

*"If students can't change this campus,
then stop lying to them that they can
change the world."*

-Alex Gee

We -- a united group of Seattle Pacific undergraduate and graduate students, alumni, and community supporters -- in an effort to hold the University accountable to those values and convictions which it espouses to be fundamental to its identity, demand that the following items be implemented in a manner that is consistent (in both haste and method) with the urgency that is felt by those whose lives are negatively impacted by the current practices of Seattle Pacific University:

1) Chief Diversity Office

Purpose: We believe that the current structure of SPU in all areas pertaining to student life, community involvement, faculty development, and internal relations, suppresses minority cultures and identities by perpetuating the notion that Western white evangelical culture is socially and theologically normative, thereby inhibiting the personal and communal development of minority students. In order to effectively address the systems within the University that marginalize minority students, faculty, and staff (while simultaneously enabling students of the dominant culture to internalize discrimination), the University requires an administrative office that is capable and experienced in dealing with these issues. This office will serve as the representative of students who have been historically neglected by this University; this office will not only voice the concerns of minority students to the administration, as a part of the administration, but should be given enough authority to overturn processes, programs, and practices by which the oppression and marginalization of minorities is perpetuated.

a. The duties of the Chief Diversity Office will include but are certainly not limited to:

- i. Collaborate with campus departments to foster dynamic learning environments, academic support, recruitment and outreach programs, and advance university-wide responsibility on behalf of diversity.
- ii. Continuous monitoring of the environment, regular assessment and evaluation, and development of additional resources as required.
- iii. Engaging campus efforts to welcome and sustain a diverse campus community in order to achieve understanding of diversity as integral to liberal arts education.
- iv. Collaborate with secondary educational institutions and community organizations to ensure that there are incoming pools of well prepared, pre-college students from underserved backgrounds.
- v. Build a welcoming and supportive campus climate for students, faculty, and staff through Faculty Advancement, Institutional Research, Faculty and Staff Affinity Groups, and Curricular Transformation.

b. Timeline: Search committee formed by the end of 2015-2016 academic year.

- i. By May 1, 2016, the job description will be submitted to student representatives for review and approval by 9am. Along with this submission should be included a progress report, to be followed by a meeting shortly thereafter, within a two week time frame.
- ii. Job search commenced by Summer 2016.
- iii. Review of applicants commenced by September 2016.
- iv. Chief Diversity Office established by end of 2016-2017 academic year.
- v. Should administration fail to meet these deadlines (without the approval of an extension from student representatives), students will engage in various campus wide demonstrations.

2) Justice and Cultural Credibility Requirement for Faculty, Staff, Administration, and Student Leaders

Purpose: Many of the stories we have told, and many of the stories we hear, are stories of the pain that results from ignorant statements made by students, student leaders, faculty and staff. We believe that this University lacks cultural sensitivity and credibility on a systemic level, but also on a personal level: it is the obligation of this institution to implement policies and practices to ensure that its representatives (student leaders, faculty, staff, administrators) are capable, intelligent (not just well-intentioned) individuals who are willing and trained to foster a culture in which all students are welcomed, developed, and cared for. We believe that the following items are necessary steps to creating that culture:

- a. **Professional development:** Currently, faculty are required to develop an annual plan which explains how they are going to meet their professional and ministry goals for the upcoming year. In addition to these two items, a diversity component will be added to the annual review/plan to ensure that faculty are “engaging the culture” and learning how to be culturally credible.
- b. **Administrators will also be required to complete this addition to their professional development progress.** Administrators will be held accountable to these standards in annual reviews/plans by the Faculty Diversity Committee.
- c. **Leadership for Students:** Students involved in campus life (residential life, student life, and University ministries) are required to engage the diversity of the campus. Therefore, a prerequisite initiative must be shown in order for applying candidates to be considered for any campus leadership position.
 - i. All applications should include a series of cultural engagement questions, both in written form (at least two essay questions where students will be given the opportunity to demonstrate their cultural credibility) and during the interview process.
 - ii. Students must have completed at least one class that pertains to diversity, cross-cultural studies, and/or racial/gender/disability justice and reconciliation. This may include but is not limited to:

1. SOC 3215: Social Inequality: Power and Privilege
2. THEO 2730: Introduction to Christian Reconciliation
3. THEO 3510: Christianity and Society
4. SOC 3862: Race and Ethnicity
5. COM 4180: Cultural Communication

Students may apply for the position prior to the completion of the class, but the class must be completed prior to their inauguration.

- iii. Once the candidate has been approved and the position has been filled, the student leader will be required to undergo ongoing mentorship with their respective advisors. These mentors will encourage the leaders to engage the various cultures represented on campus, and correct student leaders when necessary.
- d. **Reporting system:** an anonymous reporting system to submit incidents of inappropriate behavior and speech from faculty, staff, and student leaders will be developed and implemented. Currently, students are asked to complete end-of-quarter class evaluations of their class experience. This evaluation is submitted at the conclusion of the quarter and does not reflect the urgency of the incident that has occurred. This system would allow students to report those issues at the time of the occurrence (and receive a receipt of their submission from said system). The anonymity of this system is paramount to the climate of safety on campus, the relationships and jobs of students and staff/faculty, and the social and academic health of students.
- i. Because faculty have also suffered from inappropriate behavior and speech from their colleagues, a similar anonymous reporting system will be implemented at the faculty level.

3) Restructure the Hiring Process of SPU Faculty

Purpose: We believe the current hiring process at SPU is one that perpetuates the exclusion of diverse faculty. We believe that, without adequate diverse representation at the faculty level, diversifying the student body (which President Martin, and SPU by extension, has been adamant about) is an irresponsible and pernicious practice, beneficial for the face and marketing of the school only. We believe that diverse faculty is one of the most important factors that contributes to the success of marginalized students. In light of these beliefs, we demand that the hiring process include the following revisions:

a. Search Committee Make-Up

- i. Search committees will represent racial, gender, and disciplinary diversity.
- ii. The search committee must actively seek the participation of enrolled undergraduate and graduate students who have expressed commitment to reconciliation and diversity on campus. These students must be

actively involved in the hiring process with faculty, staff, and administration.

- iii. *University Ministries* will oversee the selection of students in the search committee, to ensure that the group is diverse.
- b. Application materials for all staff and faculty positions must include a narrative statement that explicitly details the candidate's commitment to diversity and reconciliation.
- c. The final group of candidates for all new hires need to reflect the University's commitment to diversity. This generally means that the final candidates include at least one woman and one person of color in the final three candidates.

We understand that our demands are great. We acknowledge that there has been significant improvement in our recent history. We appreciate that there has been more conversation and we have hope for the future. The goal of this petition is to convey the message that we are not satisfied. We affirm the good intentions of administration, but our recent interactions have made it clear that we remain unheard. We are willing to work with administration to see these goals accomplished, but that does not mean we are willing to wait. This is not a matter of comfort, this is a matter of survival. When we are told, as we repeatedly have been, that "these things take time," what we hear is a privileged voice, telling us that we will not see this change in our short time here, that administration does not understand how serious this matter is. Our goal is to make it matter. We will see this change.