

Self Study Action Committee Report

Spring 2016



"I truly believe that we are creating a community in which everyone—staff, faculty, students, alumni, and friends—has the potential to be a lifelong learner, and that we have much we can learn from each other. My highest hope is that our community will embrace our common humanity as well as our dazzling array of differences. As we become an increasingly diverse community, we will cultivate curiosity about ideas and experiences and beliefs that challenge us, about people who are different from us, and experiences that are unfamiliar."

Valerie Smith, President of Swarthmore College

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Table of Contents

Introduction p.3

Recommendations p. 7

1. Transparent and Comprehensive Resource Guides and Information p. 7
2. Advancement and Employment p. 8
3. Increased Support for Marginalized Members of the Community p. 11
4. Commitment to Diverse and Accessible Mental Health Care for All Members of Our Community p. 13
5. Institutionalize the Self Study Action Committee p. 15

Avocado List p. 17

Long Term Priorities p. 18

Group Process p.18

Rendering the Report p.19

Coding Submissions p. 19

Establishing Criteria p. 20

Addenda and Links p. 21

Introduction

The mission statement of Swarthmore College states:

“The purpose of Swarthmore College is to make its students more valuable human beings and more useful members of society. Although it shares this purpose with other educational institutions, each school, college, and university seeks to realize that purpose in its own way. Swarthmore seeks to help its students realize their full intellectual and personal potential combined with a deep sense of ethical and social concern.” (College Bulletin - Course Catalog, 2016)

To this end, and in response to calls for change during campus unrest in 2013, the College conducted a self study of campus climate, i. e. attitudes and perceptions of community members towards living, working, and learning in the college community, during the spring of 2015. The study was developed by a committee of faculty, staff, and students in partnership with Rankin and Associates, Consulting. Faculty, staff, and students were surveyed. The results of that self study were released to the full community in November 2015 and can be seen at:

<http://www.swarthmore.edu/study-learning-working-living/outcomes>

The Campus Climate Project Final Report begins: “Swarthmore College believes that diversity and inclusion are crucial to the intellectual vitality of the campus community. It is through the free exchange of ideas and viewpoints in supportive environments that individuals develop the critical thinking and citizenship skills that will benefit them throughout their lives. Diversity and inclusion engender academic engagement where teaching, working, learning, and living take place in pluralistic communities of mutual respect.” (p. 1)

The Campus Climate Project Final Report helped our community to learn that most people who live, work, and learn in our community perceive it to be a comfortable campus climate, workplace, and classroom experience. “The diversity of perspectives represented by Swarthmore students, faculty, and staff - including different viewpoints, identities, and histories - contributes to the community's strong sense of open dialogue and engagement with ideas and issues.” (*Campus Climate Project Final Report*, p. I, 2015) However, in spite of the College’s mission statement and focus on “fostering a caring community that provides leadership for constructive participation in a diverse, multicultural world” (as noted on the College website), ***some constituencies in our community do not experience the sense of belonging that all should experience as members of the College’s learning, living, and working community.***

The key findings of the study were:

- Members of several constituencies were differentially affected by exclusionary, intimidating, offensive and/or hostile conduct (EIOH). The demographic characteristics of those who experienced such conduct which emerged include: gender identity, ethnic identity, racial identity, sexual identity and mental health/psychological condition. Further, the study showed that the bases for persons who experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive and/or hostile behaviors on campus include: gender and gender identity, position status, ethnicity, and political affiliation.
- Several constituent groups indicated less comfort with the overall campus climate, workplace climate, and classroom climate than their peers. These groups include community members who identify as Trans faculty and students; Persons of Color; Multiple Race respondents; LGBTQ & Asexual respondents; faculty and students with single and multiple disabilities.
- Seventy respondents (7% of respondents) indicated they had experienced unwanted physical sexual contact. (*Campus Climate Project Final Report*, p. Vii-x, 2015)

Importantly, when asked the source of exclusionary, intimidating, offensive and or hostile conduct by position status:

- *Staff* identified this conduct coming from supervisors (33%), other staff (32%), senior administration (17%), faculty (13%), and students (8%).
- *Faculty* identified this conduct coming from other faculty (58%).
- *Students* found this conduct coming from other students (86%), faculty (18%), senior administration (11%), and staff (9%). (*Campus Climate Project Final Report*, Figure 34, Page 74, 2015)

Faculty and staff had persistent concerns about fairness in the workplace, fair workloads, compensation, and transparency in decision-making.

Yet, Swarthmore states and restates a commitment to diversity and inclusion in its mission statement, on the website, and in the strategic plan of 2011, where it reaffirmed this commitment:

The College “aims to be an exemplar of how a residential community supports the work of developing individuals; manifesting a diverse, inclusive, and engaged community; and building new models of democratic communities in the world.” (p. 4).

A “liberal arts education, by definition, prepares young men and women for building robust democratic communities by requiring them to live in residential communities and experiment with leadership in the arts, athletics, cultural activities, and student government—all practices that develop community-building skills” (p. 4).

In 2011 the College made the recommendation to “Develop a comprehensive diversity, inclusivity, and engagement plan that will transform the College into a model workplace and residential learning community in an increasingly global world” (p. 19).

December 2011, Strategic Directions for Swarthmore College

To this end, the Self Study Action Committee was convened in January, 2016, to recommend three to four actions to President Smith by the end of the spring 2016 term. This commitment was made by the senior administration when they agreed to the Self Study. Our Action Committee has aimed to be inclusive, transparent, and democratic in our work to elicit ideas and solutions from the community. Our tasks involved developing venues and events by which the community could respond to the self study, organizing and facilitating venues and events, engaging with groups and committees regarding the self study, developing submission forms, synthesizing and communicating key findings from the self study, and deciding on our own processes for analyzing and deciding what and how to raise solutions to President Smith.

As the committee worked to sort through the submissions and make decisions, we have also aimed to be inclusive, transparent, and democratic. Our processes, for the record, are delineated after the recommendations in the section titled: Group Process.

Ultimately we decided to organize our recommendations under *five themes* and to share what we think of as short term, doable actions and longer term priorities within those themes. Each recommendation is grounded in the *Campus Climate Project Final Report*. We share who we expect will benefit from the recommendation, and which existing structures might be responsible for taking action on the recommendation.

Additionally, we provide two additional sections: The Avocado List and Long Term Priorities.

Two areas arose in the self-study that did not elicit robust responses in the call for solutions and ideas: unwanted sexual contact and childcare. We speculate that recent efforts of the Title IX Office and the Ad-Hoc Faculty Child Care Committee may have minimized the need for additional suggestions in these areas. In this report childcare has been addressed within broader categories.

We understand that President Smith will consider our recommendations and share her decisions regarding short term actions. It is our hope that the Committee's short and long term recommendations will remain central to transforming the Swarthmore College community into one in which all members feel a keen sense of belonging as residents, scholars, learners, teachers, colleagues, mentors, staff, and friends.

Recommendations

1. Transparent and Comprehensive Resource Guides and Information

"Honesty and transparency make you vulnerable. Be honest and transparent anyway."

Mother Teresa

Conducted in partnership with Rankin and Associates, the results of the Campus Climate survey included a clear desire from faculty, staff, and students for increased transparency within the College administration. Exploring this more specifically during the campus roundtables this spring semester, the action committee found that members of the campus community seek to better understand who the campus administrators are, which resources are available in each department, and how campus administrators contribute to the broader success of the campus. We anticipate that a more complete understanding of who is on campus and what their roles are will help everyone feel more integrated into the community. We imagine that Human Resources, the Provost Office and the Dean's Office will take leadership on these recommendations.

Short-Term Recommendations

- Expand Organizational Charts: The Climate Study Action committee received requests for additional information about the functions of administrative departments, as well as an organizational chart that details the members of each department. This expanded organizational chart should include a short departmental overview, as well as a brief position synopsis for each position within the department. The respective senior leaders could work closely with each of their divisions to expand the current online organizational structure.
- Share job descriptions: In addition to expanding the online organizational charts by departments, the committee also received requests to increase the transparency of complete position descriptions. Through the addition of position descriptions to the online medium, community members will have a better understanding of available campus resources.
- Conduct more frequent orientation regarding policies: In an effort to further increase transparency in community expectations, the committee received requests

for more frequent policy reminders, beyond new faculty and staff orientation for newly hired employees. While ongoing annual training is offered for policies such as the online harassment training, the College should offer additional opportunities for employees to review and discuss a variety of policies and campus procedures.

- Produce a web-based and hard copy Resource Guide for Students and FAQ that could be distributed to students, shared through Resident Assistants and Student Academic Mentors, faculty advisors, Deans, and others. The web-based version could be designed as a database called “myResources,” located as a tab on mySwarthmore, in which students could search by keyword to find resources available to them.

Medium-Term Recommendations

- Develop Cygnet for Faculty & Staff: As the campus community continues to grow and evolve, it can be difficult to recall which individuals are serving in current administrative roles. As an expansion of the online Cygnet student resource, the committee has received recommendations to offer Cygnet to employees as well. Cygnet is a student service provided by the Swarthmore College Computer Society. This online service would provide a photograph of each individual, as well as a brief synopsis of their role at the College, much like an internal facebook. (The College once had a hard-copy document like this called *The Profile* that was phased out.) The Cygnet would serve to both increase transparency and increase the sense of community on campus, so that faculty and staff across departments could put a face to a name.

2. Advancement and Employment

“By refreshing our sense of belonging in the world, we widen the web of relationships that nourishes us and protects us from burnout.”

Joanna Macy & Chris Johnstone, Active Hope

Throughout the Rankin study, all constituencies raised concerns about employment practices on campus. Some of the issues related to transparency of these practices, while others specifically addressed the practices themselves. While many suggestions to resolve these issues will require considerable resources, deeper structural changes, and time, others require commitment, energy, creativity, and a little capital to be realized.

The report brings to light many aspects of employment life at the College including:

- 1) Hiring practices and advancement opportunities: The report noted that 44% of staff and faculty who considered leaving the college did so because of limited opportunities for advancement (p. 116).
- 2) Compensation: Over 45% of staff did not think that salaries were competitive; 75% of faculty did not feel adequately compensated for summer work and 60% did not feel that the College provided adequate resources to help them manage work-life balance.
- 3) Professional development: The report findings about perceived value of professional development differed between faculty and staff, but both groups strongly favored mentoring programs.
- 4) Perceptions of fairness and equity in workload and expectations: Although the majority of faculty members felt that teaching loads are distributed fairly “in my department” (71% agreed), only 41% agreed that “Teaching loads are distributed fairly among faculty in the College.” Perceptions of fairness of the distribution of “student advising responsibilities” are split, with 56% agreeing that they are fair and 44% disagreeing (pp 197-198). Nearly 30% of staff felt that they were pressured to work outside of normal work hours (p. 200). Rankin and Associates originally put forward a suggestion of hiring an ombudsperson in both their presentation to the community and the written report (p. 146).
- 5) Value of the individual and their voice in the College and decision-making in particular: About 25% of staff and faculty respondents did not feel valued by senior administration (p. 220-221).
- 6) Clarity and consistency of employment policies and practices: The report revealed that there was a lack of knowledge about employment practices and policies across both faculty and staff, as well as a divergence in practice across the College. About 40% of faculty did not feel the criteria for tenure were clear, and about 60% did not feel the criteria for promotion to full professor were clear (p. 197). Over 40% of staff did not think the performance evaluation process was clear (p. 200).

A large number of suggestions emanating from the roundtables, departmental discussions, and feedback forms dealt with these issues. We imagine that Human Resources, the Provost Office and the President’s Office will take leadership on many of these recommendations.

Short-Term Recommendations

- Ensure clarity and consistency in policies for evaluation, compensation and advancement, including public display of salary and compensation charts, clarity

about factors for promotion, and constraints on promotion by nature of the College's size.

- Develop means to ensure excellence in management through mandated management training in conflict, diversity, feedback, coaching, communication, leadership, general emotional intelligence and evaluation processes.
- Enhance professional development opportunities for faculty and staff and encourage Appreciative Inquiry. A range of areas was suggested. These included support for developing more positive interpersonal interactions, such as training in conflict resolution, in sensitivity and support for diversity, in development of emotional intelligence, in addressing bullying, in recognizing and preventing workplace intimidation, and in increasing civil discourse. Other areas included skills such as social media presence and strategy, advocating for funding, networking and proposal writing. Professional development opportunities, such as webinars, should be posted on the campus calendar, with opportunities for community members to sign up and attend.
- Establish a mentorship program for staff and continue to enhance faculty mentorship programs. Orientation to the College or to a new position should be regular and ongoing in order to further understand policies, procedures, institutional culture, best practices, and cultivate a feeling of support and cooperation.

Medium- to Long-Term Proposals

- Create an ombudsperson position, someone who could be a trusted member of the community or could be someone new to the community. Care must be taken in developing any new job position, but this is especially true for an ombudsperson, in order to ensure the impartiality of the role is maintained.
- Improve the student employment system; create a system that will provide easily accessible information about available jobs on campus and a way to apply for those positions online. The process for applying for on campus jobs should streamline students' job search process while also prioritizing work-study and low income students.
- Clearly articulate requirements for promotion and tenure. We understand that this process has begun and that within the next two years departments will have completed this task. The College must clarify the tenure and promotion requirements for faculty, as well as criteria for second semester leave.
- Provide opportunities for staff advancement and growth. While we recognize that there are numerous positions on campus that have no promotional possibility without leaving the institution, staff may be able to move to different positions elsewhere or be given greater responsibilities within their own departments. Where

there is a clear path to promotion (for example to an assistant or associate director level, or from administrative assistant to administrative coordinator), the differences in requirements and job responsibilities must be clearly articulated and made publicly available.

- Enhance the evaluation process, particularly for managers. The College should explore additional and alternative feedback measures including 360 reviews or peer reviews, especially ones that encourage discussion of management by the managers and the individuals being managed.
- Explore alternative governance/representative models. There were concerns with both the structure of Staff Advisory Council (SAC) and lack of representation of certain constituencies, particularly academic staff. We recommend that the College look at how different constituencies can participate in College-wide decision making and how the existing structures such as (SAC), Administrative Advisory Council (AAC), Student Government Organization (SGO), and committees might be restructured or refocused to provide better representation and feedback to their respective communities. There were also concerns about the burden of the current faculty committee structure, especially for junior faculty. We recommend an audit of the current committees and a rethinking of how they might be staffed.
- Explore enhancements to salary and benefits. The differential for shift workers was recently implemented, representing a positive step towards compensation improvements. It remains important, however, to revisit the living wage, as was echoed in multiple suggestions the Action Committee received and in the fact that about 47% of hourly workers report that the wages are not competitive (p. 201). To assist with transparency and erroneous perceptions about staff salaries with respect to faculty, the College should publish the ranges of increases for both constituencies. The College should consider re-evaluating the reasoning behind the mortgage benefits and perhaps applying it -- or not -- for both faculty and staff.
- Address work-life balance issues for both faculty and staff. Many of these concerns relate to family and child-care. One suggestion was to recognize Labor Day and Memorial Day, in order that employees could be with their families and not have to worry about arranging additional childcare on these traditional three-day weekends.

3. Increased Support for marginalized members of our community

“A sense of belonging refers to students’ perceived social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and important to the group or others on campus.”

Terrell L. Strayhorn

As a community we are not adequately providing a safe, supportive, or thriving space for a significant group of students, staff, and faculty on this campus. We define these groups to have the following identities: LGBTQ, Transgender, Gender nonconforming, Women, Religiously identifying, and Low-income/first generation students. While there is deep intersectionality between many of these identities, the data and our observations show a need to look at each on an individual level first. In comparison to other members of the community, the groups named above report an alarmingly higher rate of experienced EIOH conduct, lower sense of belonging, and lower persistence which relate back to their identities. A significant amount of support for these groups will come from campus-wide education on the shifting needs of these identities as we have not yet reached a place that provides a healthy and truly supportive space. We imagine that the Dean's Office and the Registrar's Office will take leadership on many of these recommendations.

Short Term actions by Identity:

- **LGBTQ Community**

Implement community building, training and, education that is geared towards the many facets of LGBTQ life at Swarthmore. This might include: diversity of identities, intersectionality, bullying and intimidation, managing conflict, and resources available on campus. This should be aimed towards these identity groups and to the larger community.

- **Transgender, and gender non-conforming**

Add preferred pronouns to Faculty Services and class rosters that match a student's preferred gender identity. Provide training for faculty and staff to better understand the complexities of this change.

- **Women**

Increase institutional support for the Women's Resource Center (WRC). The current model leaves the three cultural centers (BCC, IC, & WRC) with varied degrees of staff, space, and support. The lack of support for the female identifying community is apparent and sends a message to the women on this campus that they are less of a priority.

- **Low income/first generation students**

Extend and sustain support for longer than the first year by building on pre-existing programs and by moving beyond Orientation Week workshops. This might include a larger focus on the challenges of transitioning to college (e.g. culture shock, homesickness, supporting family back home, navigating class issues) or building greater connections with low-income or first generation faculty and staff members.

- **Religious life**

Label Bond Hall as the home for Religious and Spiritual Life on campus maps so it has institutionally dedicated space. Add religious holidays to the printed and online campus calendar to improve awareness of events planned on these holidays.

Long term actions by identity:

- **LGBQ, Transgender, and gender non-conforming**

Create a dedicated position that solely oversees LGBTQ Life on campus, increase affinity and collaborative spaces, and implement a Faculty-Staff Group to assist in supporting the larger LGBTQ Community. On-going assessment of this population is essential with a keen eye to transgender students, staff, and faculty. The recent Dear Colleague letter¹ published by the U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education reminds us of the responsibilities and commitments we have as an institution to the transgender population in particular and the above actions will help move Swarthmore in the right direction.

4. Commitment to Diverse and Accessible Mental Health Care for all members of our Community

"Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare."

Audre Lorde

In order to create a supportive environment, a community must promote holistic wellness and provide reliable support systems accessible to all. Mental health care is an important facet of such community wellness. In the Campus Climate Study report by Rankin and Associates, several patterns emerged that reflected faculty, staff, and student concerns around the college's current mental health care system. A brief overview of these common sentiments is provided, followed by short and long term recommendations on improving mental health care that stem from the campus-wide idea generation process.

Mental health and/or psychological conditions were by far the most commonly reported disability experienced by members of the campus community. According to Rankin et. al., 15% of respondents (n=147) cited mental health as a disability; 25% of respondents noted that their disabilities "substantially affected learning, working, or living activities" (p. 27).

Members of the campus community who suffer from mental health problems or psychiatric conditions report experiencing hostile or intimidating behavior much more frequently than

¹ www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201605-title-ix-transgender.pdf

other members of the community. Forty-two percent (n = 62) of respondents with a mental health/psychological condition reported experiencing hostile or intimidating behavior, as compared to 21% (n = 170) of respondents with no mental health/psychological condition.

Students were particularly emphatic about the need for mental wellness on campus. When asked which conditions impacted their learning, working, or living activities, the most frequent response (15% of students) was “mental health/psychological conditions” (see table B18, p. 171). To provide perspective, it is helpful to note that the second most frequently-noted response, a “chronic medical condition,” was reported by 5.7% of students. Multiple student respondents shared that they seriously considered leaving Swarthmore because they felt that “academic stress was contributing poorly towards [their] mental health” (p. 138).

Such stress is exacerbated amongst minority populations. Across all constituencies, exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile (EIOH) conduct was reported at higher rates for respondents of minority groups than for other groups. To illustrate: 61% of Trans respondents [in comparison to 21% of Men respondents and 23% of Women respondents], 39% of LGBTQ respondents [in comparison to 20% of Heterosexual respondents], and 31% of People of Color respondents [in comparison to 21% of White respondents], experienced EIOH behavior (p. 63-67). These experiences may increase stress and anxiety. One respondent wrote, “As a first generation low income college student, it was very difficult for me to emotionally deal with the immense course load and vast change in culture. I have often felt as though there is simply no time in my schedule to work through personal issues like depression, stress, and anxiety that coursework and homesickness have caused” (p. 138).

Faculty and staff also face pressure and stress as community members. One faculty respondent wrote, “The current overall workload is insane” (p. 114). Even if there were a decrease to a 4-course teaching load, many faculty feel the decrease in actual workload would be minimal (p. 114). A general sentiment among Staff respondents is that they “feel forced to work beyond their scheduled hours” (p. 104).

Comprehensive mental health care constitutes an integral component of a healthy and productive academic environment. Mental health services are, unsurprisingly, one of the first resources called upon when the rigours of academic life and life on campus become difficult to sustain. We imagine that the Dean’s Office, CAPS and Human Resources will take leadership for many of these recommendations. Accordingly, we propose the following:

Short-term solutions

- Diversify Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), staff. Students who identify as racial and ethnic minorities, gender nonconforming, LGBTQ, first-generation, and/or low-income report higher levels of stress and mental health problems than other students. Given that many CAPS counselors are hired as interns or temporary staff, it seems feasible to immediately instantiate affirmative hiring practices which ensure that mental health care providers have experiential knowledge of and/or training in the issues which underserved populations face.
- Clearly communicate all mental health resources available to faculty and staff through Carebridge; clearly communicate insurance coverage for in-network and out-of-network mental health services.

Long-term solutions

- Hire more CAPS staff. Multiple students suggested that CAPS is consistently understaffed, resulting in long wait times before students receive mental health care.
- Commit to providing comprehensive mental health coverage for faculty and staff. Benchmark Swarthmore's mental health coverage with peer institutions, reviewing coverage for out-of-network care and assessing the diversity of in-network mental health providers.
- Understanding that EIOH behavior may exacerbate stress and increase the urgency of mental health care supports, it is important to develop a more inclusive community and take steps, as outlined in Recommendation 3, to support members of marginalized groups.

5. Institutionalize the Self Study Action Committee

"We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own."

Cesar Chavez

It could be argued that every aspect of campus climate, and many of the specific concerns highlighted in the self-study, are in some way connected to the sense of community experienced at the college. Members of a healthy community support each other and address their problems in constructive ways. This is an ideal that the college signals often, but on which the results of the Climate Study suggest we have sometimes fallen short. Many of the suggestions recognized that by improving our sense of community we will affect positive change that can diminish EIOH conduct, increase trust and transparency, and foster collaborative problem-solving. They also recognized that such improvement is a continual process requiring care and vigilance - essentially taking a wellness approach to our

community. As with the other categories of improvement, there are steps that can be taken both immediately and in the longer term. We imagine that the Provost's Office, Human Resources, the President's Office, the Dean's Office, and all faculty, staff, and students will take responsibility for continuing self-study solution-proposed monitoring progress and institutional and community improvements.

Short-term

- Establish a standing committee of students, faculty, and staff to address community development on an ongoing basis. The Self Study Action Committee recognized that its work should be regarded as only a first step. This committee should be the locus of responsibility for monitoring and reporting about progress on the Recommendations. Considerations should also be given to where the Community Development Grant might fit into this process.
- Maintain an ongoing, online, anonymous-option Submission Portal for ideas and solutions, with occasional prompts to the community. The above standing committee would be responsible for checking, filtering, and responding to the submissions.
- Open the submissions spreadsheet created in spring 2016 to the community in the interest of transparency and making all idea submissions available to the community.
- As a beginning step for more formal, longer-term programming (see below), identify opportunities for casual gatherings open to everyone to come together to eat, talk, explore mutual interests, or discuss College issues. In the short-term this can be as simple as soliciting a small number of interested volunteers to coordinate a gathering by identifying and communicating a place, time, and suggested topic, similar to the Community Roundtables of spring 2016. Brown-bag lunches could keep these gatherings budget-neutral, though a modest budget allocation for snacks or beverages could go a long way to foster good will. For example, community members who have participated in SwatDeck and Dinners with Strangers find the experiences to be exciting opportunities to share time, food, and ideas within and across constituencies.

Longer term

- Establish and hold “sacred” an all-campus/ collection time.
- Create programming and formal workshops in areas such as:
 - a. Civility Charette
 - b. Workshops to promote intergroup dialogue

- c. Explore the establishment of a more comprehensive community-building program such as that conducted at Emory University (*Transforming Emory Project*
<http://shared.web.emory.edu/emory/news/releases/2010/02/transforming-community-project-creates-agents-of-change.html#.VzChIYQrKUK>)

Avocado List

In reading and sorting through the submissions to address problems lifted up by the Self Study, we found a number of ideas that seemed very easy to do and not necessarily in need of deep discussion. Perhaps they did not directly address a *major* concern from the Self Study; perhaps they would affect a small constituency or very specific part of campus. Yet we found them to be compelling because, at the level of daily living, small experiences can promote a better sense of belonging and a healthier way of living in the opposite way that microaggressions can detract from full perceptions of inclusion. If one person or a small group are made happier or feel heard that in itself is good for the community. These experiences may, incrementally, accrue into transformations within our community that, over time, are quite positive.

For example, someone submitted a recommendation for avocados to be available in Essie Mae's Snack Bar. Some of us chuckled when we read this, deeming it not sufficiently profound or significant in addressing a major concern. On further thought we felt that we were in error to give any submissions short shrift, that it was our obligation to take each idea seriously, as we had promised. Avocados are a healthful food, vegetarians and vegans may depend upon them for sources of fat and vitamins, and they are green.

We came to consensus that we should submit these ideas as well as those that made it to our primary recommendations in the hope that small actions may be taken as well as larger actions, in the belief that local actions make a difference in communities. Each of these imply that it is on us to make these changes. We encourage members of the community to read the Avocado List asking "What is on this list that I can initiate or engage with others to enact?"

Thus, our Avocado List:

1. Sell whole avocados in Essie Mae's
2. Provide free Tampons and Pads, available in restrooms
3. Increase transportation access for students, especially for non-academic purposes
4. Create and promote a single, campus-wide calendar that everyone uses and sees
5. Allow credit card options at Essie Mae's and Coffee bars

6. Open Matchbox at 10:00am on Sunday
7. Facilitate Affinity Groups, such as Garknits, SWAT Faculty/Staff sports league, etc.
8. Institute Lab Instructor appreciation day
9. Create topical tables at Sharples to encourage students to connect over a meal
10. Initiate Secret Swatty (random acts of kindness)
11. Invite staff to Faculty Meetings and to Faculty Lunch as guests
12. Publicly display our salary and compensation charts
13. Recognize Labor Day and Memorial Day as holidays

Long Term Priorities

The transformation of a community into one that is inclusive of all its diversities takes will and intentionality. True cultural change also takes time and resources. WE imagine the following two recommendations needing support .from the entire community including Human Resources and Development.

1. Establish an on-campus child care facility or develop model ways to support families who work at Swarthmore College. (We understand that this report has recently been submitted to the Faculty. We agree that staff family child care needs should be included, as well faculty needs.)
2. Explore the idea of funding fully paid sabbatical (3 months?) for staff in order to recognize their commitment to this institution of learning, to recognize them as learners, and to make a more equitable relationship between faculty and staff. One could think of this as a local form of equity and social justice. Staff who work here for a specific number of years (5?) could apply for sabbatical in order to take time away to learn something. We envision this having positive climate perceptions for staff. This would probably need to be an endowed fund.

"A generous heart is always open, always ready to receive our going and coming. In the midst of such love we need never fear abandonment. This is the most precious gift true love offers - the experience of knowing we always belong."

bell hooks, All About Love: New Visions

Group Process

The Committee met weekly from January 25 to April 12 and then twice a week from April 26 to May 5. We understood our task to be:

- Establish processes to soliciting ideas and solutions from the widest constituencies of our community.

- Analyze submissions of ideas and solutions.
- Propose 3-4 Actions that President Smith might authorize within a year of the report. In consultation with President Smith we agreed that the report would be submitted by April 30 for a response from her by May 30. Ultimately, in true Swarthmore College fashion, we asked for a two week extension.

We established multiple ways for individuals and groups of people on campus to submit ideas: physical & anonymous idea boxes; an anonymous online idea box; A Community Roundtable on March 18, 2016; encouragement of departments and established leadership groups and committees to host their own meetings and submit ideas; opportunity for ANY small groups of community members to meet, with snacks, and submit their ideas, anonymously if they wish.

Rendering the Report

In order to understand the Self Study Report, the Committee members read and reread both the report and the slides from Rankin and Associates' presentation in November 2015. In our conversations with community members we discerned a need to distill the report into forms that would be readily accessible to all of the very busy members of our community. As we did so we found new ways of thinking about the report that were expressed in forms that became useful to others, including the Roundtable Discussions. They include:

1. Self Study Abridged version, done by members of the Intercultural Center Community under the guidance of Mo Lotif, Assistant Director, Intercultural Center See Link: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-E6ECunGyazFaMm8wWU1UUVU>
2. Challenges (add. 1) See link: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1mgmGNMZi3UQj2HfvZDggutfK20nfBmK7tSrTTAQIn4E>
3. Overlapping Themes (add. 2) See link: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0Bx9pO8C--KGkaTN3UjZYSDhHZ0E>
4. We made these available to the community through the Self Study website and used them throughout the process.

Coding Submissions

Ultimately there were 179 submissions, far more than we ever expected. Betsy Durning, committee member and Administrative Assistant, set up an Excel spreadsheet with coding categories for:

- Which *theme* from the Self Study does the suggestion address?
- How *long* would this suggestion take to enact? short (within one year), medium (1-2 years), long (2-3 years)

- *Who would benefit* if this suggestion were enacted? (staff, faculty, students)
- What *type* of suggestion? (programming; policy; financial; social; workshop; curricular; resource; communication; etc.)
- *Who would likely be responsible* for carrying out this suggestion? (Human Resources; Dean's Staff; SAC; Provost; Communications; President's Office; identity-based group; etc.)

This spreadsheet helped us when we broke into groups to examine the suggestions for those that we would recommend, first to one another within the committee and ultimately to President Smith.

Establishing Criteria

We established criteria for judging the suggestions that would ultimately come forward in this report. Those criteria include:

Criteria 1: Does the suggestion respond directly to the concern of at least one **constituency**, staff, students, or faculty? (We agreed that in our final Recommendations we would leave no constituency behind)

Criteria 2: Is the suggestion **significant**, including clear themes and recurring challenges?

Criteria 3: Is the suggestion **compelling** and **visible**?

Criteria 4: Does the suggestion honor the **spirit** of the Self Study?

Criteria 5: Does the suggestion speak to the College's **Mission** and values?

Criteria 6: Is the suggestion **feasible**?

We broke up into groups of 3-4 Committee members and met to lift up solutions that included short term actions, knowing ahead of time that we were having difficulty disentangling short term actions for significant overall proposals. Each of our groups shared ours ideas and then struggled in the larger group to make sense of them in a way that stayed true to our criteria and allowed the most significant of the suggestions to emerge.

Nine overall suggestions emerged, and all committee members voted for their top five of this group. In the end, consensus was reached, including the decision to combine two of them into one, to ultimately arrive at the five categories detailed in Recommendations. Further, we agreed to lift these up as broad categories for reform and improvement, designating those actions within which we believe to be short, medium or long term; places

where we believe efforts might already be underway; how suggestions fall within or under existing structures at the college or where a new committee or structure should exist.

As in any report of this type our knowledge is not exhaustive. We are, however, agreed in the substance of these Recommendations and sincere in our belief in their integrity for our ever evolving diverse and inclusive community.

Addenda & Links

1. Challenges (add. 1, p. 19) See link:
<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1mgmGNMZi3UQj2HfvZDggutfK20nfBmK7tSrTTAQJn4E>
2. Overlapping Themes (add. 2, p.19) See link:
<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0Bx9pO8C--KGkaTN3UjZYSDhHZ0E>

Climate Study Working Group 2014-2016

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