

Report on the Human Diversity Pilot Study

Curricular & Co-Curricular Integration and Transformation Diversity Work Group

August 15, 2008

The Curricular & Co-Curricular Integration and Transformation Diversity Work Group was asked to review quantitative findings and qualitative comments from the Human Diversity Requirement (HRD) Pilot Study.

The Work Group was requested to identify recommendations and/or strategies that will:

1. strengthen the university core curriculum's human diversity requirement,
2. assist department chairs and/or faculty teaching HDR courses to utilize survey feedback in revising or enhancing courses,
3. systematize future HDR survey cycles and ongoing review of HDR courses offerings,
4. help cultivate professional development workshops focused on curriculum transformation, and
5. expand curriculum to include a variety of perspectives, discussions of social contexts, including issues of equity and justice.

In its review of the *HDR Survey Pilot Evaluation Fall 2006 Methodology, Results and Limitation Report*, prepared by Institutional Research and Analysis, the Work Group endorsed Mike Cogan's recommendations:

1. Rec 1: UST should adopt a clearly articulated and acceptable definition of diversity that will drive question development for future HRD surveys,
2. Rec 2: The instrument should be modified to collect respondent specific information pertaining to class, sexual orientation, disability status and geopolitical status. Controlling these factors will provide valuable insight regarding the perception of diversity at UST,
3. Rec 3 (Note: the Working Group revised this recommendation): The instrument should be revised to take into account the number of HRD courses the respondent has completed.

Further Analysis

The Work Group recommend that further analysis by IR & A address the following questions:

1. Are HRD courses making an impact on students?
2. Student responses regarding sexual orientation.
3. The percentage of courses offered focusing on the areas of inquiry. This data may assist to increase (and hence balance) of number of courses that address sexual orientation and disability status. , especially regarding chronic mental illness and accommodation)
4. The HDRC will use the survey results to make recommendations to the Core Curriculum Committee about course offerings.

HRD Survey Process

The Work Group recommends the following process for future HRD Surveys

1. The HRD instrument should be a formal assessment tool, developed by the Human Diversity Review Committee, Office of Institutional Diversity, Core Curriculum Committee, Institutional Research and Analysis and recognized by the University.
2. The HRD survey should be distributed every two to three years a course is offered.
3. The Director of Undergraduate Academic Affairs will contact faculty, requesting that they participate in the survey.

4. Institutional Research & Analysis will distribute the survey, as well as compile and analyze the data.
5. The Human Diversity Review Committee (HDRC) will review the results.
6. The Core Curriculum Committee and the HDRC will consult to confirm how the results will be distributed. The following process is proposed:
 - a. Individually-taught courses: The HDRC will distribute results to the instructor.
 - b. Course with multiple sections and instructors: The HDRC will distribute results to the department chair, as well as the instructor

The Work Group also recommends that the HDRC make this instrument part of the approval process for all future HRD courses, as well as part of the 'recertification process' as HRD courses are under periodic review.

Other Recommendations that Will Strengthen Diversity at St. Thomas

The Work Group strongly recommends:

1. Fr. Dease, the Executive Vice President for Academics, Deans and Department Chairs support of the value of faculty engagement with diversity topics, with particular attention to student teaching evaluations and faculty members' annual reports. Faculty must be allowed to develop professionally as they engage and teach in all areas of diversity, and sometimes this may mean that they fail. Faculty should not be punished for such attempts.
2. Diversity infusion must be strengthened through major field requirements and through all graduate programs, including more non-traditional diversity fields.
3. Funding should be designated for curricular innovation and instructional support, including materials, course release (time) and stipends, so faculty can develop new areas of diversity expertise.
4. Discussions, through symposia, workshops, etc, should be available to support conversations about 'difference' within the context of a Catholic university.
5. The current workshops sponsored by HDRC and Center for Faculty Development should be continued and expanded.

Submitted by:

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