

Equity Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 27, 2014
9:00 – 10:30 a.m.
Ballentine Hall, Thomson Board Room
Kingston Campus

Attendance: Michelle Fontes-Barros (co-chair), Lynne Derbyshire (co-chair), Melissa McCarthy, Debbie Suggs, Diane Kern, Sarah Couch, Pamela Rohland, Laura Beauvais, Amy Olson, Stephen Baker, Faye Boudreaux-Bartels, Naomi Thompson, Lisa Abreu Morel, Tammy Vargas Warner, Delores M. Walters, Susan Golet, Nancy H. Kelley, Alicia Mosley Austin, John Sears, Shana Greene, Mailee Kue, Gerard Holder, and Eileen Orabone.

Invited Guest: VP Gerald Sonnenfeld

1. Introductions

2. The minutes of January 31, 2014 meeting were approved.

3. Introduction and update, VP Gerald Sonnenfeld, Research & Economic Development

- Gerald Sonnenfeld gave brief information about his previous professional experience at various institutions.
- The role of the Division of Research and Economic Development:
 - Supporting the scholarly activity in the university
 - The compliance of research
 - Publicizing research
 - Keeping university community informed about issues of human studies, chemical studies, export control, bio hazard, etc.
 - Disclosing, monitoring, and regulating conflicts of interests
 - Investigating and reposting research misconduct cases
 - Regulating intellectual property of the university
 - The university research magazine publishes scholarly articles of the university faculty and researchers.
 - Responsibility for postdoctoral candidates: the Division of Research and Economic Development is working with Graduate School to provide space for post doctoral fellows.
- URI Research Foundation:
 - A non-profit organization to assist university with intellectual property.
 - Commercializing and licensing the intellectual property.
 - Helping faculty staff and students establish companies.
 - Helping people to develop grants.
 - Developing scholarly activity strategic plan.
- Complimentary letters are sent to everyone who has accomplished scholarly activity, all faculty are recognized and celebrated based on their excellence.
- Expanding undergraduate research and providing funding for it.

- Grant management system will be electronic with a sophisticated system.
- Inclusion of people of diversity in the research: Hiring students of diversity, taking diversity into consideration. Highlighting a speaker who is a minority researcher to serve as a role model in the institution. Affirmative action funding programs to increase participation of minority students.

4. Membership Update

- Recruitment: Representatives from each group in the university. There has been language change. The focus will be on groups not represented in recruitments. Representation as complete as possible is aimed.
- Renewed commitment: Within next week an email will be sent to current members to ask if they would like to stay as members of the committee. If you agree to continue, it will mean two years, including this year and next year. Everyone on the committee is already committed for this year.

5. CCE Diversity Committee update, Tammy Vargas Warner

- The communications started a year ago. Participation has been increased in the last 2-3 months.
- Participation from the community, understanding diversity
- Representatives from all functional offices for dealing with moral issues on campus
- The goal is to focus on community building in the upcoming year. Diversity committee is having conversations about unsettling status of the community. The committee meets with other committee chairs to better understand their own goals.
- LADO: Latino Dollars for Scholars of Rhode Island. A gala was organized to raise money for the program of scholarship. The program website: www.ladori.org
- Naomi Thompson stated that CCE Diversity Committee's discussion has been robust; they have addressed practical issues such as accessibility bathrooms and other wide range of diversity issues. They are taking proactive steps, identify issues. Tammy has accomplished to build a community and to raise money for scholarship.
- Michelle Fontes-Barros suggested that coming up with a mission and goal with committee members would foster conversation among them.

6. New Business/Announcements/Q&A

a. Office of Admission

- 20,640 applications: 24 % are self identified students of color, 6.1 % increase in students of color
- Full time staff and road runners
- Big apple fair, high school visits
- DRIVE: Diversifying, Recruiting, Inspiring, Volunteering, and Educating. URI undergraduate students work with the Admission office to assist students of color with their application process.

- Multicultural overnight program for newly admitted out-of-state students: Self-identified students of color come to campus, stay with a host student. 50 students will stay on campus this year.
- In-state students of color come and do activities, but do not stay on campus.
- Campus tours: On campus organizations help with campus tours.
- LGBTQ office assists Admission Office with the recruitment of LGBT students. The clubs are on admission vouchers.
- Veterans students
- 105 tour guides, with increased number of students of color. Tour guides with disabilities.
- There is an online virtual tour available.
- There is an admission video available on the admission website.
- Special tours are available.
- Inclusion of inquiry about students who self identify as disabled.
- Disability will be included in the welcoming statement.

b. Alumni Association event

- It has been changed into Bay Voyage instead of Plantation Bay Voyage.
- Diversity training for alumni association

c. McNair Proposal

- URI has not been a McNair institution for a long time. Anyone who wants to be involved in that is encouraged.

d. Announcements

- Diversity and inclusion conference “Voices Carry” is tomorrow (Feb. 28). Showcasing trainings are all day. Any group can arrange trainings for their groups. Morning and afternoon session will be live streamed. Diversity training and awareness.
- NABA: National Association of Black Accountants. Students of color from College of Business represented excellence from URI.
- March 18: Woman of the Year Reception at Multicultural Center
- March 26: Talk and Book signing by Delores M. Walters (ed.), *Gendered Resistance: Women, Slavery, and the Legacy of Margaret Garner*. Multicultural center Hardge Forum, at 5 pm
- March 30-April 4: The annual Holocaust Event. Film screening, holocaust survivors and speakers from holocaust museum

*Next meeting: Friday, March 28, 2014, 3-4:30 p.m., Student Senate Chambers, Memorial Union