Division of Academic Affairs  
Diversity Task Force  
Thursday, February 7, 2019  
3-4:30 PM  
President’s Conference Room, Green Hall  
Minutes

Present: Don DeHayes, Laura Beauvais, Jacqueline Britto, Peter Larsen, Sean Rogers, Marty Rojas, Alycia Mosley Austin, Mary Cloud, Dave Porter, Gifty Ako-Adounvo, Mary Grace Almandrea, Joanna Ravello, Lynne Derbyshire, Trish Morokoff

Guests: Mary Grace Almandrez, Joanna Ravello,

1. Announcements

Don provided a brief update regarding Governor Raimondo’s proposed budget, specifically focused on RI Promise at CCRI and RIC.

Gifty introduced herself and her plans for global initiatives. She is joining the task force to ensure that there is communication and coordination on diversity, inclusion, and global efforts on campus.

Later in the meeting, Gifty provided a description of the faculty travel program that she is developing with the Global Steering Committee. Details on the program will be distributed to faculty in the next week or two.

2. The minutes of the December 4 meeting were approved.

Don and Laura will pull out of past reports and minutes the major accomplishments of the task force over the years and distribute to the task force and others who would like a summary of our accomplishments. This will be done at the end of the academic year.

3. Diversity and Inclusion Badge Program for Graduate Students—Alycia Mosley Austin

Alycia provided a description and update of this program. The program consists of 5 2-hour workshops required to earn a “badge.” Ten workshops are planned this year with 30 students signed up.

Discussion: Could we have a program for faculty to earn a badge? And staff? Could we offer at least the first workshop to faculty? The task force has shown interest in providing some funds to the workshop participants in appreciation for doing this work. Laura will poll task force members to find out if and how much support we are willing to allocate to the 12-13 workshop presenters. We will be able to use some of the funding
from the $20,000 allocated to the Multicultural Enhancement Fund. Annemarie’s workshops on inclusive pedagogy are also being supported by this funding, so we may have about $10,000 left to provide the badge workshop facilitators.

4. Special Guest: Mary Grace Almandrez, Interim Chief Diversity Officer (3:30)—Overview of the Academic Affairs Diversity Task Force

Mary Grace provided information on her background and what she has been doing in the last three weeks at URI. Right now, she is still on her listening tour. Joanna and Mary Grace have asked to join the task force, which was endorsed by the task force. Mary Grace handed out a document on her progress to date.

An open forum will be scheduled for March. At the forum, she will provide feedback on what she has heard about diversity issues on campus. An online feedback system is being established to learn what is going on throughout the university.

The commissions and councils will be reconstituted as advisory boards. The structure and charges of these boards are to be established.

The Diversity Task Force’s accomplishments were discussed:

- Developed a set of multicultural learning competencies that were eventually incorporated into the new general education program;
- Creation of the Multicultural Enhancement Fund. It was suggested that we might take some of this funding to do a workshop similar to the one offered in the graduate student badge program, e.g., micro-aggressions. We might engage ATL in the process of developing faculty skills and competencies and partner with departments or other groups to carry out this work. How do we change the conversation to learning about diversity and inclusivity as something we must do in our work, not as add-ons? In addition, this work should be measured and evaluated. Universal design may be a useful conceptual framework to guide this work.
- Multicultural Faculty Fellowship Program was described by Trish.

Needs that we have not addressed: campus climate survey needs to be done. Mary Grace says that she will hire a grad student to look at all the data available on campus and conduct focus groups with students on current classroom climate and then determine next steps in conducting a campus climate survey.

Course evaluation taskforce can look into the issue of measuring student perceptions of inclusive climate as part of assessing teaching effectiveness.

5. New business
For our next meeting: ask Annemarie Vaccaro to provide an update on her offerings of the inclusive workshops; prepare to announce the RFP for the Multicultural Faculty Fellows Program for hiring in Fall 2020.

Link to website: http://web.uri.edu/academic-planning/planning-intiatives/diversity/

Dates for Spring 2019 Meetings. Location: President’s Conference Room in Green Hall.
Wednesday, March 20, 3-4:30
Tuesday, April 23, 3-4:30