

University Diversity Council Agenda
May 15, 2020
WebEx

Attendees: Gifty Ako-Adounvo, Mary Grace Almandrez, Jacquie Britto, Marland Chang, Erin Earle, Maling Ebrahimpour, Michelle Fontes, Nisa Ghonem, Brian Heikes, Holly Nichols, Eileen Orabone, Kristina Perrelli, Jen Riley, Mary Stanley, Jacqui Tisdale, Annemarie Vaccaro

Absent: ~~Lulu Alryati~~, Corey Fernandez, Trish Morokoff, Martha Elena Rojas

I. Welcome and Announcements

- a. **Welcome to New Members** – Dr. Mary Grace Almandrez welcomed the new members to the Council: Dr. Nisa Ghonem (Graduate Council representative), Dr. Kristina Perrelli (Director, New Student Programs), and Dr. Jacqui Tisdale (Assistant Dean, Outreach & Intervention). Dr. Perrelli and Dr. Tisdale have been invited to provide updates on student support during this COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Almandrez reminded the group that we are still searching for someone to fill the classified staff representative for this Council and that if anyone knows someone that might be interested to please let her know.
- b. **UDC Webpage** – Dr. Almandrez let the Council know that CED is working on having a centralized diversity website, but that for now, UDC minutes and membership are on the CED website at www.uri.edu/diversity.
- c. **Campus Climate Survey** - Dr. Almandrez announced that there was a question as to whether or not we would move forward with the timeline that we had outlined for the campus climate survey. She would like to put the campus climate survey on the next meeting agenda, as she would like to speak with Dr. Rankin to see if it would be feasible to still proceed in the Fall, as planned.
- d. **Focus Group Information** - Dr. Almandrez let the council know that a graduate student completed a capstone project that highlighted information from student groups as to what their experiences and perceptions were around diversity issues and inclusion at the University. She would like to follow up with the student for permission to share it with the UDC and other stakeholders with a caveat that this would be confidential and findings would be used to inform our discussion
- e. **Text Suggestions** – All members of the UDC received a copy of the book, *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice* from CED. Dr. Almandrez announced that CED has put some funds aside to purchase another book for the coming year and welcomed suggestions from the group.

II. Approval of Minutes – Minutes were approved as written.

III. Student Support Updates – Dr. Tisdale provided an update on what resources are available to students during this COVID-19 pandemic. She indicated that so far they have provided students with approximately \$40,000 worth of Student First funding in the form of gift cards to grocery stores, and was able to connect it to our financial aid system, but only if the students did not owe money to the University. She said that the average amount given has been between \$500-\$2,000 and the higher amounts have been given to graduate students who said they were lacking funding for the summer or they lost significant funding. They have also been helping international students who had limited options to travel home and did not have sufficient funding for summer housing. She also said that students who were on CWS and graduate assistants received their last paychecks on May 1st and none of our students are eligible for unemployment unless they worked an off-campus job. In addition, HRL is allowing graduating seniors who lived on campus and have not been able to find employment to stay on campus through at least the first summer session, possibly through the second session as long as they show that they are currently looking for a job. She indicated that Rhody Outpost is in good shape with food and paper product donations, but they are in need of disinfecting wipes and cleaner.

Dr. Kristina Perrelli provided an update on what UCAS is doing to reach out to new and current students to prepare them for the Fall. She said that they have created an on-line module for orientation for incoming students and it will provide students with resources at URI and will be updated as they progress. Transfer students are being notified and getting to enroll in courses three days after they give their deposit. The Academic Enhancement Center moved all of their tutoring services to be remote and will continue through the summer. They are working on what the URI 101 content will look like in the Fall. They will include content that would be covered in orientation but working to develop a course that could be delivered in person or not. A question was asked about whether or not the Graduate School was approaching this in the same way with graduate students, or can this information be shared with them. Dr. Perrelli said that typically there is no orientation for graduate students, but as part of the new virtual on-line orientation, the University purchased a module system with the COVID money where they can create different modules for the students. Therefore, if someone wanted to be involved, they could share it with them. Another question was asked about URI 101 being reconfigured and was it going to be how it was being delivered or is new material going to be presented to students. Dr. Perrelli indicated that they would like to figure out what is going to be missing in orientation and how New Student Programs can integrate that into URI 101. There also was a question on whether there was diversity content in either the orientation or URI 101 class. Dr. Perrelli stated that this would be a topic that could be discussed with the UDC as to how diversity content could be presented to students in URI 101 and orientation.

IV. UDC Co-Chair – Dr. Almandrez talked about the draft of the responsibilities of the co-chair with the changes that members made, and that she added a few additions to the draft. There was discussion about how there should be collaboration between the UDC and the colleges, specifically with the deans. It was discussed that this committee will need to figure out how the UDC can collaborate with the college diversity committees. It was stated that there should be some goals that we all are aiming for. There was discussion about the nomination of Dean Jen Riley being the co-chair of the UDC. It was agreed that Dean Riley will be the new co-chair.

V. **Legislative Report** – Dr. Almandrez reported that she had presented the legislative report to the Board of Trustees at their last meeting. She highlighted items such as the Diversity Dialogues, the work that the ATL office has done, including the inclusive pedagogy training by Anne Marie Vaccaro, the Multicultural Faculty Fellows program, and the college liaisons highlighting Assistant Dean Michelle Fontes’ position in CELS. She also highlighted the University Diversity Council and the campus climate survey.

The following questions were asked by the Board:

- What is our goal for recruiting international students?
- What is our goal for recruiting students of color?
- What is our goal for recruiting faculty of color?