

Social Justice Coordinating Committee  
End Year Report  
2010-2011

May 16, 2011

To: Brother Ronald Gallagher  
President  
Saint Mary's College of California

Bethami Dobkin, Ph.D.  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Saint Mary's College of California

Frances Sweeney, Ph.D.  
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs  
Saint Mary's College of California

Academic Senate  
Saint Mary's College of California

From: Marshall Welch, Ph.D.  
Chair – Social Justice Coordinating Committee (SJCC)  
Saint Mary's College of California

RE: Year-end Report from SJCC for 2010-2011 Academic Year

Membership of the SJCC:

Staci Hamaguchi	Athletics & Recreation Sports
Br. Michael Avila	Christian Brothers Community
Cynthia Ganote	Core Curriculum Implementation Committee
Joan Iva Fawcett	Intercultural Center
Lorien Romito	International Studies
Sue Fallis	Jan-Term
Reuben Greenwald	Student Involvement and Leadership
Jim Sciuto	Residential Life
Marie Lawler	Mission and Ministry
Saroja Subrahmanyam	School of Business
Gemma Nierman	School of Education
John Ely	School of Liberal Arts
Weiwei Pan	School of Science
Pravda Wright	Staff Representative
Salem Kidane	Student Representative
Jennifer Pigza	CILSA
Marshall Welch	CILSA, Chair

Please consider this the formal end-year report of the Social Justice Coordinating Committee (SJCC) for the 2010-2011 academic year. After three years of operation, the SJCC allocated time during its last meeting of the year to assess its performance and to make recommendations for slight modification of its role and membership. Those recommendations are presented at the conclusion of this report.

The Social Justice Coordinating Committee (SJCC) is responsible for developing and implementing a unified vision and plan for integrating social justice across the curricular and co-curricular experience at Saint Mary's College. The SJCC emerged from a finding and recommendation of the 2004 College Self-study for the Educational Effectiveness Review conducted by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The report found "considerable evidence that promoting social justice and civic engagement are central to the College's mission and increasingly are desired outcomes of the Saint Mary's Education. The SJCC was established to provide coordinated, institution-wide leadership for moving social justice to a more fully integrated place on our campus. The SJCC continues the work of a task force created as part of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Core Commitment Project designed as a two-year project to promote personal and social responsibility among undergraduates. The SJCC consists of representatives from faculty, staff, and students. The committee reports to the Academic Senate, President, Provost, and Vice Provost for Academics.

### Monthly Meetings and Action

Based on the recommendation of last year's committee, the membership of this year's committee was restructured on an experimental and temporary basis, which resulted in broader representation. This experimental shift was a result of earlier reflection on the efficacy of the existing and recommended membership. The new representation of Athletics and Jan-term greatly enhanced the work of the committee. Conversely, there was seemingly redundant or over-representation on behalf of Student Life. President Brother Ron Gallagher requested that the committee include a representative from the Christian Brothers Community. An invitation was extended to and accepted by a member of the Christian Brothers community but he was unable to attend any of the meetings due to his schedule. Likewise, the School of Science was unable to successfully replace its representative who went on study leave. While attendance and participation improved to a degree this year, this continues to be a challenge, especially in terms of faculty representation and representation of Deans. The average percentage of attendance was 50% with a low of three or four members in attendance on occasion. Meetings were consistently scheduled for the same time and location to facilitate attendance.

Monthly meetings included reports from various offices and units on campus. This proved to be especially helpful and informative to obtain a better sense of social justice initiatives and activities across campus. At the same time, it became apparent that the campus as a whole is unaware of the existence and role of the SJCC. The committee discussed the importance of committee members to report back to their constituencies the work and role of the SJCC.

A new and significant role of the SJCC was its involvement with three campus-based issues. One specific activity was in response to an action plan item in which a representative from the SMC Business Office reported on SMC investment policy and practice. Controller, Jeanne DeMatteo made a report to the SJCC and responded to questions. The SJCC responded with written commendations and recommendations.

The SJCC was also asked to review the SMC Alumni Association fund-raising event at the Castlewood Country Club where a labor dispute is underway. The SJCC invited Professor Ron Ahnen to share his concerns regarding the incident. Chris Carter was also invited to report on action steps taken to resolve the situation.

Finally, the SJCC, in conjunction with the Sustainability Committee, asked the Business Office to report on the use of paper timesheets. Again, Jeanne DeMatteo accepted the committee's invitation to engaged in a conversation about this important topic. She expressed appreciation to the SJCC for reviving discussion and exploration of paperless alternatives. She reported the research and tentative steps the Business Office is taking to move toward a paper-less system.

While these deliberations resonated with committee members, questions arose as to whether this type of action was within the purview of the committee. In referring to the original proposal for establishing the SJCC, it was noted that early on the Educational Policies Board (EPB) focused on integrating social justice within the curricular and co-curricular mission of the college rather than on institutional policy and administration. At the same time, a report from January 2003 also articulated:

But the EPB advocates that the college go beyond thinking of this area as "course content" only...too often a piece-meal approach to new initiatives means that programs come forward to the EPB with no institutional context or sense of priorities that would help guide decision-making. The EPB would like to see the college identify its programming more clearly and do more long-range planning so that initiatives are integrated into an ongoing planning process.

This was interpreted to suggest that the role of the SJCC transcends merely coordinating curricular and co-curricular programming to include guiding the institution as well. Likewise, the action plan approved last year includes institutional and administrative issues suggesting that the role of the SJCC does, indeed, transcend curricular and co-curricular programming.

The SJCC also responded to input and recommendations regarding visibility made by staff from Student Life by creating an active website. It was suggested that the website provide a schedule of meetings, a procedure for requesting agenda items, and posting the campus-wide inventory as a "rolling" survey that could be completed at any time during the year.

### Campus-wide Inventory

While the coordination and completion of the campus-wide inventory of curricular and co-curricular activities related to social justice and service is a key role and responsibility of the SJCC, actual implementation remains a significant challenge. The SJCC expended considerable time and energy last year in creating a comprehensive survey instrument designed to provide a wealth of demographic data. It is speculated that the comprehensive nature of the survey may be aversive to most staff and faculty, resulting in disappointing return rates. Similarly, faculty and staff are simply too busy to complete yet another survey. The committee instituted two new approaches to improve survey returns: 1) post it on the SJCC website to allow for a “rolling” completion/submission, and 2) provide incentives for completion and submission. It was also acknowledged that most of the SJCC members had not been able to encourage or “shepherd” colleagues to complete the survey. Committee members will be charged to consult with their administrators/supervisors to allocate discussion time during unit meetings to glean basic information and/or actual on-line completion of the survey. Greater awareness and participation on the part of Campus Deans and Directors (as addressed below) may help facilitate this process. Likewise, the SJCC will revisit the survey in consultation with the Director of Institutional Research.

A brush-stroke of the results is presented below. Spring results include Jan Term data. A curious note regarding *responses and response rate* is that graduate programs appear were more diligent in responding to the Spring survey than undergraduate programs. As such, it is reassuring to note the amount of activity taking place at the graduate levels. While these are interesting data, we are aware that much more is taking place on campus that is not represented in the report.

	<u>Fall Results</u>	<u>Spring Results</u>	<u>Total</u>
Number of responses	43	50	93
Social Justice Courses	6	8	14
Service-learning Courses	5	11	16
CBR Courses	1	4	5
Co-curricular activities	31	28	59
Student involvement =	1,205	1,381	2,586
Service hours =	1,593	6,538	8,131
# non-SMC participants =	540 K-12 students 550 adults	1320 pre K--12 students 1038	

Most Fall Survey Responses – SIL (n=12) and Athletics (n=5)

Most Spring Survey Responses

UG SOLA	16.2% n= 6
Athletics	13.5% n= 5
Grad Leadership	10.8% n= 4
Intercultural Center	10.8% n= 4
CILSA	10.8% n = 4
Graduate Education	8.1% n = 3
MBA	5.4% n = 2

Most events/activities = co-curricular one-day event on campus

Very little outcome measures are implemented other than end-of-event evaluations or standard course evaluations. However, at least 4 responses from the Spring survey indicated that community partners played an important role in evaluating community-based activities/projects.

### Action Plan

The SJCC developed a comprehensive action plan in 2008-2009 and which was approved on May 10, 2010. The committee has completed many tasks related to the standing charge of the committee and many other initiatives related to sustainability and exploration of a graduate program in social justice were already in progress.

Of the 23 action items in section I (Academic/Curricular) of the action plan, 12 (52%) are in progress and/or completed, largely due to the programming role of CILSA.

Of the 14 action items in section II (Co-curricular/Student Life) of the action plan, only 2 (14%) are in progress or completed. This area of the action plan will be of particular focus in the coming academic year.

Of the 18 action items in section III (Administrative/Institutional) of the action plan, 14 (77%) are in progress and/or completed.

### President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll

The Corporation for National and Community Service announced the annual Honor Roll award recipients, recognizing more than 600 colleges and universities for exemplary, innovative, and effective community service programs. The Corporation oversees the Honor Roll in collaboration with the Department of Education, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Campus Compact, and the

American Council on Education. Honorees are chosen based on a series of selection factors including scope and innovation of service projects, percentage of student participation in service activities, incentives for service, and the extent to which the school offers academic service-learning courses.

Saint Mary's College was one of the 11 finalists out of 851 institutions of higher education applying for the President's Honor Roll Award.

### Annual Institute on Research, Teaching, and Learning for Social Justice

This year's Institute had nearly 60 participants with most of them coming from Bay Area colleges. The Social Justice Coordinating Committee, the Cummins Institute for Catholic Thought, Culture and Action, and the Office of the Provost support the Institute. This year's institute focused on integrating capacity building into service-learning and community-based research courses. Dr. Gerald Eisman, Director of the Institute for Civic and Community Engagement at San Francisco State University (and former SMC faculty member) was this year's keynote presenter. Dr. Eisman and the team at his institute have developed a new initiative called Neighborhood Empowerment Network and Universities (NENU), a collaboration between the City of San Francisco's neighborhoods and a growing consortium of universities that serve San Francisco communities through engagement. The goal of NENU is to develop foundational research studies, establish inter-university collaborations and expand service-learning and community-based research projects that directly respond to the needs of localized communities. Doug Paxton of the Saint Mary's College Leadership Center provided a mid-day keynote address, which invited participants to explore the deeper passions behind their civic engagement work. Colleagues from Bay Area colleges and universities also attended this year's institute.

The institute was also the culminating activity for SMC faculty who participated in CILSA's yearlong faculty cohort program. Faculty in the cohort debriefed, updated their future plans for service-learning and community-based research, and engaged in personal reflection. One challenging aspect of this year's Institute was with regard to the number of SMC faculty participating, which was significantly reduced. This was due, in large part, to new end-of-year workshops offered by two other entities on campus, one of which offered a stipend as incentive to participate.

### Social Justice Speakers & Performers

The committee also agreed to help fund speaking engagements by Jim Keady (\$750) and Shane Claiborne (\$750) assuming the remaining funds are raised from other campus sponsors. Attendance was very good and both presentations were well received. A unique aspect of Jim Keady's presentation on the social issue of sweatshop manufacturing of athletic clothing was the participation of SMC Athletes.

### SJCC Membership, Structure, and Role – Revisited

The SJCC revisited its charge and the recommended structure/membership of the committee as approved by the Academic Senate during its final two meetings of the academic year. The SJCC is required to have 16 members, including members such as the Director of Institutional Research and a representative of the Vice President for Advancement. The committee recognizes and appreciates the value of an inclusive membership. However, given the nature of the committee's work, the committee also acknowledged that a significant number of the required members might be unrealistic, un-necessary, and unwieldy. It was also noted that recommended membership of the SJCC largely reflects the members of the Campus Deans and Directors Committee (CDDC). Therefore, it was recommended that the Chair of the SJCC make at least one report to the CDDC each semester to help facilitate SJCC programming and assessment across curricular and co-curricular programs.

The following recommendations have been made and forwarded to the Academic Senate for review and approval:

Re-organize the SJCC to be chaired by the Director of CILSA and comprised of the following members:

- One faculty representative from each college (4)
- One staff representative from Student Life
- One staff representative from Mission and Ministry
- One staff representative from Athletics
- One representative from Staff Council
- One representative from International Programs
- Two student representatives (one recommended by Student Life Staff and/or one "at-large" recommended by/representing ASSMC – each serving a one-year term)

Committee members would serve two-year terms.

The following ad hoc members would be called upon to attend on an as needed basis:

- Director of Institutional Research
- Director of Admissions
- Vice President for Development
- Representative from the Core Curriculum Committee
- Representative from the Sustainability Committee

Finally, the SJCC recommended that its formal charge be slightly modified to reflect the roles and responsibilities that have organically emerged over the past three years. These include:

Delete: Work with the Advancement Office to develop a budget and fundraising strategies to support social justice opportunities. – The committee felt this already fell under the broad umbrella of the overburdened Advancement Office. Likewise, over the past three years, the SJCC has been able to effectively utilize its modest budget in collaboration with other entities on campus to conduct various activities and events.

Add: The SJCC will serve as a resource to students, staff, and faculty to help shape, implement, and assess the broad institutional mission of social justice within and outside the college community.

It is requested that these recommendations be formally submitted to the Senate for review and approval in the Fall of 2011-2012 Academic year.

Respectfully submitted:

Marshall Welch – SJCC Chair