

URI EQUITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
September 24, 2009

I. Attendance: Trish Morokoff (meeting chair), Jerry Schaffran (co-chair), Laura Beauvais, Lynne Derbyshire, Gail Faris, Frank Forleo, Kyle Kusz, Jody Lisberger, Karol Leuzarder, Helen Mederer, Carolyn Sovet, Pamela Rohland, Barb Silver, Melvin Wade, Andrew Winters, Monique Conway

II. Welcome and introductions; announcements

A. Melvin Wade announced that the Diversity Week planning committee is working to emphasize global learning. Registration will be online this year.

B. Andrew Winters announced that on Columbus day there will be a showing of the Laramie Project.

C. Jody Lisberger announced that on October 1 there will be a lecture by Rosa Maria Pegueros entitled *Another 'Wise Latina' looks at the US Supreme Court: Why Justice Sotomayor matters.*

III. Response to request from President Dooley: council members affirmed that decision of the summer in taking some time to present a rationale for a Chief Diversity Officer while requesting resources for the work of the Council. President Dooley recently spoke to the Division of Student Affairs and there was discussion of issues raised during these remarks.

IV. Strategic plan goals:

A. Goal 1: Create integrated structures and supportive leadership that promote inclusivity. Melvin Wade and Barb Silver.

1. Structural changes.: Melvin shared three articles that may be relevant to this goal:

a) The Diversity Scorecard: A Learning Approach to Institutional Change by Estela Bensimon

<http://www.uwsa.edu/edi/equity/pdf/diversityscorecardchangemag.pdf>

b) Making Excellence Inclusive: A Framework for Embedding Diversity and Inclusion into Colleges and Universities' Academic Excellence Mission by Alma Clayton-Pedersen, Nancy O'Neill, and Caryn McTighe Musil

<http://www.uwp.edu/departments/arts.sciences/MEI%20Paper%20Last%20Revised%20121%203%2008.pdf>

c) Strategic Planning for Diversity and Organizational Change: A Primer for Higher-Education Leadership by Damon Williams and Charmaine Clowney <http://www.scribd.com/doc/14860554/Strategic-Planning-for-Diversity-and-Organizational-Change-by-Dr.-Damon-A-Williams-and-Ms.-Charmaine-Clowney.pdf>

2. Diversity Committees: Barb Silver distributed handouts highlighting several key Issues for the Equity Council with respect to the Diversity Committees. These issues included determining what is our charge in relation to the Diversity committees, determining benchmarks (metrics) that could be used to evaluate the success of goals, providing sample mission statements, goals,

examples of incentives and organizational structures. Karol noted that it is difficult to obtain data on diversity of staff.

B. Goal 2 Increase diversity among faculty, staff, and administrators. Pamela Rohland and Melvin Wade. Melvin indicated that he favors the ADVANCE model for recruiting more diverse faculty and administrators. Barb advocated Best Practices to encourage a diverse recruitment process. It might also be possible for the Provost to provide incentives for diverse faculty hires. There was discussion of sending a letter to the Provost and then asking him to meet with us to discuss this goal.

C. Goal 3 Increase and ensure access for underrepresented groups. Pamela Rohland, Helen Mederer, and Lynne Derbyshire. Pamela suggested a universal design for the curriculum designed to meet the needs of the broadest range of students, faculty, and staff. Lynne suggested that the Equity Council might set a couple of priorities per year such as a flexible approach to tuition and enrollment, for example redefining full time status in order to provide health care for students. She also suggested a review of how we define productive movement toward graduation. It was noted that students with disabilities may take longer to finish. There was a discussion of gatekeeper courses used by departments to restrict access to the major. Helen suggested that departments might consider different quality criteria. It was suggested that Sharon Forleo would be a good addition to the Equity Council because of her involvement in the issue of restricted majors (Domingo Morel had been most involved before he left URI).

D. It was agreed that the Strategic Plan goal committees will write up their recommendations for the Equity Council's Strategic Plan.

V. V. Increase awareness of the Equity Council. This agenda item was deferred to a future meeting.

VI. Equity Council leadership. Jerry Schaffran has served as co-chair of the Equity Council for the past year. He commented on the need to consider different issues with respect to transition to new leadership for the Equity Council, as he would like to revert to a regular member of the council. Frank Forleo reflected the sentiments of the Council in expressing our deep appreciation for Jerry's service to the Council. He nominated Lynne Derbyshire for co-chair of the Equity Council. It was agreed that we would further discuss membership at the next meeting and that Lynne's nomination would be sent out on the listserv with the opportunity for other names to be placed in nomination.

Next meeting: October 23, 2009 1-2:30.