

Black Student Success Council (BSSC)

Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2019

Welcome

- Welcome by Theresa and Debra.
- Introduction of new members (Sandra Darden, Allen Lipscomb)

Thematic Discussion & Reconnections

- Shiva discussed the recent shooting in Santa Clarita and the number of CSUN staff and faculty who live in that area. She also noted the importance of our being mindful about how our students might be processing this event.
- Elizabeth Adams noted that students from Saugus high school and the other high schools in the Santa Clarita area would be given more time to submit their applications to CSUN. The deadline will be pushed out a few weeks for those students. Juana Maria from SOAR is in touch with their college counselors to make them aware of the extended deadline.
- Abram noted that University Counseling Services has information on their webpage about support services for students.
- Ryan Mason inquired about how we might message students regarding President Harrison's statements on the shooting. He recommended sending an email to students about the support services that are available on our campus.
- Debra noted that she or Theresa would take that suggestion to Dr. Watkins.

Commission on Diversity & Inclusion

- Debra provided a handout with information on the work of the Commission on Diversity & Inclusion and discussed how their work may overlap with some of the efforts of the Black Student Success Council. Janet Oh, Elizabeth Gutierrez, Theresa White and Debra Hammond are all on the commission. Debra asked that any feedback or suggestions on how the work performed by the commission might aid Black students on campus be sent to her, Theresa, Janet or Elizabeth.
- Theresa asked the working groups to think about the various ways they might bring awareness of the Black Student Success Council to the wider campus, so those ideas can be presented to Dr. Watkins. Also, what kind of data would you like to request from Janet Oh that might be helpful?

VP of Student Affairs Requests

- Nothing noted at the time.

Institutional Research Report Requests

- Updated data from the Power Point presentation that Theresa made at the October meeting.
- Number of Black students who dropped out and didn't return.
- Number of Black students who were admitted to CSUN but never enrolled in courses.
- Black graduate student retention rates.
- Number of Black students who have been at CSUN for more than six years.

- Janet Oh requested that when members of the council submit their data requests that they include the question they are trying to have answered.

Break-Out Working Groups (Finalize WG Lead Selection)

Working Group Report Out

Group 1 – Outreach, Recruitment, Enrollment

- Considering producing a documentary or short video of a Black student doing a walkthrough of the campus.
- Suggested that Black students from different colleges/areas be a part of student outreach groups. Each college might have an outreach team that reported back to SOAR.
- Suggested inviting local high school instructors to come to campus to see what is happening at CSUN in their areas.
- Connecting with Black students who did not return or graduate to find out why they didn't continue.
- Suggested starting early (middle school) to help Black students begin to think about college at CSUN.
- Would like to conduct a survey that may help us know more about a student's preferences on the application.

Group 2 – Analysis and Assessment of Current Research Data

- Working on defining the different definitions of Black over the years with the short term goal of explaining/clarifying the information associated with the report on students identifying as Black or African American at CSUN. Also looking to discuss the implication of the data showing the decrease in numbers of students who identify as Black.
- Need to know the time frame for when they should finish this report. Report would include comparison of graduation rates for Black Students.

Group 3 – Identification and Assessment of Current Programs and Initiatives

- Working on identifying all activities that include students of Black decent. Ryan and Tiffany are providing a list of those activities, programs, clubs and organizations.
- Once we identify active students in these programs/activities, including those involved in two or more, we would like to compare the outcomes (GPA, credit accumulation, retention, 6 year FTF graduation rates, and 2 & 4 year FTT graduation rates) relative to students with similar demographics who are not active in any such programs.

Group 4 – Student Focus Groups

- Moving forward with idea to find space where we can talk to Black students. Dejon mentioned the "We are One" event on Thursday, Nov 21st at 5pm in the Lake Balboa Room as a potential opportunity to gather feedback from several Black students.
- Discussed the list of questions they would like to ask including how students feel connected to CSUN or how they do not feel connected to CSUN. Questions will be student to student and will be documented by minutes/notes as a starting point.
- Group needs funds for incentives for students to participate to focus groups. Need a way to contact students who they would like to invite to participate.

Group 5 – Institutional Challenges

- Group divided institutional challenges into two categories by students and staff: Cultural Roadblocks and Bureaucratic Roadblocks. Cultural roadblocks include an absence of inclusive

pedagogy, insufficient representation, deficiency of awareness of issues pertaining to diversity and inclusion, inconsistency of university messaging, experiencing imposter syndrome, lack of peer-to-peer engagement, and lack of proactive engagement with students. Bureaucratic roadblocks include the admissions process (going from being a prospective student to an applicant to getting admitted and finally enrolling in classes) and the hiring process for faculty and staff.

- Need to connect with group 4 to obtain feedback collected from students at focus groups.
- Working on developing a resource guide for Black students. Need to develop cost projections and obtain funding to produce the resource guide.
- Would like to collaborate with the Commission on Diversity & Inclusion regarding the Campus Climate Survey.
- Would like to answer the question “Why do students of African descent stop attending without returning to CSUN?” Would also like to know the number of units they were taking in their last semester, academic standing, whether they were on academic probation or disqualified, and what was their final GPA.

Group 6 – Information Dissemination

- Working on getting their website up. Looking at getting approval from Dept. Chairs and VPs to determine where the website will be hosted.
- CSUN Box has been set up to hold items for group including document listing resources, contact information for all BSSC group members.
- Working with A.S. and USU on how to maintain physical presence of BSSC on campus including using the A.S. Mindscreens and producing flyers that members can make available in their offices.
- Funding is needed for marketing materials.
- Data request has been made for the number of Black students who have been at CSUN for more than six years.
- Noted the desire for mentorship groups or programs specifically for Black Students who are struggling with academic issues.
- Deion Turner noted how the Black Leadership Council can help share information about resources and events with Black students. Deion also noted that several ideas suggested by groups may already be being worked on by the Black Leadership Council.

Working Group Convener Meeting

- Theresa and Debra asked for each group to send her their notes by next Tuesday.
- Theresa noted short term goals for this semester and long term goals by the end of spring. Would like to meet with Provost after Christmas break in early January and show her what groups are working on or goals they met by end of December. Janet Oh noted that the typical turn-around time for data request is two weeks. Debra reminded everyone to please let Janet know what the question is that you are trying to have answered.

Holiday/Social Gathering

- Theresa asked by show of hands if the group would like to think about having a social gathering at the end of spring. Most group members were open to the idea.
- Dell would still like to see a picnic in the fall to welcome black students back to campus.
- Elizabeth Gutierrez would like to see us work with groups like the Black Leadership Council to help host events like the picnic and communicate with Black students.
- Theresa asked if Deion could facilitate a meeting between BSSC members and members of the Black Leadership Council. Deion mentioned a meeting on Friday, December 6th at 7am with Black Leadership Council presidents.

- Shiva noted that students feel more comfortable with activities that are primarily student run with minimal faculty/staff support.

Announcements

- Meetings for the spring.
- Tuesdays seem better than Fridays.
- Doodle Poll will be sent out to determine the best dates.
- ABC Conference in January deadline to register is Dec 5th.
- Request for mentors was sent out by Ryan Mason and possible Black Male Students event is coming up. Details to follow.
- Elizabeth Gutierrez mentioned that CSSA is coming to CSUN for their monthly conference tomorrow Saturday, November 16th in the Northridge Center.
- Theresa is looking for mentors and students jobs in her department.

Adjourn