

## **Student Alliance Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, March 26, 2007**

**3:00 PM room 207**

- 1) **Meditation and Introductions** (10 min) - Everyone introduced themselves and Nandi lead a brief meditation. In attendance: Alejandro, Erik, Robert, Meg VanBuren, Doug, Alex, Sarah Noyes, Shirley Strong, Mary and Nandi.
- 2) **Mission Statement** (40 min)
  - a. **Review** (5 min) - former statement, Student Handbook, CIIS ideals, etc. - Mary read the current Mission Statement from the Student Handbook. She also read the Mission Statement from the Student Alliance website.
  - b. **Brainstorm** (15 min) - most important aspects of the organization - While people read the Mission Statements and reflected, Mary read the seven Institute Ideals for CIIS. Students shared what phrases they thought were important to be considered as part of the SA mission statement.
    - Sarah thought that integral governance was important. Also, she thought that “a voice for students” (a primary voice). Shirley mentioned that it was a primary voice to care things forward but that it is not THE voice. Alejandro brought up that there is no ONE student voice, so how do we keep this in dialogue.
    - Alejandro suggested structure for mobilization and representation. It was also important to him to include innovative, on-going and flexible process so to communicate that the process is fluid and not fixed, that there is openness to re-thinking things. Dynamic. This is something that would be woven into the mission statement and how we think about Student Alliance.
    - Shirley pointed out the line from the Student Handbook about SA being empowered by the Dean of Students. She shared that the administration doesn't empower the students, but that the students are powerful in their own right. Better to write that there is partnership/collaboration with the Dean of Students. Meg suggested a process of “stepping up.”
    - Alejandro suggested that this be a brainstorming session today rather than focusing on creating a statement today. Robert also felt it would be good to compile a list to think over rather than decide today. Shirley asked

Mary what her hope was for the meeting. Mary shared that she wanted to come up with a sentence or two to put up on the website that we would be able to refer to, particularly in creating the award guidelines that will be structured in the next meeting.

- Important to Alejandro to include diversity, feminism, spirituality... a commitment to bring a variety of marginalized voices into the discussion. To be in dialogue with marginalized voices at the intersection of diversity, race, class, religion. Shirley suggested using a word like "lifting" or "centering". Sarah suggested also holding a commitment to active dialogue. A body of students that is empowered through funding and also through coming together. There is a responsibility to continually reach out to the multitude of voices that exist at this university.

- Erik suggested that in the line of "representing students on various Institute committees" to also include student groups. Shirley then talked about how a group of students is more powerful than one student. When one student says something, people pay attention. When the DOS says something, they listen but not as much. But, when a group of students say something, everything stops. Our role is to work in collaboration (the dean of students) to know when students need to be heard and letting Shirley know our point of view so that she can carry that with her as well. She sees it as natural a give and take.

- Nandi suggested alliance building and/or community building.

- Mary added funding to the list.

- Also, adding "advocating for students". Nandi indicated that this will definitely work with wanting to support marginalized voices.

- Alejandro created a sentence for starters - "As an organization charged with the responsibility of representation, we are faced with the need to provide structures of funding, grievance, mobilization and advocacy towards addressing the polyphonic concerns of students, in particular, towards fostering attention, dialogue and alliance across marginalized communities (or voices) at the intersections of nation, religion, race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, culture and beyond.

- Robert didn't feel comfortable with "faced with the need" or with listing all the "isms". Some named agism, ableism.

-Nandi mentioned that she didn't like the word "mobilizing". Alejandro shared that it's an empowering and a coming together as Shirley said. Perhaps "organizing" instead of mobilizing. "strives to provide" "towards" funding. Members discussed various working and issues that came up for them in this sample statement.

- Shirley also wanted to add "strengthen the role of students."

-There was discussion about where we stand on the statement process and not deciding on it today. Nandi suggested that we work on it next meeting before working on the guidelines in order to have something to refer to.

- Alejandro wanted to switch "marginalized communities" to relations of power.

-Shirley would like SA to take on more of a leadership role in the school.

-Sarah wanted to add "transformative" to representation so that it's transformative representation, which is also about empowerment.

- Robert mentioned using language that is accessible and encouraging to the student body so that they will utilize the process of Student Alliance.

- Having the mission statement and also a Statement of Purpose..

-Mary suggested adding in the word "support"

- The words and phases we came up with (in summary):

- integral governance
- primary voice for the students
- structure for mobilization and representation
- community-building, alliance-building
- on-going process (openness; dynamic)
- in partnership/collaboration with the Dean of Students Office
- commitment to be in dialogue with marginalized voices
- commitment to holding an active dialogue
- reaching out; encouraging participation
- funding
- advocating for students
- grievance procedure
- strengthen role of students
- leadership
- support

- The sentence that we were left with to contemplate - As an organization charged with the responsibility of transformative representation, we strive to provide structures (towards) of funding, grievance, mobilization (organization), support and advocacy towards addressing the (diverse) polyphonic concerns of students, particularly towards fostering attention, dialogue and alliance across marginalized communities at the intersections of nations, religion, race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, cultural and beyond (also added ageism and ableism)

- 3) **Student Alliance End of Year Gathering with Kali Ma** (10 min) - Update and Volunteer Call - Nandi - Nandi presented what was approved last meeting and asked if the teaching can be open to the public for a \$10 charge for non-CIIS community members. There will still be a community dinner prior to the teachings just for CIIS community. 7 out of 7 people voted in favor of the change. - Robert said he could help Nandi with set-up. Will also ask other students .
- 4) **Proposals for Community Projects and Events** (40 min)
  - a. **Review** of 2006-2007 Budget (5 min) - Nandi - we have about \$2500 left over from the award process that is available for this.
  - b. **Presentation** of Proposals (15 min)
    - i. **Sarah Noyes -Transformative Leadership Program** - she presented the proposal for \$1000. Details at the end of the minutes on the minutes.
    - ii. Sarah Deragon - not in attendance
    - iii. David Nicol - not in attendance
    - iv. **White People Working Against Racism (Alex)** - \$500 - Applied and received funding last semester for the same amount that they used in January for a workshop that was facilitated by a CIIS alumna. There was a cap on the workshop of 20 people imposed by the facilitator. They turned away almost as many people as people who came to the workshop. There is a high level of interest in the work of this campus group, which has probably doubled in size since last semester most likely due to the workshop they had. There is a lot of movement around this issue on campus right now. The request is to fund an additional facilitated process for later this

semester. Based on feedback from the first one, they won't be repeating the same facilitator and consequently a different process. They are looking at doing another day long workshop, probably on a Saturday or having a facilitator do discussions in the remaining meetings they have this semester. They are meeting this Wednesday, pending the result of this process, they will decide on the process of facilitating. They can't do that until they know if they have funding. They have a couple of people in mind. They want to make this accessible to more people. Feels strongly that this is something that SA should be funding. This is open to white people.

c. **Discussion** and Questions (15 min)

d. **Voting** on Proposals (5 min) -

- voted on the proposals.

1. Sarah - voted on awarding \$1000 - none; voted on \$500 (5). Sarah abstained.

2. Alex - voted on awarding \$500 (3) - voted on \$400 (1). Alex abstained from voting.

e. Doug Seckinger came to ask for a change in their award. Presenting at a conference in Boston on homelessness. Funding is mostly covered on that. Will be presenting multiple projects in Boston and New York. Would like to use funding from SA for airfare to New York instead of for airfare to Boston. Discussion ensued about being open to proposal changes and students with changes to their approved proposal. 5 voted to approve the changes.

5) **Callout for Guidelines Re-visioning Team** (10 min) - Alex interested, nandi interested. Doug and Alex signed up for the SA list serve.

### **Spring Event Announcements**

a. **Spring Meeting Dates:**

Friday, April 6 from 2pm to 4pm in room 214

(Mission Statement, Guidelines Review and Revision)

Tuesday, April 17 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm in room 606

(Future Planning: Summer Meetings, Events, Projects, and Budget)

b. **Professional Development Workshops:**

Public Speaking - Wednesday, March 28 at 6:15 PM in room 311

Excel - Tuesday, April 17 at 6:15 PM in room 311

c. **Turkish Movie Nights:**

**"Sommersault in the Coffin"** by Sinem Yilanci

on Thursday, March 29 from 6pm to 9pm in room 311

**"The Juggler"** introduced by Cigdem Alper

on Tuesday, April 3 from 6pm to 9pm in Namaste

**"The Way"** introduced by Ipek Sarac

on Thursday, April 5 from 6pm to 9pm in room 311

**"My Father and My Son"** introduced by Arzu Ozatalay

on Tuesday, April 10 from 6pm to 9pm in Namaste

d. **Yoga**

Mondays from 11:45 AM to 12:45 PM in Namaste Hall

Thursdays from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM in room 207

### **Community Projects and Events Proposal Presentations**

Sarah Noyes - on behalf of the Transformative Leadership Program:

Funds are being requested by the Transformative Leadership program to **organize speakers for its bi-annual Intensive** in Pacifica, CA. The speakers will be most likely be scheduled **August 28th and/or the 29th**. (If there are more than two workshops, they will probably be held on different days.) Past workshops include Transformative Art and Career Coaching/Counseling. Ideas for this intensive are still in process, but they will be related to the idea of Transformative Leadership. Transformative Leadership is a particular **leadership theory focused on empowering others**.

The purpose is to increase the **professional development of distance students** in a face-to-face format. This is the original purpose, but distance students have the desire to **open up these workshops to the entire CIIS community**. It is the belief that they could also strongly benefit from the high quality instruction that is present. Another advantage would be that distance students, whom comprise 11% of the student body, would have the opportunity to engage and network with campus students in an educational forum and visa versa.

Amount requested of **\$1,000 is to compensate 2 or more workshop presenters** for their travel and lodging expenses as well as for their time at the Intensive. It is certain that all these funds will be used. If, for some reason, fewer speakers are hired, excess funds will be returned to Student Alliance. Again this is very unlikely.

The **CIIS campus will be invited** to attend. They will be notified via the Student List Serve, individual program list serves (via Kim D'Arcy), on campus flyers, and word of mouth.