

**Equity Council Planning Meeting**  
**Friday, September 18, 2015**  
**1:00pm – 3:00 pm**  
**URI Gender and Sexuality Center, Kingston**

**1:00pm-** Welcome & Introductions—Bob Samuels and Diane Kern, co-chairs  
In Attendance: Diane Kern (co-chair), Bob Samuels (co-chair), Ann Morrissey (facilitator), Amy Olson, Annie M. Kosar, Becky Costello, Betsy Cooper, Debbie Suggs, Faye Boudreaux-Bartels, Fernando Guzmán, Garry Bozylinsky, Gerald Williams, Gerard Holder, Jackie Sparks, Jaime Pierce (notetaker), Kyle Kusz, Liliana Costa, Lynne Derbyshire, Maggie Charpentier, Melissa McCarthy, Pamela Rohland, Robert Vincent, Roxanne Gomes, Sarah Couch, Steve Baker, Tamara Bolotow, Ted Shear, Tory Kern, Trish Morokoff.

[Review of agenda]

**1:15pm – Work in Small groups - Facilitator Ann Morrissey**  
**Develop strategies and actions** for one of three priority areas.

**2:00pm- Share in Large Group and Elicit Feedback** [What and How]

Transparency and Access to Information to Promote Equity and Diversity

- Major Goal: increase the transparency and access to information on campus
  - **Strategy-** Essential assessment of status of equity and diversity on campus
    - **Actions:**
      - Collection and analysis of survey data around campus
      - Collection and analysis of qualitative data that could help inform us
      - Create clearing house location/website where the analyses could be stored
      - Make sure that people are informed about clearing house and website to promote diversity
    - **Strategy-** Inform campus community about the reports, data, etc.
      - **Actions:**
        - Use of social media, newsletter
        - Permission from president for shift workers and staff members to attend diversity events and meetings
        - Coffee hour or town hall once a month to share info
        - Clearinghouse forum for feedback
        - Create a mechanism to connect different campuses and different diversity committees
- **Feedback**
  - The Equity Council itself should work to develop better connectivity between campuses and different diversity committees

- Set a goal to get reports out of draft form and into action
  - Devise a work-group that would help Equity Council determine which reports are still in draft and which need to be advanced
- Locate all of the different reports, analyze them, put them on the website, and update them.
  - Note: As the President receives our recommendations, he may want to hire someone with expertise to do report analysis
- There are already people on campus who are responsible for survey/report analysis (CED)
  - The data is not as readily available as it could or should be
  - CED website there are links to documents (many are broken)
  - There is a need to determine if CED relates to Equity Council and the President's Council— What is really happening? Who is the Office of CED representing?
- Reminder: Keep focus on work of Equity Council and allow the President and CED to respond

#### Public Safety to Ensure Equity and Diversity

- What do we need to be safe on campus?
- Address issues such as bullying, health, accessibility, privacy, etc.
  - **Strategies:**
    - All policies transparent and easily accessible
    - Inclusion of disability issues in all safety/health policies
    - Emergency Management:
      - Accessibility for everyone in emergencies, - including with any type of disability
  - **Actions:**
    - Panic button on front page of URI website that asks your emergency, gives information and phone numbers
    - Put a card with emergency phone numbers and nearest exit information in every classroom and on every floor in each building
    - Mobility across campus- curb cuts need to be bigger, snow removal for universal design
    - In terms of having accessible classrooms, we need to consider those individuals with temporary disabilities
    - Ongoing dialogue with the police especially now that they are armed
      - Make sure to follow rules of joint-governance
      - Implicit bias training 6 times a year
    - Put information on syllabi: issues about sexual assault, where to go and what to do

- We are pointing out areas on campus where these issues can be challenging to equity and diversity- our work is to find out more about these issues and point out where the problems still exist and make appropriate recommendations
- **Feedback**
  - Another strategy is to further diversity training for ALL the public safety staff members and ALL faculty
  - Find out more information about what the emergency system does now, where it falls short, and then make recommendations

### Advancing the Status of Faculty, Staff, and Students from underrepresented groups

- Realization that we have an existing structure of councils and commissions to do this work
  - **Strategy:**
    - Have time at each Equity Council meeting for sharing information and data from all councils
  - **Actions:**
    - Make time to strategize on issues during meetings
  - **Feedback**
    - Would it be possible to have communication about where we are at as far as how many people on campus are involved with different aspects of diversity?
    - We could share more data in meeting about underrepresented students (graduation rates, etc.) and then make recommendations about who we need to reach out to and what resources we need
    - Find out who we are as an Equity Council and make recommendations (future conversation)
    - Recruiting, hiring, retention, and curriculum is important
      - New general education requirements that deal with cultural competence
        - We are on target to be unprepared to teach cultural competence— we need more staff for these positions
    - Strategy suggestion: Which groups could Equity Council visit in order to bring this to their attention? Equity Council could find out the number of courses and then representatives could have conversations with deans, department heads, etc.
      - If we bring this to the provost or vice provost we could offer our assistance
    - Part of our discussion dealt with our role as Equity Council
      - We can work through larger figures on campus or through our group itself
      - This is a start to finding some important gaps and work that could be conducted, shaped, and made to advance equity and diversity

- We can work to devise an action plan that we can present via Dr. K or we can go the “grass roots” route
- The Equity Council is representative of every presidential commission, every committee, etc. and we can still have the “grass roots” functions
  - We might all be represented, but grass roots goes against what we want to accomplish—some of us came here thinking that we could get justice on campus. Our goals should be more proactively progressive yet we are being antagonistic. This risks people leaving the group and we are facing an accountability issue. If we’re not willing to have teeth behind our requests, then we are failing as a council.
  - What’s the point? How are things going to get done?
  - Rebuttal- What does the equity council do? We come from grass roots and have a grass roots mission? When we can’t work with administration we have to be bolder and be prepared for that. We have to acknowledge our traditions and collaborate together, maintaining our grass roots
  - Productivity can come from raising issues or addressing a productive agenda that the council can work together on to advance the equity and diversity on campus and have accountable progress
  - This committee is a powerful committee- if we make recommendations to administration we need to stick to them and follow through with them to ensure that their held accountable
    - Providing clarity is essential for this. Be explicit—where is the gap, gather data, present the information. LGBTQ has had success in generating reports, providing a case on what they need, monitoring progress and they were rewarded for those efforts
  - Formalizing processes- if we create guidelines and present them, we should commit to go public to ensure action
  - Council used to be more fluid and dynamic and less structured. The schedule appears to be a year’s worth of work—we need to get back to the impulsive nature of this council. A change of mission, perhaps?

### **2:45pm - Identify Next Steps**

- Expectations of subcommittees to meet regularly to conduct work
- Update Council on progress by working groups at monthly Equity Council meetings
- Submission of draft working group reports – January for Equity Council feedback

- Final Drafting of Findings & Recommendations by working groups February. Equity Council approval.
- Review report and consult with CDO – March 2016
- Co-chairs consolidate subcommittee report into full report draft – March 2016. Equity Council approval.
- Submission of Findings and Recommendations to President and CDO – April 2016

**Fall 2015 Equity Council Meetings:**

- Monday, 10/26 11:00am-12:30pm at the [Multicultural Center, Hodge Forum, Kingston](#)
- Monday, 11/16 1-2:30pm [Memorial Union, Room 300, Hamilton Senate Chambers, Kingston](#)
- Friday, 12/4 11-12:30 [URI Gender and Sexuality Center, Kingston](#)