

Minutes of the Nominating Committee Meeting November 18-20, 2011 Boston, MA

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 18, 2011

Members Present: Christopher Sims, Elnora Williams, Rev. Darrick Jackson, Aymie Manning, Rev. James Hobart, Rev. LoraKim Joyner, Larry Ladd, Leon Spencer, Danielle DiBona

Review of agenda

Opening words – Elnora Williams

Check In

Review of the formal role of the Nominating Committee and its changes

- Defined as an elected committee of the Association (separate from the committees of the Board) – essentially nominate for every committee/commission that is elected by the General Assembly except President and Moderator
- Documents – brochure for recruiting, internal document with list of positions to fill
- New Stuff:
 - Presidential search committee
 - 7 members, 5 nominated by us, 2 appointed by Board
 - Our nominations to come for the 2013 elections
 - All current members serving a 6 year term (or filling a vacancy), but new incoming members next election cycle will serve 3 year terms
 - Change to 11 at-large trustees for UUA Board of Trustees beginning in 2013
 - 3 or 4 nominations every year for election
 - Our responsibilities will include creating the best group of 14, with a mix of skills, background, diversity, location, age, etc.
 - In 2013 Board will nominate 4 from among its current members – we MUST collaborate with the Board on this task (we nominate the 7 others)

Break

Review of the Key Dates of the Nomination Cycle

Covenant

- As a process – check in (at beginning of meeting) and check out (at end of day) – check in with the group whenever/if there is trouble or a problem with the covenant
- Strive for clarity and meaning, and share expertise and experience (trust and risk in the process)
- Step up/step down – and reminding each other of it in love

- What does it mean to be in religious covenant? Covenant to each other, to the wider UU community, and to the sacred. Remembering the historical background of the word, and being grounded in our tradition.
- Seek to speak with one voice
- Sticking to the schedule of tasks – respect, integrity and efficiency
- Leave space for the spirit, be flexible
- Remembering who we are accountable to – especially the folks not at this table (and those not born yet)
- Speaking with one voice through consensus – confidentiality and trust, and accountability

Consensus Process

Our goal is to come to consensus in our work – not to be confused with unanimity
 As a group we strive to come to consensus, with room for individuals to express reservations, stand aside, or block the decision, in which case we take more time to address the concern(s)

Process Observations

Lunch

Opening Words – Danielle DiBona

AR/AO/MC with Bill Gardiner and Paula Cole Jones

Questions:

- How do we become better observers?
- How do we bring new members and new people into the process?
- Use of the AR/AO/MC lens as a foundation?
- What are some additional challenges?
- How can we make better use of our own process?

What riddles are you trying to solve in regards to leadership and inclusion?

- Leading and reflecting the challenges for the congregations to follow
- The difference between being a model for others and a top-down system
- Identifying leaders who are not already involved in the congregation/district/Association
- How do we ensure the inclusion of historically marginalized groups into leadership?
- Authenticity of leadership
- How do we have faith that we can do this?
- How do we include youth and young adults into leadership?
- Identifying new leaders when there isn't a structure to find/encourage them (especially youth and young adults)?
- Mission Impossible?
- How do we balance all the skills that are needed at the table through our nominations?

Definitions of Concepts:

Covenant – we have to be honest about the covenant we are already in; how we are going to go about doing what we do

Accountability – who we are accountable to shapes the history, turns us one way or another

History – we are being asked to rewrite the history that will be

Vision – what guides us

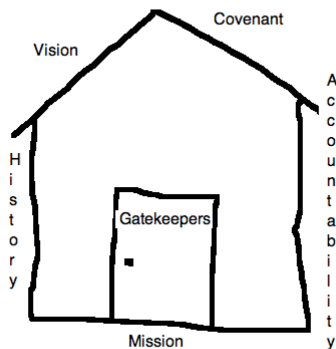
Mission – what we strive to achieve, the goal we are trying to achieve, and what we are charged to do (and we don't have to get it right or succeed)

All these come together to shape who comes through the door – determined by the gatekeepers

We are also responsible for getting people and their resources/skills into the right rooms within the house

How do we get people to walk up to the door in the first place?

Image that accompanies this discussion:



Becoming Grounded – Combining our analyses into one common analysis

Themes:

- Institutionalization
- Accountability
- History and Identity
- Power and Privilege
- Internalization of status
- Spirituality/Faith
- Marginalized Voices

Transition to an AR/AO/MC movement is to enter into a new identity and conversation

Homework: Combining our thoughts into a 2-3 page draft statement of our analysis

Center or Dominant Culture/Borderlands or Marginalized Communities

What accountability looks like?

- Structuring Accountability
- Regular and consistent communication
- Intentionality, transparency, and commitment
- Carefully defining and clarifying accountability relationships

What can we expect from UU leaders?

Final Questions:

- What are you accountable for?
- Who are you accountable to?
- What is the process you are working with?
- How do you evaluate? What are you learning?

Break

Discussion with Carey McDonald, Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries and Jeremy Bateman, Leadership Development Associate for the Youth and Young Adult Office

- What are some changes in the cultural and institutional sphere of youth and young adults?
- How to make committees/commissions/board more interesting for youth and young adults?
- How to recruit more youth and young adults for these positions?

Barriers to youth and young adult participation in UUA leadership:

- Safety, practical stuff
- What it means to be inclusive to youth and young adults and embracing multicultural ministries
 - Continually changing process, varies depending on age and experience
 - Some committees not accessible to youth due to time constraints
 - Attitude of meeting needs to affirm humanity, leadership and equality of youth
 - Tokenization
 - Young Adults often come from a variety of experiences, have differing availability and constraints
 - Better approaches to orientation and mentorship within committees will help with feelings of otherness/under-appreciation for young adults, etc.

Recruiting Youth and Young Adults

- Obvious starting point – Young Adult and Youth Caucus Staff at GA
- Time commitment is a huge deal for young people
- UUA Field Staff
- District Youth leadership trainings and events
- Youth leadership recognition program – youth say what they have done as leaders, encourage congregations to provide such opportunities, create a database of congregational and district youth leaders
- Blueboat.blogs.uua.org – Youth and Young Adult blog by the UUA

- Communicating with Directors of Religious Education in congregations and districts about young leaders
- Continued communication with these two groups about recruiting leaders!
- Monica Cummings and Multicultural Leadership School – great resource for youth and young adults of color
- Youth = high school aged
- Young Adults = post high school/18 through 35

Revisiting the Covenant in light of AR/AO/MC Discussion

- Adding a point about using an AR/AO/MC lens/paradigm as part of the covenant – striving towards the Beloved Community – a part of every other point as well!
- Future discussion needed for learning about Multi-Species competencies as a part of our work – being put on the bicycle rack
- Importance of recognizing what being “grounded in our traditions” means in regards to who/what is defined as the Center or Dominant Culture

Bicycle Rack and Process Review

- Leon and Nancy Bartlett are in the process of drafting a common Nom Com/CoC application
- Topics for the Discussion of the application at 10:15 am on Saturday:
 - Process/policy for lack of AR/AO/MC training and life experience
 - Knowing applicants more fairly
 - Confirming whether an applicant is a member of a congregation
 - Policy on incomplete applications
 - Importance of a photograph
 - Use of social networking sites to learn about applicants
 - Guidelines on letters of recommendation
 - Limits on number of references?
 - Calling references?
- Discussion of the use of social networking sites to gain information on applicants – to be addressed after this meeting
- Leadership Development discussion – addressed on Sunday
- Confidentiality Policy discussion – 3:00 pm Saturday
- We would like to add slightly more spiritual items to agenda: chalice lighting, perhaps a song every now and then, words and gathering, etc.
- To continue the work from our meeting with Paula and Bill, I will type up the words from our green sheets and pass those along to everyone as well as the notes from our discussion. Each group of 3 will produce a draft document of analysis for us to share and respond to in the future.
- The discussion Saturday 10:15 – 3:00 will plant many seeds for the second task from Paula and Bill in terms of the 3 membership levels and new recruitment!

Process Observations – Danielle DiBona

Closing

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 19, 2011

Opening Words – LoraKim Joyner

Conversation with DRUUMM leaders Jacqui Williams and Clyde Grubbs, and ARE leader Ken Wagner

What's going on with DRUUMM now?

- District/Regional events and gatherings
- Reinvigorating the DRUUMM Chaplain program (not just at GA)
- Preparations for Justice GA – working with Accountability group, GAPC, Council on Cross Cultural Engagement, etc.
- Training of religious professionals – whose are we? Training of trainers, continuing education and support past seminary for clergy with UUMA
- Quick history – Originally Religious Professionals of Colour, has now grown into a medium/large sized church, with ~300 dues-paying members and ~400+ others it serves
- Performs incredible ministry for free, and receives no financial support from UUA
- UUA not doing substantial Anti-Racism work now, though plenty of Multicultural training going on

What's going on with ARE?

- Co-Presidents Michael Tino and Melissa Carvill-Ziemer
- Focus on communication with membership
- Working on “What does it mean to be a member of ARE?” – being an ally isn't a state of being, but a process and a behaviour; being a member of ARE is a commitment to focus and grow
- Drafting accountability guidelines – to be reviewed every few years
- Regionalization – relationships of regional groups with national ARE, and with DRUUMM
- Conference this past year – Fort Meyers, FL; theme = multigenerational; great steps in repairing relationships between youth/young adults and adult ARE members (from first ARE conference in Minneapolis)
- Conference next year – Fort Worth, TX; theme = Imperialism, Colonialism, and preparation for GA in Phoenix
- Past ARE conferences: Minneapolis, Kansas City, Long Beach, Fort Meyers, Fort Worth

Committees – consistency year to year with turnover

Need to look at why some committees require AR/AO/MC work and some only recommend
What is a priority for the Nominating Committee in terms of trainings, and AR/AO/MC?

- Question on application: “have you had any training” may not be the best way to judge a person's history with training
 - Rather than being able to list training experiences, find a way to judge competencies with a tiered or ranking system? AR/AO work is a process, not a box you tick.

- Perhaps a statement or an essay about how they apply or live their AR/AO work
- Also need to decide whether training is required or not, and what kind of training?
(The post-GA training this past year for newly elected leaders was focused more on “let’s all get along” than it was “anti-oppression”)
- Board has a ranking of different competencies needed for different committees, and we have a requirement of competencies across the board for all committees
- Training post-GA after the next election cycle:
 - Current kind of training not adequate – given our new charge in the bylaws, we should demand better!
 - Seen as an “event” rather than a training that is successful if no push-back
 - Feeling that another training not necessary if one has been to it once before
 - Work with the Committee on Committees to set same standards of training for appointees and elected positions alike
- DRUUMM still receives requests for names of people of colour to fill their committees
- In congregations across the country, anti-racism is not talked about, particularly because it is not required/pushed/encouraged beyond a minister getting final fellowship
- Nom Com’s role in a non-election year
 - Recruitment
 - Advertising for application process
 - Fitting right people in right committees
- Relationships with youth and young adults in ARE and DRUUMM
 - Monica Cummings working on an event for youth in February
 - Past ARE conference provided ample scholarships for young adults/youth
 - Groundwork trainings under Bill Sinkford have since been dissolved, no opportunities for youth/young adults to go to trainings anymore, and those youth who had that training are now being lost as they become Young Adults
 - Money to support youth and young adult involvement is lacking

Break

Observer from Break to Lunch: Clyde Grubbs

Process Observation – Leon

Planning for recruiting strong candidate pool

Process/policy for lack of AR/AO/MC training and life experience

- Input about what kind of training happens post-GA for elected/appointed leaders
 - Work with staff folks who set the trainings up
 - Collaborate with Committee on Committees
- Current process
 - We ask for a list of trainings participated in within the letter of intent on the application essay
 - Gather context clues as to their AR/AO/MC competencies from letter of intent

- Don't talk to references in person to ask about competencies
- Suggestions for changes
 - Call all three references provided
 - Interview candidates by phone call
 - Essay Question about what AR/AO/MC work means in your life
 - Include an education piece on the application about Association's commitment to AR/AO/MC
 - Provide the Multicultural competency form for applicants to fill out
 - Utilize the competency guidelines when interviewing the applicants
 - Include in recommendation letter guide an evaluation on AR/AO competency
 - Determine application of competencies – are they passive or active? Ask for a demonstrative example of AR/AO work and a reference for it
 - Encourage learning for applicants with little to no experience to gain competency and apply again in the next cycle
 - Encourage continued education by posting links to/lists of good resources on our website – consistent with our guidelines/expectations
 - Request that a DRUUMM and ARE representative are involved in post-GA trainings – to ensure accountability
- Summary:
 - Include phone interview of applicants, and use MC competency as guide
 - Include an essay about AR/AO/MC experiences, what it means in their life, and an example of how they live it
 - Add letter of reference guideline about competency, and call references
 - Provide tools for continuing education and support

Deepening our process in order to know applicants more fairly

- Expanding the essay question will help with this
- Interviewing by phone will help with this
- Adding more guidelines for recommendations will help with this

Confirming whether an applicant is a member of a congregation

- Bylaws dictate that a member of a committee/commission/board must be a member of a congregation
- Keeping in mind a Multicultural paradigm, we must remember that requiring membership in a congregation is a way of keeping power

Policy on Incomplete Applications/Importance of a Photograph

- Important to have a firm deadline for the application itself
- If references have not arrived by the deadline but the application has, we contact the applicant and references to let them know
- If minimal information is missing from the application, we can contact the applicant to ask for that information, and have an unadvertised secondary deadline for that info
- Important to remember the power and privilege associated with allowing people to submit things beyond the deadlines
- Photographs
 - Evens playing field for those we have met and those we haven't

- Struggle with issues of prejudice, cultural preferences
- Concern with use of photos for advertising/tokenizing purposes without consent of person
- Consensus – will NOT require a photograph

Letters of Reference – Allow more than 3?

- Unfair on the committee to send more than the requested letters of recommendation
- Wording: “at least 3 and no more,” “Exactly and no more,” “no more or less than 3,”
- Asking Nancy to contact applicants when more than 3 letters of reference are received, and they can either pick their choice of three or we get the first three received
- Sometimes we have made exceptions to deadlines for the sake of having applicants at all or having applicants that represent the diversity of the Association – when we have to do this, it indicates that we have not done our job in recruiting well
- We can aspire to perfecting the system!

Process Observation – Larry Ladd

Lunch

Continuation of planning for recruiting strong candidate pool – specifics

Liaison Responsibilities

- Nomination Liaisons
 - Check in with committee/commission/board about what they need in terms of skills
 - Know how many slots are open for this election cycle
- Affiliate Liaisons
 - Check in to see if they have suggestions for possible leaders, who they would like to see in leadership positions, etc.
- District Liaisons
 - Keep the list kept
 - Use unique strategies for contacting your district based on their style

Liaison with President, Moderator, Board

- In order to gain insight into what leaders might be out there
- Must be clear about our role in communication with them
 - Could prepare a handout or write-up of our intent in contact
- Keeping liaison with District President’s Association – Danielle
- Dividing up the Board to consult with them on suggestions – Danielle and Jim

Brochure

- Updating information of what slots in the committees are open
- Possibility of combining out brochures, applications, websites, etc. with the Committee on Committees
- Larry working with Leon and Nancy B on collaboration with Committee on Committees on this

- Timeline – turn in information by February 1st to have to Darrick, who will compile by February 15th

Media Outreach

- Many different ways we can reach out and put our information out there
 - Facebook page – Aymie and Darrick
 - Twitter account
 - LinkedIn
 - Blog?
 - A new website? – ask Nancy about possibility
 - Put our information out there and make it possible for as many people as possible to contact us!

Break

Planning for General Assembly

- Are we going?
 - Moderator and chair of Committee on Committees think we need to be there for purposes of recruiting
 - New kind of GA = new model for recruiting
 - Leadership development and justice work in addition to recruiting
 - If we go as a committee we need to do the committee work
 - Could we send some of the committee?
 - If we don't go, could we use the money for another in-person meeting?
 - In person recruiting helpful for communities that don't often gather is significant – such as youth and young adult caucus
 - Public opinion if we decide to send only a few?
 - New tasks of Presidential Search Committee and Board of Trustees at large
 - GA provides opportunity to be on top of the current feel of the Association
 - Very complex situation, not everyone would be comfortable going as Nom Com
- Straw Pull question: Should Nom Com have a presence at GA? Yes, with one stand aside and some reservations
 - Striving toward authenticity in our role(s) there
 - What will our purpose be while there?
 - Where will we be in relation to the center/dominant culture while at GA?
- DRUUMM – All Justice GA, no business
- Faith in leaders of color and ally leaders to participate in planning
- In what capacity are we going as the Nominating Committee?
 - People of privilege operate from within the Dominant Culture in order to be accountable to the Borderlands, and work to change the center from within
 - People of color operate from the Borderlands, in solidarity with others, creating change from that perspective and in accountability with allies in the Center
 - Multi-capacity, wearing many hats
 - Observation, Participation, make Judgments, and Recruit
 - Learn from this experience

- Spend the night thinking about our role at GA more specifically, bring it up tomorrow

Confidentiality Policy (looking at draft policy drawn up by LoraKim in 2010)

- On number 4, changing “notes” to “internal minutes”
- Add a point stating “we will not discuss candidate’s by name via email.”
- In regards to number 2, we have discussed a common database with the CoC in order to share applicants that may be useful to both of us
 - Sharing the entire application with the CoC if the applicant agrees would save time and effort by the applicant if they choose to/are asked to serve
- Having applications available as historic documents/public record after a certain period of time?
 - We would have to include this on the application letting applicants know
 - Applications possibly not appropriate as public record ever?
 - What is the tradition of archiving applications? We should look into this
 - We will ask Dick Cresswell (previous Vice Chair of Nom Com) whether we have always archived past applications – LoraKim will do this and report back, at which time we will vote on the Confidentiality Policy

Process Observation – Chris Sims

Closing Words – Darrick Jackson

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2011

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting – Leon Spencer

GA Plan

- Recruiting strategies in the past
 - Booth (shared with Committee on Committees)
 - Workshop with Committee on Committees
 - Reception
 - Application and brochure handouts
 - Face to face meetings before and after GA
 - Attended events where leaders might be
 - Section in Plenary
- Ideas for Justice GA 2012
 - Workshop on recruiting through justice?
 - Guide for other nominating committees to recruit
 - Go without a plan and serve, witness, and participate, recruit from there
 - No booth, workshop or reception this year!
 - We will need to be vigilant, nimble and accessible
 - Meet before and after, as well as daily check-ins and communication
 - Mealtime meetings – outside convention center at locally owned restaurant

- We won't all be wearing our Nom Com hats 24/7 at GA, and will have other commitments, but we will trust each other to get our work done

Schedule for our Nomination Cycle

- Larry will create a draft schedule for us to have
- Creating Application – Aymie and Elnora – due on February 15th

References

- Calling, letters of recommendation, or both?
- Will create a guideline for recommendation letters
 - More of a short answer format, a few questions instead of a letter
- Be sure to get all the information we need from references before we meet in person

Finalize Meeting Date for Fall

- Need more meeting time – either 2 shorter meetings or one longer meeting
- Possible Meeting Dates:

| Dates | Conflicts? |
|------------------------|---------------|
| October 4-7 | Jim, LoraKim |
| October 11-14 | Jim |
| October 18-21 | Board Meeting |
| October 25-28 | Leon |
| November 1-4 | none |
| November 8-11 | none |
| November 15-18 | none |
| November 22-25 | Thanksgiving |
| November 29-December 2 | none |

We will give these dates to Nancy, who will let us know the availability of P&E, which will probably dictate if 2 meetings or 1 longer meeting are possible, and when

Process Observation – Elnora Williams

Closing Words – Jim Hobart

Covenant Check-Out

Abbreviations you might come across in this document and what they stand for:

- AR/AO/MC – Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, Multiculturalism
- ARE – Allies for Racial Equity
- BoT – Board of Trustees
- CoC – Committee on Committees
- DRUUMM – Diverse Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries
- GA – General Assembly
- GAPC – General Assembly Planning Committee
- Nom Com – Nominating Committee

P&E – Pickett and Elliot House

UUA – Unitarian Universalist Association

UUMA – Unitarian Universalist Minister's Association

YA – Young Adults

YaYA – Youth and Young Adults