

Climate Committee Meeting Minutes
8am, Aug. 31, 2017

Present: Sara Bernstein, Patricia Blanchette, Celina Durgin, Curtis Franks, Ashton Green, Geoff Hall, Alex Jech, Jeff Speaks, Michael Rea (Chair)

1. The first agenda item was to discuss the role and purpose of the climate committee. Due to time constraints, committee members were simply urged to read the following description.
 - Purpose: The Climate Committee was established as a resource for working to improve department climate and to assist department members who have experienced difficulties of a climate-related kind.
 - Role:
 - Planning talks, workshops, and other events that will help the department to be as welcoming as possible to everyone, especially to members of underrepresented groups.
 - Paying attention to 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 things like the climate survey with the goal of understanding and working to improve department climate.
 - It is possible that people will talk to you specifically about their own climate related issues. It would be a good idea for all of us to be familiar with university policies and practices related to issues like harassment, the filing of complaints, etc., so that we can serve as a source of information for other members of the department. Each of us also should be aware of the university's reporting policies, and let our views on that topic inform our approach to talking with people about their own climate related issues, should the occasion arise.

2. The main order of business was to review and discuss the data from the recent climate survey. After reviewing the data, committee members were asked to reflect on the following questions for further discussion at our next meeting:
 - What shall we do with and in response to the survey data?
 - How should we deliver the data to the department?

- Data will be made available to committee members in the Philosophy Department office for review between now and the next meeting.

3. The climate survey revealed that there continues to be some ongoing dissatisfaction among graduate students with the mentoring that they receive in our program. We

discussed existing structures for mentoring and briefly considered a few suggestions. Among the existing structures are (a) the mentoring program pioneered by Ashton Green that pairs incoming graduate students with graduate student mentors who are a bit further along in the program; and (b) the Philosophy Adventure Day, which provides students with the opportunity to hear brief presentations followed by open Q&A on various aspects of the ND graduate program in philosophy. It was suggested that more informal social interaction between graduate students and faculty might put graduate students in a better position to find and feel comfortable seeking out faculty mentors; and it was also suggested that restarting the “brown bag lunch” Q&A sessions on professionalization might be a good idea, if we could solve the problem of dwindling attendance as the series continues.

4. At our next meeting we plan to discuss these items, as well as issues pertaining to undergraduate mentoring and the Philosophy Club.