

Proposal for Intergroup Dialogues at Peralta in Spring 2021

The Peralta Federation of Teachers (PFT) Diversity Subcommittee on Antiracism and Intersectionality is excited to recommend the ***Intergroup Dialogues*** framework for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training through the ***Difficult Dialogues National Resource Center (DDNRC)*** in the Peralta Community College District.

Background: In Spring 2020, the (PFT) Diversity Subcommittee on Antiracism and Intersectionality was called to action as a response to the former chancellor's remarks about the pervasive history of racism in Peralta. This endeavor was made more prescient by the tragedy of the George Floyd lynching and the troubling xenophobic marginalization of a Laney student. Our members began meeting weekly in Summer 2020 and established a cohesive, supportive group of faculty across the four (4) sister colleges. This group continues their long-term commitment to transform the culture of our union and the broader Peralta community to one that is more edifying and multiculturally competent. The subcommittee has a collective goal for its union members to acknowledge their deeply-held conscious and unconscious biases through rich, meaningful self-work and facilitated dialogues to improve our relationships with colleagues and students.

Need: Racism is deeply embedded in the Peralta culture. In a survey we conducted in August 2020, 85% of respondents cited racism as the most pressing topic that faculty needs to address. Nearly 80% of respondents prefer facilitated dialogues or small group discussion as their preferred format of engagement. DEI presentations at both August and October 2020 Flex days have been well-attended and suggest a palpable desire to expand our understanding and be more inclusive. We need sustained, consistent and effective training that fosters healthy disruption and provides safe spaces for those of all levels of understanding to begin working toward a more inclusive environment.

The Peralta community has reached a moment where its long-standing need to improve its culture intersects with the increasing desire and willingness of its members to change. As we are all physically separated from one another during shelter-in-place, there is a growing desire within the community to connect with one another and to understand their role in improving our culture and institution so we can better serve students. **The Subcommittee on Antiracism and Intersectionality is seeking sponsorship and support to bring this training to the community, with the option to continue the remaining phases that lead to a “train the trainer” model.**

Recommendation: After online research and a series of requests to various DEI trainers by the Diversity Subcommittee, we met Brigid Dwyer of the DDNRC in July 2020. Brigid is an Oakland native, former Laney student, and the current Associate Dean of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at Princeton University. She has taught Sociology at the community college level. She is trained in the Intergroup Dialogue framework, which meets each participant “where they're at”, at all levels of cultural competency, in an effort to minimize trauma, blaming, or shaming. Intergroup Dialogue addresses power dynamics and encourages storytelling within groups diverse in demographics and composition. The emphasis of the training is to address all forms of prejudice. The framework is meant for long term, sustained growth and participation among its participants.

The multi-phase proposal incorporates a “train the trainers” model which may prove more valuable and sustainable to provide a means of healing to those affected by racism and prejudice, and instill agency in those who wish to become trainers. Having homegrown trainers also gives access to a restorative practice to support those who may falter on their journey towards being more culturally competent, as well as offering a starting point to continue this work with ‘in house’ facilitation.

The first phase of training occurred with the report from the PFT Diversity Subcommittee and the Intergroup Dialogue introductory presentation at August and October Flex Days, respectively. The second phase of the DDNRC proposal would involve a 90-minute plenary on Thursday, January 21, 2021 with Ms. Dwyer to provide more people with the opportunity to experience the Intergroup Dialogue framework and promote participation in the training.

After that, a twelve-hour training of three 4-hour sessions in Intergroup Dialogue would have room for up to 200 people across the four colleges and the District Office.

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Phase 2 of Intergroup Dialogues at Peralta - Experiential Intergroup Dialogue Workshop

Phase 2 will allow members of the district to experience the intergroup dialogue model, engage in self-exploration, and develop a better understanding of

- Participants' own social identities
- Privileged and marginalized identities
- Sources of power and decision-making within the community and oneself

During this phase the consultant(s) will:

- Meet with members of the district to develop an effective workshop
- Arrange logistics of the workshop in partnership with Peralta
- Lead intergroup dialogue workshops (12-14 hours total) with up to 200 participants

Goals: To provide an opportunity for members of the Peralta Community College District to experience the intergroup dialogue model, reflect on their own lived experiences, and begin to consider how to integrate dialogic tools into their daily life and their role in the district.

Cost Estimate \$15,000 - Flex Day 90-minute Overview/Invitation to Participants and Phase 2 workshops during Spring Semester for up to 200 Peralta Employees.

For more information:

- Visit the [Difficult Dialogues National Resource Center Website](#)
- Watch [Brigid Dwyer's Presentation on Intergroup Dialogues](#) to the Subcommittee on Antiracism and Intersectionality in July 2020.
- Watch [Brigid Dwyer's Intergroup Dialogue Presentation](#) at October Flex 2020.