

Professional Development Committee

October 28, 2015
Room 420

Present: Julie St. Clair, Gillian Clements, Ray Orque, Deirdre McGovern, Rob Hickox, Eric Castro, Patrick Lannan, Kristen Moraine, Paul Molinelli, Carole Nickolai, Emily Goodell

Excused: Patrick Ruff

Guests: Matt Balano, Jennifer Gaspar-Santos

October In-service Review

Committee members discussed in-service evaluation results forwarded to the group prior to the meeting (available at this link → <http://bit.ly/1RAAIBA>). The feedback was generally positive, and essentially consistent with recent in-services on diversity, equity and inclusion. Ninety-one people responded to the evaluation, which represents about 70% of those who attended. Discussion highlights about the evaluation results:

- Seems that most people found the “visiting anthropologist” activity helpful, although some didn’t see the connection between the campus tour and culturally responsive teaching.
- For some the day seemed rushed, including Katie’s excellent ministry presentation and table group conversations.
- Several people mentioned the importance of follow-up, including what we would do with the data collected by small groups and summarized on posters (available here — > <http://bit.ly/1LXRDKP>).

Paul reviewed what’s currently planned for the remainder of this year:

- Beginning next month, we’ll use Academic Council, Diversity & Inclusion Group (DIG), and department meetings to begin teaching and applying the remaining four Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching. These CRT principles and all other in-service resources are posted on this page (<http://www.siprep.org/page.cfm?p=10422>).
- We’ll summarize and share In-service “visiting anthropologist” findings with the appropriate stakeholders (<http://bit.ly/1LXRDKP>).
- We’re hosting the upcoming White Privilege Symposium on Saturday, 11/14. This is an excellent opportunity to deepen our understanding of issues of equity and inclusion, and departments are encouraged to send at least one representative.
- We’ll host four Friday Diversity Socials. Our October 23rd social provided an opportunity to debrief the in-service and discuss the excellent America Magazine article entitled, “Breathing Space: Jesuit institutions must do more to undo racism.” Our next Diversity Friday Social on December 4th, with two more socials scheduled for spring (March 4th, April 29th). See the Equity and Inclusion webpage for details and other resources (<http://www.siprep.org/page.cfm?p=9389>).

Discussion moved to what else we might be doing to sustain our equity and inclusion efforts, this year and beyond:

- Perhaps consider hosting “chew and view” sessions after school that feature key documentaries.
- Think about how we might fold this into our Arrupe Series, even if only once a year, given the intersection between equity and inclusion and Catholic/Ignatian principles.
- Continue to be mindful of how our own curriculum review process (CDRP) provides the mechanism for examining our curriculum with this lens.
- Continue looking for ways to bring discipline-specific resources to our departments.
- The upcoming White Privilege Symposium we’re hosting offers a terrific way for us to connect and share with other educators.
- Matt raised the possibility of hosting an annual equity & inclusion conference here as one possible way to sustain our work moving forward.
- Perhaps consider an annual conference here with a broader focus on modern teaching that would include multiple strands — equity and inclusion, assessment, learning differences, technology, etc.
- Need to look for additional ways to use and share the knowledge and expertise that

already resides in the building.

Paul and Matt will take these suggestions and use them in planning additional programming and resources for faculty/staff.

Summer Curriculum Grants

Paul asked the Committee to consider how we might more effectively inspire and support innovation at SI, either through our current Summer Curriculum Grant program or through an alternative program or process. He provided some historical context for our grant program, highlighted the kinds of projects most commonly been supported, and shared an alternative grant program from Sacred Heart Cathedral.

- The stated purpose of our current grant program is to support the development of “curriculum projects that can significantly and positively impact the effectiveness of our school programs... and are intended to support curriculum-related work that lies beyond the scope of faculty members’ normal professional duties” (<http://www.siprep.org/page.cfm?p=5931>).
- The most commonly supported grant projects tend to be new or completely re-designed courses, or course readers and textbooks. These projects typically include very concrete “deliverables” or products. (See list of Summer Grants awarded the past 5 years —> <http://www.siprep.org/page.cfm?p=5932>).
- Sacred Heart Cathedral’s grant program was adapted from ours, and their process offers a simpler, streamlined alternative (<http://bit.ly/1RdzZX5>). Proposals must simply link to the School’s Action Plan, and approval does not require presentations and a committee process, which can seem daunting or cumbersome. Also, funding levels are much lower (between \$250 and \$750 per award). While Sacred Heart awards fewer total dollars annually with their program, the upside is that more teachers participate in it. (See historical funding and participation data for our Summer Grant Program —> <http://bit.ly/1PTviPw>.)

The Committee considered and discussed these questions, highlighted below:

- It would be helpful to ask and determine for ourselves what “innovation” means here at SI. Jen Gaspar-Santos, Director of Educational Technology & Innovation, has been asking members of our community this question and shared some of the responses she’s received.
- While we might be able to adapt our current Summer Grant Program, it seems that a parallel or alternative program/process would be better, since we still want to support these larger, traditionally supported projects.
- How do we support a process of innovation and experimentation, and not just a product or concrete deliverable?
- Being innovative means giving ourselves permission to try and to fail. This is how we learn and discover new ways of doing things.
- Fostering and sustaining a culture of innovation is important to attracting and retaining excellent faculty.
- Maybe the criteria for an alternative grant program could be as simple as answering, “How is what I’m proposing to do different from what I’ve been doing?”
- Does this have to be a “summer” program? Not necessarily. Summer Grants have historically been “summer” projects because of their scope and the time required to complete them.
- If we do something like this, we can’t call them summer grants. How about “curiosity grants”? We could link them to our action plan and other initiatives (e.g., culturally responsive teaching, experiential learning curricula, etc.). Proposals and projects would simply need to reflect a “curiosity mindset.”

Paul will work with Jen Gaspar-Santos to develop further an alternative “curiosity grant” criteria and process, with the goal of implementing it next semester.

Meeting adjourned.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 2nd