

From: [Campus Climate Proposal form](#)
To: [Libby Peterek](#); [Carrie Olson](#)
Subject: New submission from Campus Climate Proposals
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2016 9:27:20 AM

First name:

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What is your affiliation with UW-Madison? For group submissions, please respond for main contact.

- Academic Staff

Describe the concept. If already in use here or elsewhere, please indicate this.

I think we should create 'safe spaces' in which there can be honest dialogue about racism, hatred, and bias on this campus, as it impacts students, staff, faculty, and the greater community. Building from a 'restorative justice' and reconciliation model, my idea is to facilitate dialogues that illuminate, from which will emerge those actions that most naturally and energetically arise. We can be informed by the recent effort to establish a National Truth and Reconciliation Commission (see YES! Magazine, 4/13/16), and should work through both the Campus Diversity Framework (including Leadership Institute facilitators) and the VCFA EID Initiative and Council, of which I am a member. Starting from dialogue, I seek to move towards genuine, specific, accountable sets of action steps that are integrated into our academic and employment structures.

How would this affect cultural change on campus?

Helping people understand the true experiences of others generates insight and cultivates the ground for Enlightened and informed action. I am confident that, given institutional support and resources to facilitate such conversations plus a commitment to act upon the resulting insights and agreements, we can make meaningful change. For example, my own HR Communities of Practice Office is facilitating development of HR competencies across campus, and at the foundation of such skills are those of respectful engagement, inclusion, and diversity... these conversations should inform my office about WHAT matters most and HOW to do so.

For new ideas, how would you propose piloting this idea to see if it would work? If the idea is already in use at UW-Madison, how would you propose expanding or altering this program for greater impact?

I think that a pilot project should occur in diverse sets of spaces, so students, staff, and faculty in varying contexts can engage together. It would also allow us to better understand the modes of conversation that are most sustainable and meaningful.

What resources would be needed to implement your suggestion?

I have not fully considered this aspect, but would gladly do so...

If this proposal was developed in partnership with any other organizations, please list them below.

This is my idea, being submitted to honor your deadline at this time. I am confident that there would be partners... it is possible others have already considered a similar pathway, but that I am not aware of

their proposals. I am glad to work with such groups.

Please use this space for any additional information about your proposal that you wish to share:

My 40+ years associated with this University, as student, alumnus, and staff member, makes its vision as a respectful and caring community one that matters deeply to me. It concerns me greatly that our larger political landscape of polarization, hateful speech, and actions of marginalization is infecting our campus. But we should not delude ourselves: Such attitudes and actions have been here as long as I have been on campus, which goes back to anti-war demonstrations and protests following the closures of ethnic studies centers in the 1970's. If I can make some small contribution to our actually dealing with such attitudes that have no place on our campus, I will be honored to have done so.