

Minutes
Climate Committee Meeting: September 19, 2016

The Climate Committee met at 3:00 pm on September 19, 2016.

Members present: Patricia Blanchette, Callie Phillips, Rebecca Chan, Curtis Franks, Alex Jech, Janet Kourany, Peter Finocchiaro

- I. The purpose of the climate committee was discussed. Its role includes:
- Planning talks, workshops, and/or other events that will help the department be as welcoming as possible to everyone, especially to members of under-represented groups.
 - Paying attention to any climate-related issues or concerns that appear in the department, bringing them to the attention of the climate committee, and making suggestions for ways in which the culture of the department can be improved.
 - Planning and implementing such things as the climate survey.

II. Callie Phillips informed the group about a **mentoring initiative** aimed at philosophy graduate student women on the job market. The deadline for applicants for this year has passed, but PB will raise with our Placement officers the question whether this is something that, perhaps in future, should be brought to the attention of our job seekers. Whether it is productive to send a notice to this year's job seekers at this point will depend on whether (a) they already know about it, and (b) whether the September 1 deadline is firm.

III. The committee discussed the **climate survey** that was administered over the summer, and the question of when and how to administer the next survey. The data from the survey administered this past summer (summer 2016) are now awaiting analysis. We expect a report from our analyst very soon. (It was expected by September 1, but there have been medical complications.) The one thing we know is that the response rate was quite low.

We need to decide (i) when to run the next climate survey, and (ii) how to do it, especially whether to again use SoGo Survey.

Re (i): There was some sentiment in favor of doing a survey very soon, at the beginning of spring semester. Reasons for this include the low participation rate in the previous survey, together with the general idea that early in spring semester is probably the best time for optimal response rates and for including the impressions of first-year students. There was also some sentiment in favor of waiting a year, in keeping with the general idea of setting up a pattern of a climate survey every other year. It was decided that we will revisit this question once we have the report from the recent survey.

Re (ii): There was some dissatisfaction with the implementation of the recent survey. However the next survey is run, we should administer it with clearer contact from the department at the beginning of the survey (e.g. an email from the chair

urging participation), and with follow-up emails at regular intervals from the survey implementer to those who have not participated. Whether we should use SoGo survey again will depend in part on the details of our arrangement with them, including the cost of future surveys. PB will bring more information about this to the next meeting.

It is hoped that the information we get from our own recent survey will be supplemented by information from the upcoming APA Site Visit survey.

III. The question of how to make the **undergraduate philosophy club** more welcoming, especially to women, was discussed. Suggestions made to Alex Jech included these:

- Encourage the club to have speakers, or panel discussions. Offer, at department expense, to pay for food at such events. It was noted that these do not have to be like colloquia; they should be designed to be attractive to large numbers of undergraduates. Panel discussions by faculty members on targeted topics (light-hearted or serious) might be good.
- Discuss with club officers the issue of inclusiveness and the lack of diversity currently seen in the club, suggesting that the club consider:
 - Speakers who are not all white men;
 - Officers who are not all white men.

IV. The committee discussed planning for future **speakers and events**. It was noted that the department's colloquium committee was open to receiving suggestions from the climate committee. The committee will begin an email discussion about speakers or other events, and will take up this issue at our next meeting.

Submitted by: P Blanchette