Advisory Council on Campus Climate, Culture and Inclusion
2014-2015 Annual Report

This report summarizes initiatives and programs offered by UC Irvine that strengthen the community of students, faculty and staff. As we celebrate our 50th anniversary, we are fulfilling the vision that was set in 1965 of becoming a world-class university. In 2015, and for the fourth consecutive year, UC Irvine ranked first among U.S. universities under 50 years old – and in the top 10 worldwide – in the Times Higher Education rankings. This status was reaffirmed by the inaugural QS University Rankings of universities under 50 years of age, which placed UC Irvine first in the U.S.

Council Activities

During the 2014-2015 academic year, the Advisory Council on Campus Climate, Culture and Inclusion (Council) continued to promote its mission to monitor and assess the campus climate and make recommendations to campus leadership. The council is led by Chancellor Howard Gillman, Vice Provost Academic Planning Judy Stepan-Norris and Daniel Wehrenfennig. The Council consists of five students, one alumnus, nine faculty, six staff, two community members and six ex-officio representatives. This year the Council’s work groups include 1) Diversity, Inclusion and Programming; 2) Survey, Data Analysis and Evaluation; 3) Constructive Engagement, Policing and Crisis Response; 4) Listening Tour; 5) African American Student Experience and 6) Campus Public Relations. Each work group consists of members of the Council and additional faculty, staff and student members from the campus community who have an interest in working on a particular work group.

Diversity, Inclusion and Programming Work Group

Through the Diversity, Inclusion and Programming Work Group the What Matters to Me & Why series continues to flourish in its third year. The series is designed to build and strengthen bonds between people who teach, learn and work together daily. The third-year presenters were nominated and selected by a subcommittee which includes undergraduate and graduate students; the presenters included Elizabeth Loftus, Natalie Schonfeld, Arthur Lander, David Reinkensmeyer, Mark Warschauer, Michele Goodwin and Julia Lupton. They reflect the diversity of the professoriate and the range of academic programs at UC Irvine. Attendance at each of these programs has filled the venue to capacity. The compelling nature of each presenter’s personal perspective on what matters most to them, and the interaction among students, staff and faculty, have resulted in a high degree of satisfaction. In addition, the posting of the recorded presentations on the Council’s Web page allows members of the campus community to enjoy the series at their convenience.

Building on this year’s success, the subcommittee has planned its fourth year; presenters are scheduled, and include both staff and faculty. Increasing participation among students is a priority, and the Council will encourage greater student input into the selection of speakers and participation in each program.
In May 2014, members of the UCI campus community created a new tradition when UCI inaugurated the Global Equity Games at Aldrich Park. An assessment of the event was conducted in September 2014. Overall, participants enjoyed the event and understood the purpose of the games, although the name of the event was misleading. In addition, survey results indicated the planning details of the event including timing, registration process and the level of difficulty of the games were positively received.

Now called the Anteater Equity Games, the event held on May 5, 2015, in Aldrich Park succeeded in building and sustaining an inclusive community by playing, learning and having fun together. Over 300 participants registered for the event with 18 teams consisting of faculty, students and staff working in tandem to solve eight fun challenges. The 2015 game sponsors included departments throughout the campus – Academic Personnel, Cross-Cultural Center, Equal Opportunity & Diversity, Human Resources, International Programs, LGBT Resource Center and Veteran Services. The informational booths consisted of 18 departments, organizations and resource centers. This year, each participant was given a passport and encouraged to visit all the informational booths for a chance to win one of the 18 raffle prizes.

Survey, Data Analysis and Evaluation Work Group

The Survey, Data Analysis and Evaluation Work Group, along with the Campus Climate Study Local Work Group, collaborated with Kenny Oden, program coordinator, P.R.I.D.E. Mentorship Program, to develop a pre- and post-assessment for his program. The work group also designed a pre- and post-assessment of the Campus Climate Series Leadership program, Advocacy through Dialogue, for student leaders within Interfraternity Council (IFC), Multicultural Greek Association (MCG), Panhellenic Association (PHA), and ASUCI.

In addition, the work group is in the process of reviewing the 2014 University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) Campus Climate Report, prepared by UC Irvine’s Center for Assessment and Applied Research. Approximately 45% of UC Irvine’s undergraduate students responded to the 2014 UCUES survey, the highest response rate in the UC system. The general climate for students at UCI was perceived as safe (M=5.33, which 1=dangerous and 6=safe), friendly (M=4.86, where 1=hostile and 6=friendly), and intellectual (m=4.82, where 1=not intellectual and 6=intellectual). In addition, 88% of UCI students agreed at least somewhat that they are proud to be students at UCI, 79% were satisfied at least somewhat with their academic experience, 84% agreed at least somewhat that they belong on their campus, and 83% agreed at least somewhat that knowing what they know now, they would still choose to enroll at UCI. Although all item means analyzed by social identity group were at least somewhat positive, students for the following identity groups expressed relatively lower levels of agreement that students like them respected on this campus: not Heterosexual, Black, Muslim, Jewish, Physically Disabled, Politically Conservative and Lower Social Class.
Constructive Engagement, Policing and Crisis Response Work Group

Continuing its work with the undergraduate community, the Constructive Engagement, Policing and Crisis Response work group continues to implement and build upon its “Constructive Engagement” model. The members of the group see its core mission in connecting the various constituencies on campus directly with each other and supporting each other in solving any pressing crises on campus. The group finalized its part of Robinson Edley report during the first couple of meetings of the 2014-2015 term. At the same time some group members participated in a crowd-control training workshop in San Francisco. The work group also worked on some more proactive constructive engagement projects (e.g. starting to create a campus climate mobile app and is interviewing various constituencies on campus about climate issues) and is still discussing and responding to some of the pressing crises on campus (e.g. tuition hike protests, Black Lives Matter, flag incident). The work and accomplishments of this work group are divided into three major areas indicated in the name of the group:

Policing (post-crisis reflection):

As the only work group with representation from the campus police, time is allocated during each meeting to discuss policing efforts on campus. As a direct result of the Robinson-Edley report, all UC police chiefs were invited to UCSF for training in Crowd Management and two participants from our work group attended the training. Work group members participated in the campus debate with the law school and the police department on policing matters on campus. Discussing policing matters has been a very important and successful function of the work group, as direct conversation with the campus police leadership avoids miscommunication around issues (e.g. during the follow-up to the fee hike protests or the role of the police in protecting UCI students after the flag controversy).

Crisis response:

An important function of this work group is to reflect on the campus climate crises and to communicate with each other about “what we are hearing.” Again building on the strength of the diversity in the group which represents undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, staff, administrators and other core constituencies, like the campus police, it affords the group the ability to detect the miscommunication and challenges between these groups in working with each other. During this year’s major crises around tuition hikes, Black Lives Matters, the flag issues and many other smaller crises, this communication proved to be very important and produced some great results. Furthermore, by reflecting on these crises and how the campus as a whole is
handling them, the work group identified some practices that are effective (e.g. internal communication when crises happen) and communicated it to the appropriate places.

**Constructive Engagement:**

In the evolution of this work group in the past two years, members voiced their hope that we can also play a more proactive role on campus. After reviewing the campus climate report and the arising issue that students still feel like they don’t know how to navigate the various support opportunities on campus when it comes to campus climate, the idea of a mobile application for campus climate was born. Throughout this year we worked on feasibility research with Strategic Communications and had a number of groups come to our meetings and present their work in the field of mobile applications. After a comprehensive review we will work with the team that created an app for recruitment searches and the OIT coordinators for app development on campus. The first interface of the app is based on the “Be Well: Anteater Guide to Health & Help” material from Student Affairs. The first interface is completed with a scheduled test-run for the end of the 2015 Fall Quarter with a final implementation before the end of the next academic year.

Besides the mobile application development, we also encourage work group members to alert each other about great guest speakers/experts who are available to train various constituencies on campus climate issues. As a result of this conversation, Daryl Smith, a well-known teacher and practitioner on campus climate issues, was asked to extend her visit and hold workshops with various groups on campus. The workshop was held on Tuesday, May 12.

**Listening Tour Work Group**

During fall quarter, the Listening Tour work group conducted an intimate and confidential discussion with students to understand their campus climate experiences. From the discussion, four major themes emerged 1) LGBT Student Support; 2) Developing Allies Across Campus; 3) Educating Organizations/Individuals about Cultural Sensitivity; and 4) African American Student Support. The discussion group themes were promoted to students online (see: sites.uci.edu/listeningtour) along with campus/local resources for topics addressed within the themes.

During spring quarter, a UCI student leadership group voted to ban flags from their meeting room. The incident drew national media attention and resulted in negative interactions among students and between students and community members. One group that was especially affected was UCI veterans. The Listening Tour work group focused on obtaining the campus
climate experiences of veteran students. Rather than a group discussion, the Listening Tour Work group is interviewing veteran students individually. About 30 veteran students have been selected from the Veterans Services Office for individual interviews. The interviews are recorded and will be transcribed for themes along with a final report. The report results will be shared with the Council to develop potential intervention strategies at the end of the academic year.

**African American Student Experience Work Group**

The African American Student Experience (AASE) Work Group was initiated by the Council in 2013 to address concerns that African American students were one of the most at-risk populations at UC Irvine. Demographically Black students represent less than 2% of the campus population and as a group they fell less “supported or safe.” Its mission is to promote initiatives that make UC Irvine a more welcoming environment for African American students, faculty and staff while educating and sensitizing the broader campus community about African American history and culture. As a work group of the Council, AASE serves as a conduit for Black student and faculty organizations, with the goal of facilitating the implementation and maintenance of projects at UCI that speak directly to the needs of that population. These projects aim to improve Black student and faculty recruitment and retention at UCI, and increase the presence of positive Black cultural/historical/educational activities to provide a more positive, inclusive and civil climate for the campus community.

**2014-2015 Activities:**

1. **P.R.I.D.E Mentorship Program** – P.R.I.D.E’s mission is to assist in the academic success of the African American students, with a special emphasis on freshmen in aiding their transition to the university and second year students who are in need of additional support. P.R.I.D.E. aims directly at improving success and retention of Black students. The program, still in early phases, worked with an estimated 25 African American students, both male and female, all of whom have benefitted from the program.

2. **Redefining the AASE Structure** – Nicole Mitchell, Professor of Music, was appointed chair of the committee in fall 2014. Recognizing the needs to achieve the delicate balance between administrative staff, faculty and active Black students, AASE recruited additional members from the African American Studies faculty, Black Student Union members, Black students at large, and members of the Black Faculty and Staff Association. Through these efforts full representation of BSU leaders and non-BSU affiliated African American students, Black staff and African American Studies affiliated faculty are participating and the structure of the meetings are open with drop in opportunities for students.

3. **Planning for Black History Month Events** – In 2013, we started programming for Black History Month, a nationally recognized celebration of the achievements, history and culture of African Americans, which had not been prominent at UC Irvine. Programming began that included:
a. Performance / Lecture featuring Distinguished Professor and institution builder Haki R. Madhubuti
b. A two-day Black Urban Music Conference including several musicians and scholars from Los Angeles, Chicago and New York.
c. Film screening and talk back by African filmmaker Reda Zine featuring legendary hip-hop artist Chuck D and football star Malik Farrakhan.
d. A poster that advertised these events and other related events on campus that tied together activities celebrating Black History Month.

All of the events and activities were well received and attendance ranged between 50 and 100 participants. All events were videotaped and recorded for future educational use through online activities. In speaking with students afterwards, we discovered that there was a general lack of knowledge about the programs taking place. All future Black History Month events must be finalized by December and an outside publicist hired to ensure promotion of the events throughout Southern California.

4. African American Film Project – Professor Mitchell secured African American filmmaker Carla Wilson, to create a documentary about African American experience on campus. The documentary will be completed in June and is scheduled to be presented at SPOP as an educational tool to incoming freshman students.

5. Analysis of undergraduate African American Academic Performance at UC Irvine – At the request of Professor Mitchell, Kelly Kadlec, a senior research analyst in the Department of Undergraduate Education presented an analysis of academic performance among African American students. The report clarifies that a higher proportion of UC Irvine’s African American students have parents that have gone to college and they come from mainly middle class backgrounds. Though Black students as a group earn slightly lower GPA’s and struggle through their first two years, by the third year they reach a success rate comparable to that of other students. This indicates the resilience of Black students to meet academic standards by their third year in parallel to all other students.

6. Task Force on Ensuring a Positive Climate for the Campus’ Black Community – In Winter 2015, BSU presented a list of demands to the chancellor. The Task Force was created to collaborate with Black students to address their concerns. It was noted that the AASE has a healthy overlap with the Chancellor’s Task Force (some members serve on both committees); this facilitates cooperative rather than duplicative efforts by the committees.

7. Site Visit to UCSD’s Black Resource Center – Several members along with Professor Mitchell visited the center and met with directors, staff and students. From the site visit, it reinforced the importance of including Black students in the process of developing the UCI Black Resource Center. Also evidenced was the fact that at least 35% of the students that benefit from the center’s programs are non-Black, which underlines the real benefit a Black Resource Center can have to improve campus climate and intercultural understanding.

8. Student Outreach Event – On May 5, members of the AASE work group planned a dinner for a select group of Black students. Students shared their experiences and brainstormed suggestions to improve the Black experience on campus. The students expressed enthusiasm about the event and joining the AASE. There were many positive
testimonials to the P.R.I.D.E Mentorship Program. It helps Black students to develop support networks and feel better as students at UCI. Students also shared a desire for more events similar to the dinner, so that they can come together as Black students in a casual and supportive atmosphere to network and make new friends.

The 2014-2015 academic year was a defining year for the AASE work group, as the hardest work of creating a balanced representation with committed members has been accomplished, as well as progress on the P.R.I.D.E Mentorship program, and the implementation of Black History Month as a happening on campus. AASE is serving to bridge the communication between the voiced needs of Black students and faculty, and will continue to facilitate improvement of the African American Student Experience on campus.

**Campus Public Relations Work Group**

The charge of the Campus Public Relations Work Group is to create awareness of, promote participation in and otherwise build appreciation for the work of the Advisory Council on Campus Climate, Culture & Inclusion. Working in collaboration with the Internal Communications professionals in the Office of Strategic Communications, the work group shepherded numerous publicity efforts during 2014-2015.

Over the course of the year, three feature stories were written and posted on the Council website. The stories were featured in the UCI Brief enewsletter for faculty and staff, and pitched to the New University campus newspaper for consideration. The Council website also added a section on “Featured Events,” highlighting the numerous campus activities that have a positive effect on campus climate.

For each of the seven events in the What Matters to Me & Why series, a campuswide message from the event series chairs, a poster layout, advertisement for the New University, a Web page with a speaker photo and brief biography and a registration page were prepared and implemented. A similarly broad publicity effort was conducted for the Anteater Equity Games and Black History Month activities.

For 2015-16, the Campus PR work group will continue to support the efforts of the other work groups, particularly in the expansion of the What Matters to Me & Why series, the development of the campus app, and the enhanced promotional campaign for Black History Month events and activities.

**Student Experience**

The ASUCI Campus Climate Series, Advocacy Through Dialogue, seminar was offered in Fall 2015. Vice Chair Daniel Wehrenfennig is the faculty advisor to this program and 31 students enrolled. The three-course series is designed to help students develop knowledge of campus climate, diversity and cultural awareness at UC Irvine and to engage in programs that impact
and promote a healthier campus climate. Students strategize to create inclusionary projects with the expectation of implementing the project(s) within their respective groups. Topics covered include cultural appropriation; gender and sexism; identity and intersectionalities; racism/oppression; supporting and by-standard intervention-sexual assault; power mapping/student rights; and how to make cultural shifts on campus. Students are required to illustrate knowledge of topics and reflect on personal growth through a final report. On June 2, Vice Chairs Judy Stepan-Norris and Daniel Wehrenfennig congratulated students and delivered 29 Certificates of Achievement to students.

Conclusion
The UCI Advisory Council on Campus Climate, Culture and Inclusion has continued to transform to better serve the needs of the campus and increased its pro-active programming. Significantly more student, faculty, staff and community members have been involved in the Council’s activities and the visibility of the important work through all of its workgroups has been greater than in years before. Continuing this trend, the existing workgroups are already planning important programs for the coming academic years and recruiting more members to be better informed and able to address issues around the vibrant campus climate at UCI.