Continuation of discussion: What two to three issues do we want to work on this year?

The task force participated in a brainstorming session on the first two issues at our March 10th meeting. The notes from that meeting were reviewed and changes were suggested. These changes are incorporated below in **bold italics**.

Overview: What actions might the task force take this year to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus, particularly within academic affairs?

1. **In what manner could or should the academic community, including faculty and administration, formally acknowledge and recognize faculty activities in the areas of teaching, research and scholarship, and service that directly and effectively address diversity, equity, and multiculturalism at URI and beyond?**

   - Faculty can write narratives in the promotion and tenure materials regarding how they serve diverse populations (e.g., raise funds, *faculty mentoring*, provide scholarships and other opportunities for underrepresented students, etc.)
   - Better publicity of the work that faculty perform in community, diversity, and equity
   - Add performance on community, diversity, and equity issues as a fourth component to teaching, scholarship and research, and service performance expectations of faculty
   - Workload statements are not aligned with promotion and tenure expectations. If we want to enhance faculty participation in community, diversity and equity work, then it has to be acknowledged and given credit in department workload statements
Faculty can examine diverse sources of knowledge and research methodologies in their scholarship as a way to contribute to community, diversity, and equity work.

Present a consistent message on “community, diversity, and equity” similar to the “Think Big, We Do” brand.

In letters of appointment for all faculty hires, add expectations in multiculturalism, diversity, and equity work and evaluate subsequent performance against these expectations. **A suggested statement to add to appointment letters:** “URI is committed to building and sustaining a community based on inclusiveness, equity, and diversity. We expect all new faculty to engage with students and colleagues in ways that reflect these values that are central to our identity and mission. These key values are part of the guiding vision of President and embedded within the goals and strategies of the University’s Academic Plan (see enclosed copy).” We also need to provide a definition of multiculturalism, diversity, and equity, possibly by linking to a website where these concepts are defined.

It was suggested that we add a statement to the faculty and staff review process that highlights the importance of diversity work to the University. Such a statement for the faculty might be the following: “Consistent with the President’s vision and the goals in the Academic Plan, meaningful and explicit contributions that advance multiculturalism, diversity, and equity as part of a faculty’s teaching, research and scholarship, and/or service are especially valued. Demonstrated commitment to this work is shown by providing evidence that support the impact or outcomes of this work.” We also need to provide a definition of multiculturalism, diversity, and equity, possibly by linking to a website where these concepts are defined. For language changes in the promotion and tenure forms, Faculty Senate and the AAUP may need to be consulted.

Include in faculty position descriptions the importance of work in multiculturalism, diversity, and equity. This statement would not be a job qualification but a value statement of the URI community. Suggested language that the URI ADVANCE “Faculty Recruitment Handbook” recommends: “We hope to attract applicants who can teach in a diverse University community and have demonstrated ability in helping students from diverse backgrounds succeed. We are committed to building a multicultural workforce and strongly encourage women, racial/ethnic/gender minorities, persons with disabilities, and covered veterans to apply. The University of Rhode Island is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer.” Roxanne Gomes and Kathryn Friedman should be consulted on adding such language to job ads/descriptions as well as training for search committees.

Engage the Faculty Senate to add language to the University Manual that indicates that multiculturalism, diversity, and equity work is valued in faculty performance. The Student Senate leadership is taking a significant role in promoting this work and so should the Faculty Senate. Can this issue be a topic
of discussion with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting with the Provost?

- In addition to developing the above language to add to the University Manual, to appointment letters, and to the faculty review process, we need to develop a strategy to promote this work.

- **Encourage a culture of mentoring within departments**

2. **What incentives might be created (or disincentives might be removed) to support faculty that make meaningful contributions in diversity, equity, and multiculturalism on campus?**

- **Develop a funding source to support a variety of diversity activities**
- Provide mini-grants to faculty to develop courses
- Model a “Distinguished Multicultural Scholars” program after “Distinguished International Visiting Scholars” program
- Start Multicultural Fellows Program similar to fellows program with John Hazen White Sr. Center for Ethics and Public Service
- Award teaching assistantships to faculty who participate in community, diversity, and equity work
- Allocate a certain percentage of assistantships to diverse students (CELS)
- Re-design courses to infuse multicultural content throughout the curriculum
- We need to be careful of providing monetary incentives for every good deed
- Provide travel funds to faculty who have supported diverse students in their research
- Encourage junior faculty to get involved in service activities associated with community, diversity, and equity issues
- Discourage the practice of mentoring junior faculty to avoid participation in service work, maybe especially among faculty of color
- Eliminate bias of those who make decisions on workload assignments and performance
- Visit other institutions to see how community, diversity, and equity are infused in the curriculum, especially in disciplines where this infusion may seem difficult
- Initiate Diversity Teaching Fellows Program, similar to Online Teaching Fellows Program
- Pull faculty together to share ideas and experiences regarding community, diversity, and equity with regard to philosophy, methodologies, language, culture, race, ethnicity, etc.

After reviewing the notes on the issues above, the task force brainstormed answers to the question below.
3. How might we better communicate with colleges and departments to help them incorporate the multicultural competencies we developed last year in their work?

- Obtain feedback from college diversity committees on the multicultural competencies. Working through college diversity committees, we might develop topical forums that include not only curricular reform, but also ideas on recruitment, retention, and climate strategies.

- Suggested structure for a workshop for college diversity committees might include:
  - Structured set of questions to ask committee members: What do they think about the multicultural competency dimensions? What works now with regard to inculcating multicultural competencies in the curriculum? What have been some challenges and how have these challenges been addressed?
  - Panel presentation by those who are more advanced on developing curriculum
  - Provide an inventory about what is already being done and share these practices among the committees.

- Provide incentive grants to do the work on developing the curriculum
- Provide acknowledgement and public recognition for this work

Consulting with Kathryn Friedman, Barb and Laura, and other volunteers from the task force will develop workshops, a forum, etc. on how to design curriculum on multicultural competency.