

Campus Senate Committee on Rights, Opportunity, Access and Diversity
End-of-Year Report to the UIS Senate Executive Committee
2010-2011

Faculty

- Michael Cavanagh, LAS
- Elizabeth Kosmetatou, LAS
- Roxanne Kurtz, **Chair**, LAS
- Hinda Seif, LAS
- Frances Shen, LAS
- Vacant

Civil Service

- Gloria Newton Davlantis
- Veronica Espina

Academic Professional

- Roger Salvador
- Teresa Szabo

Students

- Jaime Casinova
- Amy Winebaugh

Ex-Officio:

- Deanie Brown, J.D, Associate Chancellor for Access and Equal Opportunity
- Clarice Ford, Executive Director of Diversity Center
- Lynn Otterson, Director of the Women's Center
- Kerry Pyntner, Director of the LGBTQQ Resource Office
- Suzie Woods , Director of Disability Services

Commitment to becoming purposeful when it comes to diversity and inclusiveness:

- ROAD focused this year on how to encourage the UIS community to be more purposeful with respect to diversity and inclusiveness to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment for all.
- ROAD worked on a resolution regarding the values of diversity and inclusiveness together with the AEO. But, we have not yet arrived at how to translate an ideal that applies so broadly into concrete recommendations. So, for now, we will share the ideal and make a broad request to all in our community:

ROAD recognizes that the values of diversity and inclusiveness are central to creating a fair, welcoming, and supportive climate for all members of a community that includes various identity constituencies which have been subject to historical and contemporary forces that impact access, opportunity, and success. We affirm that UIS aims to achieve and maintain a fair, welcoming, and supportive climate for all members of its community.

To foster such a climate requires that we be purposeful with respect to diversity and inclusiveness when we form committees and when we identify candidates for beneficial opportunities. It requires that we consider how our environment on our campus overall and in individual classrooms affects students from various identity constituencies and how we can enhance our environment to one in which all can thrive.

Thus, we ask all members of the UIS campus community to consciously and consistently pursue the values of diversity and inclusiveness throughout our decision-making to promote diverse and inclusive committees and candidate pools for beneficial opportunities at UIS, to shape our environment to one that supports diversity broadly, to look at how we can change ourselves and

our practices to best support all of our students.

- In line with our goal of being purposeful with respect to diversity and inclusiveness, ROAD has established subcommittees and begun work on the recruitment and retention of diverse students, staff, and faculty. A brief report on this topic is attached.
- ROAD successfully raised funds to support two significant diversity-related faculty development opportunities including the Tim Wise event (thanks to the UIS Deans) and the Jaime Washington events (thanks to CTL and the Office of the Provost).
- ROAD was pleased to see our wish for a Diversity link from the UIS homepage implemented.
- ROAD contributed its energies to support a student-led campaign against hate in the Fall of 2010, however the students did not bring the project to fruition.
- ROAD leadership met with the UIS Police department to discuss climate concerns. What emerged was the idea to implement community-building exercises. Jaime Casinova and Steve Schnebly (who resigned from ROAD) continue to work on a “Pizza with the Police” plan that would bring the police into student communities in a non-threatening way.
- ROAD met with the Chair of OLAS and Jeannie Capranica to begin a discussion on the needs of concerns of Latino/Latina students. Hinda Seif and Veronica Espina constitute a subcommittee on this topic.
- ROAD explored concerns from faculty about the handling of the graffiti incident. To discuss the incident, ROAD chair (Roxanne Kurtz) participated in a meeting with Vice Chancellor Tim Barnett, Jim Korte, Jason Pierceson, Juanita Ortiz, and Michael Murphy. We had a productive conversation that shed light on how the incident was handled with the students, which seemed to lessen tension around the incident. Much of the concern coming from faculty could be traced to communication around the incident. One key result was the Vice Chancellor Tim Barnett committed to increased communication to those perceived to be key stakeholders on campus when bias incidents are reported.
- One concern at the start of the academic year was little perceived diversity among voting members of ROAD. We addressed that in two ways: (1) by inviting members of the UIS community recommended by the AEO to be special guests of ROAD to increase diversity and inclusiveness and (2) by actively seeking diverse staff and faculty to fill openings on ROAD.
- In light of concerns brought to ROAD about how the new Civil Unions law might affect various members of the UIS community, we decided to seek answers to several questions that could form the basis for a FAQ on the topic. UIS HR redirected the ROAD representative (Frances Shen) to take our questions up one level in HR. A meeting with an HR representative for HR is scheduled in May to discuss the list of questions we put together.
- We continue to have a ROAD representative (Elizabeth Kosmetatou) serve on the SARA Task Force.

Suggested Future Directions:

- Continue work on the diversity recruitment/retention subcommittees.
- Continue current initiatives on Latino/Latina students, student-police relations, ways to increase underrepresented faculty.
- Consider establishing a subcommittee or standing committee focused on best policies regarding communication around and response to bias incidents.
- Now that we have a full-time AEO and an extensive set of diversity services with directors in place, we recommend that ROAD, the ex-officios, and the Senate revisit the mission and goals of ROAD.
- ROAD remains concerned with issues of women's safety and athletics, we recommend that ROAD see how things have evolved next year after recent decisions.
- We recommend a review of the U of I FERPA interpretation with respect to permissible ways to share safety/crime information with the campus community.