

Task Force Summer Report 2015 Embracing Our Differences as One Human Family

How often and for how long did your group meet over the summer? Was this adequate for the work you needed to do?

We met on May 27th (three hours), June 19th (three hours), and July 28 (two hours). This seems like an appropriate amount for this stage.

Then, we brought that summary of that work to the day-long retreat on September 1. The discussion amongst task force members that day allowed us to reconceptualize our priorities into what we call three "buckets" (education/classroom/co-curricular, retention/recruitment, community based activity/connections). We all agreed to develop several recommended goals in any area of interest to be presented to the others at a meeting on September 18.

How much work were individual task force members responsible for between meetings?

Each meeting had an assignment for task force members. The first assignment, for example, was for all task force members to learn the Sharepoint site and digest materials on that. The second was to identify what each believed to be one or two most important broad concerns. The third was to identify 3-4 more specific (though not fully specified) objectives or outcomes that they would like to see pursued.

What did/will the group accomplish this summer?

We hope to have a short list of more specific goals ready for the middle of the fall semester. This might include, just to provide two of dozens of possible recommendations, things like "by the end of the fall semester, an environmental scan will have identified all diversity/inclusion efforts campus wide" to "by the end of the 2015-2016 academic year provide a blueprint for enhancing the SDIS peer mentor program Linkages, in order to increase community building opportunities including cultural support systems where students can feel comfortable rather than feeling that they have to assimilate into the dominant culture." (These are just two examples, and are not necessarily the two of highest priority.) These will emerge from the nine broad thematic "pillars" we identified as most important.

What are your goals for Fall 2015?

We very much hope to develop a fuller list of the objectives of the type described immediately above. We have identified many potential priorities.

What are your goals for Spring 2016?

We would hope to have a fully delineated timeline and metrics designed for an effective start date of all objectives by the Fall of 2016.

Are there any resources your group feels you need to continue efficiently with your work?

Not as task force members at the moment. That does not imply, of course, that resources are not going to be required for the implementation of top priorities going forward.

Do you plan on any meetings or Brown Bags with the UST community this Fall and/or academic year?

Yes. Several of the committee members are in units that can sponsor such events; we will also have as a task force at least one community forum to solicit feedback on the proposed outcomes/objectives.

What other task force(s) do you feel it is important that you collaborate with going forward?

We think that all are important. The most important might be Global Connections, Educating for the Future, Enhanced Visibility, Flexible Pathways, and Catholic Identity. We have had two visitors from two of these areas already meet with the group in our summer meetings, and hope to have reps from the others at fall semester meetings. We will likely have more specific recommendations that will be "owned" by some of these other task forces; for example, we believe that certain curricular changes are an important component of some of our goals, but these will need to be brought forward by willing others. Other related pieces, like fostering a more inclusive learning environment, could be promoted by this committee as appropriate. There are many examples like this.