

University of Rhode Island Accessibility Task Force

Meeting Date: January 23, 2024
Meeting Time: 9:30am-11am
Notice of Meeting:
Location: Green Hall President's Conference Room

Meeting Summary

Present: Dorca Smalley (Chair), Erin Earle, Robin Santini, Nina Tobin, Terry Wild, Paul DePace (Present via WebEx), Markeisha Miner

Absent: Andrew Davies, Evans Boateng Boakye, El Fernekees

The proposed agenda circulated in advance of the meeting was amended to include reviewing the December meeting summary.

I. December Meeting Summary

The task force reviewed the meeting summary from its December meeting and noted necessary corrections. Those corrections will be incorporated and the December meeting summary will be presented for approval at the next meeting.

II. Governance

- a. Code of Conduct/Guidelines -Pending Approval from Undergraduate Member
This matter is tabled for further discussion when our undergraduate student member can be present. Future meetings will be scheduled with student members' spring semester course schedule in mind.

III. Establishing a Baseline

Chair Smalley presented an overview of URI's compliance framework for fulfilling obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Rehabilitation Act. Progress to date includes:

- Establishing accessible weather guidelines.
- Work to define scope and jurisdiction.

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- Accessibility requests were incorporated into the \$16M University's budget request submitted to the state. The Governor's \$7M proposal would not fund the full request but does include \$1.5M for accessibility initiatives.

The task force then discussed the presentation and potential advocacy priorities, including resource allocation. The need to enhance communication about the great work being done is important focused on resources to support community members' success. Determining where and how to focus communications so they are best received and retained by community members is a perennial task.

IV. Defining Accessibility

The task force began a discussion of essential components of a potential URI definition of accessibility as part of efforts to define and clarify what diversity, equity, and inclusion mean at URI. The civil rights and compliance framework is but one aspect. The University's mission, vision, values, aspirations and culture are essential aspects.

- Fostering an inclusive, people-centered culture that leads to a true sense of belonging.
- Individual communities positioned for success in fulfilling their goals, including the essential requirements of the program of education and duties of their role.
- Removing obstacles that prevent full participation in all aspects of the University community.
 - o Including financial accessibility
 - o Accessible design in academics (inclusive curriculum)
- Promoting access and equal opportunity is a shared responsibility of each member of the community through
 - o Accessible design
 - o Digital accessibility
 - o Accessibility of service delivery and resources, and
 - o Employment
- Reasonable efforts to accommodate

V. Next Steps and Task Force Recommendations for Agenda Items

The task force will discuss developing a strategic approach to communications and marketing of essential information concerning accessibility, including assessment, to a future meeting agenda.

Program and activity description. Syllabus audits. How do the recommendations benefit all and minimize burden

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.