

## NMSU Interfaith Council

Nov 4, 2010

### Welcome and Announcements

In attendance: Jim Lehman (Holy Family), Bruce Vandevender (NMSU Campus Activities), Sarah Heartsong (Unitarian Universalist Campus Ministry), Brandon Pelton (CRUU), David Hansen (Religious Society of Friends), Daisy Maldonado (Muslim Student Association), Jeanne Lutz (Lutheran Campus Ministry), Sal Melendrez (Newman Center)

Best wishes to Rabbi Kane who is in the hospital and was unable to attend.

Opening Prayer: Jim Lehman

### Presentation "Civility" - Dr. Dario Silva

He talked about bullying on campus, among academia and within the staff/administration. Talked about a variety of bullying within organizations and how it affects the whole system and becomes irritating to the human spirit. His job is to try to create civility. He encouraged us to talk to our students/congregations to be kind at work to one another, even in a competitive environment. How do we take our spiritual life into the work place? He also asked that we pray for their work at the university and the administrators there. It costs NMSU \$4mill in lost revenue in staff turnover and other fallout because of the lack of civility on campus based upon a formula that Dr. Silva uses. Code of Conducts help and he is encouraging the university to write one. About 2/3 the bullying comes from the managers who are responsible to ensure the safety (lack of harassment) within their departments. To keep hope he encourages us to take care of the people close to us (our families), be spiritual, and treat people kindly. It was pointed out that witnesses to bullying behavior have the power in the situation. We need to call people on it when they are being impolite and/or mean. If one witnesses bullying behavior Dr Silva encourages us to act- like the turtle, we have to stick our heads out and do something. Model civility.

### Approval of October 2010 Minutes-

Minutes moved and seconded that the minutes were approved by consensus.

### Muslim Student Association (MSA)- *Daisy Maldonada*

MSA wants to petition for membership. Daisy gave an overview of 'Islam. The first MSA started in the 1960s. Their parent organization is the National Muslim Student Association and they take guidance from them. The MSA is the sole 'Islamic group of students on campus. In recent times they find there are many misunderstandings about their beliefs and who they are. They want to counter these myths. They do not want to be isolated any longer and want to build community. They have a set of beliefs the MSA follow based upon the Quran, which Daisy presented. *"Sincerity is the foundation of our existence. Knowledge precedes our*

*actions. Humility guides our conduct. Truthfulness is the mark of our speech. Moderation is the compass of our journey. Tolerance is the banner of our outreach. Forgiveness precedes our reconciliatory efforts. Patience is the hallmark of our planning. Gratitude binds our hearts together."*

Jeanne stated that with the Interfaith dialogues the MSA are always courteous, respectful and helpful. They always respond quickly and participate fully.

The links were removed that were controversial from their website. Those links are divisive and not what the MSA stands for. Those were residuals from a couple of years ago and students that had their own agendas.

Currently there is not a religious leader in town to help them to oversee their ministry. To establish continuity between years and as the membership of the group changes they have a faculty member that is an advisor. Daisy thinks that perhaps the faculty member could be the participant in the IFC.

Discussion: There was consensus that we want to have a Muslim voice on the IFC. Concern was raised about continuity as students come and go. Garadan Al-amir is the current advisor. It is important that we have a liaison that would attend the IFC meetings and that they are someone that is able to speak with some authority for the faith. There is a quorum for a vote, it was established. It was approved through unanimous consensus that the MSA become a member of the IFC and to send representation to our meetings. We look forward to their voice at our table!

## Old Business

### Student Interfaith Dialogue-

We have held 2 planning sessions with good attendance of students. We have 2 UUs, 2 Lutherans, 2 from LDS, 1 from CRUU. Sarah sent in the minutes from the meetings for the IFC to review. Set Date for IFD: 3/3/10 from 6-9p, and we will get the room from 5-10p to ensure time for set up and take down in Corbett Senate chambers. Jeanne scheduled the room and filled out papers and tracked down the signatures. Snack food will need to come out of Corbett, too. The planning group requests a budget from the Activities Center to see if they will provide us a budget for food. We will need to have a budget for advertising, too.

Who to invite? Of course all of the IFC members are invited with their students. Hindu? Brandon Proctor will connect with the Indian Student Association that are putting on the Divali festival (11/7 at 5p at the music recital hall) and will get that info to Stephane Lichtenberg to send them an invitation. They represent Hindu, Jain, and Sikh faiths. Stephanie and Julie Nielson have worked together to send out invitations to the chartered groups.

Moderator/Panel Discussion- we will invite a professor to do a short presentation (approx 10 min) on Communicating in an Interfaith Setting and then to moderate a panel discussion.

Sarah invited Christine Eber, but she is retiring next month! She referred another professor in Religious Studies to be the moderator and Sarah is following up on this lead. Dr. Silva might be a good resource and Dr. Eric Morgan in Communication Studies program are also considerations. The students will meet in January and will discuss questions for the panel discussion. If any IFC members have suggestions for questions, please send them in to Jeanne or Sarah to bring to that meeting to assist the students with this process. Hopefully we will have the moderator by then who can meet with us as well.

#### **New Business**

**Campus Activities:** Bruce talked about the division joining the Student Affairs Leadership Council of the Education Advisory Board. They have webinars on higher education and other things. On the Up Close page there are a few coming up that might be of interest. Counseling center indicate they reached a large amount of students. They have student group sessions that are pretty much full right now, but will be more after the holidays. Reminder- as we see the students- there is a relaxation room in Garcia Hall La Vista Learning Ctr where there is a massage chair and is a chill place to hang out.

**Treasurer's Update:** \$611.41 in account and all checks cleared.

**Finals Granola Bars to be passed out:** Moved and passed that we purchase granola bars to pass out to students during finals, general campus, 12/7 on Tuesday, \$75 passed to allocate to this project. Sarah will pick up the granola bars, Jeanne will fill out paperwork, and Brandon will print the stickers. We will put on stickers at the next meeting and will decide who will go where.

**Pagan Student Union:** Will be invited to present the next meeting as they've shown interest in joining us.

#### **IFC Member Updates:**

“I Empathize”- CRUU will bring in speakers to address the modern sex slave trade to create an experience to raise money to help to put an end to these atrocities. (11/1/10-11/4/10) This will happen in the ballrooms at Corbett Center.

**Meeting adjourned at 09:38.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

***Sarah Heartsong, Secretary***