

MINUTES

Equity Council Meeting

Friday, February 17, 2012

1:00-2:30 p.m.

Thomson Board Room, Ballentine Hall

Attendance: Michelle Fontes-Barros, co-chair, Lynne Derbyshire, co-chair, Roxanne Gomes, Gerard Holder, Jody Lisberger, Melvin Wade, Delores Walters, Manjari Murali, Liliana Costa, Annie Russell, Karen Sherman, Trish Morokoff, Frank Forleo, David Hayes, Amy Olson, Anita Jackson, Linda Lyons, Vanessa Quainoo, Lisa Abreu Morel, Dan Trapani, Jason Pina, Kathryn Jervis, Gerald Williams, Joe Santiago, Major Stephen Baker, Ed Givens, Pamela Rohland, Laura Beauvais, Barb Silver, Annemarie Vaccaro and Abu Bakr.

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Minutes of the December 15, 2011 meeting were approved.
- 3) Confidentiality Policy

Michelle reviewed the policy for confidentiality:

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

4) Announcements:

1. Michelle asked if there could be no side conversations when others are speaking and to be respectful.
2. There was an Occupy URI event on access/affordability and there will be another meeting on February 23 in Rm. 205 White Hall. There will also be a nationwide event on March 1.
3. Barb Silver announced that the Work-Life staff survey has been completed and approved by the President and VPs. It will be coming out on February 23 and will be a 20-30 minute survey. She encouraged all staff to complete the survey.
4. Liliana Costa announced that the Division of Administration & Finance will be hosting a webinar on Wednesday, March 7 regarding Workplace Violence & Bullying.

5) **CDO Update**

Laura Beauvais reported that the search committee has narrowed the pool to 6 candidates that they will do phone interviews with. Their next meeting is February 23rd to discuss whom they will bring to campus.

6) **Update from Abu Bakr**

Abu Bakr reported on issues in Community, Equity & Diversity that he will be focusing on.

1. Abu talked about continued development of structures and communications within the CED unit. He indicated that Kathryn is continuing in an advisory capacity.
2. CED had a retreat on February 22 to focus on understanding who we are and to determine ways in which we can collaborate with the other areas.
3. He reported that the LGBTQ Center is looking much better with some new painting, carpet and furniture. They are also meeting to select the architect for the new Center.
4. He also discussed the Affirmative Action office and how they are outsourcing work to do other service kind of work. Gerry Holder will be the lead role in the salary/equity review.
5. He reported that the Multicultural Center is looking into new and different strategies for students. He indicated that he was interviewing facilitators for the MCC retreat that will be held on March 24th.
6. He gave a brief report on the commissions.
 - PCOSW – He indicated that Anne Seitsinger had done some work looking at gender equity and looking at salaries. He said that there are some disparities in salaries. We have also reached out to firms for salary/equity issues.
 - LGBTQ Commission – They are working on curriculum & learning outcomes.
 - Faculty, Staff and Students of Color – Katrina Dorsey & Gordon Dash will chair this committee. A letter of invitation will be sent out to be a member of this committee and then we will set a date for the first meeting.
7. He reported that he had met with the President and discussed advocating for a consistent funding source for a Director of Faculty Recruitment & Retention. He also indicated that Delores Walters will do some work that the PCOSW has worked on. She will look at faculty being recruited to URI and their experiences and generate some proposals and strategies on how to enhance our retention.

8. He also reported that the Women of Color Network will become an affinity group on campus.
9. He also reported that Dana Neugent and Tim Tierney are working on a TV/cable show similar to the Today Show format. They will be creating a full length documentary and talking with lots of people on campus. If there are any events going on, be sure to let Dana and Tim know about them.
10. He reported that there was a cyberbullying incident on campus with students from the Gay Straight Alliance. An investigation was completed and it was not URI students. The Gay Straight Alliance are planning a "Love is Louder" rally in front of the Memorial Union.

7) Report on Africana Studies

Vanessa Quainoo gave a report on Africana Studies.

1. She talked about highlights of the program indicating that this was a global program with the largest population of Liberian and Cape Verdean students. She indicated that the Kasa Magazine is done by students and three issues have been done so far.
2. There was a Black History Month lecture held on Wednesday, February 15th.
3. She indicated that their immediate needs are an articulated embrace of Africana Studies from the administration and that they need appropriate space. They are located on the 3rd floor of Davis Hall right now. There was discussion regarding this and the Equity Council asked the chairs to put something in writing to the Provost and Dean Brownell. A recommendation was made by the Council to have the chairs write a letter to the Provost proposing that Africana Studies become a department and not a program, and that they should have a permanent home on campus. The preferred space would be the Multicultural Center. It was discussed that others should be involved in this process and that we need to figure out how to strategically present this. It was also discussed that a group should be formed to strategize how to have Africana Studies and Gender & Women Studies become a department.

Meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.