

**University of Rhode Island
Equity Coalition Meeting**
November 30, 2007, 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Minutes

Attending: President Carothers, Pamela Rohland, Andrew Winters, Mailee Kue, Paula Vallieri, Roxanne Gomes, Trish Morokoff, Gerald Williams, Frank Forleo, Harold Bibb, Karol Leuzarder, Lynne Derbyshire, Barb Silver, Grace Frenzel, Padma Venkatramen, Karen Stein, Gail Faris

Remarks by President Carothers

It has been noted that all initiatives in the URI Strategic Plan except the Inclusion initiative have specific action plans. We need to do this also for the Inclusion initiative, and this is a good group to oversee that.

The Strategic Plan is "dynamic" - that is, the specifics of its goals and action items can be modified as we examine them more closely.

History leading up to this meeting (Grace Frenzel facilitating)

Forming an equity coalition is part of the Strategic Plan of the President's Commission on the Status of Women. Initial coalition included representatives from President's Commission on the Status of Women, President's Commission on the Status of People of Color, Affirmative Action Committee, Harassment Committee, and ADVANCE. Expansion of membership to anyone who represents an equity initiative at URI will broaden the scope and impact of inclusion efforts, and avoid duplication by coordinating our work on common issues/efforts.

Listing of topics that could be pursued by the Equity Coalition (Lynne Derbyshire and Barb Silver facilitating)

1. Examine the various models for promoting diversity on campus, with the creation of a chief diversity office as a possible option. We must think very broadly about the concept of diversity, including diversity of political positions, and we must identify a model that best fits the culture at URI. Create a working group to discuss position description for a chief diversity officer. Consider the functioning of the Director of Affirmative Action.
2. Examine the potential for allowing "opportunity hiring" or "nimble hiring" that fits the diversity goals at URI.
3. Review and prioritize the suggestions made at the Affirmative Action Diversity Workshop on November 2.
4. Collect, review, and synthesize the various strategic plans for diversity on campus.
5. Create a network of mentors to be liaisons / using language of diversity and inclusion "Changing the culture" grant.
6. Extend diversity initiatives to the department or unit level.
7. Engage in development efforts - identify funding, identify someone who has major

responsibility to advance fund raising.

8. Review how we define "diversity." Consider political and social class differences when considering diversity
9. Address the economic crises that face some students.
10. Establish clear priorities for using the fixed amount of available funds, including determining what cannot be funded at the present time.
11. Consolidate Affirmative Action / diversity efforts.
12. Review admissions standards for bias. Make need blind admission a university goal.
13. Examine admission requirements for majors/colleges for progressively "higher" standards that bar some qualified students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
14. Establish diversity as an infrastructural value, so that everyone is held accountable. Promote fundamental cultural change and ensure that the language of inclusion is embedded in the operating climate of the University
15. Infuse accountability and assessment outcomes for diversity at all levels
16. Educate the majority population to work within a diverse community. Promote an understanding of cultural issues.
17. Focus on the student culture of the future (make the institution inviting to the younger generation) as well as the future profile of the workforce.

Immediate Action Items

1. It was suggested that the coalition be broadened to include representatives from:
 - Development (Michael Britt)
 - Alumni
 - Undergrad and grad students
 - Providence campus
 - Classified staff
2. Suggestion that the list of topics be organized into a few areas that can be addressed by subcommittees.
3. We will sponsor an "Open Space Day," inviting the campus community to provide input regarding the organization of diversity efforts on campus, to be held late January or early February or on Martin Luther King Day, January 21. Date should allow faculty, staff and students to attend; students might get class credit for attending.
4. The coalition will meet as a group in early January to further plan this event and further explore themes brought up today. The meeting will be held on a day that allows Abu Bakr and Ann Morrissey to attend.
5. The ADVANCE website will post all strategic plans and other pertinent URI diversity documents, as well as documents from other sources that are relevant to creating a diversity structure at URI. Notes regarding functioning of the Coalition will be circulated to the membership by e-mail.