Date: March 30, 2011

Subject: Council on Diversity and Inclusion

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Background: Last year the Office of the Associate Provost was renamed the Office of Diversity and Inclusion as part of an effort to implement a new approach to diversity, inclusion and equity across campus. In this context, the Council on Diversity and Inclusion was created “to support and guide the Rice University community in fulfilling its mission by facilitating a campus environment that promotes diversity, inclusion, and academic achievement while learning from others and gaining understanding and experience”.

Report: The council had the kick-off meeting late January to discuss its mission and operational details. The objectives of the council will be achieved through the following 10 working groups: campus climate; multicultural undergraduate life; multicultural graduate studies & life; faculty recruitment & development; international students & scholars; gender & sexuality; curriculum; faculty research & sponsored programs; EEO, human resources & disability support; and multicultural community relations. Each working group will include faculty, students, alumni and staff. The chairs of the working groups will hold a seat on the Council, which also includes seven at large members (including a faculty senate delegate). As a faculty senate delegate, I am planning to get involved on working groups that are focusing on issues most closely related to the faculty, namely: faculty recruitment & development; curriculum; faculty research & sponsored programs. The objectives of these three working groups were defined at the meeting as follows: to facilitate and assist academic departments in the recruitment and development of junior faculty, to help with curriculum initiatives related to diversity and inclusion, and to facilitate the research and programs of faculty and students focusing on areas that inform diversity and inclusion.