

**Commission on Multicultural Understanding**  
**Executive Council Meeting Summary**  
**September 19, 2008 – Hoosier Room, IMU – 1:30-3:00pm**

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**Attendance:**

Chair: Pamela Freeman

Deputy Chair: Bill Shipton

Graduate Assistant: Jodi Benenson

General, At-Large, & Ex-Officio Members: Doug Bauder, Beverly Calender-Anderson, R.J. Campbell (IUSA), Melanie Castillo-Cullather, Le Anh Long (OWA), George Robinson (IUPD), Maurice Smith, Nathen Steininger

Committee Co-Conveners:

Orientation and Welcome: Not Present

Retreats and Recognition: Lillian Casillas and Barry Magee

Teachable Moments: Rebecca Riall

Student Coalition: Currently Inactive

Faculty and Staff Policy Issues: Hilary Kahn

Training: Not Present

Student Policy Issues: Not Present

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**I. Introductions and Welcome**

- Pam welcomed everyone to the meeting, and the group went around and introduced themselves.

**II. Budget**

- Pam explained that our \$10,000 budget usually fulfills the needs of our goals. If we need more money, we can ask for it, but the current amount is usually sufficient.
- Each committee has different allotments due to their different activity base.
- Pam suggested that you all read over the COMU sponsorship guidelines sometime before the next meeting, when we will likely have sponsorships to vote on.

**III. Committee Updates**

**a. Orientation and Welcome**

- Bill talked about the Student Involvement Fair. We had a record number of tables, most likely due to the fact that it combined with the volunteer fair. Bill served as the COMU representative, as well as Melanie Payne.
- Bill and Pam both believe that this year was one of the best in the involvement fair's history.
- Bill explained that the Student Involvement Fair now has an institutional home in the Student Activities Office. It was once a COMU, Union Board, IMU and Orientation-based committee, but this institutional home provides a good feel for the fair.

**b. Retreats & Recognition**

- Lillian wanted to see if anybody had ideas about possible ideas for the retreat for this year.

- The Retreats & Recognition committee is taking a “sabbatical” from the Bloomington Multicultural Festival this year, but we will convene to discuss ideas for next year sometime in the near future.
- Pam mentioned an email from Deb Getz from the Center for Student Leadership Development, who has diversity initiatives underway this year. She will most likely attend our October COMU meeting. One thing Deb is trying to do is to get membership in student organizations diversified. This could possibly translate into a retreat about leadership development.
- Melanie C. discussed possibly doing a post-election retreat in the spring.
- Barry announced that the Civil Rights Immersion trip will likely be going to Oklahoma in January, and will focus on civil rights issues for Native American people. Barry thought about doing a workshop before the trip, so that the participants could come together and be introduced to Native Americans in a civil rights context.
- Alternatively, Nathen suggested a follow-up for the Immersion Program.

**c. Teachable Moments**

- Rebecca discussed a Native American educational program mirroring the Frozen Grand Central Project, where people start mingling and then freeze. The idea is that they will be wearing a t-shirt with a Native American educational message printed on it, and passerby’s will notice their presence.
- Pam and others said that Rebecca, Sharlene, and Nita Allgood, Administrative Secretary in Student Ethics, will have to fill out a hospitality form.
- Nita will be asked to set up a sub-account for this event if we get the grant that Rebecca and Sharlene applied for through the Indiana Campus Contact office.
- The locations for the event are not specific yet, but will be spread out throughout the community and campus.
- This will probably cost around \$983 dollars.
- It was mentioned that the committee should let the police department know that this is going on, and Beverly’s office.

**d. Student Policy Issues**

- Next meeting, Sandy Britton and Rob Meyer will discuss the work Corbin has done at the IMU for student groups to tap into a fund and obtain access to meeting/group rooms in the IMU.
- This committee is looking for new project ideas as well, so if anyone has thoughts, please let Sandy know ([sbritton@indiana.edu](mailto:sbritton@indiana.edu)).
- Pam discussed that the religious bias incidents team was approached by a former graduate student regarding the religious observance policy that was not exactly being followed. There has been a lack of sensitivity recognized specifically during the Jewish high holy days.
- Bill wondered if the Dean of Faculties knew about this issue.
- Melanie C. acknowledged that grades need to be in at a certain time, which is part of why this may have become an issue. (Faculty members assigning exams or large assignments to high holy days.)
- Le Anh said that professors can get an extension on grade submissions.
- Barry brought up the non-discrimination clause regarding transgendered students.
- Pam responded by saying the affirmative action committee’s clause included gender identity, but there was discussion over using both gender identify and gender in the clause. Ultimately, it was concluded that gender-identity be added.
- Maurice said that he has not seen any changes, and this needs to be made public.

- Pam said that this is an administrative issue, and the code itself still does not have the new language. (It is a Board of Trustees /BFC approved code.)
- There was discussion about the need to distinguish between sex, gender, and gender-identity in the code.

#### **e. Faculty & Staff Policy Issues**

- Welcome Hilary!
- Pam updated all of us about the idea to have an interactive kiosk in the room of Woodburn 100 where the Benton murals are, so visitors (even not in class) can come and receive more information about the murals.
- Students would have a chance to look at these educational materials when waiting outside of the classroom.
- Provost Hanson was very supportive of the idea, as well as Paul Eisenberg, Emeritus Professor and member of the Religious Bias Incident Team.
- Pam applied to the IU Parent's Fund, and it was accepted. We received \$12,000.
- Hilary might get her Human Rights and the Arts students to help with this project.
- First, we need to contact the overseas study office regarding the display we would like to use outside this classroom, Woodburn 100.
- Nathen brought up the fact that there are also murals in the IU Auditorium.
- Pam suggested that this could possibly be included in the kiosk in Woodburn Hall, or in a supplementary brochure.
- Barry suggested showing the murals in the video as they were at the World's Fair (from a panoramic, holistic perspective.)
- Pam suggested first getting the project organized and managed. The committee will plan on meeting before our next COMU meeting.

#### **IV. Announcements and Discussion Items**

- Jodi announced that we have a student co-convenor for the Student Policy issues committee, Jennifer Yu, but we are still looking for a student Training co-convenor.
- The new website is up – go look at it and make comments/suggestions/etc. to [comu@indiana.edu](mailto:comu@indiana.edu).
- R. J. explained the poster series that IUSA is doing called “Did You Know...” each month – this month (September) was La Casa and the Incident Teams; October will be OUT for National Coming Out Day.

#### **V. Cultural Center Updates**

- Le Anh announced the Fall Open House for the Office for Women's Affairs on September 26 at the Memorial Hall atrium, from 4-6pm. There will be speakers, food, and tables so you can learn more about the OWA and partner organizations.
- Jodi presented information about the Jewish Women in Global Perspective film festival on October 11-13, at the IMU. You can visit [www.indiana.edu/~jwgp](http://www.indiana.edu/~jwgp) or contact her for more information and day-of volunteer opportunities.
- Hilary talked about “Voices and Visions” to promote intercultural awareness in understanding Muslims and Non-Muslims at IU. There are a number of podcasts (an introductory “crash course and more in-depth Muslim Voices podcast series), events at the union, and a website ([muslimvoices.org](http://muslimvoices.org)). “Voices and Visions” is generating lots of excitement.

- Beverly announced the Multicultural Calendar on the City of Bloomington website. The calendar can be found here: [http://bloomington.in.gov/calendars/?calendar\\_id=6](http://bloomington.in.gov/calendars/?calendar_id=6)
- Pam asked Beverly if we want to do the Campus Community Partnership Meeting, and this will be discussed soon.
- Lillian explained the project called Cultural Lens. The goal is to highlight what exists within both the city and the campus. There are different segments (ie: “oops section,” “special features,” “arts”) and each segment is 3-5 minutes. The whole show is 30 minutes, and will be shown October 23, and December 17. In December, the theme will be holidays, and will feature segments on Ramadan, HooShir (the Jewish Acapella group), and several other segments. This project came out of the Campus Community Partnership Meeting in 2008.

*The meeting adjourned at 2:47pm.*