

Equity Council Minutes

October 23, 2013

3:00-4:30p.m,

Atrium 1, Memorial Union

Attendance: Michelle Fontes-Barros, co-chair, Mailee Kue, Annie Kosar, Amy Olson, Sarah Couch, Alycia Mosley Austin, Lisa Abreu Morel, Kyle Kusz, Liliana Costa, Faye Boudreaux-Bartels, Sarah Patterson, Delores Walters, Annemarie Vaccaro, Kayley Robsham, Kerri Hicks, Diane Kern, Anita Jackson, John Sears, Debbie Suggs, Garry Bozylinsky, Gerry Holder, David Hayes, Laura Beauvais, Roxanne Gomes, Eileen Orabone and Stephen Baker.

Introductions

The May 30, 2013 and September 26, 2013 meeting minutes were approved.

Updates from last meeting

- Sarah Couch-story on move
 - Update on the webpage regarding student of color
 - Brought in team from the home page
 - Unless relevant, each student is a student, faculty is a faculty, staff is a staff, etc.
 - Audio Description Project American Council of the Blind, Guidelines and Best Practices
 - “Describe individuals by using the most significant physical characteristics. Identify ethnicity/race as it is known and vital to the comprehension of content. If it is, then all main characters’ skin colors must be described—light-skinned, dark-skinned, olive-skinned. (Citing the race only of non-white individuals establishes “white” as a default and is unacceptable.”
 - Communications and Marketing will have a diversity training and some safe zone trainings
- John Sears reported
 - There is an occasional bias report
 - They are looking into programming and social justice education opportunities in the Residence Halls
- Co-Chair Elect Nominations
 - Diane Kern
 - Kyle Kusz
 - Ballot will be available at the next meeting
- Arming Campus Police
 - Should Equity Council take a stand?
 - Hand out ballots on whether the Equity Council should make a formal statement about arming campus police. It was voted that the Equity Council not take a stand on arming campus police.

- Major Baker
 - Campus police incident
 - Reported October 1-incident occurred a day earlier 21 year old African American student reported that three of his tires were slashed and the n word was put on his car
 - This was near Aldrich and Burnside Hall around 1AM
 - No evidence to prove who has done this and no solid leads at this point
 - They do have evidence of the vandalism itself and are keeping the case open
 - People were notified regarding this bias incident, student was referred to bias response team
- Jerry Holder spoke about cameras and whether they are working
 - Major Baker said system is not currently working and that IT is working on this.
 - Major Baker said his plan now is to fix the ones that we have available to work
 - If server for cameras cannot be fixed, they will ask for an emergency purchase of cameras.
 - Statement about safety to President
 - Roxanne proposed that Equity Council will draft a statement to the President regarding safety and cameras being operational.
 - Equity Council voted that they would do this.
 - Roxanne will work with Michelle on the wording regarding this letter.
- Structure Meeting
 - Would like as many people as possible to attend.
 - Conversation about how we will move forward from here.
 - Membership, By-Laws, Structures of meetings, etc.
 - 11/6/13-3PM in Student Senate Chambers
 - If you cannot attend, then please email Michelle with thoughts on these matters.
- Arming Campus Police
 - Please come to the forums regarding arming campus police.
 - Spoke about the increase in active shooter incidents, 14 so far in 2013.
 - Spoke about the importance of having the tools necessary to address these incidents.
 - Major Baker says this is about safety and equity and that the costs are justified.
 - The next forum regarding arming campus police is October 28 at 3:00 p.m. in Atrium 1, Memorial Union.
- J-Term-Dean Libutti
 - Yesterday afternoon, officially launched the new winter J Term at URI
 - Mini-semester that is not required and is optional. Jan 2-17 is when classes would begin.
 - 9 Travel course options for students
 - 22 courses, general education courses and others
 - Can register next Monday on ecampus
 - Max. amounts of credits is four during the J Term

- Have set aside \$50,000 of URI Grant money to offer towards these experiences for students, an alum has been willing to match if we raise another \$50,000. \$5,000 has been raised so far
- J Term will be added to the Spring term to assist them with federal funds.
- Students who are living on campus can live in residence halls and they are not being charged over winter break thanks to John Sears and his team.
- Students will be able to use summer and J Term to graduate on time which will save them money in the long run because currently only 40% of URI students graduate in four years on time.
- National rate of four-year graduates is even lower than this.
- Expectations letter was handed out
 - Opportunity for feedback
 - We approved these expectations without discussion.
 - Laminate copies and/or send them out with minutes.
 - Minutes for next few meetings will be Annie R and then further discussion will happen.
 - Eileen mentioned that they may try and hire a graduate student to take minutes at meetings.
- Delores Walters-Faculty Diversity Report
 - Strategic plan that would help in the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty was worked on per Naomi's request.
 - Goals and recommendations about this were handed out.
 - Statistics were discussed and it is evident that we need to work on recruitment and retention.
 - Recommendations include a webpage, would work closely with Affirmative Action on this website.
 - Certification process would be another possibility.
 - Assess campus climate survey.
 - Mentoring
 - Topical and off-line lunches
 - Work-Life
 - Passed out plan to take a look at
 - Faculty and Staff are included in these efforts.
 - Mailee asked whether domestic or international was included? Delores said info is available, but that they kept anonymity by not advising of the data to this extent.
 - Mailee said it would be good to look at this data and how it might affect results.
 - Kerri Hicks brought up whether other aspects of diversity, ability, lgbtq, class, etc. are being considered with this?
 - Delores indicated that this would be a decision best left to the committee.
 - Faye discussed that many of the President's Commissions are focused on recruitment and retention and that maybe we can work together on this concern?

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.