

## **Real Food Working Group Meeting**

May 21, 2013

### **Present**

Jane Kolodinsky  
Cynthia Belliveau  
David Conner  
Katie Bekel  
Sebastian Downs  
Maria Carabello  
Brian Roper  
Alison Nihart  
Caylin McKee  
Joe Speidel

### **David Conner's class**

David Conner is interested in partnership with research class for this fall. Goal would be to gauge student pulse on campus about RFC. The outreach committee could be the community partner. The class is CDAE 250 Applied Research Methods required for all majors. Has taught it as a service learning class. Goal is to make students better consumers and producers of quality research. Last year his class partnered with Office of Sustainability to look at student opinions, behaviors, and awareness about bottled water. Results informed policy changes (e.g. Smart Water was included in ban). They also researched where bottle fillers should go. Over 900 surveys were completed.

Class will start with lit review, observations, a series of interviews with students, then develop surveys (20 per student, 48 students per class) to be analyzed with SPSS. A final report will be made available to us. He asks that:

- we come to class 4 times (MWF 10:40-11:30, Morrill Hall basement classroom). This is important to keep the student work grounded. If the community partner is engaged, the students are engaged.
- we be thick-skinned as the students dive into the truth.
- the research be used and useful to us. Questions will be around student attitudes and awareness and behaviors.

Jane-start broad then look at segments of consumers

Cynthia-maybe do not mention Real Food Challenge – rather ask the questions around the issues themselves

Joe-connect back to the RFC at the end

Gioia's class poster showed 80% of students had not heard of RFC

David-Instruments are shaped by the community partner, so we can have input on that Gioia had offered to take the lead, so she will be the main contact and the Outreach Committee will support her

Next step: Outreach committee will meet with David in August to flesh out research objectives.

## **Report from Policy Committee**

Committee met last week. The group is prioritizing the development of a Real Food Policy to inform the development of a multi-year action plan. We will pick and choose from the best practices provided from the Real Food Challenge. UVM's purchasing decisions should be informed by our values rather than by the calculator.

Cynthia-We need to weigh the tradeoffs between values to inform purchasing decisions

Jane-David's class can help us prioritize the top values

Maria-food culture of year-round tomatoes – if they say it's important to prioritize ecological sustainability, then we can justify stopping year-round tomatoes

Brian-so frustrating that Koffee Kup does not count, considering it's a local business (but they don't use local ingredients)

Alison-So the policy needs to include the importance of prioritizing foods that do not count as real food, but we still want to support (e.g. Koffee Kup)

Question of whether this should be a university level policy or just for use by the Real Food Working Group. University level policies are extremely difficult to pass – requires a lot of input and bureaucracy. Group decided the Real Food Policy will be used by this group to be strategic about how we get things done and how purchasing decisions are made.

Joe-This is a less official, but more effective route

Cynthia-we could raise money for this group through cost savings or through charging premium amounts for products we want to discourage (e.g. mid-winter tomatoes)

Question about the status of the budget: There is still \$1500 our budget.

Jane-dollars for this group should be direct from the Provost, not tied to the Food Systems Initiative

Labeling in the dining halls is important

Jane-question is, do we want David's class to be a baseline? Because if so, then do not want to start putting stickers on food before the students do their research.

Caylin-yes, we will not be getting any marketing materials out before the fall

Next step: Policy committee will draft Real Food Policy, bring to Working Group

## **Student involvement update**

Maria Carabello is here!

Melissa Sullivan is home for the summer

Ani will be a rep from VT Animal Advocates

Angela will be a rep from Fair Trade club

Sarah Alexander and Ann Cromely – have not heard back yet

Kira is transfer student. She has not responded to emails yet.

Caylin told them 6-10 hours a month

Next step: Need to do outreach to SGA. Caylin has standard language about the commitment, which she will share with Joe and Sebastian.

## **Review of Annual Progress Report**

Given lack of time at end of meeting, there was not time to review the whole document. Next step: Please review on your own and give feedback to Caylin.

### **Meetings throughout the summer**

Caylin will schedule through Oracle, follow up with Brian and Maria (who do not have Oracle)

We could invite people to Skype in

Committees will meet at least once a month to move work forward. Each group should take the lead on scheduling meetings.

### **Other discussion**

Alison was unanimously elected to staff advisor position

We need to identify student co-chairs

Caylin will continue with student outreach/recruitment

Observation that members at large will be less overcommitted than representatives from other student clubs

The governance document that Sam put together in Google docs is being updated with new student members as they join

The outreach group will be responsible for organizing a Food Day event. That might be a good time to launch a labeling campaign.

### **Follow up**

Caylin will email students to see who is available to participate on the Outreach committee – they need to be available to go to David's class

Caylin will send language to Sebastian and Joe to invite students to participate in Working Group

Alison will ask Sam who the contact is for the budget. She'll ask to keep it and if necessary will justify why we need that much again next year.

Alison will revisit website development

The outreach committee will meet with David in August