

Draft Preliminary Report-Campus Climate December 2012

The Campus Climate Working group (CCW) addressed Task Force questions seven and eight, pertaining respectively to the campus climate and conditions for faculty and staff and to engagement among faculty, staff, and members of the College Area community. (Please see the Appendix: Minutes, Agendas, and Handouts and the Appendix: Reports for documents produced by the CCW during the Strategic Planning process.)

As a result of its study, the CCW makes the following principal recommendation: *SDSU should periodically survey faculty, staff, and members of the College Area community on morale, engagement, and other issues related to campus climate and relations with the College Area community.* This recommendation is a general response to both Task Force questions seven and eight. All subsequent recommendations presuppose that this recommendation is implemented. SDSU does not have current empirical measures of the opinions of faculty, staff, and members of the College Area community. (See Appendix: Reference Materials for documents pertaining to empirical studies of campus climate.) Regular surveys would provide statistical information on challenges and opportunities as well as benchmarks to evaluate the effectiveness of new programs. The CCW urges that all surveys be developed with, and the results analyzed by, diversity experts and that all surveys explicitly mention diversity issues.

Second, based on the results of periodic surveys, the CCW recommends that *SDSU develop and implement a series of programs intended to foster improved engagement, emotional and physical health, and a sense of community among faculty, staff, and members of the College Area neighborhoods.* This recommendation is intended to apply to both Task Force questions seven and eight. A recurring theme in open forums was that people enjoy getting together with other people on campus especially when they mix with individuals they might not meet or spend time with during the course of their jobs. A variety of ideas surfaced that range from simple to complex. Some would first require the formation of a working group for planning and promotion. SDSU already offers a wealth of opportunities to improve the lives and, by extension, the morale of faculty and staff. The challenge is to increase awareness of and broaden participation in these opportunities. A committee charged to address this recommendation could then recruit subcommittees of individuals with shared interests to develop programs. (For examples, please see the Appendix: Reports: Examples of Potential Programs.) Again, the CCW recommends that SDSU develop programs only after surveys have established that the programs would meet actual needs of the faculty and staff.

Third, and in the service of the second recommendation, the CCW recommends that *SDSU revive and/or refine an electronic communication vehicle for faculty and staff that promotes university news, events, human interest stories and commercial opportunities.* Another recurring theme in the open forums was that SDSU lacks the 21st century equivalent of an employee newsletter, something that has been missing since SDSUniverse was folded into NewsCenter. Moreover, there is currently no central clearinghouse for information that would help individuals identify the many resources available in the College Area. A university-managed web presence would provide that clearinghouse. Content could be provided by campus and College Area community groups. A weekly (less often in the summer) electronic newsletter would provide a place to promote and celebrate the programs that might be

developed on the basis of these recommendations. It could be partially or fully self-supporting through ad sales and/or sponsorship.