

Student Success Team Fall Retreat

October 30, 2009

Flow for the Day

- Welcome
- Retreat Goals
- Ground rules
- Creating space and establishing context for our work – leadership principles
- Clarifying the vision – MFT/SST alignment
- Enhancing awareness - Defining Diversity/Exploring the Meaning of Diversity
- Generating significant efforts – identifying high impact activities (Work Groups)
- Setting priorities
- Determining next steps

Goals for the Retreat

1. Identify and act on shared purpose of MFT and SST
2. Create clarity about what diversity means within the context of leadership at the University of Iowa
3. Determine priority strategies/activities and areas of future distinction
4. Identify next steps

Ground Rules

1. One person at a time speaks
2. Speak only for yourself
3. Avoid side conversations
4. Treat the conversation as essential to the university's success (involve yourself as if your participation is the key to the group's success)
5. Listen generously

A Ritual To Read To Each Other

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If you don't know the kind of person I am
and I don't know the kind of person you are
a pattern that others made may prevail in the world
and following the wrong god home we may miss our star.

For there is many a small betrayal in the mind,
a shrug that lets the fragile sequence break
sending with shouts the horrible errors of childhood
storming out to play through the broken dyke.

And as elephants parade holding each elephant's tail,
But if one wanders the circus won't find the park,
I call it cruel and maybe the root of all cruelty
to know what occurs but not recognize the fact.

And so I appeal to a voice, to something shadowy,
a remote important region in all who talk:
though we could fool each other, we should consider—
lest the parade of our mutual life get lost in the dark.

For it is important that awake people be awake,
or breaking the line may discourage them back to sleep;
the signals we give—yes or no, or maybe—
should be clear: the darkness around us is deep.

William Stafford

Leadership Principles

- Be conscious of and manage emotions created by uncertainty and the unknown;
- Stay focused on university's mission and priorities and how you can apply your leadership to promote success;
- Resist the urge to blame for the past (it is what it is), instead embrace future possibilities;
- Be committed to change and growth, for the University of Iowa, your students, your colleagues and yourself; and
- Share your best thinking.

Leadership Principles

- Support your colleagues;
- Ask for the support you need;
- Ask for clarification you may need;
- Check your assumptions;
- Hold needed conversations in the room; and
- Take risks.

Clarifying the Vision

1. How will our university benefit from the full alignment of the functions of SST and MfT?
2. How will the mission of SST be enhanced by integration with MfT?
3. How will the meaningfulness of the work of MfT be enhanced by integration with SST?
4. What specifically do we need to do to make sure the integration of MfT into SST achieves the highest impact possible for the University of Iowa?

Enhancing Awareness

- The focus of this retreat is diversity. What is *diversity* to you? What is *diversity* to us?
- Who have we left out of our definition? If students were to look at this definition, who would feel absent, invisible or omitted?

Quote

- (My) fullest concentration of energy is available...only when I integrate all the parts of who I am...without the restrictions of externally imposed definitions.

Audre Lorde (1984)

The Presence of Trees

*Dedicated to the memory of George Baines:
Educator and Quaker, healer and poet*

Slowly, I am remembering
the language of awe,

how to take in, say,
the living complexity of a tree

its gnarled trunk,
its ragged bark,

the way its leafy canopy
filters sunlight

down to the brown
carpeted ground,

the way the wind bends my heart
to the exquisite presence of trees

the forest that calls to me as deeply
as I breathe,

as though the woods were
marrow of my bone as though

I myself were tree, a breathing, reaching
arc of the larger canopy

beside a brook bubbling to foam
like the one

deep in these woods,
that calls

that whisper *home*.

Enhancing Awareness

- If you are to be a meaningful contributor to our diversity leadership efforts, what new knowledge and skills do you need to acquire? How can your colleagues help in this regard?
- What fears or trepidation do I have as I enter and participate in this process?

Deeply Listening

When someone deeply listens to you
it is like holding out a dented cup you have had since childhood
and watching it fill up with cold fresh water.

When it balances on the top of the rim
you are understood.

When it overflows and touches your skin
you are loved.

When someone deeply listens to you
the room where you stay starts a new life
and the place where you wrote your first poem
begins to blow in your minds eye
It's as if gold has been discovered.

When someone deeply listens to you
your bare feet are on the earth
and the beloved land that seemed distant
is now at home within you.

John Fox

Work Group Process

1. Identify initiatives/strategies to advance your group's area of focus
2. Identify benefits (strengths) of each proposed activity, including how it will advance diversity
3. Identify at least one measure of success for each proposed activity
4. Rank order proposed activities from highest to lowest priority for implementation (consider factors such as, impact, feasibility, degree to which it advances diversity, return on investment, potential for success, etc.)

Strategic Areas

- *Health, Wellness, & Safety*
- *Connecting students to high-impact activities-Research*
- *Connecting students to high-impact activities -Study Abroad*
- *Curricular Development*
- *Faculty & Staff Cultural Competence*

Setting Priorities

- Each workgroup will share their top priority initiative in a 2-minute “elevator pitch”
- Workgroups will present more detail on their proposal via a poster session
- The entire retreat group will identify a reasonable list of priority initiatives (one in each topic area).

Setting Priorities

- Given the current economic constraints, what input do you have to the SST Executive Committee on which of the priorities must be undertaken?
- Large group ranking of priorities

Closing