Division of Academic Affairs  
Diversity Task Force  
May 19, 2011  
3:00-4:30  
President’s Conference Room, Green Hall  

Meeting Notes  

Present: Donald DeHayes, Laura Beauvais, Gerald Williams, Jasmine Mena (for Trish Morokoff), Alycia Mosely Austin, Cheryl Wilga, Marcia Morreira, Karen Wischner, Barb Silver, Joanne Lynch, Delores Walters, Mary Cloud, Anita Jackson, Earl Smith III.  

1. Announcements  
The Joint Committee on Academic Planning (JCAP) subcommittee that reviews task force reports has read and made comments/suggestions on the report we submitted to JCAP in 2010. The committee’s report was distributed to the task force (see attached).  

2. Review of Meeting Notes from April 12th  
   a. Language changes in appointment letters, faculty review guidelines, and job ads  
   b. For the faculty performance review language changes: these need to be reviewed by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the AAUP Executive Committee before being finalized and implemented.  
   c. Further changes were made in the language that would be included on position descriptions to the following:  
      “Our goal is to attract applicants who will thrive in a diverse University community. We are committed to building a multicultural workforce and strongly encourage women, racial/ethnic/GLBTQ individuals, persons with disabilities, and covered veterans to apply. The University of Rhode Island is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer.”  

3. Task force Subcommittees and Membership  
   a. Multicultural Enhancement Fund (initial investment: $20,000)  
      i. Develop process for proposals and determine what activities should be supported (refer to Academic Plan, Goal 5)?  
      ii. Potential activities to fund:  
         1. Diversity Teaching Fellows Program and Mentor Program  
         2. Faculty development (individual, department, task force, or college level)
3. Offer a university-wide faculty development workshop (January?)
4. Mentoring program for students to prepare for careers as professors
5. Student and faculty projects that focus on recruitment and retention issues (e.g., videos, marketing projects, etc.)
6. Development of STEM faculty
7. Provide matching funds with other diversity initiatives on campus
8. Refer to p. 27 of the Academic Plan for activities to support: promotion of multicultural curricular and co-curricular programs, workshops, etc.
9. Development of mentor and protégé programs

iii. Subcommittee will develop the specific guidelines for the fund and make recommendations to the task force. Members include: Anita Jackson, Earl Smith, Jasmine Mena, and Alycia Austin. Others are encouraged to join.

b. Advancing Multicultural Competencies and Curriculum Development
   i. Working with University, college, and department curriculum committees, how do we diffuse the multicultural learning competencies developed by the task force?
      1. Work has already begun in the revision of the General Education Committee to incorporate multicultural competency
      2. Other ways to diffuse the competencies:
         a. Invite curricular committees to a half-day forum that will introduce and discuss how to build these competencies in their curricula
         b. Hold an Academic Summit on building these competencies into the curriculum
         c. Have a series of topical lunches/sessions with panels and speaker on building these competencies into the curriculum
         d. Faculty Fellows Program that will become leaders around campus for incorporating multicultural competency in the curriculum
         e. Develop metrics and rubrics to guide our efforts in assessing student learning in multicultural competency
         f. Have faculty who are in accredited programs that have multicultural competency standards assist other programs
g. Invite curriculum committee members from
departments to task force meetings
h. Subcommittee: Laura Beauvais and Barb Silver.
    Others are encouraged to join.

4. Equity Council Report
   a. Laura will need suggestions/revisions by mid-June for submission to the
      Equity Council. Please send revisions through email.

5. Membership and Leadership of the task force
   a. Over the summer, think about possible leadership changes
   b. Let Laura know if you plan to continue to serve on the task force next
      year so that membership issues are resolved by September.
General Comments
This is an ongoing task force in the Division of Academic Affairs. Goal V of the URI Academic Plan, 2010-2015, *Ensure an Equitable and Inclusive Campus Community*, includes the following strategy: “Prepare the URI community to engage in a multicultural world and to understand human differences.” In this report, the term “diversity” refers to “disenfranchised/oppressed groups in the US society, including (but not limited to): class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and physical/mental ability.” “Multiculturalism” is meant to include global cultural awareness, not only multiculturalism restricted to within the U.S. Intercultural awareness is not mentioned, but should be included in the discussion. (URI has a world expert on Intercultural awareness, sensitivity and competence, Professor Guo-Ming Chen, Communications Studies.) In addition to the groups focused on in this report, recognition should be given to immigration aspects, intercultural, cross-cultural communities, and age bias. Also, inclusion of a focus area on sustainability is an important aspect to consider as it links to poverty.

Recommendations in Progress
A new position, Associate Vice President for Community, Diversity, and Equity, has been approved by the RI Board of Governors. A search is underway for that position, which is currently being filled by Kathryn Friedman, who is serving in an interim capacity. This step goes a long way toward development and implementation of the goal: “Promote and support learning about diversity throughout the curriculum.” The Vice President will strengthen and consolidate efforts to raise the consciousness about privilege, bias, and mutual respect in the URI community; enhance the diversity of the URI community; promote a welcoming and respectful community; and be a leader in ensuring that the academic and co-curricular experiences of all students reflect understanding of multicultural perspectives and value of diversity. The general education program that is being created by the General Education Committee has included competencies in Diversity and Equity.

Recommendations in Need of Faculty Involvement
The committee plans to create a climate for diversity, and design a small diversity forum on campus. Such a forum will allow an academic discussion to take place and offer the opportunity for all views to be expressed. The building of a campus climate for diversity should include trust-building among all groups on campus, not just the groups identified as diverse or multicultural.

The competencies given in this report [see the full report of the committee] should be shared with, refined, and broadened by groups on campus that would possibly use them in course development, for example, committees working on Grand Challenge courses and major courses in various programs. Consideration should be given to developing a minor in diversity as well as learning about alternative learning styles and how they relate...
to people from diverse backgrounds.

**Recommendations In Need of Resources**
The Task Force’s report, “Framework for Multicultural Learning in the Curriculum”, should be used as a guide by the Interim Vice President for Community, Equity, and Diversity that establishes the URI community’s strongest recommendations.