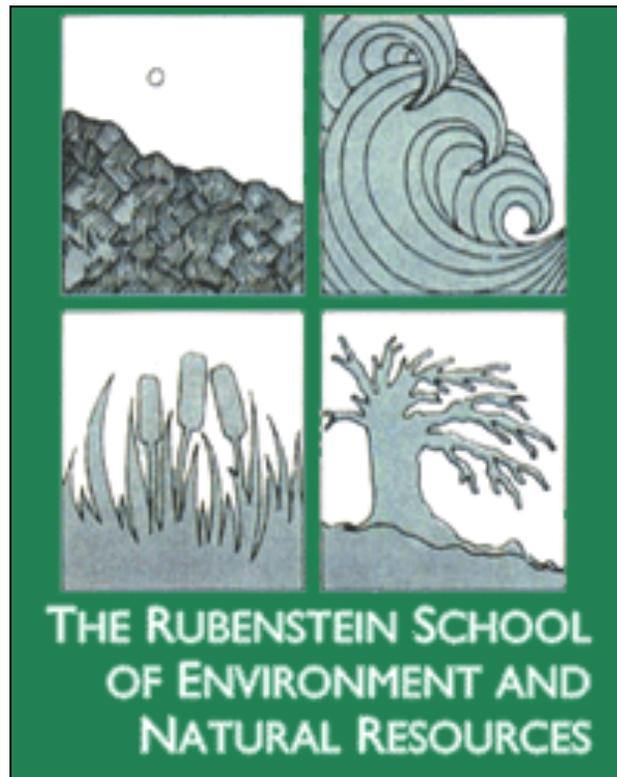


Faculty Search Interview Workbook

RSENR Diversity Task Force

2010



Prepared by members of the
Rubenstein School Diversity Task Force

Diversity Initiatives in The Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources

Prepared by: RSENR Diversity Task Force (DTF)

Purpose of this document

To inform RSENR and UVM constituents of the progress and successes of our diversity initiatives to better inform our search for a new faculty member.

Create a systematic tool for use by members of our community during faculty searches, particularly at public meetings with candidates

Comment sections are provided for you to reflect on the candidate's responses and demonstrated abilities in current diversity initiatives and to further our efforts in the Rubenstein School.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS THAT REFLECT OR SPEAK TO YOUR PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES ON DIVERSITY AT UVM & RSENR

Tips on recording your comments:

Make objective observations. For example, using the candidates' own words when describing how they responded to questions or being specific about what groups they have or have not worked with. It is important to ground your feelings and impressions of the candidates in specific actions they have taken (or not taken) so as to lend credibility to the DTF recommendations to the search committee.

Record your comments in the most natural way for you (e.g., paragraph form, bulleted list). The DTF will compile the comments and create a report for the search committee that addresses the candidates' strengths and weaknesses with regards to diversity.

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I. The Rubenstein School Diversity Task Force The Diversity Task Force (DTF) was created in 1991. It is a volunteer group of faculty, staff, and students who are committed to issues of diversity. The DTF generates and contributes to the development of ideas for diversity initiatives in curricular and other programming in The Rubenstein School. The DTF updates The Rubenstein School Diversity Plan annually (available at http://www.uvm.edu/envnr/welcome/Diversity%20Plan.pdf?Page=main_page).

Possible interview questions:

Describe your role in your university's diversity initiatives .

How have you promoted this conversation on your campus or in your research?

Please describe a time where you have been compelled to evaluate your own values and beliefs.

Please tell us an instance when you have been confronted with an experience that forced you to rethink your own system of values and beliefs.

How do you respond in a situation that forces you to think about values and beliefs very different from your own?

How have you pursued your own learning on issues of diversity, multiculturalism and social justice?

Comments:

II. Funding for Diversity Initiatives Virtually all of The Rubenstein School's diversity initiatives have been funded by competitively derived external grants. The majority of grant funding has come from the United States Department of Agriculture Cooperative States Research, Education, and Extension Service Higher Education Multicultural Scholars Program and the National Needs Fellowship Program. Between 1989 and 2008, our faculty obtained 39 diversity grants totaling nearly \$1.5 million. This includes funding to support outreach, programming, and scholarships for students at the B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. levels.

Possible interview questions:

Have you sought funding for diversity initiatives for any of your programs?

In what ways have you demonstrated support for similar initiatives on your campus?

Comments:

III. Curriculum Transformation We are working to critically evaluate & modify our curriculum to incorporate multicultural perspectives and to address issues of racial inequality as they relate to the field of environment and natural resources, and to the climate in our school.

Activities include:

- As part of a University-wide requirement, starting in fall 2007 undergraduate students complete 6 credits of race and culture course work. For Rubenstein School students, this begins with the 2-credit course, NR 6 Race and Culture in the Natural Resources in the first semester. NR 6 features speakers who address aspects of diversity as they relate to natural resources. Students also meet in discussion sections led by their advisors with other faculty, staff, and graduate students serving as co-leaders. Following NR 6, students take a 3-credit course from the University list of diversity courses. They complete the requirement with NR207, Power, Privilege, & Environment, a 1-credit Rubenstein School senior level diversity course.
- Beginning in fall 2008, all Rubenstein School M.S. students must complete a NR306, Race and Culture in the Natural Resources course.
- Many Rubenstein School courses include attention to U.S. or international diversity issues. This includes presenting and discussing implications of environmental issues to diverse cultures and laboratories or exercises with cross-cultural emphases.
- Work with the University of Vermont ALANA Student Center to provide support for our students of color and with the University Center for Cultural Pluralism to educate our faculty and staff on issues of racial awareness.

Possible interview questions:

How have you incorporated diversity issues or multicultural content (both in the US and internationally) in your courses and/or research?

How do you integrate awareness of diversity & multicultural issues into the classroom environment and among your colleagues?

Comments:

IV. Professional Development & Collaboration The Rubenstein School has worked with others on campus in diversity and multicultural efforts, including the Office of the Associate Provost for Multicultural Affairs & Academic Initiatives, the ALANA (African, Latino/a, Asian, and Native American) Student Center, the Center for Cultural Pluralism, LGBTQA Services, and the President’s Office. Over the last five years, our Dean, Associate Dean, Assistant to the Dean/Recruitment Coordinator, a faculty member, and two of our Multicultural Scholars have served or are currently serving on the President’s Commission of Racial Diversity at the personal request of President Daniel Fogel. We support and participate in special events and professional development workshops sponsored by other academic units. We have established a SEEDS chapter of the Ecological Society of America to support the professional development of our students.

Possible interview questions:

How have you supported campus-wide efforts on diversity issues?

What other groups have you worked with on your campus or within your field?

What professional development connected to diversity and multiculturalism have you engaged in or wish to pursue?

Comments:

V. Student Recruitment Efforts and Partnership High Schools

The Rubenstein School initiated a multicultural education/recruitment effort in 1988. We have expanded the program in recent years. Although there are various components to the program aimed at both undergraduate and graduate students, certain elements pervade all aspects:

- Faculty and staff visits to partner high schools (HSES and Christopher Columbus) and related programs (Urban Ecology Institute in Boston) to help students make connections between natural sciences (e.g. biology, chemistry, earth science) and social sciences (e.g. economics, sociology, political science) and natural resources. Issues such as climate change, atmospheric pollution, biodiversity, and economic-environmental conflicts, are used to illustrate these connections. In our experience, many high-achieving multicultural students have strong natural science backgrounds, but connections between the basic disciplines and the environment/natural resources field have not been provided.
- As described above, we are working to critically evaluate & modify our curriculum to incorporate multicultural perspectives and to address issues of racial inequality as they relate to the field of environment and natural resources, and to the climate in our school.
- A simultaneous focus on outreach, relevance of our programs to multicultural students, and support and education for students and faculty is needed to attract and effectively educate both ALANA and majority students.

Possible interview questions:

How have you been involved or demonstrated leadership in recruitment/retention of students?

What future opportunities do you see for student recruitment/retention?

Comments:

VI. Recruitment and Retention of Faculty and Staff

This is an area where we have worked quite hard to attract and retain faculty and staff of color while realizing that there is still much work to be done.

- We conduct affirmative searches with guidance from the UVM Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity

Office.

- We have initiated efforts to network within relevant professional venues, organizations, and conferences.
- We advertise positions in a broad range of publications.
- We strive to create a welcoming environment for faculty, staff, and students.
- There has been responsive leadership from the Dean's Office to seriously address issues as they arise.

Possible interview questions:

How have you been a catalyst in promoting this work among your peers?

What do you see as the most important issues regarding recruitment & retention?

Comments:

Diversity Task Force
Faculty Candidate Interview Worksheet

Tips on recording your comments:

- **Make objective observations.** For example, use the candidates' own words when describing how they responded to questions or be specific about what groups they have or have not worked with. It is important to ground your feelings and impressions of the candidates in specific actions they have taken (or not taken) so as to lend credibility to the DTF recommendations to the search committee.
- **Record your comments in the most natural way for you (e.g., paragraph form, bulleted list).** The DTF will compile the comments and create a report for the search committee that addresses the candidates' strengths and weaknesses with regards to diversity.

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED WORKSHEET TO MARIE VEA-FAGNANT in 336 Aiken

Name of Candidate:

Venue (ex: Open Forum):

General Comments/Observations about the candidate's responses regarding diversity issues in RSENr:

Comments regarding response to specific questions. For example:

In response to the question:

My observations regarding the candidate's responses are...