

The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
Commission on Appraisal



UUA COMMISSION ON APPRAISAL

Thurs., April 19—Mon., April 23
Cenacle Center
Chicago, IL

MINUTES

Members Present: Erica Baron, John Cullinan, Megan Dowdell, Pete Fontneau, Lynne Garner, Bev Harrison, Nana' Kratochvil, Don Mohr, Mitra Rahnama

Thursday

Megan reviewed the agenda for the week. There were questions about transcript memos and discussions. Adjustments can be made if people haven't read all the transcripts. After a discussion of the options for Sunday the consensus was to go to the morning service at Second UU.

Friday

Minutes and study notes from the October meeting and the March conference call were approved.

Pairs went to various locations to talk to do the "mindset" exercise in preparation for the diversity and inclusion training on Saturday.

Introduction and Selecting "New" Codes

Erica presented a set of additional codes for use in analyzing transcripts.

Everyone got another set of codes from the focus groups like they did at the October meeting. The assigned task was to look for relationships and particularly look for the questions listed above. The posters were reviewed in groups of three. Groups of three reported out and the posters were displayed. Everyone was assigned to do one memo on one of the charts before the end of the meeting.

After discussing whether each person should write on his or her own poster or choose another the commission decided to leave the charts out and let each person choose the one he or she wants to write about.

Transcript Memos

Everyone was given an assignment to write about one of the transcripts he or she read considering questions such as: What is the problem you would like to identify? Why do you think this problem/issue is important for UUs? What are some recommendations you would make to the participants based on what you've learned so far in this project or your own experience? The writings are to be shared with another commissioner who will respond. The deadline is May 15, and each commissioner should send the paper to the next person alphabetically by first name.

Transcript Memos: Paired Activity

Erica assigned pairs to have a discussion of a transcript with someone else who read the same transcript. Their charge was to see where there are problems and possible solutions and which are the most interesting and compelling. Each pair reported to the entire group and responses were recorded.

There was then a third writing assignment to write a reflection paper on one pair of problems and responses.

There was time to work on organizing the writing assignments in the time before dinner.

Saturday

During the morning there was a diversity and inclusion training workshop with Nehrwr Abdul-Wahid of One Ummah Consulting. This was followed by a discussion of the workshop. The commissioners agreed that the workshop had been very worthwhile.

Case Study Analysis

Two case study methods were presented:

- 1) General model which can include experiences of marginalized groups in the case study or
- 2) A methodology that is designed to life up issues of marginalized person called liberative method. The group was polled.

Erica said to let Megan lead us in the method she is confident in.

After a discussion of the two approaches the commission decided to use the liberative study method.

Case Study Analysis:

The commission studied two hypothetical composite case studies that were created from focus group data. All statements in the case studies come from focus groups but they are composites. The situations are fictional but they are based on focus group comments.

The process for studying case studies was the following. Three or four commissioners were designated as studiers. Their questions were: Who are you? What do you see/hear? Others were

assigned roles for a dramatic reading of the case study. Each case study was read and discussed. Then each was analyzed using the liberative approach.

Megan Dowdell has taught the liberative method. She learned the method from Traci West from Drew University. The underlying assumption is that oppressions are always operating. Slides of the method have been sent to COA members.

Each case study was analyzed using this method. The results were recorded for use later.

The analysis steps in this method are:

Faith Values (Embodied Spiritual Quest)

Who is or would be at the margins in this conflict? (Seeking out the margins)

How is this conflict related to power and privilege? (Historical Consciousness)

What institutions are at play (scrutiny of institutions)

What else do we need to define or discuss? (Strategic Resistance)

There was a check-in about doing the analysis with this approach. The feelings overall were positive.

Erica reviewed the three writing assignments that were assigned earlier in the meeting.

Sunday

Megan checked in with everyone about their travel plans on Monday.

Treasurer's report

Don gave a treasurer's report, and there was a discussion about how to make the best use of the funds available to the commission. The discussion included concern about the cost of distributing the report. It will not be a printed book, but it will be distributed electronically in some form.

The Way Forward

Everyone took time to outline what they would write on the problem/response exercise that was assigned the day before. Then each person named his or her choice and why. There was a discussion about the ones not chosen and how those might be incorporated into other reflections.

The commission then applied the liberative method to the list of problems and responses. Just the first step, identifying Faith Values (Embodied Spiritual Quest) was completed by the group. From that a list of shared values was generated for future reference.

Imagining the form of the report

The commission spent the rest of the afternoon discussion possible formats for the presentation of the final report. This was a time to generate ideas, and no effort was made to refine the list.

Dinner time was used to check on feelings about the work the commission did over the weekend.

The commission reviewed the task list and made additions as needed. There was a fourth writing assignment to analyze two additional focus group transcripts from youth and young adults of color and ministers of color.

The commission discussed upcoming meetings. The intent is to have the next meeting in October at Cenacle Retreat Center again. There will be brief conference calls about every six weeks. Dates for 2013 meetings and presence at GA 2013 were discussed only in a general way.

Respectfully submitted,

Bev Harrison
Secretary