

**University of Rhode Island
Kingston, Rhode Island**

***Joint Recommendation by the President & Faculty Senate
Executive Committee***

**Charge of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Positioning
the University of Rhode Island for the Future**

Statement of Purpose:

An *ad hoc* "blue ribbon" Committee is to be formed to provide a report to the President, and the Joint Strategic Planning Committee on Positioning the University of Rhode Island for the Future. The overall aim of the Committee would be to present the report to the President, the JSPC, the Faculty Senate, and Council of Deans during the early Spring of 2008 in order to guide formation of the University of Rhode Island Strategic Plan of 2009-2011.

Statement of Audience:

The primary audiences for the report are the President, the JSPC and ultimately the entire University Community in the formation of the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan for the University of Rhode Island. The Committee Report is also intended as a resource for the Vice President for University Advancement in explaining possible future directions of the University to potential donors. The Committee Report is also expected to be used by the Board of Governors for Higher Education, the General Assembly and the Governor's Office and the various State Agencies as a resource for future budget planning and cooperative programming to better serve the people of Rhode Island.

Detailed Committee Composition and Charge:

- I. An *ad hoc* "blue ribbon" Committee is to be formed, consisting of 10 Presidential appointees including the chairperson, and 10 additional Faculty Senate appointees. The Committee would report to the following: the President, the JSPC, the Faculty Senate and the Council of Deans. This report would occur during the early Spring of 2008 in order to guide formation of the University of Rhode Island Strategic Plan of 2009-2011.
- II. The committee chairperson shall be a recognized expert in long range planning and university policy. The committee membership will be selected from a variety of intramural and extramural faculty and other professionals with attention to recruiting individuals with varying ages, professional status and disciplinary backgrounds. All committee members would be expected to bring to the committee a wide 'interdisciplinary world vision' and expertise in one or more the following areas:

- Economics (including Environmental & Natural Resources Economics)
- Communications & Information Technology
- Biotechnology and Trends in Biomedical & Life Sciences
- Environmental Sciences
- Health Sciences
- Nanotechnology & Other Trends in Engineering
- Rhode Island and National Public Policy
- Trends in Education, Sciences & Humanities
- Sociology
- History & Role of URI in State & Nation
- Community Planning, Transportation & Energy Technology & Policy
- Extension and Community Outreach
- Business and Commerce
- Other Areas

III. Charge of the Committee is as follows:

- A. Develop a timetable for its activities and develop a plan for intramural and extramural stakeholder input. Groups to be consulted include but are not limited to:
 - The Faculty Senate
 - The President & President's Advisory Council
 - Council of Deans
 - Office of Institutional Research
 - Vice President for Business and Finance
 - URI Alumni
 - URI Department
 - RI Board of Governors for Higher Education
 - RI Economic Policy Council
 - RI Office of the Governor
 - RI General Assembly
 - RI Cities and Towns
 - NEASC
 - Other Stakeholder Groups
- B. As part of the timetable for activities, it is critical that a mechanism of interim reports to the President and Faculty Senate be scheduled for consideration, comment and approval.
- C. Conduct a review of recent literature concerning trends in educational policy relevant to a Public Land Grant/Sea Grant/Urban Grant University.
- D. Review the "1993 Joint Academic Steering Committee (JASC) Report: Positioning for the Future" creating an analysis of its recommendations and accomplishments since its release with reasons for adoption or non-adoption.

- E. Evaluate, update and refresh the recommendations of the 1993 JASC Report (the most recent strategic self-assessment report undertaken by the University) based on current needs:
- identify challenges and opportunities facing URI
 - explore options for meeting the challenges
 - suggest mechanisms for implementing the options
- F. Consider a futuring exercise as divided into periods, including a 5-year “short-term” (through 2011), a 10-year “intermediate-term” (through 2016), and a 25-year “long-term” (through 2031). Most of the futuring exercise would focus on short-term and intermediate-term, but a significant part should also look at long term. This long-term segment of the exercise might consider such questions as:
- What impacts will external economic, political & social forces have in RI?
 - Are there trends (economic or otherwise) indicating changes in how Rhode Islanders live and work over the next quarter century?
 - Can URI position itself in a leadership role in transitions?
- G. Consider historical stages of RI (and URI) success
- What can be learned from RI’s successes in maximizing opportunities from a historical perspective?
 - Internationalism?
 - Entrepreneurism?
 - Others?
 - What opportunities should URI capitalize on in the future?
- H. Explore external influences: Impacts of globalization and the future of learning at URI
- Industrialization and outsourcing
 - Science & Technology trends
 - Political trends (nationally & locally)
 - Demographics & social change
 - Access & affordability to low income & middle class clientele
 - Impacts of global “mega-universities” and on-line learning
 - Others?
- I. Engage in institutional introspection:
1. Consider a framework of knowledge
 - Production

- Preservation
 - Dissemination
 - Translation to wealth – economic development
2. Students in the future – what do we need to prepare them to do?
Foundations of inquiry and critical thinking.
 - Role of General Education
 - Role of Honors Program
 - Role of Individual Degree Programs
 - Non-traditional students & lifelong learning
 - Outreach & Extension Programs for Extramural Clientele
 - Role of International Education (Study Abroad Programs)
 3. Consider new or expanded research directions for the future (finding innovative niches to make most impact given likely university resources):
 - Leadership and Ethics – a new emphasis for the Arts and Humanities?
 - Alternative energy production & conservation systems?
 - Food security?
 - Biosciences & Biopharmaceuticals?
 - Bioethics?
 - Marine & Environmental Sciences?
 - Communication & Information Sciences?
 - Nanotechnology?
 - Others?
 4. Consider and recommend plans for URI's financial sustainability in the future.
 5. Consider the role of University Information Systems (including the future role of the Library) in preservation & dissemination of knowledge.