**BU Women’s Colloquium Meeting**

**April 11, 2019**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Carrie Arroyo, Stephanie Boddie, Andrea Turpin, Elesha Coffman (and guests), Janet Bagby, Tiffany Hogue, Tonya Davis, Brooke Blevins, Lisa Shaver, Kara Alexander, Ivy Hamerly, Jung Hyun Min, Tracey Jones, Laine Scales

**Announcements:**

* Women’s and Gender Study Announcements (Lisa Shaver):
  + September 12, 2019: Boundary Breaking Women Panel
  + Women’s Faculty Writing Program (For Associate Professors): Below is a link to a Doodle Poll that lists potential writing session times for the fall term. The optimal number is 12-15 participants a session. By Friday, May 10, please sign up for all sessions that fit within your fall schedule. We will fill sessions on first-come basis. We will be back in touch with your assigned session later in May. If you have questions, feel free to contact Lisa Shaver ([lisa\_shaver@baylor.edu](mailto:lisa_shaver@baylor.edu))  <https://doodle.com/poll/9h9uzw499rpe9m8y>
* Request for Mentors for WITA (Laine Scales):
  + Please see attached flyer. If you are interested in signing up please let Beth Allison Barr ([beth\_barr@baylro.edu](mailto:beth_barr@baylro.edu)) know.
* Update on Childcare initiative (Brooke Blevins & Sarah Walden)
  + Sarah Walden and Brooke Blevins, along with Joe Oliver from student success, had the opportunity to share our concerns about childcare issues for faculty, students, and staff at the Faculty Senate meeting on March 19. We asked for the senate to support the formation of a campus wide task force to investigate childcare needs and solutions. The senate unanimously approved this request and have crafted a letter of support.
  + Since that time, we have also had the opportunity to share this presentation with Staff Council and the President’s Diversity Council. Both groups agreed unanimously to support this request and have crafted a letter of support.
  + Members of the Women’s colloquium have also put together a letter in support of this effort.
  + We will put all four letters together along with a cover letter and submit to the President’s office by May 3. A copy of the women’s colloquium letter is attached in this email.
  + If you are interested in serving on this task force once it is formed, please let us know ([sarah\_walden@baylor.edu](mailto:sarah_walden@baylor.edu))

**Addressing Controversial or Difficult Topics in the Classroom:**

Three colleagues shared about their ideas in addressing difficult or controversial topics in the classroom. The notes below only touch on the ideas these women shared, please contact them for additional information.

**Sarah Walden, BIC & Honors College**

* We have to change the culture of the classroom away from one that is hostile towards these types of conversations
  + This means discussing perceptions of authority and who has a voice in the conversation
* Give voice to marginalized groups
  + Syllabi: Be purposeful about including voices, perspectives, and readings from marginalized persons. Sarah tries to select three identity groups for each topic she discusses to provide a diversity of perspectives.
  + Recommended Reading: Provide an additional recommended reading list on canvas that includes traditionally marginalized voices
  + Reference scholars from marginalized groups—via PPTs, course handouts, etc.
* Explore and call out gendered behaviors in the classroom
  + You must build rapport with the students to be able to do this. Sarah urged us to think about invitational rhetoric in which one is concerned with safety, value, and freedom.
  + Behaviors might include speaking, raising one’s hand, confronting bias, etc.
  + Encourage students to perspective take and develop an empathetic space in the classroom

**Tiffany Hogue, Educational Leadership**

* Start with inclusive language in your syllabus.
* Next, focus on empathy and empathic listening in particular.  This [Brene Brown video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw) is a great way to illustrate the difference between sympathy and empathy.  I’m also enclosing some guidelines for empathic listening in class.
* To practice empathic listening, I ask my students to share their views on six controversial issues (abortion, prayer in public schools, gun control, sex education in school, etc.).  Then I match them with someone who has drastically different views and I give them time in class to talk and listen to one another.
* Next, we go through another version of this exercise where a student has to lead the class discussion on a hard issue.
* On privilege and race, I use Peggy McIntosh’s “[Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](https://nationalseedproject.org/Key-SEED-Texts/white-privilege-unpacking-the-invisible-knapsack).”  Taking the quiz has been a powerful launching pad for conversation.
* Avoid having one student be the voice for all members of their identity group.
* Acknowledge students fears and concerns in discussing controversial or difficult topics.

**Janet Bagby, Educational Psychology**

* You must create a safe environment for this conversation to occur
* Work to build a sense of community that the whole class is on a learning journey together.
* As faculty, we have to be open about our own humanity and questions about these issues
* Allow the research to speak for itself and don’t focus on changing students minds—instead let the literature and discussion help to open up their worldviews and perspectives