

AIMA Council

November 2015 Board of Regents Update

Subcommittee: Strengthening Tribal Relations

Members: Florence Garcia, Royelle Bundy, Brad Hall, Carie Kelly, Andrea Opitz, Suzin Kratina

- Communicate and collaborate with GEAR UP, TRiO, ETS, Big Sky Pathways, NAS, and appropriate MUS programs regarding visits to Montana reservations and tribal colleges.
 - Develop and share a statewide academic calendar which notes the visits to reservations and tribal colleges by MUS faculty and staff. This could be sponsored by the OCHE AIMA Office and available to all MUS institutions.
 - Coordinate with OCHE and the MUS system to communicate MUS initiatives that may benefit students transferring to a Montana institution. Examples include: PLA, course sharing, RevUp, HealthCARE MONTANA, and EdREady.

- Honor government to government relations.
 - Develop and offer webinars to educate MUS faculty and staff about protocols and best practices for visits to tribal governments, reservations, and tribal colleges.
 - Inform tribal councils/governments of MUS visits to reservations and tribal colleges as early as possible. When planning visits, expect to meet with tribal councils/governments as a practice of courtesy and respect.

- Consider developing and implementing faculty exchange programs.
 - Survey MUS faculty and administrators to determine the feasibility of faculty exchange programs with the tribal colleges.
 - Discuss options with tribal colleges and develop MOUs to implement faculty exchange.
 - Offer incentives for MUS faculty who teach at tribal colleges.
 - Explore online programs that could be taught by MUS faculty at tribal colleges.

- Expand doctoral programs; provide offerings to increase the number of PhD faculty at tribal colleges.
 - Determine the cost and pathway for offering PhD programs to tribal college faculty. Are there resources to offer PhD programs to tribal college faculty?
 - Survey tribal colleges to determine the need for doctoral programs and the willingness of their faculty to take classes and pursue a PhD.
 - Survey MUS faculty to determine their willingness and availability to teach courses either online or face to face.

- Examine current data and initiate data that is relevant and useful.

- Convene a workgroup to examine data from the American Indian Data Center and discuss its relevance and usefulness.
- Prepare the information in an Executive Summary to AIMA.

Subcommittee: Creating Campus Community

Members: Matt Caires, Mandy Smokers, Bobbie Evans, Sweeney Windchief

- Improve campus community for American Indian students
 - Gather data on the current campus climate across MUS for American Indians.
- Create a campus climate survey that would assess promising practices, as well as current challenges, for American Indian students.
 - Liz Roosa Millar (UM) and Ariel Donohue (MSU) were the campus lead "investigators" who conducted climate surveys last year.
 - Our subcommittee agreed that we would use the existing surveys to assist with the creation of a new instrument that would be used specifically to assess campus climate for American Indians and attitudes towards these students.
 - UM
 - Climate study administered in spring of 2015, benchmarking instrument (Baseline)
 - Primary goal was to compare results to other campuses who use the same instrument
 - 6000 undergrad students – Received 15% response rate for Native Americans
 - Data Analyst has been hired
 - MSU
 - Climate study fall of 2014, survey tool developed on MSU campus
 - Perception of safety on campus and positive/negative conduct
 - 4000 undergrad students – 20.8% response rate
 - Four focus groups conducted after with different demographics?
 - Liz and Ariel plan to join an in-person AIMA meeting in spring of 2016
 - Prepare a 30 minute presentation with additional 30 minutes for questions and discussion.

Subcommittee: Culturally Responsive Staff

Members: Heidi Pasek, Chris Kearns, Greg Kegel, Christina Estrada

Vision: To create centralized access to resources and professional development to faculty and staff of the MUS by establishing the MUS Center for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning.

There are many excellent resources available in Montana; however, they are not centralized and accessible to all who might want or need to use them. The MUS Center for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning would become a central repository and a Montana resource center for information and professional development.

This is a long term goal that requires the following actions begin this AY (2015-2016):

- During AY 2015-2016, the AIMA Culturally Responsive Staff Subcommittee recommends AIMA convene a work group to:
 - Identify best practices in culturally responsive staff development. This work would provide a framework for the development of the Center for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning idea.
 - Classify existing resources. As we mentioned, there are many existing resources in Montana (e.g., OPI, U of M, MSU, Tribal Colleges, etc.). But, these resources may or may not be accessible.
 - Brainstorm ideas about how the system could make resources available and provide staff development support/referrals.
 - Ex: Virtual with trainers available to travel to various locations
 - Discuss financial resources available to support the vision of centralized resources.
 - AIMA Director could play an integral role
 - Recommend next steps on the creation of the Center.

Subcommittee: IEFA on a System Level

Members: Ted Van-Alst, Sweeney Windchief, Suzin Kratina

Expand upon the legal ambiguity that is related to IEFA Legislation and how it is being implemented in the MUS.

The following points have been a part of the ongoing conversation:

- Not limiting the study to classes are specifically related to Native American Studies, rather we are curious what is being done in each course/class
- We want to be careful not to tokenize the curriculum that has been a part of the MUS institutions by expanding institutional uptake of IEFA
- We also want to be careful not to overburden native students by placing these responsibilities on them, as often is the case for American Indian heritage day, university function that center indigenous identity, ontology, epistemology, and community.

We propose an institutional survey that looks long term and includes the following:

- Undergrad and Grad courses, student learning outcomes
- Replicability
- Mixed Method making room for both qualitative and quantitative assessment
- Done in a way that aligns with each College at MUS institutions

We have questions on three levels:

- What are the theoretical implications?
- What are the methodological implications?
- What are the pragmatic implications?

We want to support the AIMA by recognizing the strengths that come as a result of IEFA legislation:

- IEFA offers Montana as a State of Institutions with particular and historical distinction.
- IEFA is connected to a global context – Related to UNDRIP

Resultantly we want to develop a proposal for a statewide study based on:

- Research Grants – (two year/reoccurring model)
- The ability to create accountability by developing a comprehensive report for MUS on a long term (10 Year) cycle
- How have we have moved the dial

To reiterate, our goal would be to:

- Survey Institutions
- Survey Students (Student Voice Videos, Questions Based on 7EUs)