

ALEC Departmental Climate Committee Meeting Notes

Tuesday, November 1, 2016

1:00-2:30 p.m.

AGLS 200

Attendees: Kirk Edney, Charlene Boggus, Robert Strong, Tanya Gunnels, Theresa Murphrey, Vidya Patil, Clarice Fulton, Jenna Kujawski, Debbie King, Gary Briers, Jamie Norgaard, Elke Aguilar, Reid Stavinoha, Julie Harlin

1. Reminder-Meetings

- a. ALEC Climate Committee meetings are open meetings for anyone interested in improving the climate of the department. Though we do have appointed members (Julie Harlin, chair, Chanda Elbert, Theresa Murphrey, Andy Vestal, Tanya Gunnels, Reid Stavinoha, and Gary Briers—Ex Officio), all members of the department are welcome and encouraged to bring items and participate in the discussion. (Note, Dr. Billy Mckim has resigned as a member of the climate committee, effective October 5, 2016).

2. Reminder-Charge

- a. The ALEC Climate Committee is responsible for making any recommendation we believe may improve departmental climate to the department head. We are also responsible for developing the ALEC Departmental Climate Plan for approval by the department.

3. ALEC Climate Plan

- a. The plan was submitted prior to the deadline. We did not receive feedback on the drafts submitted, but were commended publicly for having ours in early.
- b. We suggested two larger efforts to be implemented at the College/University level: Outward Mindset with the Arbinger Institute and Collegiality in Higher Education (from a workshop Dr. Rutherford attended).
- c. Debbie King reported that Dr. Sams did respond, stating that plans would not be reviewed until after the deadline.

4. ALEC Service Project

- a. We will send out an online sign up sheet as soon as we receive additional information about the Bridge Food Bank times.
- b. Troop Box Packing for the American Legion—this is set for November 10, 6-7 p.m. at the American Legion Hall on Hwy 21. We will do sign ups for this day and the one on December 8 for those who are interested.
- c. Charlene Boggus forwarded information about opportunities with the Bridge Ministries, a food bank that needs help in many areas on Thursdays. We will find out additional information and add it to the sign up sheet.
- d. We will continue to explore options for other activities. The attendees re-emphasized that the service activities are volunteer activities—you should only participate if you have time and want to serve in the particular activity.

5. Book Club

- a. The book club met on Wed, Oct 26; the next date is November 30, chapters 8 and 9 will be discussed. There will be a final meeting to be determined to discuss the last chapter sometime in December.
- b. The book club group re-emphasized that you can participate at any time, regardless of past participation.
- c. Participants again thanked Dr. Strong for doing such a good job facilitating. It is a safe place for discussions where everyone feels fully supported and closer as a result of the interactions.

- d. Dr. Strong will facilitate identifying the next person to lead the book club for the spring. That person will identify the book they would like to use. If you are interested in leading with a particular book in the spring, please let Dr. Strong know.
 - e. We discussed barriers to involvement and agreed that providing the book would be a great option. Hopefully our budget will be approved and we can do this in the spring.
6. ALEC Coffees
- a. We have moved the Friday coffee time to just before seminar—attendance has been good. Discussion supported continuing this coffee in the current format.
 - b. Rather than have a set time for the Tuesday coffee, we decided to delete those calendar appointments with the suggestion that the break room is always open and groups are encouraged to meet for coffee at the times their schedule allows.
 - c. We also discussed having brown bag discussions after seminar each Friday for those who would like to stay to learn about something new or continue the conversation from seminar. Seminar is moving over the lunch hour (11:30-12:20) in the spring. Perhaps a brown bag discussion will work well in this time slot.
7. Professional Development Opportunities
- a. Search Committee Training—Departmental and Dean of Faculties; many of us have completed this training in preparation for new positions.
 - b. Many attended the active shooter presentation so we know what to do in the event there is a critical issue. We watched the 5 minute video “Run, Hide, Fight” as a review for those who were interested and unable to attend. Other videos are available on the UPD website and on Train Track.
 - c. We watched a portion of the video clip on Organizational Trust and Leadership submitted by Allison Dunn (start at minute 18):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ReRcHdeUG9Y> It is an interesting take on safety in organizations and how to build trust and leadership.
 - d. There are many opportunities for professional development across our university for staff and faculty. For those who have participated, they have found these beneficial. The Pedagogy Project, Agrilife Advanced Leaders, and the University Leadership Institute were all mentioned as great opportunities for us to look into for personal and professional development.
8. “How is our Climate?” Are your concerns and suggestions being heard?
- a. We spent quite a bit of time discussing ways to truly improve our climate.
 - b. Some expressed the feeling that we are socially more active as a department, and there have been pockets of improvement, but as a whole don’t feel like we are making significant progress.
 - c. We discussed consequences for behaviors and being held accountable for statements and actions. We also discussed getting over being offended. While juxtaposed, there are sentiments on both sides that should be heard.
 - d. Listening to those who aren’t speaking and asking them why was also suggested.
 - e. Creating a common vision for our department and identifying the commonalities of our work was discussed as a necessary element for the future.
9. Sometimes we hear things not said. One suggestion was to end meetings with the following:
- a. This is what I heard.... Socially, we are improving for those who have participated in the book club, coffees, etc. Some expressed disappointment and classify climate progress as more superficial.
 - b. This is what I think....Many of the things we are doing may be band aids, but may also be important steps in moving us forward. Working on transparency and trust are difficult, but important. We can only control ourselves and our reactions; we cannot control

others. We must remain diligent in supporting the kind of climate we want. An adage might be...."Be the change you want to see."

- c. This is what we will do....We will create an online sign up for the American Legion box stuffing on November 10 and December 8 (6-7 p.m.) as well as the Bridge food bank (once we have dates and times for it). We will remove the Tuesday coffee from the calendar but encourage people to meet informally. We will look for other service opportunities. We will identify a person and a book for the spring. We will work to be the change we want to see in terms of climate in our department.
10. The next meeting of the ALEC Climate Committee will be Tuesday, December 6, 2016, 1:00-2:30 p.m., AGLS 200. All are invited to the meetings and input on the plan, meetings, and activities is welcome and needed.