Lombardi, Randall The President's Commission on Diversity and Community

Proposal

I will be conducting my research on the President's Commission on Diversity and Community. This research will include interviews with co-chair Mr. Gabriel Iuriube and ex-officio member Robbie Routenberg as well as some student leaders on campus. This video will focus more on looking at the work the commission does to help increase and retain diversity in Geneseo. One important topic that will be covered to give this video relation to scholarly works is looking at the importance of diversity in higher education and the issue of affirmative action. The reason I have chosen to look into this topic is because it is one that strikes close to home with me as an AOP student. I will use anthropological studies on affirmative action and diversity on college campuses to support my research and video production. The research articles I will use to help addressing these issues will be based upon studies of affirmative action in various countries and on diversity in college campuses. This means that I must not only address my own biases but also it means ensuring that the voices of those included in the video are not lost in production or editing to make the film more appealing. This will also include working on a way to educate viewers about the group of people working on the issue of diversity in Geneseo. The problem of a ten minute video is what will make things like this limited, however I will find a way to work around the length of the film.

Scholarly background

6 days late The video, Enacting Change: The President's Commission on Diversity and Community SUNY Geneseo, is primarily focused on the topic of diversity in university settings, why it is important and how the commission is working to increase the diversity on SUNY Geneseo's campus. The video contains some clips from interviews with co-chair of the commission, Mr. Gabriel Iuriube and ex-officio member Robbie Routenberg. The clips from these interviews that are included in the video are only a small portion of the longer interviews that were conducted with these two individuals. The clips show in the video are more focused towards talking about what the commission is, taking a brief moment to discuss the committees that make up the commission as a whole. Another important topic discussed in the video is that of affirmative action and why it can be beneficial to universities. The interviews conducted with Robbie Routenberg and Mr. Iuriube both individually lasted much longer than the video itself. This was difficult when working to piece together the video in order to convey a message I was aiming for, not including the brief interviews I had with some student leaders on campus. I chose to structure the video in a question and answer format with little narration, because I felt that the individuals I was interviewing were able to give the topics discussed more justice depth? than I would have been able to when narrating information. This is because these individuals are actively working with the commission. The two films that inspired my editing and filming choices most are The Thin Blue Line and The Times of Harvey Milk. The reason that these two films had the most influence over my filming was because I felt that these two films, especially the interviews present in them, were extremely compelling and they were able to invoke a feeling of realness and reliability. I feel that when someone is looking at a video, that has interviews with people who have experiences and well based opinions viewers are more likely to become invested in the discussion they are watching and it makes it feel more real. This is important especially when looking a topic such as diversity in universities, which is something that society is look for more now than ever before. The last question asked in the video is Do you believe that affirmative action is a good way for an institute to increase diversity on its campus? This is a question that many scholars all over the world are looking into yes, which means there are many good scholarly sources on the topic! Why didn't you cite some?. There are people on both sides of the topic, some saying it is good for students and colleges, others saying it is detrimental you should at least define it!. An argument against affirmative action is that the issues it is fighting against are not issues of race but of class. This is saying in a way that the existence of affirmative action does not truly benefit those who it is targeted to benefit, in actuality it is benefiting the people of higher classes, such as lawyers. (Harrison 1998) this needs some exposition A counter argument to this is that people are not racially conscious of the inequalities of today and that those people of lower classes tend to be minorities. (Harrison 1998) Something interesting to look at is affirmative action which has recently been introduced into the higher education systems in Brazil and how it is bringing an increase of in racial consciousness to the people who live there. Racial consciousness is affected by affirmative action because it causes more people to begin to acknowledge the existence of racial identities. While abroad in Brazil I spoke to some of the people about the implication of affirmative action, some of them said that it is a burden on students who identify as a minority because they often don't have the support they need to be going to certain schools, as their education before college is not the best these personal observations are interesting but they must be backed up with research in this context. One man talked about one good aspect of affirmative action being the fact that it does increase racial consciousness because in Brazil racial consciousness is something that not many people have. In the video I ask the question Why is diversity important in an academic setting? This question, I believe, is the most important question I ask in the video, because it address why the commission is working to change Geneseo’s campus and it also address some of the reasons that affirmative action is in place. The answer that most of my respondents gave when I asked this question to was along the lines of diversity is important because it exposes people to other ideas and ways of life which allows for growth and development of new ideas and ways of doing things. One thing that was only covered briefly in the video that is an important part of how the commission works to increase and retain the percentages of diversity on Geneseo’s campus is the subcommittee the equity scorecard. The equity scorecard works to gather information and data about Geneseo's current diversity plan and formulate ways to help guide it in the right direction. Robbie Routenberg explained that there are people who are in the commission, who are actively working to recruit more diversity, Robbie gave the example of AOP and the office of admissions. This past summer the office of admissions hosted Camp College which allows children from underrepresented backgrounds to come to the college to learn about the college experience, and be exposed the a college setting. The goal of this camp was to get applicants from this group of students. There are some interesting observations here but it wanders a bit and there should be much more research cited.

Work Cited
Response

The number one thing I can say about the making of this video is, that it was much more difficult than I had anticipated to take all of the information I was given and compact it into ten minutes. In my proposal I anticipated that I would conduct interviews with Mr. Iturbides and Robbie Routenberg as well as conducting interviews with some students. I soon realized that this goal was very ambitious as the interviews with Robbie and Mr. Iturbides gave me about an hour of information that was all equally important. It became very hard to determine what I wanted to include in the video as they had given me so much it almost seemed like I was doing their ideas an injustice in not including all of them. Thus I decided not to include the interviews I had recorded with the student leaders on campus, instead I used part of their interviews as a way to give the video an elegant sendoff. I also created a longer extended version of the video which came out to be nearly forty minutes, in order to be able to put as much of the information they gave out into the world as possible. I believe that the question and answer interview style I used in the video, where I had the question read and the response from each individual, was an effective way of conveying the information I wanted the audience to know. However I do believe that it was not the most visually appealing or attention capturing way to do it. In retrospect I would’ve rather made sure I filmed each interview in the same location as well as included respondent voice overs on silent clips of things related to the topic, such as a meeting or present given by Robbie or Mr. I. The wiki space served as a background for the video which kind of held the key as to why it is important to be even be focusing on the topic of diversity in higher education, which in a way makes them go well together. I chose to write the wiki space the way I did, as opposed to the styles presented in Film guides for Nai and An Argument about a Marriage, was to help compliment the style of video which is more focused on giving the participants a voice. Thus I included information given to me in my interviews not included in the video as well as information I had collected while abroad in the past.

Written Reflection on Final Video Rubric (see syllabus p 3-4)

Evaluates your video in relation to your written wiki space and the course readings, with explicit references to both.

Outstanding Strong Adequate Weak

Discusses choices you made about the style of the video and evaluates how successful were they in conveying the subject matter.

Outstanding Strong Adequate Weak

Discusses how well the video worked in comparison to the written component?

Outstanding Strong Adequate Weak

Explicitly reference the course readings (and other resources if you wish).

Outstanding Strong Adequate Weak

Entry is in past tense.

Yes No