



THE
UNIVERSITY
OF RHODE ISLAND

**President's Commission on
People With Disabilities**

**Executive Summary
2016**

Respectfully Completed by:
Anita Jacobson, Co-Chair 2015-2017 (faculty)
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Christine Sullivan, Co-Chair 2016-2018 (staff)

Introduction:

The President's Commission on People with Disabilities (PCPD) was established September 2013 by President David Dooley, and was based on the proposal prepared by the "Working Group to Establish a [President's Commission on People with Disabilities]" in July 2013. The PCPD now includes 20 persons, including representatives from the student population, staff, faculty, and administration who are concerned about issues related to all types of accessibility for people with disabilities at the University of Rhode Island.

Committee Membership:

Includes presidentially appointed representatives, from various facets of the University: Faculty, Staff and Student representation is included.

First name	Last name	Position	Department
Stephen	Baker	Member	Director, Public Safety
Tamara	Bolotow	Member	CCE Instr. Support and Disability Services
Annette	Bourbonniere	Member, Student Advisor	Graduate Student, Environ & Nat Res Econ
Meredith	Clark	Member	Graduate School of Oceanography
Betsy	Cooper	Member	College of Business Administration
Meada	Daly-Cano	Member	Graduate Student, Psychology
Paul	DePace	Member	Capital Projects
Nancy	Doyle-Moss	Member	College of Nursing
Joanne	Eichinger	Member	School of Education
Roxanne	Gomes	Member	Affirmative Action Equal Opportunity & Diversity
Anita	Jacobson	Faculty Co-Chair, 2 yrs.	Pharmacy
Laura	Kenerson	Member	Human Resources
Mary Jane	Klinkhammer	Member	Counseling Center
Joanne	Lynch	Member	Admission
Adam	Moore	Member	School of Education
Joannah	Portman-Daley	Member	Online Learning and Teaching
Pamela	Rohland	Member**	Disability Services for Students
Susan	Roush	Member	Physical Therapy Program
Bridget	Ruemmele	Member	Plant Sciences
Christine	Sullivan	Staff Co-chair, 2 yrs	Office of the Controller

**Pamela Rohland was Staff Co-Chair from 2013 to 2015

Goals and Mission:

The PCPD shall work to ensure an inclusive, universally designed, and welcoming community in terms of safety, well-being, and education for students, faculty and staff who have disabilities.

To accomplish the mission of the PCPD, in the context of social justice, the PCPD will identify issues of concern, best practices, and solutions related to accessibility of the entire community of people with disabilities at the University of Rhode Island. Many issues will be based on state and federal laws of ADAAA (Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008) and Sections 504/508 of the Rehabilitation Act. Issues, best practices, and solutions will be submitted to Naomi Thompson, Associate Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer, for Community, Equity, and Diversity, who will advocate for these issues at the highest level of the senior leadership team.

Specifically:

1. Encourage a climate to celebrate differences and abilities among all people at URI, while affirming the many outstanding contributions of people with disabilities to the campus community;
2. Identify major topics of concern for people with disabilities;
3. Propose policies, programs and training so that URI's ongoing dialogue of social justice and civil rights continues to include issues related to disability;
4. Collaborate with all areas of the university community to recommend accessibility, safety, and universal design of buildings, the curriculum, programs, and services;
5. Advise primary URI administrators on issues of disability;
6. Monitor the effectiveness of proposed/implemented policies and initiatives;
7. Communicate progress of these efforts to the administration and surrounding community; and
8. Submit to the senior leadership team and their designees, recommendations that would enhance inclusion and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

Sample Activities of the Commission in Academic Year 2015-16:

- The PCPD conducted 9 official meetings from September 2015 to May 2016
- Task Force I (disability celebration and awareness)
 - Nominated Bob Cooper for an honorary degree
 - Hosted the documentary "Fixed" for Diversity Week September 29, 2015
- Task Force II, related to compliance and accessibility, was subdivided into three subcommittees: Parking and Transportation, Safety and Evacuation, Curricular and Online Accessibility
- Parking and Transportation
 - Parking and Transportation Advisory Sub-Committee reestablished and PCPD members appointed
 - URI parking survey completed including assessment of ADA parking
 - Changing language on all signage and policy documents from "handicapped" to ADA parking
 - Focus on increased enforcement of ADA parking violations and availability of ADA parking
- Safety and Evacuation
 - Establishment and construction of Areas of Refuge in progress for each building

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- Emergency Management and Public Safety Office created Emergency Action reference cards for distribution to and posting in all rooms across campus
- Representative from FEMA coming in Summer of 2016 to provide training for integrating strategies for individuals with disabilities into the campus safety plans, Disability Services and CEMAC will be involved
- Office of Capital Project successful in obtaining funding from the Governors Commission of Disability for various accessibility renovation projects in FY16, totaling almost \$600,000
- Curriculum and Online Accessibility
 - Pilot for captioning of all online course videos has been conducted by the Department of Online Teaching and Learning
 - Approximately 20 videos were captioned for faculty in the pilot program
 - Representatives from PCPD met with the Vice Provost and Administrators in ITS to establish a plan for closed captioning going forward

Future Directions:

- Considering alternate methods of payment for the RIPTA shuttle service (e.g. U-Pass)
- Training and awareness building for the importance of curriculum accessibility for Faculty Senate and AAUP to avoid DOJ intervention
- Participation in and attendance at Diversity Week 2016
- Disability Services will work with OTL to establish a process for captioning of online videos going forward
- To continue to infuse concepts important to disability and accessibility compliance into other Commissions and Councils across the University including Web Policy Council, Equity Council, etc.
- To identify the network of other committee involvement that PCPD members have university-wide