

Meeting Minutes

Equity Council

Friday, October 1, 2010

1:00-3:00 p.m.

Student Senate Chambers, Memorial Union

Attendance: Trish Morokoff, co-chair, Gerald Williams, co-chair, Major Stephen Baker, Abu Bakr, Riley Davis, Lynne Derbyshire, Gail Faris, Frank Forleo, Ed Givens, Roxanne Gomes, Dan Graney, Helen Mederer, Ann Morrissey, David Oh, Eileen Orabone, John Pantalone, Jason Pina, Jessica Raffaele, Pam Rohland, Carolyn Sovet, Jacqueline Sparks, Bryana White, Andrew Winters, Chip Yensan,

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Minutes of the July 20, 2010 meeting were approved with the addition of Lynne Derbyshire to the list of those attending.
- 3) Announcements
 - a. Diversity Planning retreat was held August 30, 2010
 - b. Diversity Week October 4-8
 - c. Honors Colloquium on Race
 - d. President Dooley announced intent to hire an interim CDO
 - e. The Equity Council website is nearing completion.
 - f. There will be a candle-light vigil on Wednesday, October 6, 2010 at 7:00 pm on the Quad to remember GLBT youth who have recently taken their lives.

4) Confidentiality:

Trish reviewed the policy for confidentiality at meetings.

- a) No one will speak to the media concerning issues discussed at an Equity Council meeting unless agreed upon at the meeting.
- b) All discussion at Equity Council meetings will be confidential unless otherwise designated.
- c) Minutes will be made public after approval.

John Pantalone of the Journalism Department joined us for this meeting as he is writing an article for the alumni magazine on race relations at URI. Because he was attending our meeting as a media representative and our confidentiality policy precludes speaking to the media without agreement, there was discussion concerning whether he had the Council's agreement to attend the meeting. A consensus was reached that Mr. Pantalone would attend the meeting and treat everything he heard as confidential. It was agreed to put him on the agenda for the next meeting for questions and answers related to the article he is writing.

- 5) Update on nonviolent, direct action protest to demand University administration take immediate steps to ensure the safety and inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students, faculty and staff and Equity Council response: Riley Davis presented a summary of the results of the nonviolent action. She indicated that students have spent 9 days in the 24 hour room of the Robert L. Carothers Library and Learning Commons. Following a meeting yesterday with President Dooley, in which the students' demands were met, the students will end the sit-in. A committee chaired by Provost DeHayes will meet to review progress on the demands.

Andrew Winters then read the contents of a letter that had been sent to President Dooley from the organization Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) concerning potential legal concerns at URI.

- a. A resolution developed by the Access and Public Education Subcommittee was presented for endorsement. A motion to endorse the resolution was made and seconded. Discussion concerning the resolution ensued resulting in revisions. The resolution was amended as follows:

The Equity council recognizes that issues concerning discrimination, harassment, and safety of LGBTIQQ students, faculty, and staff cannot continue and swift intervention this semester on the part of the University administration must take place. The Equity council wholeheartedly supports LGBT students, faculty, and staff. In order to facilitate work on these issues including development of timelines, cultural sensitivity education, and other relevant issues, the Equity Council will form a subcommittee on LGBTIQQ Concerns. This subcommittee will work in conjunction with the staff of the GLBT Center to address these issues. The Equity Council agrees to join in the process of educating and sensitizing the University community to LGBTIQQ issues and persons.

The amended resolution was unanimously adopted.

- b. In accordance with the adopted resolution, members were asked to volunteer for the LGBTIQQ Concerns subcommittee. The following Equity Council members agreed to join the new subcommittee: Ann Morrissey, Roxanne Gomes, Andrew Winters, and Jessica Raffaele. Ann Morrissey agreed to convene the first meeting.
- 6) Bias Response Team Protocol. Dan Graney made a presentation on the Bias Response Team. He explained that this team connects individuals who report bias incidents to support. The website for reporting incidents is up and running and 9 incidents have been reported to date. There was

discussion concerning the BRT, especially with respect to the role of student involvement. It was agreed that students should not be members of the Bias Response Team, but should have the opportunity to provide input on procedures. It was resolved that the Bias Response Team should permit students to review the updated website procedures and contact Dan Graney if they have recommendations for revisions.

- 7) The Academic Affairs Diversity Task Force proposal for curricular revision was distributed prior to the meeting. It was agreed that Equity Council members should review this document for discussion at the next meeting.
- 8) Harassment Committee: A motion was made and seconded to form a Harassment subcommittee of the Equity Council. This subcommittee would consist of faculty, staff, and students who are trained to deal with harassment issues. The University Manual currently lists subcommittees to the Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Committee on Sexual Harassment and Racial and Ethnic Harassment. This motion would combine these into one Harassment committee that would become a subcommittee of the Equity Council rather than the Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Committee. The motion was unanimously endorsed. This motion requires writing new language for the University Manual and submitting it to President Dooley for his approval.