

ACE Network: Rhode Island Women in Higher Education Operating Guidelines¹

The ACE Network: Rhode Island Women in Higher Education (RIWHE) is one of more than 50 state networks created and supported by the Office of Women in Higher Education of the American Council on Education. Thus, RIWHE operates within the overall goals and structure of its national partner.

These guidelines describe the organization and address general principles and practices for the executive board/planning committee and for the organization.

Overview of the Office of Women in Higher Education of the American Council on Education (www.acenet.edu/programs/owhe)

Since 1973, the Office of Women in Higher Education (OWHE) at ACE has been committed to the advancement of women leaders in higher education. For more than 25 years, OWHE has provided information and counsel to constituencies within the higher education community regarding policies, issues, education, and research that influence women's equity, diversity, and advancement.

OWHE provides national leadership in advancing women to executive positions on campus and serves as a national voice for women in higher education. Staff members also work in collaboration with associations and other groups in higher education on ways to improve the status of women.

The office's mission and the mission of RIWHE is to advance women's leadership through the following activities:

- **IDENTIFYING** women leaders nationally in higher education through extensive networks.
- **DEVELOPING** women's leadership abilities through state and national programming.
- **ENCOURAGING** women to use their leadership abilities.
- **LINKING** women to other women and to mentors.
- **ADVANCING** more women into executive-level leadership positions by nominating them and working with search firms on placement.
- **SUPPORTING** the tenure of mid- and executive-level women administrators and presidents throughout their careers.

Organizational Overview of the RIWHE

The full name of the organization is The ACE Network: RI Women in Higher Education. In September 2002 Dr. Claire Van Ummersen, vice president and director of OWHE, contacted Provost M. Beverly Swan (URI) regarding formation of a state chapter of the ACE Network. Dr. Swan recommended Dr. Nancy Carriuolo, associate commissioner for academic and student affairs at the RI Office of Higher Education (RIOHE), to become the state coordinator for RI and organize the state chapter. Dr. Carriuolo contacted woman deans and vice presidents at each independent and

¹ RIWHE offers thanks to the New Jersey American Council on Education Network, the Virginia Network, the Massachusetts Network, and the Wisconsin Women in Higher Education Leadership for submitting documents that assisted RIWHE in drafting operating guidelines.

public institution, asking them to serve on a planning committee for a spring event. She also identified female leaders to act as institutional representatives to help recruit women on their campuses for the event.

The founding presidential liaison was Dr. M. Therese Antone, RSM, president of Salve Regina University. The founding ACE executive board liaison was Dr. Cynthia Smith Forrest, dean of student services at Framingham State College in Massachusetts. Both women served as speakers at the network's organizational meeting of 60 women administrators (representatives from all independent and public institutions of higher education in Rhode Island). The meeting was held on April 25, 2003, at Salve Regina University. (See Appendix A for a list of the founding members of the executive board/planning committee members and institutional representatives.)

Membership of the Executive Board/Planning Committee

The executive board/planning committee has a minimum of 11 members, consisting of at least one woman from each public and independent degree-granting college or university in Rhode Island, plus a state coordinator who serves as chair. Executive board/planning committee members should be senior-level administrators from a variety of roles within the state's colleges and universities.

The executive board/planning committee will meet a minimum of once a year (prior to RIWHE's annual event). Members are expected to attend executive board/planning committee meetings (recognizing that important institutional or personal obligations may necessitate an occasional absence) and to participate in other RIWHE-sponsored events and activities to the extent possible and appropriate. Members of the executive board/planning committee assume a variety of roles in planning and carrying out programs and functions of RIWHE. All members may be asked to be actively involved in carrying out some aspect of the organization's work. Members may, in some instances, also act as institutional representatives.

Membership on the executive board/planning committee is generally ongoing and renewable with no specified term of appointment. By June of each year, members will be asked if they wish to participate for the upcoming year. Members who are not able to attend executive board/planning committee meetings and/or who are not actively engaged in other activities of RIWHE will be asked to commit to more frequent participation or invited to resign so that more active members may be chosen.

Role of the State Coordinator

The state coordinator is elected at the annual business meeting for a three-year term. The state coordinator prepares executive board/planning committee agendas and circulates these materials in advance of the meeting, prepares letters of congratulations to women who have been appointed to senior positions at Rhode Island colleges and universities, represents RIWHE at the annual national meeting of state coordinators, responds to requests for information and remains in contact with the national office and/or advisory board, chairs the executive board/planning committee meeting, and seeks the active involvement of all executive board members in RIWHE programs and functions.

Roles and Functions Carried Out by the Executive Board/Planning Committee

A variety of roles and functions need to be performed to maintain smooth functioning of the executive board/planning committee and RIWHE activities. These roles and functions are handled either by the state coordinator and her staff, individuals, or small committees.

Functions include the following activities: maintaining relevant databases, listservs, and Web sites; loading registration forms, event calendars, photographs and other information that should be available to users and archived for the future; retrieving information from the database as needed for

mailings, e-mail distributions, or reports; and recording and distributing minutes of the executive board/planning committee meetings. After review and approval by executive board/planning committee members, the final minutes are distributed to the institutional representatives and posted on the RIWHE Web site (located at www.ribghe.org/acenet.htm).²

Institutional Representatives

Each institutional representative, officially appointed by the institution's president, will serve as her institution's official RIWHE representative. The representative plays a pivotal role in identifying women on her campus interested in the advancement of women in higher education leadership. The representative may serve as the communication link among the campus, its leaders, and the executive board/planning committee; as a disseminator of information related to women in higher education leadership; as a catalyst for the advancement of women in leadership positions; and as an organizer of local programming for the development of women in higher education leadership.

Membership Benefits/Activities

RIWHE will sponsor at least one major activity per year. This activity will be focused on RIWHE's mission, which is to identify, develop, encourage, advance, link and support women in higher education. Programming will be designed to meet the professional development needs of women leaders working in public and independent institutions. The institutional representatives will play a critical role in assisting RIWHE in understanding these needs.

Guidelines for Speaker Honoraria and Expenses

RIWHE has made a commitment to offer its programs at a modest cost in order to encourage participation by as many women administrators as possible. As a result, RIWHE typically seeks speakers who are willing to make a presentation without an honorarium. RIWHE is also interested in showcasing outstanding talent among its higher education leaders. Honoraria can be built into a program budget and registration fees set accordingly to attract a speaker of interest or one who does not have an institutional or governmental affiliation. Reimbursement for speaker travel expenses is offered where necessary or appropriate. RIWHE is sensitive to the need to balance low-cost programming with the recognition that women speakers should not be continually asked to give their time and expertise without compensation. Equity and consistency are also concerns in determining whether and how much speakers might be compensated.

Financial Matters

RIWHE will collect registration fees for annual events as needed. In addition, presidential or institutional sponsors may be asked to contribute to events hosted on campus, such as providing a luncheon, space, administrative support, or a portion of speaker costs.

Honorary Memberships

Through a majority vote of the Executive Committee, female leaders may be named as honorary members of RIWHE.

² During the period when the state coordinator is employed by RIOHE, these functions will be performed primarily by her staff under her supervision with assistance from the membership, as needed.

The above guidelines were approved at the annual business meeting of the RIWHE membership, April 25, 2003

Appendix A

Founding Members of the 2002-2003 RIWHE Executive Board/Planning Committee

Winifred Brownell, dean of arts & sciences, University of Rhode Island
Nancy Carriuolo, associate commissioner for academic & student affairs, RI Office of Higher Education
Marie DiBiasio, dean of education, Roger Williams University
Erin Farrell, dean, international programs and development, Johnson & Wales University
Lorna Hunter, vice president for enrollment management, Bryant College
Catherine Kennedy, vice president for career development, New England Institute of Technology
Laura McPhie Olivera, vice president for enrollment, Salve Regina University
Sister Leona Misto, vice president for mission and planning, Salve Regina University
Laurie Musgrove, vice president for institutional advancement, Bryant College
Barbara Newman, professor/chair, human development & family studies, University of Rhode Island
Rose Pagano, senior executive assistant to the vice president for academic administration, Providence College
Angela Renaud, dean of arts & sciences, Johnson & Wales University
Jayne Richmond, dean of University College & special academic programs, University of Rhode Island
Ruth Sherman, vice president for academic affairs, Community College of Rhode Island
M. Beverly Swan, provost and vice president for academic affairs, University of Rhode Island
Janett Trubatch, vice provost for graduate studies, research & outreach, University of Rhode Island
Barbara von Eckardt, dean of liberal arts, Rhode Island School of Design

2002-2003 Institutional Representatives to RIWHE

Winifred Brownell, dean of arts & sciences, University of Rhode Island
Lenore DeLucia, vice president for administration and finance, Rhode Island College
Marie DiBiasio, dean of education, Roger Williams University
Nancy Friese, dean of graduate studies, Rhode Island School of Design
Lorna Hunter, vice president for enrollment management, Bryant College
Margaret Jablonski, dean of campus life, Brown University
Catherine Kennedy, vice president for career development, New England Institute of Technology
Theresa Madonna, vice president for academic affairs, Salve Regina University
Laurie Musgrove, vice president for institutional advancement, Bryant College
Karen Newman, dean of the graduate school, Brown University
Angela Renaud, dean of arts & sciences, Johnson & Wales University
Jayne Richmond, dean of University College & special academic programs, University of Rhode Island
Ruth Sherman, vice president for academic affairs, Community College of Rhode Island
Karen Sibley, executive associate dean of the college, Brown University
M. Beverly Swan, vice president for academic affairs, University of Rhode Island
Janett Trubatch, vice provost for graduate studies, research & outreach, University of Rhode Island
Barbara von Eckardt, dean of liberal arts, Rhode Island School of Design