

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2012-2013  
CSBS CLIMATE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES  
California State University, Northridge**

**OFFICERS**

Chair and Executive Secretary, Sheila K. Grant

**MEMBERS**

<b>Dept</b>	<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Staff</b>
Anthropology	James Snead	Rasmita Dhruv
Geography	Mario Giraldo	AnnMarie Morlett
History	Miram Neirick	Kelly Winkleblack-Shea
Pan African Studies	Anthony Ratcliff	Anita Simon
Political Science	Boris Ricks	Cynthia Harris
Psychology	Que-Lam Huynh	Leta Chow
Psychology	Gabriela Chavira	“ “
Psychology	Michael Gardner (Adjunct)	“ “
Social Work	Wendy Ashley	Tiffany Newton
Sociology	Moshula Capous-Desyllas	Christina Brown
Sociology	Michael Carter	“ “
Sociology	Teresa Madden (Adjunct)	“ “
Urban Studies	Henrik Minassians	N/A
Dean's Office	N/A	Joy Bartley
CHAIR of CCC	Sheila Grant	N/A

*Note:* Most members attended regularly & were active contributors to the CCC Mission; but not the case for all.

**MEETINGS OF THE CSBS CLIMATE COMMITTEE (CCC)**

**Charge Meeting with Dean Stella Theodoulou and the CSBS Administrative Committee Meeting (ACM) with Chairs and Staff: November 2012**

**CCC Meeting Dates:**

**December, 3, 2012. February 15, 2013, March 15, 2013, April 19, 2013, May 10, 2013**

**CCC Sub-committees:**

- A. Staff-Faculty Communication: Kelly (chair), Anthony, Michael, Christina, Rasmita, Leta
- B. Workload Committee: Tiffany (chair), Kelly, Miriam, Mario
- C. Privilege Committee: Gabriela (chair), Anthony, Wendy, Anita, Joy, Tiffany
- D. Assessment-Qualitative: Moshoula (chair), James, Sheila, Rasmita, Henrik, Boris
- E. Assessment-Quantitative: Que-Lam ‘Q’ (chair), Henrik, Rasmita, Sheila
- F. Mission Statement Subcommittee: Joy (chair), Tiffany, AnnMarie
- G. CSBS Climate Committee Webpage Project: Joy (chair)

## CSBS CLIMATE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES:

- Brief overview of Campus Climate Report & General Charge to the CSBS Climate Committee was discussed.
- Confidentiality Pledge briefly discussed with unanimous agreement
- Members voted to combine Faculty & Staff in all aspects of CSBS Climate Committee
- Topic Discussions lead to the formation of Subcommittees (see above)

Mission Statement Subcommittee: Proposed two options for a CCC Mission Statement and the CCC voted (all in favor of this option but one who preferred the other) to **overwhelmingly support and approve the following mission statement**:

The CSBS Campus Climate Committee exists to enhance the work and learning environments of faculty, staff, and students with a focus on improving the interactions between all levels of the college and promoting the respect of individuals and groups. Our goal is to help improve the climate at CSUN and affirm the value of each member.

In order to support this mission, the committee will:

- Provide a safe space and forum for all members of the college to give a voice to the issues that are impacting their academic and professional lives without fear of reprisal
- Analyze issues and collect information to determine the appropriate method to address said issues in a fair and equitable manner
- Implement symbolic and concrete actions that address the needs of our community and foster the systemic change necessary to positively impact the lived realities of those within our college

College-level Independent Ombuds Services: General monthly discussion on Need & Feasibility

CSBS Climate Committee (CCC) webpage: General discussion on need to increase presence, transparency, and receptivity to hear faculty and staff concerns led to CCC going live on August 1, 2013 [http://www.csun.edu/csbs/resources/CSBS\\_Climate\\_Committee/index.html](http://www.csun.edu/csbs/resources/CSBS_Climate_Committee/index.html)

The following suggestions were made for possible content of CCC webpage:

- a. Book list relevant to climate issues in higher education
- b. Link to UCLA's Office of Ombuds Services
- c. Link to things to do in order to be respectful (e.g., Rules of cubicle etiquette)
- d. Community agreement, carried on syllabi, college ideals
- e. Perhaps departments can come up with their community agreement among the ten chairs and take to ACM with dean and combine to a college agreement

Privilege Subcommittee: Gabriela Chavira (chair) proposed that each department conduct a privilege walk (activity) with all of their faculty (FT/PT) and staff. One way to address the inequities in each department is to first recognize that we all have different levels of privilege. The suggestion was met with enthusiastic support and will be planned to take place in 2013-2014 AY.

Quantitative Subcommittee: Decided it was necessary to wait upon the results from the Qualitative Subcommittee to inform their work and before they can design an appropriate survey that would touch on the most important qualitative themes discovered.

### Staff-Faculty Communication:

The subcommittee identified problem areas and recommends that:

- A. a system of merit awards be implemented for staff to improve morale and show they are appreciated and their experience valued;
- B. an employee be appointed to advocate for staff in the IRP process. The decision rests on one person in Human Resources. There is a lack of clarity in this process. The administration and college should allocate funds for this purpose;
- C. lecturers should be represented on the Climate Committee and express their opinions on improving the climate;
- D. the College should revisit the idea of flexible scheduling for staff. Give staff the opportunity to participate in telecommuting;
- E. decision-making, that is lacking clarity and transparency, be addressed at college and department levels of CSBS;
- F. a system of training be implemented for new staff hires. [Perhaps by appointing a senior staff member as a mentor]; and
- G. a training system for new faculty be put in place that includes:  
clarity of division of staff duties—who to go to for a specific question, task, etc., what staff can and cannot do, as well as other resources that are available to new faculty within the college and department

Recommendation to include lecturers was acted upon and chairs of the two largest departments in the college, Psychology and Sociology, were asked to invite a lecturer to join the CCC. Dr. Michael Gardner from the Psychology Department and Dr. Teresa Madden from the Sociology Department agreed to join the CCC. However, since these lecturers were invited mid-way in the spring 2013 semester, Dr. Gardner was only able to attend one meeting and Dr. Madden was unable to attend any meetings. Next academic year the CCC will revisit this issue to attempt active participation from lecturers.

This subcommittee was asked by the Workload Subcommittee to discuss “the possible creation of common courtesy/manners guidelines to help facilitate effective and appropriate communication between administration, department chairs, faculty, staff and students”. While a good idea, this would be almost impossible to develop due to the cultural, generational, personal, gender, etc. opinions on appropriate/inappropriate behavior.

At the end of the meeting it was decided unanimously to dissolve this committee.

### Workload Committee:

According to the qualitative data collected so far, there are several issues specific to the work environment that are negatively impacting CSBS faculty and staff: administrators and chairs that are not always effective or objective leaders, the absence of an anonymous feedback mechanism to give faculty and staff an opportunity to voice concerns without fear of reprisal, a dearth of incentives or awards targeted at increasing morale and maintaining peak job performance, and a lack of standardized training and/or orientation materials to help acquaint new faculty and staff with organization’s structures, resources and policies. In response to the abovementioned issues, the committee will be working on the following tasks:

- Create and conduct a survey focused on workload issues to help identify specific areas that need to be addressed and to provide factual support of any recommendation brought to the committee and/or the Dean
- Review training and/or orientation materials and procedures for department chairs, faculty, staff and student assistants within CSBS to get an accurate idea of what information is include and what information should be added or specifically highlighted to mitigate or alleviate workload issues for faculty, staff and student assistants

Qualitative Subcommittee: A pilot focus group was held with faculty and staff members of CCC volunteering as participants. The pilot was considered a success and formal focus groups were planned and conducted (3 FT Faculty, 1 PT Faculty, & 2 Staff) and the Dean's Office provided funds for refreshments. CCC faculty members facilitated faculty focus groups and CCC staff members facilitated staff focus groups. Faculty co-facilitators (Moshoula Capous-Desyllas and James Snead); Staff co-facilitators: Kelly Winkleblack-Shea, Rasmita Dhruv, Joy Bartley, Leta Chow, Christina Brown, and AnnMarie Morlett.

*Overlapping Dominant Themes from Both Faculty and Staff Focus Groups:*

- Work-load issues (including classes being too large)
- Monetary compensation
- Clarity of faculty/staff roles
- Addressing issues of privilege and oppression related to social identities (race, age, gender, ability status, sexual orientation, religion, and class status)
- Independent bodies needed for faculty complaints
- Favoritism/Lack of transparency

**Definite CCC Plans for 2013-2014 Academic Year:**

1. Replace membership vacancies due to leave or inactivity with new members
2. Quantitative Survey for All CSBS Faculty (FT & PT) and Staff –  
To be Deployed in Late Fall 2013 or Early Spring 2014
3. Privilege Walk Activity Tailored for each CSBS Department is being planned and will be delivered in late Fall 2013 semester or in early Spring 2014 semester

**Recommendations to Dean Stella Theodoulou:**

1. Study the six themes (i.e., concerns & needs) that emerged from faculty and staff focus groups (see above) and discuss these issues with chairs and administrative staff in the CSBS Administrative Meeting and provide constructive feedback and suggestions to the CSBS Climate Committee.
2. Provide funds (\$\$) for an incentive to participate in upcoming CCC Quantitative Survey (in development) i.e., funds for an opportunity drawing to faculty & staff participants.
3. Support CCC's facilitation of a Privilege Walk Activity in each department (we plan to combine smaller departments if necessary) with a strong endorsement from Dean and all the Department Chairs.
4. Fund departmental Privilege Walk Activities with refreshments for each.
5. Appoint an independent ombudsperson for CSBS.
6. Consider bringing in speakers that are experts on improving climate (big name once per AY or small names twice per AY).
7. Posters developed, produced & placed prominently in departments & hallways (i.e., Reminders re: respect, fairness, and participation - ingredients of a positive climate; 8 Questions re: Climate).