Leadership Council (BSLC) document containing the student proposals.

Proposal *drafts* includes:

1. Implement a new recruitment and retention plan for Black students. Actively working with Black students, twice or more per semester to review and assess student needs.
2. Provide funding to recruit & retain Black faculty, staff and administrators.
3. Allocate funding/resources to create a Black resource center on campus.
4. Employing student ambassadors to go into the community, or bring the community to

the institution. Ambassadors would aim to create pathways with high schools & two-year colleges to CSUN.

5. Funding for summer services/programs to prepare students for Science, Math & Writing courses.

6. Funding for Mental Health & Psychological support programs. Having Black guidance counselors & psychologists available for students on campus.

7. Funding for scholarship programs to support incoming, returning, and 1st generation undergraduate and graduate students.

8. Incorporating Black owned businesses on campus such as fast food restaurants, juice/protein bars, coffee shops.

- Rocky asked the Council for recommendations or questions.
- Olani added that they are asking for student ambassadors/representatives to assist in the hiring process of Black faculty and staff.
- Vicki suggested looking at how we can connect each of the items listed to some of the existing resources that we have on campus. Noted that there is a national focus on STEM programs for minority students - grant support may be available. It was mentioned that scholarships cannot be tied to race/ethnicity, but there are strategies used to appeal to various groups.
- Natalie mentioned that some of these items are things they will be working on in the Commission on Diversity & Inclusion, and invited Olani and Rocky to meet with the Commission if they would like. Natalie noted that we are working with Faculty Affairs on strategies to recruit and retain Black faculty, staff and administrators. Requested more information on the Black Resource Center. Noted that they may have challenges with #4 until campus is fully open and asked if they were intending to still have those individuals do outreach in the community? What is it that you would like them to do specifically? In response to #6, Natalie noted that funding has already been designated for additional mental health counselors some of whom will be specifically for under-represented students. In response to #7, Natalie mentioned that there are some scholarships being worked on now that will cover some first-generation undergraduate students. In regards to #8, TUC is signing a new contract with a food service provider (Chartwells) this summer?
- Debra noted that she and Theresa have been meeting with Dr. Watkins, Dr. Ruelas-Bischoff, and some of the students to understand some of these proposals. The good news is that many of these things are appearing as concerns on several different lists. It was agreed that we need more clarity on what is meant by the Black Resource Center and the Institute on Research and Resources for Equity and Black Culture. How do they relate?
- Debra noted that TUC's new provider will offer a lower rate to students than the general campus rate and a pick up/drop off service at more reasonable prices.
- Debra asked how the Black Student Leadership Council (BSLC) and the Black Student Union (BSU) are going to move this document forward? Rocky said the first step would be to take it to Dr. Watkins to see if it is feasible. Debra offered to set up the meeting with Dr. Watkins.
- Vera asked Rocky to expand on #4. Rocky said they wanted ambassadors to speak to prospective students from the same major and provide them with information on the resources available to them at CSUN. Vera noted that this is something already being done through the University Ambassadors program.
- Gigi also mentioned SOAR's Outreach Internships. Gigi expressed concern about the student ambassadors that Rocky referenced receiving questions about admissions. Suggested that there might be a way to get more Black students into SOAR's existing programs.
- Rocky noted that students aren't aware of some of the programs available to them. She suggested adding links to these programs on the BSSC website.

- Olani asked about the application process for some of these programs, and why more Black students aren't involved. Vera and Gigi responded that the programs don't have many Black student applicants.
- Ryan offered his appreciation for the students for working on this document, and noted that the proposal does not have any requests that relates to Black alumni. Is there something that students want from Black alumni? Assistance may be available for scholarships and mentorships, networking opportunities, etc.
- Theresa also mentioned that there has been some discussion with University Advancement about connecting Black alumni with students for the purpose of highlighting mentorship opportunities, introducing them to different industries, shadowing them on the job, and having alumni come to campus to talk to students.
- Shelley recommended going through the list of proposals point by point and thinking through what is happening on the campus that we think is supporting this goal, or that could be further modified, advanced, or done differently. Suggested writing into the proposal the things the university is doing, or has discussed doing, that relates to these goals.
- Olani asked BSSC members to send her an email with information on events that they are hosting, so she can publicize to students.
- Theresa asked that the deadline to sign up student ambassadors be sent to the BSSC so we can help to recruit more Black students to the program. She also recommended that the students include a request for funding/compensation for student ambassadors. Suggested working with Elizabeth, Kent and herself concerning the funding for the services for Science, Math and Writing, #5 on the proposal list.
- Deion suggested scheduling a meeting to discuss/revise this document before taking it to Dr. Watkins.
- Debra will set up the meeting and asked for any BSSC members who are interested in attending to please email her and Theresa. She also noted the importance of thinking about intentionality behind what we're doing. We need to form deeper relationships between the Black students and various campus units that are working on some of these things.
- Shelley asked that members who can't attend the meeting please send in their suggestions to Debra and Theresa.
- Rocky gave her permission, at Debra's request, to send this document out to the BSSC members after the meeting.
- Kent suggested adding to #5 that the purpose is to eliminate equity gaps in many of our basic skills classes. This Provost Office is very interested in supporting this effort.
- Mechelle suggested the possibility of offering academic credit in place of funding for students who participate in the ambassador program. It was noted that these students receive priority registration.
- Rocky shared the Black Student Leadership Council's July newsletter with the BSSC Council.
- Debra requested that Rocky send the newsletter to the BSSC.

Commission on Diversity & Inclusion 10-Point Plan

- Natalie noted that the President's Commission on Diversity & Inclusion met with the President's Cabinet and are also putting together a list of CSUN goals and objectives in response to Black Lives Matter and making the campus more inclusive. It will include a list of things CSUN is committed to working on and putting money into, but the information is not public yet.
- CSUN is also setting up a grant funding opportunity that is coming out in the next month or so.
- Natalie expressed her thanks for the work the BSSC is doing. She also had a conversation with the Provost and some of the Deans regarding college initiatives. The Commission on

Diversity & Inclusion wants to hear from the BSSC and Natalie will be reaching out for input.

- Debra appreciated the openness of the Commission on Diversity & Inclusion during this process and their request for feedback from the BSSC.
- Natalie reminded people that they can email or call her.
- Theresa added that there is a lot happening behind the scenes and the BSSC and the campus will be hearing from the Commission on Diversity & Inclusion very soon.
- Natalie shared the list of things to report to the cabinet that are being worked on around campus in response to Black Lives Matter from various groups, i.e., Ending the Silence, Healing Spaces, etc. and asked the BSSC to please send any additional things they might be aware of to her so she can take it to the Commission.

BSSC: Leveraging Our Strengths

- Theresa shared information on how the Council first came into being. She noted that there was a need to bring together people who worked with Black students around campus, who could offer various perspectives and help move things forward in addressing the needs of Black students.
- She discussed the formulation of BSSC working groups and how the Council has had to periodically reassess deadlines and goals, in order to engage with issues that impact the Black community.
- Thinking about strategies to move our goals forward, and how we can work together in a more inclusive way, while leveraging our strengths across varied levels of expertise. It's important to promote an inclusive environment within the Council and encourage increased participation among the members.
- Suggested potential working/breakout groups that might focus on: athletes; smaller departments (e.g. Business, Science/Math, Engineering); EOP, the Colleges of Humanities & Health and Human Development) etc. and asking members to report out on what's occurring with Black students in those areas.
- It was suggested having 20-minute presentations from BSSC members who represent different areas on the campus share updates on Black students (challenges and successes) in their spaces during the upcoming semester.
- Elizabeth Riegos commented on how her participation in the BSSC helps her stay informed and better understand what is happening in her college, as it relates to Black students.
- Abram thought it was a good suggestion and talked about themes he is hearing from the students he speaks to.
- Shay agreed that the format Theresa suggested would be helpful.
- Aaron also thinks that breakout groups would be helpful to discuss what is happening in Admissions.

BSSC: 2020-21 Vision & Priorities

- Debra suggested looking at our goals and identifying what we could do and what would have the most impact on our students at this point.
- She stated that looking at 6-7 broad categories including the workgroups, the 10-point plan from the Commission on Diversity and Inclusion, the innovation and equity grants, concern for the health and wellness of the BSSC members, and the research and data that is available.
- Theresa mentioned three related themes that we should examine, including, How is Black student success defined? How does that definition affect the work that we do? What can the BSSC do to help Black students be successful?.
- Theresa also noted the importance of 1). Continually shifting the conversation/narrative from a deficit model to an asset-based approach 2). Review the data on DFU rates, and the equity gaps for Black students.

Fall Meeting Dates/Announcements

- Tuesday afternoons are being considered: 2:30pm-4:30pm or 3:00pm-5:00pm
- Debra suggested possibility meeting every 3-4 weeks beginning on September 1st.
- A Doodle Poll will be sent out with dates for the fall meetings.
- Theresa noted that a Black History Month planning meeting will take place in September.
- Dawn noted that the athletic department is working on a “Matadors United More Than A Hashtag” campaign and making resources available to encourage student athletes to vote.
- Theresa is calling a meeting with various campus representatives to discuss and connect the dots on campus initiatives focused on voting and civic engagement.
- Ryan noted an upcoming Black Male Scholars event. He will send out a flyer.
- USU is doing an event called Black Chat. It was noted that this event may be called Essential Talks.

Adjourn