

RU Engaged 2009-2010
Broadening Our Horizons: Campus Diversity
Awareness: How Inclusive Are We?
March 11, 2010
Eynon Ballroom

In this session of the 2009-2010 RU Engaged series the discussion dealt with Perceptions of Campus Climate at Rowan University and was facilitated by Drs. Carmen Jordan-Cox, DeMond Miller, Christy Faison, Johanna Velez-Yelin, Mr. Richard Jones and Mr. Edward Eigenbrot. Dr. Faison opened the session by providing a summary of the Perceptions of Campus Climate. She reminded those in attendance that RU Engaged is intended to provide a venue for every member of the Rowan family to have input and share in conversations that affect the future of Rowan.

In the next segment, Mr. Ed Eigenbrot, Assistant Provost, Director of Institutional Research & Planning presented data on student diversity. He was followed by Dr. Johanna Velez-Yelin, Director of Equity and Diversity, who presented data on employee diversity.

In the next segment entitled 'Inclusiveness' Dr. Velez-Yelin presented information on diversity terminology and findings resulting from discrimination complaints. She was followed by Mr. Richard Jones, Dean of Students, who spoke on the subject of 'Observations on Student vs. Student Issues'.

Dr. DeMond Miller facilitated the next segment in which participants were asked to relocate to a table with individuals that are not necessarily like themselves. Then participants at each table were asked to react to a series of statements. The groups were asked to select a question and given twenty minutes for discussion, and then tables were asked to report out.

1. What patterns do you see represented in the data?
2. How does your perception of campus diversity and inclusiveness match any patterns you may see in the data presented?
3. What should constitute diversity at Rowan? Do numbers matter? How do you determine the ideal mix?
 - *Diversity at Rowan is subjective based on experiences.*
 - *Diversity means more than one thing. The group at this table did not reach a conclusion.*

4. Do you believe Rowan is achieving its goal of being a diverse campus? And if Rowan is achieving its diversity goals, are we inclusive?
 - No
 - *Surprised that Rowan was not more diverse.*

5. In what ways, if any, does Rowan suffer any adverse impact if we are not diverse and inclusive?

6. Does diversity ensure inclusivity?
 - *No, diversity training is needed with a follow up, and a survey should be created.*

7. And, if Rowan is not inclusive, which group(s) is/are most likely to be excluded?
 - *Women, minorities, the disabled and older veterans are most likely to be excluded.*

8. Whose responsibility is it to ensure Rowan is an inclusive campus?
 - *It is everyone's responsibility- Rowan administration, Division of Student Affairs, the Office of Academic Affairs and Student Engagement should lead the charge for inclusivity. Consideration should be given to having an online questionnaire regarding diversity.*
 - *More diversity is needed in the Public Safety Department.*
 - *It is the responsibility of faculty, staff, and students to ensure inclusivity. The group believes that the areas of the University that recruit students may have more responsibility in this area.*

9. Whose responsibility is it to ensure Rowan has a diverse campus?
 - *It is the responsibility of Human Resources and Enrollment Management to lead to a more diverse campus.*
 - *Diversity may be present as a descriptor. Diversity may be present on the campus, but does not mean inclusivity. Inclusivity is more of a process than a product. Students are networking through the Facebook social networking website. They seem to be connecting, sharing and learning about each other via social networking more than ever before. This may be one possible vehicle for sharing.*
 - *There is a perception by some that there should be more diversity included on campus. We should be able to see ourselves on campus. There was also conversation about inclusivity on campus. On the subject of 'Inclusivity' some feel included on campus, but not off campus*
 - *If we only talk about inclusivity on campus, we are not looking at the whole picture.*
 - *It is believed that it is more challenging to diversify faculty and staff than students.*

Written Comments

Rowan needs to implement a vehicle to reach out to all students to explore ways to make them feel comfortable on campus. The problems first need to be voiced by those who feel excluded and the solutions can be made available. Perhaps in class discussions, an anonymous survey to students

Does Rowan provide an environment comfortable for minorities and women to feel comfortable?

How do you get individuals out of their comfort zone to join a group with individuals who are not like them?

What does Rowan do to make students, faculty or staff feel comfortable enough to come forward and say why they do not feel comfortable or why they do feel comfortable.

People want opportunities to be together in common groups and broader inclusivity in larger groups.

Dr. Jordan-Cox thanked everyone for their participation in this session. She also stated that inclusivity on this campus means the type of experiences students have on campus. We tend to talk with people who look like us on campus. We need to intentionally have discussions on campus and guidance for students. We must ask what the learning opportunity is.

The next RU Engaged is April 19, 2010 – Creating an Inclusive Environment at 3:15 pm in the Ballroom.