

Talking Points

Newsletter from the Office for Multicultural Affairs

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COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AT CALVIN COLLEGE

The following statement was drafted by the Multicultural Affairs Committee last semester and has been endorsed by President Byker.

As a Christian institution in the Reformed tradition, Calvin College values and promotes diversity. Scripture calls us to love others as we love ourselves; to exhibit and extend hospitality; and to pursue reconciliation with one another. Love, hospitality, and reconciliation are to be exhibited in all aspects of life; furthermore, they are markers of shalom. Understanding that there is “oneness” and “manyess” in God’s world, or unity and diversity, we affirm our common commitment to the identity and mission of the College, and our commitment to diversity as a grateful and faithful response to a biblical mandate. Calvin College is committed to diversifying its community by recruiting women and men from a variety of cultural, ethnic, ability, and socioeconomic backgrounds as administrators, faculty, staff, and students. We are committed to creating a convivial learning environment and maintaining policies and practices that reflect our commitment to diversity and the pursuit of shalom, for we are called to perform all our tasks as a caring and diverse educational community.

Also, check out Calvin College’s new diversity Web page at <http://www.calvin.edu/admin/provost/diversity/>. Along with the above statement you will find data on the college population’s racial breakdown, reasons why diversity concerns all of us, and ways to get involved.

MULTICULTURAL CLIMATE SURVEY

This April, the Multicultural Affairs Committee is asking for help from all Calvin students, faculty, and staff by participating in a Multicultural Climate Survey. Recent studies have shown that it is important to make clear the need for greater transparency regarding racial realities in learning environments at predominately white institutions. This campus-wide survey aims to uncover the multidimensionality of the college by addressing the structural diversity, psychological climate, and behavioral climate at Calvin. Please be on the lookout for more information on survey dates and rewards for participating.

Challenging you to keep talking!

FEN AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

The From Every Nation Award for Teaching Excellence is an annual award recognizing innovative and effective efforts by members of the teaching faculty at Calvin College to promote a multicultural, anti-racist curriculum. The award is designed to reward the development and/or utilization of creative, original, effective teaching and/or teaching materials reflecting one or more of the three themes of the FEN initiative at Calvin College:

Multicultural Citizenship, Anti-Racism & Accountability, Reconciliation & Restoration

AND THE NOMINEES ARE...

Henk Aay - Geology, Geography, and Environmental Studies

"Henk has more care and concern for his students than many other professors, he wants to see his students doing well and learning."

"He brings an interesting perspective to class and is full of energy."

David Baker - Geology, Geography, and Environmental Studies

"I had him for Geography 110 and learned more about the world and culture in that class than any other class I have ever taken."

"Understanding different cultures is one step in destroying a racist attitude and that is why Professor Baker had his students not only learn about the world's physical geography, but also it's cultural geography."

Glenn Fetzer - French

"With the DCM course he is able to reach a broad audience of mostly first-year students that he typically wouldn't see in upper-level French courses."

"Glenn has also been a strong supporter of revisions to the French curriculum to give more space to the study of Francophone Africa."

Linda Naranjo-Huebl - English

"What I greatly appreciate is that the literature she includes on her syllabi challenges us as students to engage in a dialogue with other cultures, the issues they face as minorities in America, and how they've been received as a sub-culture in America."

"She also delved into the murky waters of racism, discrimination, and prejudice with skill and care, bringing our attention to the deep problems many Asian Americans faced because of their ethnic, racial, and cultural differences."

NOTEWORTHY

The Multicultural Affairs Committee would also like to acknowledge the efforts of other individuals and departments on campus who exemplify the three themes of FEN.

Bill Corner, Campus Safety

In light of the approval of the Use of Force Policy on campus, Bill required his armed officers not only undergo safety training for weapon use, but also anti-racism training. As a first step, the group attended a plenary session facilitated by CORR (Congregations Organizing for Racial Reconciliation).

The Chemistry Department

Often the science division can find it difficult to incorporate FEN themes into their curriculum and programming. MAC would like to commend the Chemistry department for its three-week presentation of the Percy Julian Story in Spring 2008. The film, "Forgotten Genius: The Percy Julian Story," is a fascinating and largely unknown story of scientific triumph and racial inequality. It covers the extraordinary life journey of Percy Julian, an African American, and one of the great chemists of the 20th century.



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

CONFERENCE ON DIVERSITY IN PEDAGOGY

The West Michigan College and University Presidents' Compact Committee (WMPCC) invites 250-word proposals for papers, panels, and workshops that either address issues surrounding the inclusion of diversity topics across the curriculum or present scholarship on diversity related subjects (race, ethnicity, gender, class, age, ability) for a two-day conference at Calvin College and Davenport University, September 24-25, 2009. Keynote speaker TBD.

The committee is particularly interested in scholarship that either describes techniques and tools to equip and empower faculty to include diversity into their curriculum or showcases the diversity-related research of our regional colleagues.

Paper presentations should be planned for twenty minutes, and panel presentations should be planned for one hour and twenty minutes. All proposals should include AV requests. The committee plans to publish the proceedings in an edited volume.

Proposals are due by May 15, 2009.

Please send all proposals by mail to **both**:

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WEST MICHIGAN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS' COMPACT

The West Michigan college and university presidents together commit to promoting full respect and support for every individual, regardless of race or ethnicity, since only a full embrace of the many cultures and backgrounds among us will ensure a united community moving forward together. This requires that we combat interpersonal, systemic, and cultural racism whenever and wherever they appear in our institutions of higher education and in our community. We accept this as our responsibility, and we will encourage efforts to address the issues of racism, diversity, sensitivity, and understanding in curricular and co-curricular ways for all students, faculty, and staff. We commit to education and ongoing training that will enable our leadership, faculty, and staff to better identify and address these issues in our institutions and build multicultural academic communities. And we pledge that our institutions will work together to:

- Share efforts and resources,
- Support the activities of other institutions,
- Engage in appropriate reciprocal partnerships with the broader community,
- Hold one another accountable to these goals, and
- Cooperate in concrete ways to promote anti-racist and multicultural efforts.

Our goal in this is to ensure that our institutions of higher education actively contribute to the efforts in West Michigan to affirm, respect, and embrace people of all ethnic and racial backgrounds.

For more information about the committee please see <http://www.westmichiganpcc.org>.

FROM EVERY NATION SYMPOSIUM ON RACE

THE MOST SEGREGATED HOUR IN AMERICA



DR. VICTOR HINOJOSA
MARCH 11
COMMONS LH
7:00 PM

Dr. Victor Hinojosa describes the racial divide in the United States and the American church and explores why the church is even more segregated than other American institutions. Blending insights from academic literature with humor and pastoral anecdotes, Hinojosa suggests that there are resources in the church for overcoming even the divide of race.

Dr. Victor J. Hinojosa is assistant professor of Political Science in the Honors Program at Baylor University. He earned a B.A. in economics with a minor in philosophy from Baylor University and an M.A. and Ph.D. in political science from the University of Notre Dame (2003). Dr. Hinojosa's primary research and teaching is in Latin American Politics and U.S.-Latin American relations. He also has research interests in religion and politics, both empirically (how religion shapes political attitudes) and normatively (how Christians should think about international relations). His book Domestic Politics and International Narcotics Control, was published by Routledge in 2007, and his articles have appeared in Political Science Quarterly, the Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, Terrorism and Political Violence, and the Mennonite Quarterly Review.

NATIVE FRUITION: INEQUALITY AND AMERICAN INDIAN PERSERVERANCE



KIMBERLY HUYSER
MARCH 12
COMMONS LH
7:00 PM

Kimberly grew up in Window Rock, Arizona, which is the political capital of the Navajo Nation and attended Window Rock public high school. Growing up on the reservation, Kimberly witnessed firsthand the economic disadvantage faced by her family, but also the systematic inequality faced by the Navajo people. Through witnessing the struggles of her peers and relatives, she learned to see the structural inequality that confronts American Indian people and to appreciate the protective role of Native American families and communities. Kimberly's research focuses on understanding how American Indian communities and families provide resources to overcome and resist social problems and how these resources may contribute to the persistent and cohesive American Indian ethnic group and ethnic identity.

Kimberly R. Huyser is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Sociology and graduate student trainee at the Population Research Center at the University of Texas, Austin. She received a B.A. in Sociology from Calvin College in 2003. Kimberly's research specializations are in racial and ethnic relations and the sociology and demography of Native Americans. Kimberly is an American Sociological Association Minority Fellow, which is funded by a training grant sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health. Kimberly has also been a National Science Foundation Graduate Diversity Fellow, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Pre-doctoral Trainee, Navajo Nation Chief Manuelito Scholar, and Calvin College Graduate Study Fellow.