

Campus Life Compact for Building an Inclusive Community at Emory

Background

In December of 2012, growing student concerns sparked the formation of an ad-hoc committee designed to explore issues of race, gender, privilege, sexual violence, and oppression on campus. This committee, composed of student leaders, faculty, and administrators from the Division of Campus Life, created an online form to gather student feedback, which resulted in two Emory-wide open discussion forums. This report is a comprehensive list of recommendations reached collaboratively by students and Campus Life leadership and is presented to Dr. Ajay Nair, Senior Vice President and Dean of Campus Life, with full support and commitment from this committee to advance these recommendations in conjunction with the overarching goals of inclusion and justice in our Emory community. Campus Life has a steadfast commitment to ensuring we create an inclusive, equitable, and just environment that will allow all members of our community to thrive at Emory. This is but a first step in attempting to shift culture at Emory and enhance community to become the University we espouse to be.

Ad-Hoc Committee Members

A team of students, faculty, and staff assembled to gather feedback, craft a response, and develop comprehensive initiatives for the Division of Campus Life to consider and implement in the future. This team consisted of the following individuals, and we are thankful for their continued participation.

- Bukie Adebo
- Davion Ziere Colbert
- Liz Alexander
- Nicole Blumenkehl
- Anushka Kapoor
- Lynn Nestor
- Stephanie Llanes
- Kala Hurst
- Brian Fuller
- Jovonna Jones
- Caleb Peng
- Christine Ristaino, Faculty member, Senate Diversity Committee
- Heather Zesiger, Director, Office of Health Promotion (OHP)
- Lauren Bernstein, Assistant Director for the Respect Program, Office of Health Promotion
- Bridget Guernsey Riordan, Dean of Students
- Matt Garrett, Director, Office of Student Leadership & Service (OSLS)
- James Francois, Director, Office of Multicultural Programs and Services (OMPS)
- Aysha Daniels, Assistant Director, Office of Multicultural Programs and Services

Recommended Initiatives

Since December, the Emory community has provided significant input to Campus Life leadership through open forums, conversations, peer-to-peer activism, and the online comment box. This feedback formed the basis of the committee's set of recommendations. Of course, many more ideas were submitted than could be included in an action plan. This plan represents the suggestions that the committee believes will be most effective and feasible.

1) Student Government Accountability for Student Organizations

The Student Government Association collaborated with various stakeholders to develop a few core initiatives specific to student organizations:

- **Completed:**
 - Worked with Emory Television (ETV) and Media Council leadership to implement a system of checks and balances for content-generation and editing processes. This includes requiring all subsidiary production units of student organizations to either be under the control of the parent organization or be chartered organizations themselves. Further, *The Dooley Show* was suspended while Media Council launches an educational series on the balance of our rights with other values of community and inclusion.
- **Short Term:**
 - Partner with the Office of Student Leadership & Service to create student leader education initiatives to launch Fall 2013. These initiatives should include training for officers of undergraduate student organizations and ongoing opportunities to train general members of student organizations. Trainers should consider incorporating the Emory Issues Troupe. In addition, plans are underway to collaboratively train Orientation Leaders and Residence Life student staff in how to facilitate constructive conversations on health and social justice during Orientation. These trainings will be co-facilitated by OHP and OMPS, along with other partners.
 - Partner with Campus Life to offer various programs and educational opportunities for student organizations related to equity, diversity, gender and gender-based violence, and inclusion in our community. Additionally, offices such as the Bookstore Liaison or Barkley Forum can engage the community in academic-based conversations on topics such as Satire & Community, State of the Community, and Journalism Ethics, among others.
 - Work with the OSLS to increase advisor training for the most active organizations so they are more aware of how to promote diversity and justice in their organizations; consider and evaluate a tiered advising model with OSLS staff.

- Launch, in partnership with the Barkley Forum, a student organization community building project, State of Community, to be held annually. This will be a program that encourages student organizations to share best practices and develop partnership that cross cultural and/or organizational differences. The program will also discuss the state of Emory's community and give opportunity for constituencies to voice concerns.
- **Long Term:**
 - Work with the Constitutional Council of SGA to set up internal conduct procedures for student organizations.

2) Campus Life Coordinated Efforts

The Division of Campus Life, in close coordination with student leaders, will vigorously pursue the following recommendations.

2A) Social Justice Education: Race, Culture, Ethnic Relations, and Sexual Violence Prevention/Response Outreach and Training

Develop a comprehensive approach to social justice education and training for Emory students.

- **Short Term:**
 - Develop a student-supported model, similar to Sexual Assault Peer Advocates (SAPA), to engage the campus community in training, discussion, education, and promotion of the challenges faced by students of color on campus.
 - This program will be coordinated and advised by race-relations experts on the faculty and in Campus Life.
 - The program will have the support of a faculty advisor and a graduate assistant hired by Campus Life.
 - The focus of this group will be to increase dialogue and acceptance at Emory, specifically regarding racism awareness, power, privilege, and oppression in our community.
- **Long Term:**
 - Launch a coordinating committee in 2013-2014 to review all social justice work at Emory, specifically in Campus Life, but also more broadly.
 - The committee will review connections between programs like the new Race program, Sexual Assault Peer Advocates, Safe Space, Transforming Community Project, and others to identify points of intersection.
 - The committee will develop a long-term strategic plan for a comprehensive Social Justice Education model at Emory, including coordinated trainings; discussions of issues of difference, inclusion, power, and privilege beyond those covered by existing programs, and integration throughout the entire Emory community.
 - The committee will consider a developmental, multi-faceted approach to creating multicultural competence in a campus community.
 - A possible end-goal of this taskforce would be the creation of a permanent, overarching program or initiative that would guide the other programs that already exist on campus.

- This committee, program, or initiative should consider annual programming such as a Social Justice Awareness week, Privilege week, and others.
 - Support the expansion of SAPA through additional resources, human and fiscal, as well as connect the work of SAPA to other social justice-focused groups on campus to coordinate efforts.
 - Identify existing experts and train other staff members in Campus Life on social justice and issues of race, sexual orientation, gender, sexual violence, and others.
 - Develop and launch a Train-the-Trainer program in Campus Life, similar to programs like NCBI, to teach students, faculty, staff, and administrators to be effective facilitators of dialogue around power, privilege, oppression, and difference.
- **Other Components to Review:**
 - Review Orientation and consider program extensions, such as a First Year Experience course, PACE sessions, and a second-year Orientation to increase training and awareness of social justice concerns. During Orientation 2013, the Issues Troupe will perform skits addressing health and social justice and first-year students will participate in facilitated conversations with student leaders afterwards.
 - Include social justice education as a component of the comprehensive Residence Life Academic Engagement committee report.

2B) Community

Implement various initiatives to help increase community among students of color.

- Annually, Campus Life will explore assessing the state of campus climate and sense of belonging and inclusion of Emory students. This may be through formal campus climate surveys to measure positive change over time, or through aggregating data from other research instruments being used on campus to understand the state of community.

Consultants on Community Strengthening, Student Conduct, and Sorority and Fraternity Life

- **Short Term:**
 - Engage nationally recognized scholars on issues of race, diversity, and community in higher education to assist with the development and implementation of committee recommendations. These scholars will consult with Campus Life in March and April and provide additional recommendations to help Campus Life, in partnership with students, build a better, stronger community. These experts will also conduct a review of the practices and procedures related to the adjudication of allegations of misconduct involving Greek-letter organizations.
 - Consult with nationally recognized experts on how to generate a stronger sense of inclusivity in fraternities and sororities, as well as to strengthen policies and procedures for member selection, diversity, community, and conduct.
- **Long Term:**
 - Implement recommendations of experts and this committee to help advance our community toward the goals of justice and inclusion.
 - Measure campus climate by various social identities and measure positive improvements across the university to achieve equity (e.g. in graduation rates, grades, satisfaction, sense of belonging).

Office of Multicultural Programs & Services (OMPS)

- **Long Term:**
 - Develop an advisory board of faculty, staff, students, and alumni to guide the overarching purpose, role, and plans of OMPS.

2C) Space Needs at Emory

Reexamine space needs at Emory, in order to best meet the requirements of our diverse student population.

- **Completed:**
 - Secure theme housing for BSA in 2013-2014 academic year.
- **Short Term:**
 - Review the purpose and use of both the Food EU Lounge and the DUC Down Under to determine whether the community would be better served by a transformation of these spaces into ones that will better support and affirm under-represented students' identities, with special attention to race and culture.
 - Examine space more broadly in Campus Life buildings and lounges--such as Residence Halls, Sorority/Fraternity Housing, and the DUC--to develop a comprehensive approach to supporting the needs of a diverse student body at Emory.
- **Long Term:**
 - Conduct a feasibility study of expansion or renovations to the Dobbs University Center. This feasibility study, and any future changes to the DUC, will consider best practices from institutions around the country as Campus Life re-envision the space requirements necessary to support all students at Emory. Additionally, complete benchmarking projects and feasibility studies to determine the effectiveness of specific Black Student Union space either in or near the DUC.
 - Evaluate the feasibility of extended space, complete with faculty or graduate assistant advisors that address specific needs of diverse student populations.
 - Consider expansions of OMPS that include additional space for graduate students, faculty advisor, and lounge space for various cultural groups and organizations.

2D) Student Support and Responses to Incidents of Bias

Develop systems that are clear and accessible for students when they experience incidents of bias.

Bias Incident Protocol

- **Short Term:**
 - Create a Campus Life website listing all of the resources and support structures at Emory for students. Include comment boxes or other anonymous reporting structures.
- **Long Term:**
 - Establish a Bias Incident Protocol so students can identify advocates when they experience issues of bias. This protocol will also guide Campus Life's response when future incidents arise.

Ombudsperson Office at Emory

Explore, in collaboration with offices across Emory, the potential structure of an ombudsperson office to serve as a clearinghouse for student-reported incidents of bias. This committee charged

with developing a Bias Incident Report protocol should also provide a comprehensive recommendation as to how such an office would most effectively be structured at Emory.

2E) Campus Life Social Justice Framework

Create a comprehensive strategic plan to guide Campus Life as the Division implements diversity and social justice efforts internally, and across the University.

- **Short Term:**
 - Develop a consistent rhetoric and approach—including definitions, values, and assumptions about diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice—that will frame the efforts of the Division.
 - Conduct a comprehensive internal review of all Campus Life offices to identify strengths, weaknesses, connections, and missed opportunities in the context of this framework.
- **Long Term:**
 - Revise professional development opportunities to ensure all Campus Life staff members are trained, knowledgeable, and capable diversity and social justice agents at Emory.
 - Conduct external reviews of all offices, hiring consultants and scholars to evaluate the effectiveness of each office and unit. As part of this external review process, develop goals and objectives for programming and professional staff competencies related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

2F) Public Discourse on Challenging Topics

Create a series of programs that would support broader educational discussion on sensitive issues such as social identities, the state of community, etc. at Emory.

- **Short Term:**
 - Continue monthly Wheel Debates, managed by Barkley Forum (BF), where each month BF partner with the Features Editor of the Emory Wheel to produce a debate on a salient sensitive or political issue. The Wheel selects the topic and BF students research and produce the written arguments. The first debate was on contract workers and the second debate will focus on Affirmative Action.
 - The BF will then provide an opportunity for other members of the Emory community to publicly respond to each Wheel Debate. The BF will facilitate a public conversation on Affirmative Action on April 9th in the Harland Cinema. The goal is to make this a standard practice after each Wheel Debate.
- **Long Term:**
 - Develop and support a student organization, advised by the Barkley Forum that strives to promote civil dialogue on pertinent issues that impact the Emory community via social media, the student newspaper, and the radio. The goal is transfer some responsibility for the Wheel Debates and Forum Discussions to Eagles Speak in the fall.

3) Student Government, With Support of Campus Life, to Develop Community Principles

- **Long Term:**
 - Create a set of University-wide Community Principles that can guide future decisions, actions, and responses to incidents like ETV and Chick-fil-A.

4) Academic Recommendations

In partnership with student leaders, the Office of the Provost and academic Deans:

- Advocate for a required “Diversity Statement” on all syllabi that demonstrates Emory’s commitment to a welcoming environment and that directs students to appropriate resources when they feel issues of bias arise in the classroom.
- Consider creating a Global Citizenship & Diversity General Education Requirement.
- Expand the range and quantity of course offerings specifically related to race relations, racism, ethnicity, etc.; encourage departments to make hires with these areas in mind whenever possible.
- Create a focused plan to increase the diversity of faculty, including specific hiring and retention processes.
- Develop a faculty leadership team to guide diversity and inclusion training of all faculty, as well as manage and respond to issues of bias that occur in the classroom.
 - One possible approach to incentivizing a training process would be a model similar to the Piedmont Sustainability project, where faculty are invited to an extensive training program, then given a small grant to incorporate the topics of diversity and multiculturalism into their syllabi and courses.
- Integrate the concept of nonviolent communication into guiding classroom principles and post such guiding principles in all classrooms on campus.