

**Meeting Notes --- Civic Action Plan Open Forum  
Buffalo State College  
Thursday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016**

Attendees: (**Please Note:** Due to the large group of attendees and quick introductions I was not able to account for all persons that were in attendance. Below are names of the attendees I were able to document. Thank you!)

Laura Hill Rao, Volunteer & Service-Learning Coordinator  
Alex Means, Social & Psychological Foundations  
Andrew D. Nicholls, History and Social Studies Education  
Andrea Nikischer, Adult Education  
Cynthia Conides, Buffalo State College  
Stephanie Zuckerman-Aviles, Career Development Center  
Charles Keyon, Dean of Students  
Kimberly Kline, Higher Education Administration  
Joy Guarino, Associate Professor, Theater  
Paula Madrigal, Weigel Health Program  
Lisa T. Morrison-Fronckowiak, Disability Services  
Gary Welborn, Associate Professor, Sociology, and Faculty Coordinator for Service-Learning  
Darryl Carter, STEP Program  
Pilar Nelson, (Graduate Intern), President Office  
Chris Root, Monroe-Fordham

12:19pm – Welcome by Laura Hill Rao and Alex Means

**Laura Hill Rao** provided a brief overview of the Civic Action Plan Committee. She then conveyed that the purpose of this meeting is to receive feedback of the draft of the Civic Action Plan. The floor was opened up for persons to provide feedback as each section of the plan was reviewed.

**Charles Kenyon** complimented the committee on a wonderful draft of the Civic Action Plan.

**Andrew Nicholls** mentioned that *the Monroe Fordham Regional History Center* was not mentioned as an asset and explained the extensive commitment and collaboration at the Center. He encouraged the committee to include the Center in it's list of campus civic and community engagement assets.

**Alex Means** mentioned that there were challenges in acquiring existing information, which is a challenge of the existing structure and communication methods.

**Andrew Nicholls** recommended that the committee utilize department and annual reports to identify community partners that focuses on community engagement.

**Joy Guarino** mentioned that time constraints forced them to only review certain documentation that led to the overlooking of certain departments and community partners involved in civic engagement.

**Andrew Nicholls** suggested that the President's Office start doing a better job reading and reviewing all the appropriate reports in regards to community engagement and learning -- to avoid anyone else from being overlooked.

**Stephanie Zuckerman-Aviles** suggested that a centralized place for information related to civic engagement be created to further convey efforts, this can likely be through existing online data collection tools such as Banner. **Joy Guarino** agreed with Stephanie and suggested that key words associated with civic engagement be implemented in the existing data collection systems, considering that there are numerous words that are related to the topic of civic engagement. **Lisa Morrison-Fronckowiak** later re-emphasized the above statement made by Joy.

**Laura Hill Rao** moved to the next set of items on the plan, which was *Outcomes and Priority Areas* starting with *Priority #1: Develop a Shared Language and Culture*. She asked the audience's opinion on if they thought the timeline is realistic considering the budget cuts.

**Cynthia Conides** responded that she believed the plan recommendations were realistic. However, she would like to see a list of offices, divisions, departments, partners, etc. who are involved in some form with civic engagement – because many including herself are not aware of what other offices, partners, etc. are doing in regards to civic engagement.

**Stephanie Zuckerman-Aviles** responded that de-centralization was the reason for why most offices, partners, departments, etc. involved in civic engagement is not aware of each other.

**Charles Kenyon** suggested that an appendix be attached to the final version of the Civic Action Plan of all departments, offices, partners, etc. involved in civic engagement.

We moved on to *Priority #2: Broaden Community Input and Deepen Community Impact* and *Priority Area #3: Enhance Faculty, Staff, and Student Voice and Support*.

**Andrew Nicholls** mentioned the need to focus external funding efforts to support community and civic engagement. This is an investment in our reputation and community profile.

There was some conversation about how external funding requests are prioritized and the need to work with administration to encourage these efforts be prioritized.

**Stephanie Zuckerman-Aviles** made a **recommendation** that under the section, *Student Voices* that paid community internships should be added not just scholarships. **Joy Guarino** agreed, then stated that she would like to add paid research assistantships for undergraduate students.

We moved on to *Priority #4: Coordination of Civic and Community Engagement*.

**Andrea Nikischer** mentioned that when it comes to implementing a civic engagement office, that it could be housed either in the President's Office or combined with another office due to budget cuts and hiring freeze. She recommended that graduate assistants could help with initiatives and tasks that arises from the implementation of the civic engagement office.

**Kimberly Kline** recommended to bring general education involved in the discussion of civic engagement, and to meet with other relevant committees on campus.

**Joy Guarino** and **Stephanie Zuckerman-Aviles** also recommended that people from different committees be consulted about what is happening with civic engagement.

**Andrea Nikischer** suggested that a strategy for integrating community engagement be developed for online learning students (residing outside of Western New York). As online learning advances, there should be some opportunity for online students to participate in civic engagement to some extent that is practical. Many of Buffalo State's online students do not know too much about the college which means they are more likely not to donate or participate in events, activities, etc. as alumni.

We moved on to *Accountability and Communication* the last section of the draft. There was no feedback provided for this session. The floor was opened up for final comments.

The community member that was in attendance introduced herself and thanked everyone for their feedback and hard work.

It was mentioned that we continue to promote civic engagement at Buffalo State College -- not only to college students but to students K-12 in the area.

**Andrew Nicholls** mentioned that Buffalo State cannot forget about their past (Buffalo State's past is connected to the present, and future).

Finally, it was shared, "if you want to succeed at Buffalo State (at any level) you have to be committed to being engaged". -- Many of the attendees agreed with the statement.

### **Follow-up**

- The committee will create a second draft of the plan that will be shared with the campus community early in the spring semester for review and comment.
- Final version of the Civic Action Plan is scheduled to be submitted to the President by March 1st, then sent to Campus Compact by Dr. Conway-Turner.