Division of Academic Affairs
Diversity Task Force
Tuesday, March 7, 2017
3-4:30 PM
President’s Conference Room, Green Hall

Minutes

Present: Don Dehayes, Laura Beauvais, Fernando Guzman, Michelle Fontes Barro, Dania Brandford Calvo, Kendall Moore, Furong Xu, Kelly Matson, Faye Boudreaux-Bartels, David Bidwell, Lynne Derbyshire, Peter Larsen, David Bidwell, Barb Silver, Janie Palm.

Guest: Annemarie Vaccaro

1. Minutes of the February, 1, 2017 meeting were approved

2. Announcements: Alumni of Color Panel event on March 30 at 5:30 in MU Ballroom. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse was at a community event sponsored by the AAUP on President Trump’s Executive Order on immigration. People were allowed to ask questions and have their concerns brought forward. Senator wants to be an asset to us and provide support for the University.

3. Discussion of Multicultural Competency Professional Development. Guest: Professor Annemarie Vaccaro.

Prof. Vaccaro brought forward a more detailed proposal for us to discuss. Six workshops were drafted (see attached). Trish mentioned that the Psychology Department had offered a similar set of workshops in the past. It will be best to institutionalize such programs so that they are not “one-off” programs. Developing common language may be crucial. Also, how do we get people on the same page with similar goals and recognition that there are challenges in this area. Assessment of the program will be necessary to show results and that can convince others that this is a worthwhile program in which to participate. Student feedback may help faculty understand the importance and relevance of this training. Prof. Vaccaro includes this student input in the training. What are the rewards and incentive structures for motivating faculty and staff to attend such training? Maybe professional pride as educators; adopt a department model, with some incentives; training during regular department meeting times—makes it more legitimate and efficient for faculty; PR and effective marketing may help to normalize this program—need to publicize that this is a concerted effort in which multiple units are participating. Staying focused on the academic side (faculty) is important as much of this work is done in student affairs units. Demographics are increasingly changing—may encourage faculty to get more training in this area. Data driven research is important for some faculty. Also, grounding what we are doing in best practices of good institutions. Framing and presenting workshops in a non-threatening way are important, also. This could be framed as effective leadership training, and as a body of knowledge that all of our students need to know across the disciplines.

How to implement effectively: she suggests an adopt a department model; it might also work with new faculty and graduate students. Both/and model is appropriate. 2 hour
sessions are better but she could do an hour and a half. Laura and Annemarie can work on implementation models. Setting up reading groups around these issues may also accelerate development in multicultural competency.

4. Multicultural Faculty Fellowship—finalize RFP—It is final and will go out at the end of this week, with due date of April 24.

5. Update on Other Initiatives

   a. Diversity seminar program for graduate students—up and running; students will be given “milestones” on their transcripts. Advertising and PR from the Graduate School is needed. There are PR classes or independent studies that may be able to assist in a campaign.

   b. ACE Initiatives—Development of part time tenure track faculty terms—support guest speaker Joan Hebers on campus visit? Barb Silver

       Work/Life Committee is asking the AADTF to embrace this idea and hope that we would endorse and/or support a visit to campus, perhaps next fall. Marketing and PR of all the programs offered by the committee would be a good idea. Communications & Marketing Department and/or Alumni Office may be able to help in publicity and marketing. The task force endorsed supporting this speaker.

   c. New faculty support—Michelle Fontes Barros

       Update: a focus group with new faculty is being held this month, facilitated by Eric Kaldor and Michelle to learn what they need to be supported at the University. Potential question: investigate if some new faculty are feeling overburdened by being asked to do cultural work. Also point out the expert advising program as it is not getting much use.

6. New Business

Link to website:  [http://web.uri.edu/academic-planning/planning-initiatives/diversity/](http://web.uri.edu/academic-planning/planning-initiatives/diversity/)

Remaining Spring Semester Meetings:

Wednesday, April 5, 3-4:30 PM, Room change: Thomson Boardroom, Ballentine Hall (3rd floor)
Tuesday, May 2, 3-4:30 PM, President’s Conference Room, Green Hall