

NMSU Interfaith Council

Sept 1, 2011

Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

Opening Prayer: Sarah Heartsong

Officers of NMSUIC introduced: Sarah Heartsong is President, Sid Druen is President Elect, Sabine Green is Secretary, Jim Lehman will continue as Treasurer. Jim Ficklin to continue to maintain the website and mailing list. Brandon Pelton is the executive advisor.

Introduction of IFC members

Introduction and remarks from Vice President for Student Affairs, Dean of Students, and Campus Activities. Dr. Bernadette Montoya, VP for Student affairs, reports enrollment is down by approximately 2%, mostly freshman. Decline in High school graduates. Focus is graduation and retention. Largest numbers of students from 1. Dona Ana county 2. Bernalillo County 3. El Paso, TX.

Campus Activities Presentations

- **Social Work – Lori Haussamen**
Helping connect students to resources. Advocate for students. Navigate the system. Discussion about resources for international students, recent graduates that need assistance, food bank options, branch campus students. IFC members offer their help as a resource outside the campus. The CALL crisis line as a resource. Discussion of suicidal issues. The NMSU counseling center offers advice, or consultation for IFC members. Deana Lea is the outreach person that can come and give guidance, training, etc. for student leaders. Referral forms can be used to have student services contact the student. BASICS program is for students with chemical dependency issues. A 2-session process for analyzing their use of alcohol or drugs. Bring Lori and Natasha back for another session.
- **Student Accessibility Services – Diana Quintana**
- **Career Services – Roseanne Bensley (proxy Liz)** Available for students, student groups, have resources, NMSU friendly employers, graduate resources through Career Manager as well as work study.
- **Student Judicial Services – Angela Arvizo -** Oversee discipline for the university regarding student behavior. Mostly on campus issues. Academic misconduct is also reported to this office. Release form are available if you send a student to the office. FURPA release. Records can be subpoena in court. It is not judicial, just administrative.
- **Housing – Julie Weber - Michelle Bernstein (proxy for Julie Webber).** Partnerships with IFC, social, educational, engage them while on campus. Religious tolerance panel. Student Government for Campus Residence is wanting to host this religious tolerance panel, and inspire them to get involved in spiritual organizations.
- **Testing/Veteran's Programs – Agustin Diaz**
 - They help the students to make sure that they use their benefits correctly and are taking classes that are grades that would affect their GPA. VA is not so concerned that they pass, but that if they don't pass that they have consequences that are

punitive. They are mostly dealing with the academic issues, not their mental health issues

- They work closely with the Counseling Center if there are issues that a veteran needs help with, such as PTSD. It is noted that the veterans may be getting their counseling through the VA.
- **Counseling and Student Development – Natasha Ali**
 - Have crisis services that are on a walk-in basis, as well as The Call. They offer counseling, 15 free sessions of either individual or couples counseling every academic year and unlimited group counseling services.
 - Talked about confidentiality- they can't tell whether the student has come in for services unless the student signs a release of information.
 - There is a referral process- the student can come in and fill out some information on the computer (intake process).
 - They are looking at how to help students that practice a faith. 38% of the students they served last year said that faith is really important to them. One thing that came out of the interns from Counseling Center coming to visit with the IFC is that they will work with us to refer the students to the appropriate faith-based advisors. Most staff says they are really on-board with doing this. The student has the right at the intake session to ask about the theoretical orientation of the counselor (to help them decide if that counselor would be a good one for them given their faith background. There is a movement in counseling/psychology to integrate into the counseling the faith of the individual. IFC asked for them to list with the staff their theoretical orientation of the counselor.
 - IFC asked the counseling center if the counselors got training in basics of various faiths so that they can better counsel the students. This is something that the field of psychology is addressing now and students going through schooling now are thinking about this and learning about this.
 - In couples counseling just one need be a student, but if they are both students then they get twice the number of sessions.
 - This is not open to students at the branch colleges, but branch colleges have their own counseling center.

Old Business

Review IFC's traditional norms of business

- Meetings will continue on the 1st Thursday of every month from 8:00-9:30, food will be provided by the group hosting the IFC that month
- Prayers and inclusivity issues. The group enjoys our diversity and hearing how others frame their prayer and we want to be sure to keep the rich environment and spirit of cooperation between faiths that we currently appreciate. The group agreed that it is important that we approach this topic with a spirit of openness and forgiveness. The procedure reaffirmed in this meeting for the NMSU IFC is thus:
 1. The group that hosts the IFC meeting will open the IFC with a short Teaching from the tradition they come from, and a prayer. They can decide whether to provide a prayer within their tradition and members of the IFC can respectfully refrain from praying or saying "amen" if it is something that their faith requires from them. Jim Ficklin offered that he chooses to end his prayers saying, "We each pray in our own way and as I pray in my tradition in the name of..." as a recommendation for

prayer within the IFC to help all present to be comfortable with the language.

2. The IFC is closed with prayer from the group that will host the next meeting with the same above guidelines.
3. If it any of us represent the IFC in a public or NMSU setting then we should ensure that the prayer is inclusive. (Guidelines for inclusive prayer were provided that we've used before, which are posted on the web.) Certain formal settings dictate that we work with NMSU staff ahead of time to provide words of inspiration that are inclusive (i.e. formal gatherings such as graduation).
4. For the university hosted IFC meetings, the first and the last (September and May), whomever does the prayer (September, traditionally the outgoing IFC president does the opening and the incoming IFC president offers the closing prayer) should be conscious to pray in an inclusive way taking into consideration the guidelines posted on the web for inclusive prayers.

Approval of May 2011 Minutes- approved as written with consensus.

Treasurer's Report and Dues- Aggies for Christ need to pay and Sid will contact. Now we have \$1253.47. Dues are do now, but everyone is paid up now, they are due in May. Wesley? They have a new person- Zach. Sarah will make contact with them. Empty Bowls is coming up and we normally give money to them for that in the total of \$150. It was decided that should we be approached by the Wesley center that the IFC approves up to \$150 to be donated to the Empty Bowls again this year. It also passed to buy a "Visa gift card" for \$100 for Brandon Pelton and his family with a card sending our regards from the NMSU Interfaith Counsel. Sal will get it and send it the family. The above was approved with consensus.

New Business

"See You at the Pole"- Co-sponsor again with the Lutheran Campus Ministry? YES. This was approved with consensus.

Who to invite for programming next month? Red Cross comfort kits: Scott and Jim (LDS) will make a presentation about their idea for an interfaith service activity. Religious Tolerance Panel with the Student Governance: Sid will invite them to come to the next meeting. IFC members asked for training about mental health answering the question: What do we do when someone walks in our door with mental health issues? This is a specialty of one of our members, Jim Lehman, who offered us a training entitled "Pastoral Management of Students with Mental Health Issues at Places of Worship". The NMSU Counseling Center will be invited to attend to listen and participate and this will be scheduled for November.

Additional groups that the IFC should invite to join the IFC? Momentum Youth, Pipeline, Sagebrush. Do they have a "parent organization"? They need this to be a part of the IFC. This was tabled to the next meeting due to issues of time.

Individual Group Updates- This was tabled to the next meeting due to issues of time.

Closing- This prayer is traditionally done by the group advisor that will host the next IFC meeting, so the prayer was offered by Rev. Rod Thompson, UUCLC.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35pm and lunch was provided by the Activities Center. (Thanks!)