

## UPAC minutes for April Meeting 4-13-16

- ❖ Welcome: Kristen Geary, UPAC Co-Chair
- ❖ Understanding Microaggressions, Teresa Graham Brett, Associate Dean of Students Inclusion and Multicultural Engagement, Dean of Students
  - [Please see attached Presentation slides for details on presentation](#)
  - Discussion after presentation:
    - How can students identify microaggressions, since they are so subtle?
      - Pinpointing microaggressions can be hard since it is usually just a feeling
      - Talk with students and ask “if you could guess, what might it be?”
      - Students may know, but may not want to outwardly say I think I was being discriminated against by this person
      - So by asking students more open questions like “can you guess what it might be?”, “what do you feel it might be?” “what do you think this is about?” “have you had this feeling/experience before?” etc. (focus more on feeling type questions), it gives students the chance to see if the person they are talking with is someone they can trust to open up to
      - Students have to take risk when speaking up so they may want to test if this is a safe place to speak or will they just be shut down again?
      - Students are ultimately here to be academically successful, so when microaggressions occur, they try to just push it down and move on, but it does stay with them
    - What are better campus resources advisors can refer students to who are having these kind of issues?
      - Can always refer student to Teresa directly, and she can determine the best place to refer student if it is not her as well
      - Cultural resource centers
    - In STEM fields, how can we help students in these areas?
      - It’s OK to let students know that the STEM fields are challenging areas
      - Important to understand underlying dynamics of department/area; ie: in STEM fields we have a lot of work to do, since it is a particular demographic in field that has been seen as “successful”
      - Even when you want to change and encourage diversity in a department, it is hard because it raises conflict, because these conversations aren’t easy and are not happening in an open way
      - Create big picture for students and identifying similar challenges students have faced
    - What about students who identify with multiple/different nationalities (ie: two different races for example) and do not feel like they fit into any one place?
      - Looking into how to create intersectional work with all of the cultural centers on campus
      - Currently, we do not do that very well at the UA for students with different backgrounds and helping them find their home at the UA
    - What about students who are Studying Abroad and having these issues?
      - There is always a phone option for students who are wanting to connect with someone, can always talk with Teresa to begin with

- Important to look for online/digital ways for students to seek assistance, which is something we currently do not have
- The faculty listening tours, then lead to students protesting and listing series of demands to start a conversation with the UA, which then lead to Diversity Task Force being created
  - Since listening tours came out, Teresa has seen more interest from departments and colleges asking about what can we do?
- What are the goals of the Task Force? How can we as a group contribute to defining what diversity is and what that means for students and what are the actions items that we as a group can contribute to? What are some ideas?
  - UPAC/advisor can create events or something to let students know we are available to them as a resource for this, we can talk about diversity and show students advisor support in this way
  - Maybe we could create a statement of commitment from UPAC/advisors about this is how we want to support the experience for all students. And if you advisor is not living up to these standards, here is what you can do. Helpful for students to provide feedback in safe way and a way for advisors to refer students who are experiencing issues and not sure how they can help directly if it involves another colleague
    - ◆ Value if UPAC takes stands about this issue, then it gives a way to open a conversation that would be difficult to open up and talks directly to the students
  - Task force is actually open, so multiple representatives can be there to the open meetings
    - ◆ Tannya Gaxiola would be the point of contact to get involved with this
    - ◆ Students are concerned that the task force is going to “meet the students out” since they will eventually move on and graduate and new students will come in, unfamiliar with what has been started
  - Open letter to students about advisor support could be very powerful
  - Maybe we could develop training for advisors about diversity and cultural competency?
- looking at creating training in residence halls to help reduce unconscious bias, and look at it from research perspective to see how it can reduce unconscious bias and positive environment
- ❖ Candidates for two new UPAC Co-Chair positions
  - Keep eye out for email about candidates and opportunity to vote for the next co-chairs
  - Election will start on April 27<sup>th</sup>, winners will be announced next UPAC meeting (May 11<sup>th</sup>)
- ❖ General Advising Updates: Roxie Catts, Director, Advising Resource Center
  - Advising Celebration date has changed, new date TBD