

Bias Response Group Meeting Minutes 2009-12-09

Attendees: Emma Blumer, Rochelle Calhoun, Don Hastings, Mariel Martin, and Mary Stange.

Spring Membership

Mary Stange will remain on the committee for the 2010 spring semester. Marla Segol will resume her position.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the October 28, 2009 meeting were approved as written.

Incident Review

The group discussed whether or not a notice should be issued for the most recent report (November 24, 2010). It was determined that a notice will be sent to the community, and Rochelle will notify Mariel for “wording” on the Bias webpage.

Flow Chart

The Bias Response Flow Cart was approved as written. It should now be posted on the website. Emma advised the group that SGA President Raina Bretan recommended the flow chart be brought to SGA Senate for informational purposes.

January Training/Retreat (quick review for Mary training of staff as done last January with Res Life and Campus Safety.) Mariel is in preliminary conversations with Greg Miraglia, national director of Stop the Hate; they have a three-day “Train the Trainers” session. We are looking at a half-day or at most one full day. Greg will check to see if their three-day program can be changed to meet our needs. January 27 from 8:30 a.m. to noon has been selected as the training date.

Spring Programming

- Rochelle spoke with John Anzalone regarding a “Speech Matters” student panel discussion (theorizing speech and responsibility). John referenced a George Carlin tape that focuses on why context matters. Perhaps John can kick off this discussion during the Spring 2010 semester.
- Mariel and Rochelle spoke with Dan Jacobsen who will leave Skidmore at the end of the Fall 2010 semester. Dan suggested we bring Project Unity and S.O.A.R. into the student panel project. Get the students to write down words they overhear in Case Center; students could do a vignette using those words.
- Barbara Smith might be able to speak, perhaps for Women’s History month—during the first week in March. She charges three thousand dollars.

In terms of community education, the following was discussed:

- Start with new first-year class or within the fourth hour seminars; use some of the incident alerts as examples (similar to the seminar pilot program's "Words on Fire").
- Ask the question "Why is (incident description) written on a bulletin board offensive?"

Bias Response Chart

Final review of BRG flow chart: Box 4 (Alert sent to community [when applicable]) was approved as written. The chart was approved for posting on the BRG website.

Community Alerts

At the start of the school year, it was decided that the Skidmore community would receive incident alerts. The group voted to review this policy at the end of the fall 2010 semester to determine if this practice should be continued. Today, the Bias Response Group determined that the incident alerts would continue to be sent throughout the spring 2010 semester. The notices are a good means of communication (qualified: we state there was an incident alert reported by a member of the Skidmore community—we do not call it a bias incident).

The meeting adjourned at 12:46p.m.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Davis.