Committee on Student Life (CSL)
Friday, April 8, 2011
Room 12-196 12pm – 2pm
Minutes taken by Lisa Stagnone
FINAL

Present: Alex Slocom, Oz Agar, Enectali Figueroa, Barbara Baker, Cody Coleman, Danielle Guichard-Ashbrook, Chris Colombo, Vivek Sahkrani,

Guests: Antonio Perry, Office of Minority Education, Program Coordinator of Academic & Professional Development Programs, Yangbo Du

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TOPIC: Men's topics and Men of color topics; Walker

Men’s topics and Men of color topics
Cultural Awareness; Self Identity; Improving Confidences/Self Efficacy.

The Mentor Advocate Partnership (MAP) is a volunteer mentoring program for MIT students that seek to foster their holistic development along both academic and non-academic dimensions. The OME (Office of Minority Education) created MAP because building strong relationships throughout the college experience plays an integral role in academic success and personal satisfaction at MIT. At the core of MAP is a sincere, trusting partnership between a student and staff/faculty that has the potential to persist throughout the undergraduate years.

Designed to complement the current advisor system, MAP mentors help students build relationships with staff/faculty, monitor their academic performance and personal well-being, offer encouragement, and provide a proactive support network. See http://web.mit.edu/ome/programs-services/partnership.html. Mentor application visit http://scripts.mit.edu/~ome/map-mentor.php

The OME supports students from underrepresented or underserved groups, including African American, Native American, and Latino students. However, all students are welcome. OME is for anyone who feels they don’t fit in anywhere; it’s as if “minority” applies at MIT to “culture” as much if not more than “race” particularly as we become more mixed.

Most men of color have reflected interest in the follow categories;
- Academic Interests (87% stated most important)
- Race (gender cultural)
- Ethnicity
- Cultural Characteristics
- Hobbies
- Gender

Connecting, having a model in fields of interests would be helpful for all. Thinking about graduate education, now, in even the freshman year is important. Be aware, get acclimated and connected within MIT.
Collecting data regarding loneliness and coping within MIT has been monitored. The 1st year through mid December has shown the report to reflect that males cope better than females. We have 46 mentors; 60 students; 87 URM (Under Represented Minorities).

People need something or someone to relate to; an image of achievement. We need to be able to have them think about things they haven’t thought they could achieve. They need to know that there are options out there for them that they’ve never dreamed of because they haven’t yet seen it. Mentoring can show that you have options. Mentoring can make you more connected. This leads to self-confidence and better work performance which with guidance can open opportunities. Once you’ve been mentored, there’s a better chance that you give that opportunity to someone else and become a mentor.

**Action Item:** Chris Colombo – list mentoring programs all across MIT (many academic departments have mentoring programs, and DUE & DSL should have a one-stop shopping site where anyone at MIT can go and see what’s available.

Functional vs. Relational Mentoring
MIT seems to lead towards functional mentoring. You are being matched up specifically, faculty and student, via a topic in common. Relational occurs under different circumstances but more towards a social aspect (at a dinner event, social event).

People are different and expect different mentoring approaches. We try to assist with a holistic approach. Some students or faculty may want just an academic approach. You as the student need to decide which support you need.

Barbara Baker spoke of her experience working with juniors. Community Catalyst program brings 50 students mentoring coaches together in October to develop programs together through the year. They meet during seminars; focus on leadership for both men and women with alumni. Once they become alumni, they feed back into the program and mentor.

Cody Coleman spoke of an experience with a professor/mentor. He likened it to a blind date for students. The professor matched a freshman, a sophomore and a senior together over dinner with him. The professor would start the conversation with a question and get all three engaged which turned out to be an educational experience for all. They shared experiences, offered guidance and were able to learn in a way that otherwise they wouldn’t have been provided to them via the classroom.

**Action Item:** Antonio to recruit Alex Slocum (as of these minutes, Alex has completed the mentor application on-line) and Tali Figueroa Feliciano as mentors

Brainstorming Ideas:
- offer mentoring out to Alumni
- speed lunches peering students together
- match.com sort of system
- can I bring a mentor to dinner or lunch with me if I’m in the dining plan
- can I get a card (from Tech Cash) that contains money on it for mentoring/meeting with students

Walker:
Arts building would benefit from a collection of cultures (LBGT, BSU) with their lounges right there in Walker as serendipity is a most powerful catalyst. Minority (race and culture) cultured lounges around the nexus adds diversity. Promote difference thinking.

If the building re-use already decided by the administration, and it does not include the lounges of many of the student groups who feel they were promised space by the original charter, there will be many extremely hurt people.

A strategy: It’s a classical building, and this problem was faced by the Louvre: so let’s consider a similar approach—perhaps a glass pyramid on the roof of Walker that can house the lounges that are to be displaced? Let’s turn loose the MIT Architecture department (give them graduate fellowships as design prizes).