Annual Report (2012-2013) for Academic Senate Committee on Student Diversity and Academic Development (SDAD)

Chair: Margaret Conkey (Anthropology)

Members:
- David Ahn (Economics)
- Patricia Baquedano-Lopez (Education)
- Charles Briggs (Fall only; Anthropology)
- Brandi Catanese (Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies)
- Catherine Cole (Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies)
- Laurel Fletcher (Law)
- Marcial Gonzalez (English)
- Martin Jay (History)
- Caroline Kane (Molecular and Cell Biology)
- Cynthia Ledesma (Graduate Assembly)
- Sarah McMains (Mechanical Engineering)
- Michael Omi (Ethnic Studies)
- Jeff Perloff (Agriculture and Resource Economics)
- Douglas Taylor (ASUC, Undergraduate rep)
- Christine Wildsoet (Optometry)

The SDAD committee met on nine occasions for two hour meetings: September 27, October 19, November 9, December 12, January 25, February 15, March 15, April 19, & May 17th.

Guests & information sessions:
One of our main goals for this academic year was to familiarize ourselves more fully with many of the campus/off-campus organizations and offices that serve student diversity in the realm of academic development. Additionally, we were pleased to be able to host Vice Chancellor Gibor Basri (Equity and Inclusion) on two occasions to discuss issues in his office of relevance to us, and Academic Senate Chair, Christina Maslach to present the issues of the Senate over the course of the year. A special invitation was extended and accepted by alumnus Robert Haas whose philanthropy has benefitted campus diversity efforts enormously. Following our meeting that he attended primarily to learn how we work and what we are doing, he most generously hosted a luncheon for 6 of the committee to continue our discussions.

Other guests who presented important and relevant information about student diversity and academic development:
- Dave Stark, Stiles Hall
- Sidalia Reel, Director of Staff Issues, Division of Equity and Inclusion
- Derek Van Rheenen, Director, Athletic Study Center
- Frabrizio Mejia and Jessica Lopez for Meng So and the Undocumented Student Center
In the context of the issues surrounding changes in the Multicultural Student Development Centers, we engaged with several concerned students (Silah Muhammed and Sidronio Jacobo) both off campus and with a presentation/discussion from Silah at our October 19th meeting.

**Additional activities:**
1. Meg Conkey (Chair) hosted a luncheon for the Chairs of most other Senate Committees that deal directly with student issues.
2. Meg Conkey (Chair) presented a report to SWEM on the activities of the Gender, Equity and Diversity Subcommittee of the University Athletic Board (UAB) as a representative of SWEM to the Board.

**Annual Tasks:**
One of SDAD's annual tasks is to solicit nominations for and selection of recipients of the Henkin Citation, which honors faculty and staff who have demonstrated “exceptional commitment to the educational development of students from groups who are underrepresented in the academy.” We put out a Call for Nominations in February (and extended the deadline to encourage more nominations) and, with Four nominees before us, we selected two: Professor Susan Schweik (English/Disability Studies) and Professor Mark Richards (Executive Dean of L and S, and Earth and Planetary Sciences). These two recipients will be awarded their citations at a luncheon in Fall 2013, along with Professor Mahasin Mujahid (Public Health) who was selected in 2012 but for whom a luncheon had not been organized.

During this academic year, the SDAD took on the experiment to assist our complementary committee SWEM (Status of Women and Ethnic Minorities) in their contributions to the reviews of academic programs and departments. SDAD’s contribution was to be a focus on issues of diversity among the students in each unit under review, especially undergraduates. Evaluations of the program review materials were undertaken by individual members of SDAD and a short statement was forwarded to SWEM for inclusion in their report. In 2012-2013, SDAD contributed materials for the program reviews of ERG (Energy and Resources Group), Classics, and Plant and Microbial Biology. A statement on Optometry will be added to the Fall 2013 evaluation of that unit. SWEM Chair (Nicholas Paige) has opined that SWEM has found these a most useful contribution and would like to see this practice continued.

Following a memorandum from SDAD (2012) to Divisional Council, SDAD is to be consulted regarding the selection of the campus representative to the system-wide committee, UCOPE, with the expectation that this representative is most likely to come from SDAD. During 2012-2013, Marcial Gonzalez served on UCOPE and he presented a summary of that committee’s activities. Fortunately, Marcial has agreed to serve again on UCOPE during 2013-2014.

**Specific Issues addressed in 2012-2013:**
1. Each committee of the Academic Senate was asked to please provide a short statement of the work of the committee and its objectives as part of a packet of Senate “orientation” materials for in-coming Chancellor Nicholas Dirks. SDAD prepared such a statement (attached).

2. The primary issue under discussion and consideration throughout the academic year was that of the Multicultural Student Development Centers. In the face of administrative reorganizations and student concerns, SDAD reached out to student leaders and engaged with them on several occasions as well as discussed the situation with Vice Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion, Gibor Basri. The situation was such that Chancellor Birgeneau convened a Task Force to study the situation and make recommendations to him by May 2013. David Ahn from SDAD as well as Cynthia Ledesma (Graduate Assembly and SDAD) were members of the hard-working Task Force. Follow-ups on the results of this set of recommendations and actions should be of key concern to SDAD when convening in Fall 2013.

**On-going concerns of SDAD:**

1. With regard to the visibility and efficacy of the committee itself, we continue to regret the lack of staff support for the committee.

2. Additionally, we would hope to develop a web presence for SDAD that accurately presents our work and goals, as well as web presence for the Henkin Citation. A follow up inquiry is in order to the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion as to why SDAD is not listed among campus resources.

3. Following a key analysis by SDAD members in 2011-2012, SDAD continues to stress the value and importance of support for our transfer students who are increasingly vital to maintaining our undergraduate student diversity, especially in the face of an expanded admissions policy that has increased the percentage of out-of-state /international undergraduate admissions. In the wake of the Supreme Court Fisher decision (made following our 2012-2013 academic year), it would appear that a “deep dive” into our admissions practices and the implications of the Fisher decision would be of potential concern of SDAD.

4. At the end of the year, the committee continues to have the impression that too few resources are being put into populations of students who are at risk and who need them to be able to succeed at Berkeley, and, furthermore, too few of these students can or do take advantage of what there is.