



FACCC BIPOC Committee Meeting Notes

Friday, May 10, 2024
12:30-1:30 PM via Zoom

In attendance:

Nicky Gonzalez Yuen, De Anza College (Chair)
Robin Daniels, Santa Monica College
Rocio Diaz, El Camino College
Francis Howard, Laney College
Mzilikazi Kone, College of the Desert
Natalina Monteiro, East Los Angeles College

Not in attendance:

Maria Estrada, Santa Ana College
Desiree Montenegro, Cerritos College (unofficial FACCC Board Liaison)
Thomas Carrasco, Santa Barbara City College– resigned from the committee

Agenda:

1. Check Ins and Updates on Committee Work Plan
2. Mindfulness Practice
3. Life Stories & Impact of Race and Racism on our lives
4. Closing and Review

1. Check Ins and Updates

Committee members shared greetings and welcomes with each other. We also checked in to see which committee members were planning to return and had asked to be re-appointed. All but one of the members present indicated that had asked to be re-appointed to the BIPOC committee. Mzilikazi Kone from College of the Desert indicated initially that she was stepping back from her FACCC activities and would not be returning. However, at the end of the meeting she said she had changed her mind and would ask to be re-appointed if it was not too late.

Committee members also shared their work on the BIPOC committee work plan to engage other FACCC committees in the project to implement action to realize FACCC's DEI statement. Most

committee members shared that other FACCC committees seemed to be not meeting over the summer. It was reported that Ryan Tripp from the FACCC Communications Committee had been particularly receptive to the BIPOC committee initiative and that his committee was already engaged in this work. Ryan also suggested the possibility of dedicating an issue of an upcoming FACCC journal to anti-racism work and also suggested incorporating a component of each journal issue to DEI work. Needless to say, committee members were excited about this!

Some other committee chairs indicated that they would pick up the BIPOC Committee invitation in the fall. [See below for letter sent to the chairs of each FACCC committee.] It was agreed that members would continue to reach out to other committee chairs over the summer and to check back in once the fall started.

We also reported that at our May 10, 2024 meeting we did not have a quorum. Though we did not have enough members present to engage in official business, those who did show up reported on progress sending out our BIPOC committee work plan letter. BIPOC committee members reported mixed results, with some committee chairs reporting that their committee was too busy to respond at this time.

Committee was also informed that our FACCC staff person Herlim Li was no longer with FACCC. Members were encouraged to reach out to Herlim to wish him well and to offer gratitude for his work supporting the BIPOC committee.

2. Mindfulness Practice- The committee spent about 15 minutes engaged in a mindfulness practice called “Resilience & Resourcefulness.” This was a 12 minute lesson and meditation with a focus on learning specific skills such as breath work and attention to the physical body. The goal of the practice was the help BIPOC committee members both to be more present in the meeting and also to enhance their long-term anti-racism and political organizing skills. After the lesson, committee members shared specific ways in which the lesson could be applied to the work at hand with FACCC and in other aspects of our lives.

3. Life Stories & Impact of Race and Racism on our lives- The final 30 minutes of our meeting was dedicated to a “think and listen” session in which committee members shared their thoughts on the following question: What is one significant life experience in which you felt invalidated because of your racial or ethnic background? How does this impact your life as a faculty member and as a FACCC leader? What is one significant life experience in which you found support and/or validation for your racial or ethnic background? How does this enhance your ability to carry out anti-racism work and/or to be an effective educator?

Each committee member had about 5 minutes to share their thoughts on this question. After each member shared, there was a very brief period for comment, questions or validation from other committee members.

4. Closing and Review

Committee members shared highlights and appreciations from the meeting. There was consensus that committee members enjoyed both the mindfulness practice and the opportunity to share life experiences and mutual support. We also agreed we would return to more BIPOC committee business at our next meeting.

Below is a copy of the BIPOC Committee Work Plan letter sent to the chairs of each FACCC Committee

Dear FACCC Board, Committee Chairs and Committee Members,

As members of the FACCC BIPOC committee, we are reaching out to respectfully ask for your help in fulfilling the spirit and purpose of our organization's DEI statement. We believe that only by working together can we build a community college system and society free of the burdens of racism. Therefore, to help FACCC contribute towards this goal, we ask that your committee take the following steps:

- 1. Read (or re-read) FACCC's DEI statement.*
- 2. Discuss and consider what meaningful action your committee is already taking or can now begin taking over the coming year to help FACCC fulfill the spirit of our DEI statement.*
- 3. Establish benchmarks and timelines for your committee's DEI action/goals.*
- 4. Assign specific tasks that committee members can undertake.*
- 5. Review your progress over the year.*
- 6. Help the BIPOC committee make a successful report of FACCC's progress at next year's All-Committee Day meeting.*

We understand that your committee has its own immediate and long-term goals, and we are not requesting anything outside of the scope of your committee's portfolio. However, we ask that you consider your committee's main charge and frame at least one committee initiative within the context of FACCC's already-adopted DEI commitments. We hope that you can undertake this discussion within the next two months to give your committee adequate time to make progress before next February's All Committee Day meeting.

We acknowledge with appreciation the valuable intentions, efforts, and work already carried out by many Board Members, FACCC Staff, Committees, and the many rank-and-file activists who often work behind the scenes. In this spirit, we believe that our appeal is not an "add-on" or "extra" task but a core and essential part of our prime directive. The vast majority of our students (and Californians as a whole) are people of color whose daily lives are impacted by

ongoing structures of racism. Thus, we have many opportunities for growth and progress through DEI initiatives. We believe that by viewing our strategic actions through an anti-racist lens, we can be even more effective as we "educate, empower, and advocate for faculty in service to students and the communities of California."

For example, we note that notwithstanding FACCC's many powerful wins for students and faculty, our past gaps as an organization in the area of race have contributed to some of our greatest setbacks. Think, for example, of how rhetorical appeals to "student success and equity" have been used to promote disastrous and harmful "reforms" such as SLO's, the SCFF, and CalBright. Moving forward, we hope our initiative here will deepen our capacity to put forward more credible counter-narratives about equity and to mobilize a deeper base of FACCC activists with greater experience engaging in anti-racist work.

While some of our members and committees are already fully engaged in anti-racist work, others may find that anti-racism as a central framework for their work is new or unfamiliar. For this reason, members of the BIPOC committee have agreed to act as liaisons to FACCC committees. Depending on your needs and desires, we can consult and try to bring resources to your efforts, or simply check in and receive your reports. For your convenience, below you will find a list of our committee members with contact information. Please feel free to take the initiative to reach out to us. Please also expect that we will reach out to you in hopes that our initiative will be embraced not just in the spirit of solidarity but also in the knowledge that FACCC's success is dependent on our ability to turn our DEI Statement into an ongoing series of effective actions throughout our organization.

Thank you for your attention and willingness to work towards our shared goals.

Yours in Solidarity and Spirit,

- *Nicky Gonzalez Yuen, BIPOC Committee Chair (liaison to Communications), De Anza College (YuenNicky@fhda.edu)*
- *Thomas Carrasco (liaison to Policy), Santa Barbara City College (tacarrasco@pipeline.sbccc.edu)*
- *Robin Daniels (liaison to Retirement), Santa Monica College (daniels_robin@smc.edu)*
- *Rocio Diaz, (liaison to Professional Development), El Camino College (rodiaz@elcamino.edu)*
- *Maria Estrada, (liaison to Counseling), Santa Ana College (estrada_maria@sac.edu)*
- *Francis Howard, (liaison to Legislation & Budget), Laney College (francis.howard0251@gmail.com)*
- *Mzilikazi Kone (liaison to Advocacy & Leadership), College of the Desert (mkone@collegeofthedesert.edu)*
- *Natalina Monteiro (liaison to FACCC PAC), East Los Angeles College (nmonteiro@mac.com)*
- *Desiree Montenegro (liaison to Board of Governors and Part time), Cerritos College (dmontenegro@cerritos.edu)*