Counsel for Peaceful Resolution (CPR)

These draft notes were developed out of dialogues and conversations at CEER, Spring 2021: Rob Smedfjeld, Shairon Zingsheim, Jeff O’Connell, Vy Le, Katherine Michel, Ghada Al-Masri, Shelly Spratt, Sandy Bennett, Elizabeth Blau Ogilvie, Melissa Cervantes

Purpose Statement
- To empower employees with tools and resources to assist in conflict resolution and to support individuals when they engage in challenging conversations.

Location
- Office of Professional Development, Employee Onboarding, and Engagement

Institutionalization
- Formal: create an Administrative Procedure (AP) to identify the pre-grievance process so that this group (1) has monetary resources, (2) has an agreed-on structure, (3) has accountability (e.g., guarantee of confidentiality, including within the group), and (4) cannot be unilaterally removed in the future
- Informal: promote awareness of the group and resources (e.g., could reach out to UFO, SEIU, CSEA, and DDAS to work out how CPR would fit in with each of the representative employee groups as a pre-grievance procedure), create mentoring relationships to foster/advance growth mindset as turnover occurs within the CPR group

Outcomes
- A safe place (campus environment and perhaps physical location?) where employees can feel heard and have difficult conversations respectfully
- Provide space for employees to choose an option to either be heard or to receive strategy (i.e., do you just need someone to listen? or do you need advice on how to solve a problem?)
- Allow employees to take accountability and enhance their engagement by understanding communication styles and conflict management techniques
- Proactively encourage positivity (e.g., affirmation challenges, EAP) to promote self-awareness, self-reflection, and empathy both for others and oneself
- Hold workshops to provide tools, share resources, and/or facilitate conversations within small group settings (e.g., within a division)

Structure
- Representative across the college: staff, full-time faculty, part-time faculty, administrators
  - Considerations:
    - this group is informal, rather than going through the formal HR process
- The most vulnerable among us need to have say (e.g., deans and other middle management, part-time faculty members)
- We need to think about the representative for the management group very carefully (i.e., what if one of their employees wants to come to the group?)
- It may be possible to use the existing “Trust Huddle” group as a starting point.
  - This group includes classified professionals and managers who went through training in January (and a few faculty members went through training a few years ago).
  - However, this group will likely need expansion, as it currently is not representative of all constituent groups at the college.

**Possible Models**
- UC Irvine: Reaffirming Ethnic Awareness and Community Harmony (R.E.A.C.H.)
  - Program through the multicultural center focusing on conflict resolution and empathy development
  - Cohort model (five or six students with a faculty/administrative advisor) with a year-long intensive training on DEI. This included training from the counseling department that focused on strategies of interpersonal communication and working with individuals who had experienced trauma.
- University of Miami: Office of Institutional Culture ([https://culture.miami.edu](https://culture.miami.edu))

**Logistics**
- Create application process to join the group, with all applicants committing to training
- Provide release time and/or be part of employee’s regular work assignment

**Training Considerations**
- Confidentiality, trust, setting aside power dynamics
  - This needs to occur so that everyone buys in (e.g., faculty members and deans)
  - Note: The “Speed of Trust” workshop will be included in the future onboarding process (the new employee orientation process) through the Office of Professional Development, Employee Onboarding, and Engagement.
- How to decide when an employee has a complaint vs. when action is required (e.g., how to diagnose problems? how to conduct consultations?)

**Next Steps**
- Go through the process to become an official AP
- Hand over to Sandy to start building the group
  - Do we need to hire an individual to facilitate and train the team (e.g., hire a consultant)?
- Fall semester: look at the budget