Division of Academic Affairs  
Diversity Task Force  
Wednesday, October 24, 2012  
9-10:30 PM, President’s Conference Room, Green Hall  
Meeting Minutes


1. Announcements:
   a. Lynne Derbyshire, Michelle Fontes-Barros, and Delores Walters are attending the Compact for Faculty Diversity Institute in Tampa, FL, to recruit underrepresented candidates for positions at URI and provide information about URI to candidates.
   b. Karen suggested that we might invite the new dean of GSO, Dr. Bruce Corliss, to one of our meetings to introduce him to the task force and learn about his plans for enhancing diversity, equity, and multiculturalism in the school.
   c. Kyle announced that there is a group on campus developing an American Studies minor and suggested that we work with them to help incorporate multicultural issues in the minor. Kyle has volunteered to be the link between the task force and this working group to exchange information. As it is intended to be an interdisciplinary minor, the group may need help in developing guidelines for interdisciplinary collaboration. JCAP is currently working on principles and guidelines for interdisciplinary work. Lynne Derbyshire said that she would like to see the development of a multicultural competency minor, which some students are already doing informally. This would be a valuable learning opportunity for many students, coupled with their majors. In addition, it is important to develop a graduate multicultural option/requirement to make our graduate students more competitive in their disciplinary fields. The Graduate School is working on a graduate certificate in multicultural competency. Are there current courses/programs that might serve as models (e.g., Psychology)? The application requirement in Psychology is a good feature, but we need to ensure students are prepared for these experiences.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from 9-25-12: Approved.

3. Discussion of the University’s demographics with Roxanne Gomes, Director of Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity, and Diversity. Roxanne handed out the Annual Affirmative Action Statistical Summary with year-end totals of the racial and ethnic diversity of the URI employee population, as well as applicant flow data (see attached). Yields are low, so we need to focus efforts
on ensuring offers are made to diverse candidates and making offers that are competitive with other institutions. Also, we may need to diversify search committees by including people outside the unit. Perhaps a member of the college diversity committee should serve on search committees within that college. Concern was brought up regarding a possible increasingly circumscribed role of department faculty in choosing colleagues. The charge to search committees is key.

With regard to searches, as a reminder, from our meeting minutes of 5-19-11: Recommended changes were made in the language that would be included on position descriptions:

“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.”

We need to follow up with Human Resources Administration to ensure that this statement is placed on ALL position descriptions. Also, we may need the deans to sign off on position descriptions to ensure that each job search has included this language. The Provost will bring this issue to the deans’ attention at the next Council of Deans.

The following agenda items will be taken up at the next meeting on Tuesday, November 27, 3-4:30. Also, we may want to develop ideas for a diversity day (with Naomi Thompson and the Student Affairs Diversity Committee) and charge a subcommittee with developing the events of the day in more detail. Attached after these minutes are ideas that Trish generated in an earlier task force meeting when this event was originally discussed.

4. Goals for the 2012-2013 Academic Year: see ideas from Meeting Minutes of Sept. 25, 2012

5. Evaluation of Subcommittee Structure
      i. Members: Alycia Austin, Anita Jackson, Jasmine Mena
   b. Advancing Multicultural Competencies and Curriculum Development
      i. Members: Trish Morokoff, Peter Larsen, Lynne Derbyshire, Betsy Cooper
   c. Faculty Development in Diversity and Multicultural Understanding
i. Members: Delores Walters, Laura Beauvais, Marcia Morreira, Anita Jackson, Barb Silver, Dania Brandford-Calvo, Tammy Vargas-Warner

6. New Business

Meeting Schedule (all meetings in the President’s Conference Room in Green Hall):
November 27, Tuesday, 3-4:30
December 19, Wednesday, 9-10:30 (this date and time may change)

Link to website: http://www.uri.edu/provost/planning/diversity.html
Trish's Ideas on a Diversity Forum from December 2009 Task Force Meeting

The Diversity Task Force of the Division of Academic Affairs is planning a Diversity Forum for a specific day during the week of April 5th, Spring 2010. A forum might look something like this: a campus wide event with diversity-related activities everywhere on campus. These could include:

- Teach-ins in classrooms in which all instructors would be invited to spend some time in class teaching on an aspect of diversity related to the topic of the course, or inviting someone into the class to teach on a diversity topic.
- Members of the community encouraged to wear native clothing
- Residence halls celebrate the cultural backgrounds of students by offering cultural information, food, or other programs related to the heritage of the residents.
- Events on the quad: a diversity quilt? Could we have a quilt with squares representing elements of diversity on campus or other symbol of diversity?
- Each college would sponsor programs in their academic buildings. Here are a few ideas related to different departments.
  - Global fashion show organized by TMD
  - Psychology: demonstrations of bias and judgments—take a computer test
  - Music—roots of music: folk, jazz, Latin
  - Film—social justice in film
  - Allied Health—health disparities; race/ethnicity and treatment
  - Sciences—how sciences interact with culture; women and minorities in the sciences
  - Communication—cross cultural communication
  - English—poetry and fiction from diverse authors
  - Sociology—societal racism, privilege
- I could envision a dance at the end of the day featuring music from different cultures
- We could invite a noted author to speak
- Here is a partial list of individuals who would need to be contacted:
  - Faculty—invite to participate in the teach-in
  - Deans—invite to plan events in their colleges
  - Residence hall directors and RA’s—plan events in the residence halls
  - Memorial union staff—the union could be the site for various events. If possible, food celebrating various ethnic cuisines could be on the menu at campus restaurants
  - Student Affairs Diversity organizations, e.g. Multicultural Center, GLBT Center, Women's Center
Student organizations including Asian Student Assoc., CIAO, Catholic Center, El Son Sensual Dance, GLBT-OutRI, Hillel, Indian Student Assoc., LASA, Leadership and mentor program for women of color, Muslim Student Assoc., NASO, PINK Women, Uhuru Sasa, Korean Graduate Student Assoc. among others.

Here are some links I found:

http://web.mit.edu/csd/CSD/Homepage.html
http://technologysource.org/article/university_2_diversity/
http://www.regent.edu/news_events/?article_id=423