Division of Academic Affairs
Diversity Task Force
Tuesday, September 25, 2012
3-4:30 PM, President’s Conference Room, Green Hall
Minutes

Present: Kyle Kusz, Cheryl Wilga, Delores Walters, Marcia Morreira, Jasmine Mena, Peter Larsen, Trish Morokoff, Alycia Austin, Laura Beauvais, Donald DeHayes, Chris Hunter, Karen Wishner.

Guest: Naomi Thompson, Associate Vice President for Community, Equity, and Diversity.

1. Announcements: Diversity Week is next week; Naomi Thompson is our new CDO and joined us later in the meeting. Report on last year’s work has been distributed. Please send any changes or edits to Laura.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from 5-15-12: approved.

3. RFP for Multicultural Enhancement Fund: approved the RFP with changes in the funding cap allowed. Suggested language: “While no specific funding cap is imposed at this time, support will likely be provided for about 6-10 projects.”

4. Membership of Task Force: introductions of new members. The Provost provided the history and background of the task force. Highlights of the committee’s work were described. Task force members were encouraged to invite colleagues to join the task force.

5. Subcommittees: are these still the right committees?
   a. Multicultural Enhancement Funds
      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

Subcommittee 2 wants direction for future work. Trish wants to re-direct efforts to college efforts to advance curriculum, but also to assist in recruitment and retention of faculty and students. Discussion followed. Can diversity committees actually lead
these efforts? How can this be done successfully? Can the diversity committees work with the curriculum committees? Be advisory to the dean? Since the colleges are at different stages of development on these issues, then different mechanisms might need to be used to be successful. Should these issues be built into the college bylaws? We must also consider graduate student multicultural competence development. Might the Graduate School develop and offer a multiculturalism and diversity course (elective) to ensure that our graduate students are prepared to work in academia in the 21st century (particularly Ph.D. students)? Another issue is attracting graduate students to attend URI by providing good support for them that is competitive with other institutions.

6. Introductions and Discussion with Naomi Thompson, Associate Vice President of Community, Equity, and Diversity (3:30)

She has been here a month, mostly information gathering. She posed a few questions for the committee to consider:

   a. What is the institution doing well with regard to community, equity, and diversity?
   b. What is the institution not doing so well? What is the task force doing with other committees?
   c. What are the expectations of her role?
   d. What ideas does the task force have for improvement?
   e. How can I support you?

We have a lot of structure but how do we ensure that it works effectively and efficiently to have impact?

We are interested in curricular change.

How do curricular changes get processed? The curriculum is in the hands of the faculty. How do diversity committees navigate through the process of getting curricular changes made? It was suggested that some degree of lobbying with our colleagues is necessary to make changes.

Maintaining momentum has been problematic on this campus (e.g., ADVANCE grant). How do we continue to evolve these programs?

7. Goals for the 2012-2013 Academic Year. Some ideas include:

   a. Sponsor a speaker each year. Make an event around this opportunity. Two different foci: (1) scholarly work in this area; (2) teaching practices informed by diversity and multicultural issues. Example: Angela Dantoin Bauer’s visit in August.
   b. Develop recognitions practices and summarize our work on a website.
   c. Develop a Multicultural Fellows Program
d. Grant writing subcommittee? Ask the URI Foundation for guidance on granting agencies. Maybe one or two members of the task force could work on developing a list of grant agencies who might support this work and make this available for faculty. Perhaps some members of the task force might be interested in writing grants to support our work.

Meeting Schedule (all meetings in the President’s Conference Room in Green Hall):
September 25, Tuesday, 3-4:30
October 24, Wednesday, 9-10:30
November 27, Tuesday, 3-4:30
December 19, Wednesday, 9-10:30

Link to website: http://www.uri.edu/provost/planning/diversity.html