Division of Academic Affairs  
Diversity Task Force  
Wednesday, November 18, 2020  
3-4:30 PM  
Via Webex

1) **Present**: Vinka Craver, Don DeHayes, Mary Grace Almandrez, Anne Veeger, Brian Heikes, Jaunetta Hill, Kathleen McIntyre, Alycia Mosley Austin, Nelle Couret, and Dan Persaud, Trish Morokoff, Lynne Derbyshire, Gifty Ako-Adounvo, Mary Greaney, Furong Xu, Peter Larsen, Sean Rogers, Julia Lovett, Alisa Baron, Ashley Buchanan and Martha Elena Rojas.

2) **Announcements**  
   a) Welcome Furong Xu representing CEPS.  
   b) Faculty Senate survey on days to recognize on URI calendar. They’re looking for thoughts on which days (or events on campus) the University should be recognizing. Laura Meyerson chairs the committee so the email may come from her. Suggestions so far include Indigenous Peoples Day, Juneteenth, along with others.

3) **Approval of the Minutes of the October 20th meeting**: Motion to approve, Peter Larsen, seconded by Lynn Derbyshire. All in favor of approval.

4) **Old Business**  
   a) Faculty Diversity at URI – John Stringer, Director of Institutional Research presents. This is meant to help us in moving forward with faculty and staff searches. IR has been analyzing faculty and staff data with CED and Affirmative Action. Discuss regarding how race and ethnicity is collected. Two part question in the e-campus HR website; consistent with federal categories. There was a recommendation that the federal categories be expanded with the census but the Trump administration did not approve. URI uses the categories for IPEDS. Comparisons are provided regarding other institutions. We are asking faculty/staff to update their information via the HR portal. It’s also important as we look at the upcoming climate survey. We need to have an accurate picture of who our faculty and staff (and students) are. We’ve moved from 15.3% – 21.4% for diverse faculty (since 2015) but staff has remained flat. Most growth is happening in the Asian faculty population. African American and Latinx faculty growth is small. Concern about inability to accurately reflect faculty identify due to limited fields. The coding available in e-campus is problematic and we have a data accuracy problem. It is important to recognize that the identity of our faculty is nuanced and has intersectionality. URI should make room for discussion and nuances relative to diversity and identity. There are 2 aspects to consider: we are federally obligated to collect race and ethnicity; we can collect individual identity in different ways – need to make the decision as an institution and put the resources behind collecting this data. Slide presentation of faculty diversity by rank, race and ethnicity. Percentages are not helpful because it represents 2 or 3 people. It’s a misleading message for Black, Lantinx.

   We also need to look at faculty who are hired in non-tenure track positions.
Data collected through HR, and changes would need to go through HR, AA and be implemented by ITS. We don’t have data demographic information for part time faculty. NECHE / IPEDS commented that we need to do a better job at collecting this. Can we provide demographics by college? IR is working on improving data collection for faculty and staff but want to be mindful of confidentiality when it gets granular. May become identifiable at college level. The data helps us understand what we need to do better. The Campus Climate survey will encourage faculty and staff to update their information in e-campus.

Data is useful and it’s important to aggregate at a higher level, however we need to be aware of what we have in our own departments to address this disparity. It’s unthinkable that some departments have no underrepresented faculty in their unit at this time. Need to look at data at the department level so that we can find out where we are making progress and where we’ve made no progress. Existing racial/ethnic boxes provided don’t work for all faculty. There is a issue with the accuracy of the data so we are starting with the climate survey. University of Michigan has a complex example of the identity schema or we can use an open text format to better allow faculty to share their identity. We will need to make choices as a community on this moving forward. We want to be mindful regarding how we talk about this data in the context of identity.

b) Revised Multicultural Faculty Fellows RFP
Provost discusses deep dive into existing program to maintain what is of value and correct was is not of value. Challenges and unintended consequences have been identified through conversations with former fellows, faculty, deans, etc. The initial program was well intentioned but resulted in unintended consequences that we want to restructure. An example is that it was the fellows job to implement diversity programs within the college. This creates a cultural tax on the MFF so we removed that from the fellow’s job description and put it on the hosting department. There was also confusion about their role in the department, expectations of the position and the process for transitioning to a tenure-track position. Some faculty are also making the assumption that any multicultural faculty that is hired was done so through this program. Provost notes that the program has had value but if we can expand and re-write it, that would be beneficial. Comments from the group: Focus on newly minted PhD could be problematic for those in STEM as those faculty are expected to have multiple years of research post-doc. Could make career stage discipline specific, so that flexibility exists to allow those who have prior post-doc experience. Departments would specify in their proposal. In the Humanities, individuals usually have teaching experience, but not necessarily a post-doc. We need to continue MFF program as many great people have come through the program. Strong support for a cohort model, it is a minoritizing experience to be a fellow, being part of a cohort can resolve some of that.
Need an Advance-like structure, supported/resourced at the Provost level, to support the cohort. Until we do a better job in our regular searches, we should continue with a cohort model.

We have identified some databases that would be good for MFF recruiting, allowing us to see demographics of graduating PhDs in each discipline by institution. NSF also collects race and ethnicity data in the Survey of Earned Doctorates and IPEDS also has that information by institution and zip code. This will help to see if we are tapping into the potential candidate pool and outreach.

Cluster hires – Does the department have input for hires for a coordinated search? In the past clusters have been built around thematic areas: Islamic Studies, Health across lifespan, etc. Those weren't built around ethnicity.

We have some departments that are particularly low on representation, can we use a cluster-hire approach for these departments?

c) Funding for ABD/recent PhD guest speakers
   Need to have more people (potential candidates) to give talks — use the funds we have from AADTF with the low cost of virtual presentations, this is a good time.
   Increasing the visibility of recent PhDs and devote funds having an increase presence for a pre-search network.

5) The meeting adjourned at 4:06 PM.