

**Campus Culture Task Force
Tuesday, November 25, 2008
Talley Student Center – Room 3118
Meeting Minutes**

Members present: Maxine Atkinson, Jacqueline Hughes-Oliver, Patricia Marshall, Jim Martin, José Picart, Tracey Ray, James Stewart, Matt Woodward, Marcia Bryan, Jack Cozort, Heather Cutchin, Jay Dawkins, David Rainer, Traci Reid, Bill Swallow, Paul Cousins, Greg Doucette, David Drooz, Adrianna Harrell, Tom Stafford, Lock Whiteside, Amber Carr, and Kevin Howell.

Dr. José Picart, Vice Provost for Diversity and Inclusion, called to order the first meeting of the Campus Cultural Task Force at 3:05 a.m. on November 25, 2008. Dr. Picart thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for their service on the task force.

Agenda Items:

Opening Statements

Each task force co-chair made some opening remarks. In his opening remarks, Vice Provost José Picart emphasized that this task force has the opportunity to change how ethics, civil dialogue and responsible behavior are embraced at NC State University for many years to come.

Vice Chancellor Tom Stafford emphasized the importance of the work of the Task Force and expressed his optimism about the impact of the Task Force on the Campus Climate. We support free speech, but with civility and respect for others.

In his opening statement Student Body President Jay Dawkins thanked all the task force members for their service. Jay Dawkins went on to express his appreciation to the student body and student government for their response to the remarks in the tunnel. Jay also expressed his hope for a substantive and effective review and examination of our campus policies and practices related to free expression, hate speech, and harassment.

Introductions

Task force members introduced themselves to the committee by stating their name and their affiliation to the university.

Review of Free Expression Tunnel Incident

Vice Chancellor Tom Stafford presented a brief review of the free expression tunnel incident, the criminal investigation and findings, the Chancellor's statements and the decision not to pursue legal action against the students. Dr. Stafford also reviewed all the campus events that have transpired in response to the incident. Prior to the meeting, all task force members were provided with copies of the Chancellor's statements, a summary

of campus events, and case law reviews that informed the administration's decision not to pursue further action against the students.

Task Force Reactions to the Free Expression Tunnel Incident and the Campus Response

Each task force member was then invited to express their reaction to the tunnel incident and the campus response. First, several task force members asked questions about the police investigation, campus policies and laws related to hate speech, free expression and racial harassment. David Drooz, Paul Cousins and David Rainer responded to the questions and also helped clarify some issues and concerns that were expressed. Some task force members expressed frustration with the lack of policies or law that would deter this kind of behavior. David Drooz, from the Office of Legal Affairs, responded that past case law has consistently protected this type of behavior as free speech and political rhetoric, especially given the lack of a "true threat" and the fact that it was written in the free expression tunnel.

Task Force Member's Expectations and Aspirations for Task Force Outcomes

All task force members were asked to share their expectations and aspirations for what they believe should result from the work of the task force. Individual task force member's responses included:

- An enhanced Student Code of Conduct that is clear on what acts or behaviors violate campus policy and that provides for accountability and specific consequences.
- Retain the Free Expression Tunnel
- Minimize anonymous free expressions. Members of the campus community should take ownership for their free expression.
- The campus leadership should be more proactive by providing education and programs in advance of known state or national events that might trigger hate speech.
- The central work of the task force should be on campus climate.
- The focus of student diversity education should be in the freshman year.
- Peer pressure is critical to encouraging ethical and civil student conduct.
- Any recommended policies or practices must include faculty and staff.
- The campus community should have the opportunity to respond to the interim and final task force reports. A website should be provided that would allow people to log in and provide feedback to the task force.
- Data should be collected to assess the impact of the task force recommendations on the campus climate and student conduct.

Review of the Charge to the Task Force and Timeline

Jay Dawkins, Student Body President, reviewed the charge and the timeline for the work of the task force. Task force members discussed the charge and the co-chairs responded to questions about the Chancellor's expectations and what we can reasonably expect to accomplish given the compressed timeline.

Task Force Organization and Subcommittees

Vice Provost Jose Picart informed task force members that three subcommittees would be formed, 1) campus climate, 2) student code of conduct and 3) free expression tunnel and brickyard. Each member of the task force would be asked to serve on one of the subcommittees. Task force members would be assigned to a subcommittee based on their stated preference and the need in the subcommittee for some subject matter experts. Task force members were asked to complete a subcommittee preference sheet. Dr. Picart then added that each subcommittee would meet independently and then report their work at scheduled meetings of the entire task force. The full task force would then meet to consider the work of each subcommittee and provide feedback and comments. Dr. Picart will chair the campus climate subcommittee, Dr. Stafford will chair the student code of conduct subcommittee and Jay Dawkins will chair the free expression tunnel and brickyard subcommittee.

A Historical Context: The Effects of Racial Language and Imagery on Black Citizenship

Dr. Blair Kelly an Assistant Professor in the Department of History presented a brief lecture to the task force on racial language and imagery. The purpose of the briefing was to place the tunnel writings and images in a historical context and for task force members to enhance their appreciation for hateful language and imagery impact the entire campus community.

Closing Remarks and Adjournment

After brief remarks by Dr. Stafford and collection of the subcommittee preference sheets, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm. The next meeting of the full task force is scheduled for Monday, December 15 from 3-5 in Talley Student Center, room 3118. At that meeting, each subcommittee will be asked to give a report, followed by discussion.