Dean Janow mentioned that although SIPA administration had not met with members of SSOC to discuss the progress on SIPA’s Diversity plans, the administration has been meeting to further the diversity agenda.

The outgoing and incoming SSOC Board was introduced.

The agendas presented by Dean Waters and SSOC were very similar and coincided on the creation of a Diversity Task Force and the need for programming.

Eder pointed out that assessing campus climate at SIPA is important in order to address racial microagressions some students of color experience.

SSOC also emphasized their opinion regarding the need to have a diversity officer. Dean Janow responded that it would be better to start by taking a holistic approach to diversity where we all are responsible for, and are contributors to, the fostering of diversity at SIPA. This would avoid directing all responsibility and accountability to only one person. SSOC agreed.

Dean Waters spoke of approaching the issue of diversity within the context of School’s values. SSOC agreed with framing diversity within the greater context of values as long as sensitivity training of some sort is provided.

Dean Janow commented on acknowledging the content knowledge professors bring to the classroom; knowledge they have spent many years on refining.

SSOC asked: How do we get well-respected and knowledgeable faculty to manage the classroom in a way that promotes respect? This question also led to a discussion on how to manage climate in the classroom.

When Dean Janow mentioned the need to collect data on specific incidents SSOC presented a couple. SSOC will also work on collecting more specific data to provide to the administration.

Upon hearing the SSOC’s descriptions of specific incidents, Dean Janow presented the following two questions as a way to engage us in productive conversations:
1) How is race engaged by us (SIPA)?
2) How does it surface?

SSOC suggested that TAs, and all student instructional help, should participate in diversity/sensitivity training. Everyone agreed.

SSOC asked about SIPA’s efforts to recruit and retain faculty of color. Dean Janow mentioned that there is a university-wide effort, which of course SIPA is part of, and that results from said efforts could be shared with the Diversity Task Force.

Questions were also raised regarding the need to involve alumni of color in diversity related efforts. Dean Janow said it would be a good idea to have someone already in the alumni council to be part of the Diversity Task Force.