There are 16 participants who have begun the pilot program for Difficult Discussions which are being facilitated by Kathleen Ames-Oliver (HR/EO) and Professor Steve Hillmer from the School of Business. The Langston Hughes Visiting Professorship Lecture is scheduled for February 25th and Professor Adam Banks (Syracuse University) has planned an interesting and engaging presentation. I hope you plan on attending and encourage your students to participate as well. And, with the coordination of University Relations, the technology support staff at KU and the Office of the Provost a new website – en español was recently released.

In this issue, we highlight the Center for East Asian Studies, a colleague in the Art Department, a recent study on the trends of doctorate recipients – based on gender and ethnic diversity. With nearly 2,500 KU Hispanics having earned a degree, the recent establishment of the Hispanic Alumni Chapter is highlighted. A resource link for diversity and inclusive teaching is provided as well as upcoming events of interest are also featured in this issue.

CRITICAL THINKING AND DIVERSITY: A ROLE FOR EVERYONE

The lessons of civic engagement and diversity have significant implications for teaching and learning. Our classrooms, labs, studios and the workplace should be models of democracy in action. The search for better modes of deliberation across differences occurs not just in the town hall, but all across the institution we call the university. The skills everyone needs to form better understandings are very similar to those we all need to become engaged citizens in a pluralistic democracy: written and oral communication, teamwork, inquiry and analysis, intercultural competence, and critical thinking. These learned skills are not only for our students to learn. We should all seek opportunities to model these skills through discussion and debate, presenting evidence on both sides of historical and contemporary issues and encouraging everyone to draw their own conclusions while engaging deeply with multiple viewpoints.

Too often the goal of debate in our democracy is to convince others of our views. In short, too often we see inquiry, analysis, and critical thinking as ways to prove that they are right and assume that those who disagree with them are simply failing to engage in these activities. The essence of critical thinking is not criticism of others’ ideas but reflection on one’s own ideas and assumptions that are developed in dialogue with others.
THE SCHOLARSHIP OF DIVERSITY: A SYNOPSIS

The number of black and Hispanic U.S. citizens receiving doctorates more than doubled in the past 20 years, and the number of Asian recipients almost tripled. However, those percentages among black and Hispanic scholars continue to trail well behind their representation in the general population and among undergraduates.

Source: Survey of Earned Doctorates, annual study by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago for U.S. government agencies.

KU HISPANIC ALUMNI CHAPTER

Members of the inaugural Executive Committee of the Hispanic Alumni Chapter recently met at KU on February 12 and 13th to finalize and approve the Articles of Association and Bylaws. With their approval, KU has its first-ever Hispanic Alumni Chapter. The Executive Committee also elected officers: President, Fred Rodriguez; Vice President, Monique Garcia; Treasurer, Phil Orlando; Recording Secretary, Camille Plaza; Communications Secretary, David Ochoa, KU Endowment; and KU student representative, Mark Marquez.

Other members of the Executive Committee are: Toni Casados, Garden City; Sonia Garcia, NY, NY; Octavio Hinojosa, Washington, D.C.; Juan Izaguirre, KU; Greg Valdivino, KU; and Alfred Murguia, KC, KS.

Initially, four themes were identified that will focus the work of the Chapter: 1) Networking and Re-connecting; 2) Recruitment and Coordination; 3) On-campus events and activities; and 4) Scholarships.

If you would like more information on how to be involved or be a member of the Hispanic Alumni Chapter, please contact the KU Alumni Association at: www.KUAumni@KUAumni.org or call 800-584-2957.

Center in the Spotlight: Center for East Asian Studies

Founded in 1959, the Center for East Asian Studies (CEAS) at the University of Kansas is the only East Asian resource center in the Great Plains region. CEAS supports East Asian language instruction and promotes East Asian studies across the curriculum. Seventy-three affiliated faculty members teach in 16 departments and 8 professional schools at KU, offering over 250 courses fully or partially devoted to East Asia.

The Center works closely with the Study Abroad Office to promote undergraduate and graduate study in China, Korea, and Japan, and collaborates with the Office of International Programs on direct exchange programs, hosting visiting scholars, and career planning events. CEAS supports the KU East Asian Library, the 10th largest East Asian library collection.

They offer a speaker’s bureau, publications, and electronic resources tailored to various audiences on and off campus.

Contact information: Center for East Asian Studies, 201 Bailey Hall. Ph: 864-3849 or email: ceas@ku.edu

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS WITH CIBER

International Programs is offering an $850 stipend to tenured and tenure-track faculty who develop a new international course or significantly revise an existing course to make it more international. It is expected that the course will be offered sometime during the next two academic years and that it will be offered at least three times within the next six-year cycle.

Faculty from all academic disciplines are invited to submit proposals.

Deadline: April 19, 2010. For more information, contact Hodgie Brick, 864-6161 or hbricke@ku.edu.

LA VISIÓN

Beginning last fall semester, this monthly E-newsletter has been designed and disseminated to a wide range of recipients that updates and informs the Latino audience on matters of interest and events occurring at KU.

You can access this newsletter at: www.diversity.ku.edu