

MINUTES

Equity Council Meeting

Wednesday, September 26, 2013

3:00-4:30 p.m.

Atrium 2, Memorial Union

Attendance: Michelle Fontes-Barros, co-chair, Lynne Derbyshire, co-chair, Roxanne Gomes, Susan Golet, David Hayes, Kyle Kusz, Debbie Suggs, Garry Bozylinsky, Faye Boudreaux-Bartels, John Sears, Delores Walters, Helen Mederer, Diane Kern, Naomi Thompson, Eileen Orabone, Annie M. Kosar, Sarah Couch, Marilda Oviedo, Pamela Rohland, Mailee Kue, Ed Givens, Earl Smith, Jerry Holder, Gerald Williams and Annie Russell.

1. Introductions
2. Review of history and accomplishments of Equity Council
 - a. There was a discussion about the history of the Equity Council and how it will work with the Office of Community, Equity and Diversity. There was also discussion about the language for the Equity Council in the University Manual. A faculty co-chair for the Equity Council still needs to be elected. There was a nomination of Kyle Kusz for the faculty co-chair position.
3. Future goals and objectives for 2013-2014:

There was discussion regarding the future goals and objectives of the Equity Council for 2013-2014. The following points were brought up:

- a. Are we grassroots or are we President-down in orientation?
- b. Perhaps we can use the CED Inclusion Project information to actualize the intent of this council.
- c. We should collaborate and build on each other's strengths and all should be invited to the table.
- d. We should be addressing issues, as opposed to discussing purpose
- e. If it's at the pleasure of the President, it may be a problem because we can't let the protocol mute what we want to address on campus.
- f. Students have to pay out of pocket to participate in J-Term

At this point, there was a motion to discuss purpose at a formal meeting to happen in the next two weeks. Motion was passed. Eileen will schedule a meeting.

Other points:

- a. How do we consider purpose and action at the same time?
- b. How do we understand that putting out fires doesn't change campus climate?
- c. We could use the listserv to discuss these issues.
- d. If there are issues brewing, you have access to the subject matter experts to deal with them.
- e. As a professional courtesy, we should be discussing this with each other ahead of time so that people can prepare their thoughts and communication regarding issues. We have to have mutual respect. A lot of these problems are systemic and we have to recognize different perspectives. We are doing some things well and not others; we should be both reactive and proactive. John Sears would be happy to address recent issues in the residence halls.
- f. Could we consider that the Equity Council provides recommendations from its group?

4. New Business/Announcements/Q&A:

- a. There were several BRT reports regarding swastikas. Police were contacted and it was cleaned off. More graffiti was found after the first incident. Hillel was contacted for their support. Other swastikas and obscenities were written on the wall. The police were contacted and they were all cleaned. Two approaches need to be taken: providing support for the individual and response to the community. Hall Director sent email to community and RAs went door to door for next two days. Response should be public and consistent. We should also enlist community in a public response.
- b. What does HRL do to ensure that there's a proactive response and making sure this doesn't happen in the future? John Sears responded in saying that they do programming, but we need to make it more uniform across the campus in the coming year. One focus will likely be diversity and multiculturalism. Staff will be targeting programming to address the issues that arose.
- c. Coming Out Week is coming up. Check out the calendar at www.uri.edu/glb. The AIDS Walk is this Saturday, September 28th. Attend if you can and please consider joining the Visibility Project (a program to provide a vehicle for LGBTQ faculty and staff to be out on campus and provide mentoring for others.)
- d. The Native American Advisory meeting will be held on October 3rd from 4:00-5:00 p.m. and Chief Matthew Sachem will speak around 6:00 p.m. in the Galanti Lounge.
- e. Arming Campus Police: The issue is being addressed. Mary Jo

Gonzales and Lynne Derbyshire have been asked to join the panel.

Naomi Thompson thanked everyone for their time and consideration and indicated that she appreciated hearing their thoughts. She also announced that the President's Commission on the Status of Faculty, Staff and Students of Color is lacking leadership. If anyone is interested, please let her know. She also invited everyone to the reception for people of color at 5:00 p.m. in the Hardge Forum in the Multicultural Center.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 23 from 3:00-4:30 p.m. in Atrium 1, Memorial Union.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.