Industrial Advisory Board (IAB) Meeting Minutes

Friday, October 26, 2018
Lory Student Center Grey Rock Room


ECE department: Ryan Kim, Andrea Leland, Tony Maciejewski, Carmen Menoni, Mahdi Nikdast, Olivera Notaros, Sudeep Pasricha, HJ Siegel, Katya Stewart-Sweeney, Alauna Sutton, Karen Ungerer, Luiqing Yang, and a small group of ECE students.

Guest: Susan Benzel, Scott Scholars Program Manager.

Meeting Recap:

1. Introduction and Welcome IAB Guests (Jeannine Looney, IAB president)
2. Agenda and Department Update (ECE Department Head Tony Maciejewski)
3. Faculty Spotlight (Liuqing Yang, ECE Professor)
4. Cultivating Diversity and Inclusion in ECE at National Level (Agnieszka Miguel, ECE Department Chair, Seattle University)
5. Breakout (Agnieszka Miguel): Partnering with Industry to Shift the Culture Around Diversity and Inclusion in ECE

Key Points and Suggestions Discussed During Breakout Session:
- You’ll say it’s obvious, but the first step is awareness. Having trainings and tools to recognize and deal with it.
- Executive sponsors that live it and don’t just check the box. Address issues real-time as much as possible.
- Can we distribute the “Unconscious Bias Survey” from Harvard? This would be interesting for board.
- Best Practices – 1) Role models are huge; 2) mentorship; 3) community. Fort Collins isn’t diverse, so you see it locally in the university and workplace.
- ECE – Experiential training to emulate real diversity to feel it.
- Active recruitment of diverse populations
- Connect students to resources on campus and mentors
- Where do you insert that into the curriculum, said Tony. You divide the room up into A, B, C, D. Shift people into groups. It’s not that you can treat everybody the same but equitably and fairly. You get to know people as people.
Written Feedback from Sticky Notes Exercise:

a. **Best practices to change the culture around diversity and inclusion from your experience**
   - Training for awareness, make a multiyear plan/program, executive sponsors, corporate and regional committees
   - Case studies, actual experiences from your company, “microinequities” training, strong executive sponsors
   - Loads of cultural training was done to help with understanding people
   - Show examples of how a diverse department can be more successful
   - Encourage underrepresented and minority students
   - More diverse faculty members, promote diversity in undergrad courses through different activities

b. **What initiatives can the ECE department implement to create a more inclusive environment where all people feel welcomed and valued?**
   - Change usually comes from above so management/leaders need to have buy-in and drive this
   - Watch what the military does, it has often been the leader in blending differences. Learn and adapt from their experiences.
   - Lower the intimidation factor of how difficult it is to get a degree
   - Make a plan
   - URM resource groups, encourage diverse membership
   - Run realistic classroom scenarios for faculty and see how they respond and then have discussion group to review
   - Providing opportunities to engage in different groups to feel good/bad fits
   - Class on how to best work in diverse teams, communication styles, supporting preferred communication styles, better understanding norms of other cultures
   - ECE for women type actions, ECE t-shirts for spreading the word, empowers current ECE students to be diversity ambassadors
   - Recruit more out of state, connect students with CSU support groups
   - Double down on outreach and test all marketing messages
   - Diverse role model mentorship, diversity faculty
   - Support groups that include faculty
   - Rotate desks like in elementary school, define “teams” and change them 3x/quarter
   - Mixers, like we used to have
   - Support groups based on common interests to allow all students to feel comfortable enjoying the company of a diverse group
   - Mixers for URM students
   - Make diversity part of all classes, support at university for this, train professors/leaders
   - Events to show value of diversity, diverse teams perform better, why they do better, what causes you NOT to do better
   - Awareness campaigns, sponsor joint activities between different resource groups
   - Cultural and diversity awareness training
   - Training, empathetic communications
   - How to operate and get the best of diverse environments (styles), fairness, equality, right thing to do, better performance, better results, higher
   - Ask people how to get most value from diverse teams, make it a problem for teams to solve
   - Red program, two weeks on diversity and getting most of diverse teams, skill sets

c. **Best practices to change the culture around diversity and inclusion from your experience**
• Resource groups organized around URM categories
• Enthusiasm from leaders for my (women’s) ideas
• Share personal stories of those that have been discriminated against
• Celebrate diversity, if you observe an intentional/unintentional bias say something, pause before judging
• Panels of leaders from URMs sharing experiences
• Leadership sponsors and memberships in URM Resonvee groups that aren’t part of their “default” category
• Women in Leadership Mentoring Group
• Don’t hire unqualified people, no matter what the quotas say
• Becoming more difficult as nation continues on trend of division
• Networking groups for all URM group
• Build diverse teams because it’s the right thing to do! vs defined policy
• Promote diverse role models, create mentor and support communities
• Promote awareness especially with unconscious bias, eg examples and solutions in real life
• Having a clear message that “This is NOT ok’ when someone says an insensitive comment
• Mentorship programs for all groups (URM)
• Take an unconscious bias test
• Encourage discussions about diversity between students
• Cross-cultural sharing sessions, lunch and learn, informal gatherings
• Less focus on fair/equal, more focus on value of diverse teams, how to get the most from university
• Leaders create a “safe” environment to discuss diversity issues
• Help all to realize that living in abundance and inclusion is proven to create better results

6. Lunch and Student Presentations

7. Closing Remarks (Tony Maciejewski)

8. Tour of Woodward and Optional Social

ACTION ITEMS:
• Distribute the “Unconscious Bias Survey” from Harvard
• Offer diversity training for ECE faculty, staff, and students – leverage campus resources
• Follow-up with Prof. Miguel re: results of dot survey
• See written sticky note suggestions above to identify any additional next steps

The Spring IAB meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 19, 2019.