Division of Academic Affairs  
Diversity Task Force  
February 9, 2011  
3:00-4:30  
President’s Conference Room, Green Hall  
Meeting Notes

Attendance: Donald DeHayes, Laura Beauvais, Alycia Mosley Austin, Karen Wishner, Kyle Kusz, Marcia Morreira, Peter Larsen, Joanne Lynch, Annu Mathew, Frida Bonaparte, Earl Smith, III, Jasmine Mena (for Trish Morokoff), Tammy Vargas Warner, Gerald Williams, Barbara Silver.  
Guests: Kathryn Friedman, Melvin Wade, and Glenn Gabbard.

1. Announcements
   a. Expanding the Circle Conference in March 2011 – The Provost is sponsoring a faculty member to attend this conference for education professionals focusing on LGBTIQQQ issues and will be attended by 160 colleagues representing 90 different colleges and universities. Karen DeBruin in URI’s Languages Dept. and on URI’s LGBTIQQQ subcommittee of the Equity Council will attend. The Provost is willing to sponsor someone yearly to attend this or other similar conferences.
   b. Laura handed out information on the Joseph B. and Toby Gittler Prize ($25,000) at Brandeis University that recognizes individuals who have made outstanding and lasting scholarly contributions to racial, ethnic, and/or religious relations. If you would like to nominate someone for this award, please visit [www.brandeis.edu/gittlerprize](http://www.brandeis.edu/gittlerprize) for a description of the program and the application form.

2. Conversation with Kathryn Friedman, Associate Vice President, Community, Diversity, and Equity

Kathryn spoke about various issues that she has discovered since joining URI in early January. In her experience, it was unusual to have a large task force like ours to deal with diversity issues in the Academic Affairs Division, which indicates our commitment to work on these issues. We have made a good start on framing the multicultural learning competencies and addressing how faculty can build these learning outcomes in the curriculum. We need to begin thinking about how to build multicultural competence at the faculty recruitment and hiring level and at the level of faculty development. We need to be speaking with the deans, chairs, and department search committees about building a diverse faculty. In addition, the promotion and tenure process guidelines must reflect recognition and reward for recruiting, retaining, and developing diverse faculty. Junior faculty must be mentored and we must deal with micro-aggressions against people of color, women, disabled, etc. Our work on the task force can expand to the level of assisting faculty and departments regarding who might
be invited to campus to give lectures on these issues, understanding the complicated challenges that diverse faculty face that majority faculty do not, and ultimately pushing this work through to the integral level of departmental functioning, not that done by just a few isolated faculty. What she is not hearing is what life is like here for people of color, women, etc. on a day-to-day basis. The silence is deafening. She suggests forming a commission of people of color at URI. The Division’s strategic plan around diversity issues need to be more fully developed and people held accountable for reaching goals. We need to develop a structure to institutionalize this work. She has ideas on building a stronger organizational structure so that the commissions don’t fade away after it was pointed out that we do have a dormant President’s Commission on Faculty, Staff, and Students of Color. We need to tackle climate issues and perhaps a different language to discuss these issues. We need to re-structure how we do Affirmative Action. In closing comments, we need to go back to why we started this task force—to make significant changes in Academic Affairs. We need our task force to infiltrate the division, to have the debates and discussions with our colleagues.

3. **Diversity Rubrics: Melvin Wade and Dr. Glenn Gabbard, the New England Resource Center for Higher Education, Multicultural Affairs Think Tank**

Melvin and Glenn presented rubrics that the New England Resource Center for Higher Education has developed to assess progress on diversity efforts. Melvin went through the different approaches of using the rubrics and encouraged us to consider using the tools presented here at URI.

4. **Diversity Workshops Follow-up: Barb Silver**

Barb met with Mary Cloud (NUR), Anita Derreza (PHM), and Kyle Kusz (HSS) to develop an assessment of and ideas for follow-up to the Diversity Workshops held in January. They suggested that future workshops should include more how-to information. They have developed suggested next steps for the colleges that have participated in the pilot program and suggestions for the other colleges that have not yet gone through the workshops. Barb provided a handout (following these notes) that described these possible next steps. The task force might develop a sub-group that will work on these issues with Barb.

5. **What two to three issues do we want to work on this year?**

The Provost lead discussion on concrete actions the task force might take this year to bring diversity, equity, and inclusion into the curriculum and into the classroom. Suggestions made during the discussion:

a. Use the diversity rubric presented by Melvin and Glenn
b. Deploy members of the task force to college committees to talk about the multicultural competencies and how they might be incorporated into curricula

c. Need to show how institutional value is placed on diversity issues.

d. Create incentives to support faculty in participating in diversity/equity efforts within Academic Affairs.

At our next meeting in March, we will have as our only agenda item the continued discussion of what two to three issues the task force will work on this year.
Academic Affairs College Diversity Workshop Follow-Up Meeting
Monday, Feb. 7, 2011
Anita Derreza, Pharmacy; Mary Cloud, Nursing; Kyle Kusz, HSS; Barb Silver, SLRC

Feedback from Workshop Attendees
• Good, knowledgeable facilitation
• Good foundation and framing of concepts
• Too elementary, especially for people committed to diversity
• Too much time spent on introductions and basic concepts
• No use of all the specific information provided by each college
• If not tailored to each college, as advertised, why not just have one workshop?
• Much overlap between 2 types of workshops

Moving Forward
• Need specific action plans developed for each college
• Need more of an education piece – specific information and resources about teaching cultural competency, recruitment and retention practices, climate change, etc.
• Perhaps have an interdisciplinary meeting combining colleges, with small work groups for each college to develop own agenda
• Need to understand what the institutional commitment is for diversity efforts. How do we get beyond where we are and beyond good intentions? How do we remain motivated and know something will actually come of our efforts? Diversity work must be supported in concrete ways, such as being included in annual reviews as a legitimate service contribution, etc.

Possible Next Steps
1. Offer a follow-up, interdisciplinary goal-setting meeting, combining 3 colleges. The agenda could roughly include, depending on time allotted:
   a. Education – information and resources on recruitment, retention, curriculum reform, climate change, research & data collection, etc. – broad overview
   b. Organization – ideas for committee structure, representation, developing overarching goals and specific objectives, benchmark data to collect, sample activities to achieve goals, etc. Plan for semi-annual forum of diversity committees or their chairs
   c. College Work Groups – each college use provided resources and templates to develop specific priorities and goals for a year, with preliminary agenda for their next meeting.
   d. Report out – goals, challenges, progress, advice
   e. Group Discussion – collaboration opportunities, annual assessment ("diversity report card"), annual diversity forum, funding opportunities, etc.
2. Offer a series of short seminars or topical lunches providing expanded, in-depth information on particular topics, with invited facilitators from within and outside URI, such as:
   a. Working with Diverse Clients/Patients
   b. Teaching Cultural Competency
c. Warming the Department Climate

d. Best Recruitment Practices

e. Health Literacy Assessment

f. Mentoring Strategies

g. Understanding Work-Life Balance as an Equity Issue

h. Perspectives on Stereotyping (film clip and panel discussion)