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 communities strongest recommendations.