

## Black Student Success Council (BSSC)

Meeting Minutes

September 1, 2020

### Welcome

- Theresa and Debra welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced April Taylor who was an original member who started in 2018, and is rejoining the Council for 2020-2021.

### BSSC Goals 2020-2021

- Theresa and Debra introduced the goals for the Black Student Success Council this year:
  - GI 2020 Graduation Initiative, reducing the Equity Gap, High DFU Rates
  - Focus Groups - Elevating Student Voices (needs assessment).
  - Access and Engagement for Data Driven Outcomes (use of data to drive decision making & recommendations for action).
  - Impact of University 10-Point Plan (involvement of BSSC members).
  - Health and Wellness (of BSSC members & Black students).
  - Branding, Marketing and Information Sharing (including BSSC website, social media).
- Debra discussed the continued need to increase recognition of the BSSC on campus and to come up with a communication strategy for letting the campus know what we're working on, what our recommendations are, and how we are contributing to the university's 10-Point Plan. Our emphasis this year is to focus our attention on these six major priorities, and to assign people to groups to address each of these.
- Debra asked for any feedback from the Council regarding the six areas identified so far, and if there was anything that should be added to the list.
- Vicki asked Debra if we had received any specific information from the institution regarding the DFU so we can focus on the courses that are directly affecting the high DFU rate. Theresa responded that Janet will address some of that information in her presentation, and that we would soon have access to several dashboards that will allow access to this data.
- Theresa noted that all our projects will be data driven, and we will be intentional in our efforts.
- Ryan Mason asked if any of the goals focus on building community among the students. Theresa noted that we could add that language to the goal on "elevating student voices" to include building community. Vicki mentioned that we might gain insight into how students are thinking about building community in the virtual environment during the Welcome Black event hosted by the Black Student Leadership Council (BSLC). Rocky added that September 10th is the virtual Welcome Black event.

### COVID-19 Survey & CSUN Black Student Data

- Janet Oh introduced herself to the Council.

### **CSUN Black Student Data.**

- Janet's presentation titled, *Overview of CSUN Black Student Data* can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/BSSC-9-1-20>
- Janet noted that the Fall 2020 numbers are not yet available, so those numbers are not included in the presentation.
- Total Black student population at CSUN in the last 10 years has gone down from 7.3% in 2010 to 4.7% in 2019. (see slide #2.)
- From 2010 to 2019 there has been a drop in the total Black student population in every class level; particularly among Freshmen. (see slide #3)
- The number of new Black First-Time-Freshmen has declined from 558 in Fall 2010 to 304 in Fall 2019. (see slide #4)
- The number of new Black First-Time-Transfer students has risen from 187 in Fall 2010 to 218 in Fall 2019. (see slide #4)
- The number of new Black Graduate students has declined from 73 in Fall 2010 to 43 in Fall 2019. (see slide #4)
- Black First-Time-Freshmen students as proportion of total cohort have dropped from 10.7% in 2010 to 6.3% in 2019. (see slide #5)
- Black First-Time-Transfer students as proportion of total cohort have dropped from 4.2% in 2010 to 3.6% in 2019. (see slide #5)
- Black Graduate students cohort have dropped from 4.6% in 2010 to 3.3% in 2019. (see slide #5)
- Vicki noted that the most significant dip appeared to be in 2012, and asked if that was the timeframe in which there was a change in how students identify when they were completing their application for enrollment?
- Janet noted that there was a change to the way race was reported, largely due to the census. Because CSUN reports the federal level, we follow federal guidelines for race reporting. The information is taken directly from the CSU application and that change occurred in 2009, which is why the data in the presentation is from 2010 forward. This way the reporting is the same for all the years shown in the presentation.
- Gigi indicated that 2012 may have been the year when a lot of the impaction started, so areas in California where there were a lot of Black students were no longer considered local. This was the time we started Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 classifications.
- Janet noted that widespread impaction in 2016 could account for the drop in transfer numbers.
- Janet continued her presentation and noted that Freshmen tend to be much more diverse than our transfer students (see slide #6).
- Freshman 1-year continuation rates (Fall 2009-2018 cohorts) indicate that the number of Black First-Time-Freshman continuing after their first year has improved from 66.4% in Fall 2009 to 82.2% in Fall 2018 (see slide #7).
- Janet also noted that if a student does not continue after the first year it is highly unlikely that they transferred to another 4-year institution. They are most likely not enrolled anywhere, and if they are, it tends to be at a 2-year institution.
- 1-year continuation rates for Black First-Time-Transfer students has increased from 77.8% in Fall 2009 to 86.3% in Fall 2018 (see slide #8).

- Janet noted that we received fewer Black Transfer students overall than Black First-Time-Freshman.
- Freshman 6-year Graduation Rates for Black First-Time-Transfer students has increased from 36.8% in Fall 2004 to 41.7% in Fall 2013. The graduation gap between the overall university numbers and the Black students is about 14% (see slide #9).
- Transfer 4-year Graduation Rates for Black First-Time-Transfer students has increased from 55.0% in Fall 2006 to 69.0% in Fall 2015 (see slide #10).
- Theresa asked if anyone had any questions.
- Elizabeth Adams noted that First-Time-Transfer students did not experience impaction until 2016.
- Theresa noted that we are planning to have a mini workshop on our agenda on September 29th to review some of this data. She also encouraged members to make an appointment to meet with Janet, after the workshop, if they would like to take a deeper look at any of the numbers that are presented.
- Debra asked Janet how we are defining Black in this setting? Janet noted that it is being defined by federal reporting guidelines, which is what we report on our public sites. For the students included in these reports they were included if they did not select Hispanic, and they only chose Black.
- Theresa asked Janet if she could share information about the mini dashboard that would be available on the BSSC website.
- Janet indicated that she could show the council a demo in the September 29<sup>th</sup> meeting of how this might work.

#### **COVID-19 Survey**

- Janet's presentation titled, COVID-19 Student Survey Responses can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/CSUN-COVID-BSSC>
- The survey was open from May 4-26
- 9,086 students responded out of 36,825 enrolled students (24%) and 365 Black students responded (representing 4% of all respondents). (see slide #2)
- 59.0% of Black students strongly agreed and 27.1% somewhat agree that overall, the staff and administration at CSUN have done a good job protecting students from the negative health consequences of COVID-19. (see slide #4)
- 54.7% of Black students strongly agreed and 24.7% somewhat agree that overall, the staff and administration have shown care and concern for me as they respond to the spread of COVID-19 (see slide #5).
- 47% of Black students strongly agreed and 24.7% somewhat agree that overall, faculty at CSUN have shown care and concern for me as they make changes in their courses in response to COVID-19 (see slide #5).
- 48.5% of Black students indicated that they were very satisfied, while 31.9% were generally satisfied with the communication they are receiving from CSUN about its ongoing responses to COVID-19 (see slide #6).
- Only 29.7% of Black students indicated that they were very satisfied with the information they are getting about how changes at CSUN in response to COVID-19 will impact their ability to pay for college (see slide #7).
- 34.5% of Black students strongly agreed that they know whom to contact if they have questions about how changes at CSUN in response to COVID-19 will affect their educational plans (see slide #8).

- 24% of Black students indicated that they were very satisfied with the support they received from CSUN to help with the transition to taking classes online (see slide #9).
- 53.4% of Black students indicated they were experiencing a great deal of stress when asked how much stress they are feeling about the potential consequences of the spread of COVID-19 (see slide #10).
- 20.5% of Black students indicated very strong when asked how connected they feel to CSUN (see slide #11).
- Most Black students indicated that their top 3 concerns were paying bills, accessing/using technology, and having a safe place to sleep (see slide #12).
- 69.4% of Black students indicated that they definitely intended to return to CSUN next fall (see slide #13).
- Theresa asked that BSSC members please email Janet Oh with any questions that they have regarding the data contained in either presentation. Copies of both presentations will be distributed to the BSSC members, and included on the website.

### **CSUN Recruitment & Outreach**

- Vera and Gigi shared a presentation providing a general overview for the BSSC on what Student Outreach and Recruitment (SOAR) does, the services and events it will provide this year, how they recruit prospective students, their Black Student recruitment plan, and how everyone can support that effort.
- The SOAR office will be virtual throughout the fall 2020.
- Testing is also closed at this time.
- SOAR's Black Matadors Rise Initiative will focus on specific High Schools and Community Colleges, including Birmingham Community Charter High School, selected schools in the Antelope Valley, and "historical" schools.
- The initiative involves conducting educational workshops for students and parents on topics such as how to prepare for college in high school, paying for college, financial aid, majors and careers, and why CSUN is a good option.
- The initiative will also involve collaborating with our eight academic colleges to develop an academic pathway pipeline, conducting events for students on campus in the spring if we are allowed to return to campus, and offering an award recognition event.
- Additional recruitment and yield efforts for Black students to CSUN include email communications, social media engagement, tours for Black students, print materials, phone banking, webinars, Black student and parent cultural talks, current student and alumni video spots, and parent educational workshops.
- Vera asked if anyone had any questions.
- Upcoming events and items are expected to be posted within the next week on the SOAR website.
- Gigi noted that SOAR could use support for the upcoming Cultural Talks and with the development of a list of resources and individuals that they can refer students to. For example, connecting a Black faculty or staff member in a particular major that a Black student might be interested in speaking to.
- Abram asked about SOAR's Instagram account information. Vera responded that Outreach does not have one, but CSUN Ambassadors do.
- Vera shared a link to SOAR's YouTube Playlist:  
[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdV1k9\\_mMBI2LOFCgwMZ85LFu94eLVI4T](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdV1k9_mMBI2LOFCgwMZ85LFu94eLVI4T)

- Also, the link to the outreach website: <https://www.csun.edu/outreach>
- Gigi discussed some of the difficulty involved in recruiting from certain schools and their plans for reaching more Black students.
- Vicki asked about the possibility of the BSSC hosting some of the preview events happening for Black students. Vera indicated that it might be a possibility and mentioned the upcoming Cultural Talk on November 17th as an option.
- Theresa thanked Vera and Gigi for the presentation and Vera noted that she would add today's presentation to the BSSC box.
- Elizabeth Adams made a comment that they would be working with the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education and the Western Undergraduate Exchange to help recruit more black students from nearby states. She also noted that they can recruit from Texas this year.
- Aaron commented that he would be working with Elizabeth to do more outreach in the Compton area including Compton High School and Compton Community College.

### **Student Voices**

- Rocky announced that the Black Student Leadership Council will host a virtual Welcome Black event on September 10th from 6pm-7:30pm and she is looking for some staff and administration participation to help fill some spots this year.
- Tiffany Abodoh noted that some students are feeling that there is a lack of communication from some areas on campus including financial aid and their student advisors.
- Shelline discussed the challenges financial aid is facing this season and noted that she will receive emails regarding issues where students need immediate assistance. Turnaround time is currently 1 week to 1 ½ weeks. Staff are working on the weekends to help address student needs.
- April asked Shelline how advisors should respond to students who are being dropped from classes due to financial aid issues. Shelline noted that enrollment protection has been expanded this year to include any student in the financial aid pipeline. The key is for students to turn in their documents as soon as possible. The biggest concern is for students who are just now filling out their financial aid application or just now submitting documents.
- Elizabeth Reigos-Olmos noted that the fax machine in Financial Aid is so busy that a fax cannot go through and students can only submit documents through fax or through mail. Email is not accepted and this is delaying students from being able to submit documents. Shelline noted that there is a drop box in the main lobby outside Financial Aid where students can submit their documents directly. She also said that at this time it is not possible to add another fax number and clarified that only documents with classified personal information need to be faxed in. Other documents can be sent via email. The current fax machine is secure to receive confidential documentation.
- Mechelle Best asked if students who are appealing their financial aid decision are also receiving enrollment protection? Shelline answered, yes.
- Shiva mentioned that it's important for those who are following up with students to know that if a student doesn't complete their file they will not get financial aid and will receive a bill. Follow-up is important to prevent this from happening.

- Theresa commented that we might ask Shelline to give a presentation at a future meeting to discuss the financial aid process.

### **Black Matador Outreach Updates**

- Vicki provided an update on the phone calls that were made to students.
- There have been a lot of missed calls or students not answering calls.
- Students were sent a brief two-question survey with the text message that was sent asking if they could identify a CSUN website they had visited in the last 30 days.
- 13 students answered the survey and indicated Financial Aid as the top site visited followed by academic departments and Admissions and Records.
- Debra spoke to two students who were happy to receive a call from CSUN. Several others had not responded yet. She also mentioned that Dr. Watkins spoke with several students and received good feedback.
- Kent said that he was able to get in touch with about half of the students on his list and received very good responses. He sent out emails to students who did not answer their phone.
- Mechelle spoke with a student's grandmother who was very surprised and impressed that someone from CSUN was calling. Mechelle planned to email the students on her list that she was not able to reach by phone.
- Nyla shared that many of the students she spoke with were doing well with the virtual environment. She also mentioned that she had a list of sophomores who she was able to talk to about clubs and organizations.
- Theresa indicated that students in Africana Studies were surprised and deeply appreciative of the call and noted how important having a sense of belonging was to them. They were also excited to hear that we had a Council and appreciated the effort that was made to reach them.
- Theresa asked the Council to upload any comments they received from students into Qualtrics.

### **CSUNasOne: Student Life and Support**

- Debra introduced the new CSUN as ONE website to the Council .
- The site is located at <https://www.csun.edu/csunasone/student-life-and-support-v2>
- Reviewed several of the tabs for students who wanted to get involved in joining student leadership, understanding financial matters, connecting with your community, cultural centers and more.
- Debra will send the BSSC information on how they can add events to the webpage.
- She pointed out the section titled, "Don't see what your looking for" and asked the council to review the site and note anything they feel might be missing from the site, ask any questions or make any suggestions in this section.
- Before moving forward, Theresa noted that in the chat log Elizabeth Adams asked everyone to please let her know which advisors were not replying to students. Theresa also noted that Vera's presentation would be added to the CSUNBox for the Council.
- Rocky asked if the Black Student Union (BSU) and Black Student Leadership Council (BSLC) could be listed separately on the webpage, under student leadership, so new students could find that information more easily. Debra recommended that we do that

on the Black Student Success Council (BSSC) Website rather than on the Student Life and Support Website.

- Vicki noted to the Council that her Instagram account was breached over the weekend. Her real Instagram account includes her picture and is titled @vickimallen.

### **Diversity & Equity Innovation Grant**

- Natalie was not available to make a presentation, but Debra noted that she and Theresa had a meeting about one project they would like to work on related to the Institute for Equity and Black Culture and asked if there were any other BSSC members who were thinking of submitting a proposal. The deadline is the end of the month and grants are available between \$5,000 and \$75,000. Please let Debra and Theresa know if assistance is needed.
- Info on Diversity and Equity Grant can be found at <https://www.csun.edu/commission-on-diversity/diversity-equity-innovation-grant>
- Gigi and Vera are working on one.
- Ryan Mason, EOP, and Student Housing are also working on grants.

### **Fall Meeting Dates/Announcements**

- Dates for the Fall meetings included September 29th, October 20th, November 17th and December 8th.
- Ryan noted that Black Male Scholars (Barber Shop Talk) meeting is every Thursday at 12 noon. Please email Ryan if you're interested at [blackmalescholars@csun.edu](mailto:blackmalescholars@csun.edu). Black Alumni will be releasing their events soon and expect to have a couple of student/staff facing events.
- Vera noted that one of SOAR's Black Cultural Talks was scheduled for November 17th from 4pm-5pm, which conflicts with the November BSSC meeting. Michelle Best suggested using the last hour of the BSSC meeting to participate in the Cultural Talk. Theresa, Debra and Vera will discuss the idea.
- The Black House has a series of virtual events coming out. Theresa will send out the calendar and place the information on the website.
- Shay noted that the website is live and fully functional. A CSUNBox sub-folder was created where members can submit an event request. Shay will send out an invite to the Box to all Council members so they can add events.
- Vicki noted that Carmen Chandler is currently approving events to be added to the university calendar. Please make sure the information does not contain any spelling or grammatical errors, and that you have an image that is clear.
- Abram noted in the chat that both the Instagram and Twitter accounts for the BSSC are active.
- Theresa noted that there were also a number of events happening around campus regarding voting. A calendar of events is being created to be distributed through *We the People*. The deadline for people to send in events is September 15th. The information should be available around the third week of the month.

### **Adjourn**