

School of Arts and Sciences Diversity Initiatives – 2007-2008

Freshman Common Reading Program - All freshmen students enrolled in the English Composition Course receive a common reading text in the summer, explore the text throughout the fall semester in W131, English Composition, and meet the author. For the past two years, we have chosen texts grounded in current diversity issues. In 2006, the students read, *Enrique's Journey* by Sonia Nazario. It is the story of a young man who illegally immigrates to the United States to find his mother. This past year, students read, *Journey from the Land of No* by Roya Hakakian. The author recollects growing up in Iran and living under the repression of the shah. In 2008 the students will read, *Someday We'll All Be* by Kevin Powell. A provocative African American writer, Kevin talks about the uncomfortable truths about America. The goals of the common reading program are:

- Emphasize reading as an intellectual skill central to student achievement in college
- Engage students in current global and diversity issues
- Enhance community by providing a common academic experience for all first-year students
- Enhance the transition from high school to college by strengthening the academic atmosphere of the institution from orientation forward.

Enhancing Minority Attainment Conference – The School of Arts and Sciences convenes a university-wide conference each year, it is chaired by the Dean of Arts and Sciences. In 2000, IU began a multi-campus exploration of infusing diversity and equity into the curriculum and enhancing the underrepresented populations of students, faculty, and staff. Since then each year, via a two-day EMA Conference, faculty and staff have worked to develop and test a range of strategies to enhance teaching and learning and to transform the existing curriculum. The 2006-2007 EMA Conference held on November 9th at IU Kokomo was designed as an opportunity to reflect on five years of diversity work. Campuses were asked to engage in a diversity portfolio review as a vehicle to:

- Develop a paradigm for assessing equity and diversity at Indiana University
- Identify campus and university diversity issues; and
- Initiate campus and university diversity plans

The 2007-2008 EMA Conference held in November on the Kokomo campus was designed to help campuses design their diversity plans.

Faculty Annual Service Reports

Each year faculty members are asked to report their diversity curriculum efforts in their annual reports. Based on the analysis of the reports, faculty development activities are designed and implemented. Last year, 30 of the 48 faculty members or 62% infused diversity/equity into their courses. These activities included: new texts, assignments, and class projects that promoted diverse perspectives.

International Travel Courses and Service Learning Experiences

In the summer of 2007, the Humanities Department offered two courses in Italy. Twenty students enrolled in the course. In the summer of 2008, ten students spent three weeks in England completing a summer Humanities course entitled, Innovation. During spring break, 2008, a group of students traveled to Guatemala for a Humanitarian Service Learning Project with an IUK Spanish professor. Many of these students were supported with travel scholarships from the campus. Currently, a group of students who studied Asian Culture in Hawaii, summer 2007, are creating a Peace Garden at a local park, dedicated to World War II veterans.

London Shakespeare Company – The London Shakespeare Company spent a week in residence at IU Kokomo (February 2007) interacting with students and faculty about a variety of diverse issues found in Shakespeare's plays. This initiative was funded by an IU Frontiers Grant.