

Student Alliance Meeting Agenda Notes
Thursday, September 3, 2009
3:30 – 5:30 pm

In attendance:

- Lil Milagro Martinez-Cornejo, SA coordinador, SCA student
- Bisola Marignay, Transformative Studies
- Elizabeth McAnally, PCC
- Ashley Philpot, SCA
- Alejandro Urruzmendi, SCA
- Emiko Yoshikami, SCA

In Partial Attendance:

- Jyoti Kalmar, ICP
- Jocie Bartlett, SCA
- Adam Hudson, SCA

Administration in Attendance

- Shirley Strong, Dean of Students
- Robbi Mixon, Maintenance and Operations
- Michael Blossom, Maintenance and Operations

Mission: Student Alliance is a student-run organization that facilitates communication, sponsors events, and allocates funding to help students and student groups actualize the seven institute ideals. Listening to student voices, we build alliances, cultivate student leadership, and advocate for social change and transformation of existing power structures.

Icebreaker and Introductions of what SA does and how we do it –
Presented by Lil Milagro

Budgetary Review - Lil Milagro with the help of Shirley Strong - The budget will be handed out and discussed. We will also discuss what are upcoming projects that are already on the table and what are potential projects to be attentive to in regards to Student Alliance money.

- We went over the budget by each line item. When we reached the part about the Student Emergency Loan Fund, we stopped and discussed about both the history of the fund as well as what were current issues around accountability and transparency that exist at an institute and administrative level. After much discussion, we decided and took a vote that Student Alliance would fund up to \$12,000 to tide students over until September 17th when financial aid disbursements would be made available. The vote was unanimous.
- Student Alliance also decided that it would be worth actively pursuing to begin to set up meetings with members of administration who are in charge with decision making processes at the school. We decided that part of this

would be to figure out in what capacity the Student Emergency Loan Fund would continue and who would fund it – either the School or Student Alliance. It was decided that SA would begin to investigate and facilitate discussions around these issues.

Update on Ongoing Initiatives:

- **Diversity Training Update** – Lil Milagro and Shirley Strong
 - We will read the letter that Elisa Haro has typed up for the Diversity Training as well as keep students informed as to the next dates for meetings and workshops.
 - We were not able to cover this agenda item during the meeting. It should be noted that the next Building Alliances/Anti-Oppression training will be offered October 9th and 10th. It has been decided that Dara Burwell from Sixth Sun Consulting (www.sixthsunconsulting.com) will be providing the training. Students are actively encouraged to email Dara (dara@sixthsunconsulting.com) with questions, comments and concerns that they may have as well as agenda items they would like to see covered. Student Alliance will also be posting up the workshop agenda for the October 9th and 10th dates on the SA website.

- **Health Resources** – Presented by Lil Milagro –
 - SA is currently looking into alternative and affordable forms of health care in order increase access for the entire student body. We have looked into partnering with schools in the area with free clinics; e.g., City College. We have thought about potentially donating up to \$10K to their free clinic in order for students to receive health care at their clinic. Lil Milagro, Shirley Strong and Jody O’Conner are currently in dialogue with the American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine (ACTCM) as well as other schools of comparable size to discuss ways to partner up and look into reduced and alternative health care plans. We have outreached into the CIIS student community body as a resource, and outreaching to students to contribute their ideas about health care via the listserv, as many students are equipped with expertise and knowledge in alternative forms of healing. We are open to students’ feedback regarding different ideas to improve our Health Care options.
 - SA provided a general overview of where this process is at and what are ongoing struggles/issues that are part of the investigation process.

- **Student Emergency Loan Fund** - Presented by Shirley Strong with help from Lil Milagro- strong participation and group led discussion by Alejandro Urruzmendi
 - We will have a facilitated discussion around why the Student Emergency Loan Fund was put on (temporary) hold, what students, in conjunction with administration, is current doing and looking into to get the Student Emergency Loan Fund back and what are ways in which this experience can point to and help address issues around transparency and accountability at the Institute. One possible option that will be discussed is around having SA potentially take on and administer the Student Emergency Loan Fund.
 - Please see budgetary review.

Proposed Student Event: Shministim Tour – Liz Palmer

Liz Palmer will be discussing a possible collaboration with Jewish Voice for Peace and Code Pink and Student Alliance to sponsor a Shministim tour. The Shministim are Israeli high school students who have been imprisoned for refusing to serve in an army that occupies the Palestinian Territories. The word ‘Shministim’ is Hebrew for “twelfth graders.” For a more detailed explanation of the Shministim, visit: <http://december18th.org/about/>. Dates and times for the event are t.b.a.

This event would:

- provide people in the United States with personal accounts of life as a conscientious objector in Israeli society, as well as give a different perspective on the Israel/Palestine conflict than what is available in popular media.
- expose Jews, youth, and other communities to the Occupation and to the anti-Occupation movement.
- strengthen local peace, justice, and community organizations.
- drive campaigns and build a justice-oriented movement

The Shministim Tour is a national U.S. tour of 2 Israeli women who will come to the United States from Israel to speak about their experiences as conscientious objectors in the Israeli army.

- As we did not receive the SA funding proposal in time, we decided to move this item to the next meeting, October 5th 2009.

Proposed Student Groups with presentations

Celebrate Your Being: Presented by Jyoti Kalmar (Jyoti Kalmar will only be able to be present for a short time during break. As such, I included her Proposal that will be read out loud)

My name is Jyoti Kalmar. I’m a 2nd year ICP student from Hungary. I am

writing this letter because I would like to start a student group called: Celebrate Your Being. I wish I could attend the whole Student Alliance meeting today and describe everything in person. Now, I am having a class but I will join you during my break around 4:30. Until then, let me present my ideas on the group in this letter.

The Celebrate Your Being Student Group will meet weekly or bi-weekly according to the wish of the majority of the members. This group is to facilitate self-care and self-exploration during the deeply transformative years in CIIS. Our activities will consist of lead meditations, dyads, dancing, and maybe chanting. During our joyously meditative and meditatively joyful meetings we will have the chance to perceive our own being in profound and loving way. A lead mediation will give us the space to sense and focus on who we really are. We will then process and deepen the experience in dyads. We will seek a way together to answer the call of our beings and celebrate ourselves.

I learned the techniques we will use in my meditation group in Hungary that I attended for five years. The last two years I was a staff member. This summer, when I went to a retreat, my teacher authorized me to start a group using his method. I am looking forward to do so, since I would not be here at CIIS without all the amazing experiences I had in my group at home.

Thank you for your attention. I am looking forward meeting you around 4:30 and answering your questions.

- Students had no questions about this group. This group has officially formed.