

SEC Academic Collaboration Award 2016 Workshop: Civility on Campus

February 4-6, 2016

Brief Report: JoAnn Oliver, PhD

The workshop was excellent! The staff that lead and organized the program, the speakers, the facilities, and the food. It was wonderful to meet our SEC colleagues and engage in dialogue with other SEC schools.

Motto was: What's said here stays here. What's learned here leaves here – Example of Community Rule/Privacy

This workshop confirmed that we all represented excellent schools but that we all had issues; in large, very similar issues were recognized.

The students appeared to have enjoyed the discussion and civil discourse that occurred throughout the workshop.

Inclusion of and the opportunity to attend the one day Student Leadership Conference sessions was an excellent experience too and further broaden the opportunity to build upon the overall theme of diversity and inclusion.

The workshop fostered increase awareness in regards to the relationship between identities and cultural understanding and engaging in civil discourse support positive social change.

Dr. Valinda Littlefield, Director of African American Studies and Associate Professor of History at USC provided an excellent presentation. One of her memorable quotes for me

“Every slice of cake have two sides. Same evidence, starkly different conclusion”

A unique example/ strategy she shared was the use of an exercise called the **“Invisible Vampire”** Analogy to define isms (Genderism, Ageism, Racism, Sexism, Classism).

- Each group had a #1, 2, 3 & 4 person
- 1st person (closest Birthday was how we chose each) can see and had been bitten
- 2nd person – see the vampire, thus believe it exist, but had not been bitten by it
- 3rd person - could not see the vampire, but was “open” to believing it might exist (though still skeptical) and
- 4th person (forth closest birthday) cannot see the vampire and is not only skeptical but thinks the others who say they see it are downright crazy!

The facilitator shared an example of ageism (seemly non-threatening) however, some of the examples she shared were very powerful and intense. This provided a great foundational example of what was needed in our role play. This was a very powerful exercise.

These questions were provided to ask within our group:

- a. What do you think would be the emotional or psychological impact on those who were bitten/attacked but are not being believed?

- b. Why are those who can't see the vampire less likely to believe it exists even if they are clearly shown very strange bite marks or bruises?
- c. Do you think it is possible that everyone who sees the vampire may not fully understand they are being attacked/threatened by a vampire? Why or why not?
- d. For those who do believe an invisible vampire is attacking others, but can't see it, what are some of the reasons why they might believe so?
- e. What are some ways we might convince more of those who cannot see the vampire that it exists and it is attacking those who see it? Is there a way to make the invisible vampire more "visible"?
- f. Might this vampire affect even those who can't see it even if it doesn't directly attack them?

The workshop utilized unique ways to incorporate discussion, role play and examples to provide skills that could help each individual in their quest to increase efforts towards positive social change.

We heard from President Pastides of University of South Carolina who was an excellent speaker. A statement that he shared which was immensely powerful, in my opinion **"Diversity and Inclusion overall is Excellence and Quality"**. He shared poignant stories including one regarding the school's recent push and ultimate removal of the confederate flag.

Dr. John Dozier, Chief Diversity Office and Director of Community Engagement also shared a presentation: Action Planning for Systemic Change. I enjoyed the YouTube video he shared of Diane Nash a student activist that led student sit ins during the civil rights. Dr. Dozier engaged the audience throughout the workshop.

The workshop provided an open forum with real people, real world examples who were willing to acknowledge their issues and share their successes in addressing issues, but also sharing lessons learned. Both seemed to have provided those attendees, specifically our student's confidence in creating and identifying possible solutions to address positive social change. Some quotes and highlights are listed below:

- Our universities are environments of thought to learn to agree and/or disagree.
- As we are agents of change as universities simultaneously we are in some ways agents of traditions and holders of values.
- Universities are agents of change on all levels
- Universities are charged with being agents of change.
- All people want is to be seen, heard and loved – Molly Barker, Founder of Girls on the Run
- Provoke and Inspire, mobilize and this will get you social change.
- We have equal opportunity by law but equity is something we are still struggling to make sense of _ PANEL discussion
- Effective teams have values, goals and role clarity
- Our voice is the most powerful tool we have
- Don't walk around like a question mark walk around like an exclamation point!
- Racial equity is not inclusion, diversity, equality, Racial Equity is Justice. – Bethany Johnson-Jovis
- The true expert is He/she most affected by the issue

- Learning Humanizes character and does not let it be cruel. Crisis is not when to look at values, but know them.
- Social Media has elevated public space to hyper-public spaces

University of Missouri's student and staff representatives were present and shared their story of inclusion and diversity. University of Mississippi provided an overview and shared steps used to ameliorate issues within their SGA that were perceived as being less than optimal in regards to inclusiveness.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to attend along with our three student leaders. We were all honored and proud to represent The University of Alabama at the 2016 SECU workshop held at the University of South Carolina.

Please contact me if you have questions.