

**Commission on Multicultural Understanding**  
**Executive Council Meeting Summary**  
**December 5, 2008 – Hoosier Room, IMU – 1:30-3:00pm**

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**Attendance:**

Chair: Pamela Freeman

Deputy Chair: Bill Shipton

Graduate Assistant: Jodi Benenson

General, At-Large, & Ex-Officio Members: Doug Bauder, Beverly Calender-Anderson, Melanie Castillo-Cullather, David Hummons, Rob Meyer, George F. Robinson (IUPD), Nathen Steininger

IUSA Students: Shane Bohbrink, Seth Bowers, Indira Dammu, Abigail Skinner

Committee Co-Conveners:

Orientation and Welcome: Thea Heninger-Lowell

Retreats and Recognition: Lillian Casillas and Barry Magee

Teachable Moments: Not present

Student Coalition: Akash Rusia

Faculty and Staff Policy Issues: Natalie Conlon

Training: Ashleigh Klingman

Student Policy Issues: Sandy Britton, Rachel Peterson, and Jen Yu

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**I. Welcome**

- Pam welcomed everyone to the meeting, and all attendees went around and introduced themselves.

**II. Sponsorship Requests**

**A. FOSTERing Action in Times of Challenge and Controversy**

- In January, Foster Residence Hall with the support of the CommUNITY Education Program is holding a contest for Bloomington High School students. The contest is in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. High school students will submit essays about why his peace efforts are important in our community today. This event will take place at the Foster Formal Lounge on Sunday January 25, 2009 at 5pm.
- This event will be a banquet and a ceremony for students to have the opportunity to share their essays with their families and friends and be recognized for their achievements.
- COMU voted and will be contributing \$75 to this event.

**B. MBLGTACC 2009**

- The 2009 Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Ally College Conference (MBLGTACC) will be hosted at IUB on February 13-15, 2009. This is a conference planned by many undergraduate and graduate students at IU, and is expected to have over 1,000 attendees.
- MBLGTACC 2009 seeks COMU as a co-sponsor.
- COMU voted and will be contributing \$75 to this event.

**C. MOSAIC Film Festival**

- The Diversity Theatre seeks financial support for its second MOSAIC Film Festival, which will take place on April 4, 2009 at City Hall. The MOSAIC Film Festival will celebrate 25 years of the theatre's presence in Bloomington as a catalyst for change.
- Many members of the planning committee are SPEA student interns, and admission to the event is free.
- COMU voted and will be contributing \$75 to this event.

**D. Campus PRIDE Film Festival**

- Barry explained that the film festival, which is in its 5<sup>th</sup> year, is seeking financial support for two on-campus screenings in conjunction with the Bloomington PRIDE Film Festival being held at the Buskirk Chumley on January 29-31, 2009.
- Last year there were several films shown throughout campus, and this year there will be two on-campus screenings. The films are "It's Still Elementary" and "XXY." These films will be shown in the School of Education and in the Community and Leadership Development Center (CLDC) in Read Residence Hall.
- COMU voted and will be sponsoring \$100 for this event.

#### **E. MLK Civil Rights Immersion Trip**

- This year the trip will be visiting Haskell Indian Nations University Culture Center, the Cahokia Mounds historic site, and the Prairie Band Potawatomi Reservation in Lawrence, Kansas. The trip will be from January 15-18, 2009. Barry expressed the hope that 56 students will be able to attend this year.
- The goal is for students to develop a more complex understanding of the diversity of Native American histories and achievements; to explore and discuss current issues facing Native American communities; and, to make connections between civil rights struggles of the past and the present and see themselves as an agent of change to challenge injustices in their own communities.
- COMU voted to sponsor \$250 for the trip.

### **III. Update on Co-Sponsored Events**

- Marga Gomez:** Lillian said that the presentations of Marga Gomez were interesting, particularly as a fellow Latina. Gomez spoke at Collins and in a gender studies course. As a comedian, Gomez was very funny, and performed so well that she has been invited back to IU for MBLGTACC 2009.
- Take Back the Night:** Indira is a part of the feminist group on campus that organized Take Back the Night. This event was focused on ending violence in the community, because sexual assault is a very big issue on campus. The event began with a musician and speakers, including the Middleway House and the Office for Women's Affairs. A candlelight vigil was held, and this event raised about \$200 for the Middleway House.
- Wit(h)ness: Art, Memory, and the Holocaust symposium:** Post-meeting, we received an update on the Mathers Museum event. Over 500 people attended the event, and the event was very well received by students and members of the community.

### **IV. Committee Updates**

#### **A. Orientation and Welcome**

- Thea explained that the cultural event for spring orientation 2009 will be January 8<sup>th</sup> at 5pm as a way to introduce students to campus.
- This event will be occurring at the Georgian Room.

#### **B. Retreats & Recognition**

- Lillian, Barry, Cynthia, and the Retreats & Recognition committee would like to have this year's retreat in conjunction with the MLK Jr. trip to Haskell University. This will allow participants to utilize the experiences of the students who went on the immersion trip.
- The plan is to have a day of roundtables, and invite the President of Haskell to come talk about Native American issues and education. Students who went on the trip could also talk about their experiences from the trip.
- Lillian noted that the retreat may require a bit more funding if we have a luncheon component. She also mentioned that the committee is working with a faculty member at IUPUI to collaborate and exchange ideas about the retreat.
- February 6 is the projected date for this event.

### **C. Teachable Moments**

- Pam noted that we are looking to have a program in response to an opinion piece that was published in the IDS last November. The piece used phrases and language in a very offensive way to a lot of people, and was followed up by several counterarguments, including alumni and other distinguished individuals.
- This presents a Teachable Moment or a Training opportunity that could be incorporated into a program, where people may be able to learn about the use of labels and phrases without consideration of possible bias.

### **D. Student Policy Issues**

- Rob explained that a minor change was made to the application form for students applying for room use, in that the event is not limited to a fundraising event. Organizations can start using this form in January.
- Sandy, Rachel, and Jen met prior to Thanksgiving and talked about plans to look on the COMU at different instances that have come up with students who are unable to observe a religious holiday. Jen explained that the committee is also working with the Bloomington Faculty Council Affirmative Action committee to make sure COMU does not impede on anything they are doing. The student policy committee will meet again in January once first semester is over.
- Pam suggested looking at the academic affairs website that may help with gathering information about reported incidents connected to the policy.
- Bill is unsure whether students know if the information is on the syllabus.
- Pam mentioned that sometimes the syllabus does not schedule exams until later in the semester, which should also be a consideration.

### **E. Faculty and Staff Policy Issues**

- Natalie met with Hilary and Susan from Overseas Studies and talked about the display case. Overseas Studies is very willing to work with COMU and let us put a kiosk there. However, there are also two display cases on the sides of the Woodburn 100 classroom that may be from COAS. Natalie and Hilary were thinking that we could perhaps use the other display cases.
- Natalie also talked about potentially having a TV that is mounted somewhere instead of having a kiosk. Hilary is contacting the IU Physical Plant to see what we can do with it.
- The committee wants to use the video from a few years ago, but it may be too long so editing may have to be done. Natalie asked Dr. McKluskey to send out an email to the Black Student Union to meet with Hilary and Natalie to get input about what they would like to see on the video. Natalie is unsure whether or not Eric Love is the advisor, but she will contact him to see if he can help.
- Hilary is thinking about incorporating one of her second semester courses into the kiosk.

### **F. Training Committee**

- Eric, Rob, and Ashleigh met and thought about having two different events second semester. Rob wants to lead a lunch and learn in February to discuss diversity issues. Ashleigh's interest was to work with Deb Getz and see what she is doing in her department.
- Ashleigh is going to meet with people to find out what is going on next semester. Currently, there is a plan for a program called 'diversity Olympics,' which aims to get different groups of students to interact together and participates in games.
- Nathen suggested stickball as a game option that could be played.

### **G. Student Coalition**

- Akash would like to step in and lead the Student Coalition. His goal is to simply bring the coalition back to life. The first task will be to have a call out meeting and get student involvement, and the goal is to get several students passionate about the coalition.

- Doug said that the coalition has done some very significant work in the GLBT office, Latino studies, etc. and can make a significant impact.
- Indira mentioned that the naming of the Wildermuth Center may be an issue the student coalition can latch on to.
- Lillian mentioned that the president of Latinos Unidos and other student groups may be involved in the student coalition.

## **V. Announcements and Discussion Items**

### **A. Campus Community Partnership Meeting**

- Pam talked about the meeting, which has happened six times in the past, and she would like to see another one in 2009. The meeting presents an opportunity for leaders in the community and on the IUB campus to collaborate.
- Things such as the Bloomington Multicultural Festival and Cultural Lens have come out of this event. Pam and Beverly thought it might be good to have another one this spring (March 12).
- Beverly mentioned that last month (November) an event was held through the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs and Safe and Civil City, but did not allow for the opportunity to collaborate and design programs. The intent of CCPM is to create programs like BMF and Cultural Lens and encourage people to think big.

### **B. Reports from Cultural Centers and Offices**

- Doug mentioned that a GLBT Spirit Award would be presented at the GLBT gathering at the Bloomington Bagel Company on December 5. He also mentioned to keep your eyes open for the movie *Milk*, which will be coming out in theaters very soon. Harvey Milk served as an inspirational gay rights activist and was assassinated in the 1970s.
- Barry announced that the Quarryland Men's Chorus will be holding its winter concert "To Friends and to Life" on Sunday, December 7 at 4pm at the Universalist Unitarian Church.
- Melanie announced that the Asian Culture Center would be serving Thai and Indian food to show support to everyone this first semester tonight, December 5. This event will be hosted by Asia Pacific American and faculty staff council.
- Lillian said that there has been a call for proposals for the Latino Leadership conference. Last year IUB partnered with Purdue, and this year it will be at IUPUI and will be sponsored by IUB, IUPUI, and Ivy Tech.
- Lillian also announced that First Nations Educational and Cultural Center (FNECC) will be moving to Ashton and might be having a decorating party. She added that she wants to grow the library and is hoping to get support for the library. They are moving to Ashton because Eigenmann is not as accessible, and is hoping to split their new office into six rooms.