

DAC Newsletter

Fall 2015

www.siena.edu/dac



DAC Fall 2015 Programming in Review

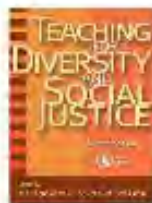
BEYOND BINARIES: IDENTITY AND SEXUALITY

On October 26, Robyn Ochs encouraged students to think about all of the ways humans are unique and how our individual identities affect our experiences. We also explored the concept of intersectionality of identities. When asked what they took away from the program students expressed learning about how there are in fact more than two genders, how complicated the definition and concept of sexuality is, and how you should view sexual orientation as a spectrum, not a binary. *"Just having people understand that there's more to sexuality and gender means that more people will be able to accept a number of people who may identify with those identities. It broke the stigmas related to bisexuality. While I understand these things, people who had no idea about these identities do too, now."* (Student participant)



Community Viewing *Dear White People*

On November 20, DAC organized a viewing of the documentary *Dear White People* with the support of SEB. This was a chance for the Siena Community to come together and discuss many important issues and spurred further action and discussion for our students. *"The viewing of Dear White People and the subsequent discussion went better than expected! The audience greatly enjoyed the movie and many themes brought up in the movie such as: homophobia, cultural appropriation, inter-racial dating, and racism were talked about during the discussion which was very easy to facilitate. From this a few students and I wrote an open letter to the Siena College administration, faculty, and students. I'm looking forward to the letters as well as other events like this one at Siena."* (Student organizer and participant)



Reading Group

Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice

This fall a group of faculty met regularly to discuss the book *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*. Faculty discussed strategies for creating more inclusive classrooms. *"I enjoyed having a space to discuss these ideas, share resources and gain a greater sense of community with my fellow faculty"* (Faculty participant)



Voices of Diversity at Siena

Meet our student representatives who champion diversity at Siena.



COSTIN THAMPIKUTTY

When I saw the opportunity to join DAC, I saw something about changing the campus climate and thought to myself, this might be something I'd be interested in. I also had a couple of friends who were involved in past years so I asked them what they thought about their experience. After that, it seemed like a good opportunity for me to learn about how faculty and administrators approach the topic of diversity and inclusion on campus. I wanted to see beyond my student experience, especially since I'm planning on working in higher education in the future in some capacity.

Through my experience, I'm hoping to further my understanding of how institutional change comes about. Also, I just want to see good things come out of our work. So far, we've helped with events, but the Spring semester is looking even more fruitful. Our fellows seem to have some engaging projects cooking up, so I'm really excited to see the direction that they will go in. If I could hope for anything next semester regarding DAC, I hope that more students know about it and will consider joining next year because it really does help understand your position as a student better.

KENNETH NEWMAN

At the end of last year the decision to not indict Darren Wilson, the cop that murdered Mike Brown, had occurred. This was extremely troubling and disheartening. I was angry, upset, distraught, fearful, but determined to do something productive that would ensure my voice and voices like mine would be heard. Fast forward to the end of the semester last year. I, along with Val Constant and the Damietta Cross Cultural Center, organized a speak out where students, specifically students of color, would be given the opportunity and space to tell faculty and administrators about some of their experiences on campus. I had also been present at the DAC conference where my friend James was a panelist. DAC seemed like an organization that was trying its best to effect widespread change across campus in new and innovative ways. The "normal" lines of communication had been proven to be ineffective and DAC was doing things differently. I knew I had to be a part of it. Through DAC I hope to create safe spaces for people of color (P.O.C.) to express themselves. These safe places include physical locations, events, and classes taught at Siena College. I believe DAC has been and will continue to be an amazing resource in achieving my goal.



JOLENE COBB

I joined DAC because I thought it would be a great experience to actively participate in events and discussions relating to Diversity at Siena College. As part of my decision to apply, I felt the need to address the questions not being asked and to be a "devil's advocate" for diversity-related subjects at hand. Everyone looks around campus and sees the lack of diversity and we all know that bringing people from different walks of life can be a challenge. Joining DAC fosters an environment where we can change that, where we can schedule events to unite earth other as a campus community and as humans, and where we can invite people to speak out about diversity issues on and off campus. I hope to be a voice for the people in my residential hall, my graduating class, and my college. I hope to encourage people, to get them excited to attend events that nurture the mind, where they can meet people unlike them, where everyone brings to the community a new perspective, and together we can grow as people. As a sophomore Physics major, I also feel inclined to encourage students not majoring in humanities to speak about diversity or the lack thereof.



Stay Tuned...

Upcoming events, programming and opportunities through DAC

Spring 2016 Programming

Go to <http://www.siena.edu/dac> and the DAC Facebook page for more details

Jan 22	Project Inclusion: Engaging Leaders on Diversity <i>Cosponsor with ACE</i>	
Jan 29	Diversity Summit (Cosponsor with DCCC)	
Feb 5	DAC Reading Group*	
March 4	DAC Reading Group*	
March 9	Pride Center - Trans 101 <i>Cosponsor with ACE & SWRK</i>	SSU 243
March 30	MLK Lecture Series	
March 31	Screening of "Tested"	The Norm
April 1	DAC Reading Group*	Rossetti 225
April 4	Hip Hop Week Kickoff	Sarazen Student Union
April 5	DAC Open Forum	The Norm

*Three discussions on articles related to issues of social justice and education, broadly conceived. Watch for Jesse Moya's digest posts for links to articles.

SUMMER 2016 DAC FELLOWSHIP FOR CURRICULUM DIVERSIFICATION / DIVERSITY RESEARCH
Deadline - January 31, 2016
Decisions Announced - March 18, 2016

Tested, directed by Curtis Chin, director present for Q&A. The film looks at the lack of racial diversity at the top public high schools in New York City.

Diversity Challenge: Create an Inclusive Classroom!

Sample Personal Information Response Activity. Developed by Dr. Susan Harper; provided by DAC Fellow Luke Lavera

I like to get to know all of my students as well as possible. Please take a few moments to fill out the following Personal Information Response form. You may answer in as much or as little detail as you would like. You may also feel free to skip any question you do not wish to answer. (I do ask that you let me know your preferred name so I can address you properly!) All information on this form is between you and me only – no other students, instructors, or administrators will read what you write here. Thank you!

- The name the college knows me by is:
- The name I prefer to be called is:
- The gender pronouns I prefer are:
- I am taking this course because:
- I have taken these other [social science, humanities, etc.] courses:
- One thing that it is important to know about me is:
- I am experiencing these challenges/circumstances I think you should know about:
- Other things I would like you to know about me:

Interested in learning more?

Contact one of our co-chairs

Keith Wilhite (kwilhite@siena.edu) Marcela Garces (mgarces@siena.edu)

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