

HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL MEETING

24 February 2009 – 11:00 a.m. – Chancellor’s Suite

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT	Susan Basso Lori Brown Sister Paula Buley Therese Chidiac Cosmo Cirillo Gabriel Esteban Marie Foley Dennis Garbini	Tracy Gottlieb Tara Hart Ingrid Hill Father Paul Holmes Maura Kenny Catherine Kiernan Pat Linfante Charee Marquez	Robert Martin Shirley Matthews Morella Mirabal Beth Bloom (<i>sitting in for King Mott</i>) Joan Osthues Joseph Quinlan Elizabeth Rathbun	Rosario Reyes John Saccoman Maria Soares Elaine Walker, <i>Co-Chair</i> Laura A. Wankel Rob Weitz Father Anthony Ziccardi, <i>Co-Chair</i>
EXCUSED	Mary Alexander Simone James Alexander Kristal Batanjany Robert Burke Monsignor James Cafone	Julieta Carraballo Father Joseph Chapel Martin Edwards Nicole Fopeano Lauren Jackson	Michael Kurlander Michael McLaughlin King Mott Mary Mueller Milagros Ortiz	Erwin Ponder Joseph Sandman Christopher Sharrett Monsignor Robert Sheeran Father James Spera

TOPIC	DISCUSSION / ACTION / PROPOSAL	RESPONSIBILITY / TIME FRAME
CALL TO ORDER	Dr. Walker called the meeting to order at 11:09 a.m.	
OPENING PRAYER	Sister Paula offered the opening prayer.	
OPENING REMARKS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both Dr. Walker and Father Ziccardi welcomed the Council to the second meeting of this academic year. • Father Ziccardi stated that at the last meeting a presentation was made on the work of the Programming Committee. Minutes of that meeting are posted on the Human Relations Council website which is still new and under development. • Monsignor Sheeran had every intention of being present at this meeting, but he needed to attend a funeral Mass. His hope was to come by at the end of this meeting with Newark’s mayor, Cory Booker, after attending the opening ceremony for the Center for Entrepreneurial Studies. 	
ICE BREAKER <i>MS. CHAREE MARQUEZ</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In an effort for Council members to get to know one another and also know the positions they hold, a game of name Bingo was played. Forrest Pritchett, member of the Programming Committee, presented the two members that won with a book on Martin Luther King’s speeches and quotes. He read a quote from Dr. King, “Like an unchecked cancer, hate corrodes the personality and eats away its vital unity. Hate destroys a man’s sense of values and his objectivity. It causes him to describe the beautiful as ugly and the ugly as beautiful, and to confuse the true with the false and the false with the true. Justice at its best is love correcting everything that stands against love.” 	

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<p>PRESENTATION: BEST PRACTICES FOR PREVENTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT <i>LORI BROWN, ESQ.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Lori Brown gave a PowerPoint presentation on sexual harassment (attached). Ms. Brown was asked by Monsignor Sheeran to make this presentation to the Council. She stated that it is important for this group as senior leaders and stewards of the University to take part in open discussions on this topic. It is our fiduciary obligation to the University to make sure that this type of behavior is not practiced in the work environment. • Ms Brown gave a background of herself. In her role as Compliance Officer of the University, she operates as a neutral party. She does not advocate for one party or the other; nor does she provide legal advice or draw any legal conclusions. She makes determinations and recommendations based on the facts presented. Confidentiality is practiced not only for the protection and privacy of both parties, but also for the integrity of the process itself. Other matters handled by the Compliance office are based upon legally protected classes such as age, race, religion, national origin or veteran status. Ms. Brown provides face-to-face training and gives presentations to departments or student groups. • Ms. Brown provided statistics from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). EEOC is a federal agency where individuals can file claims on discrimination. These statistics did not include harassment suits that were filed in state courts or damages obtained through litigation. • The federal law against sexual harassment is under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the state law is the NJ Law Against Discrimination (NJLAD). Students, or organizations that receive federal assistance, are also protected under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The University community is expected to act in accordance not only with federal and state laws, but also with the University policies and mission. • It is important, and it is the responsibility of supervisors, to report any incident to the Compliance Officer as soon as possible. Examples were given by Ms. Brown on the different types of sexual harassment. The University policy against sexual harassment was reviewed. The policy is consistent with federal and state laws as well as with the mission of the University. Ms. Catherine Kiernan added that the University policy does not replace the law, but the University does impose the duty on supervisors to report any incidents to the Compliance Officer. Ms. Brown stated that cultural differences are respected and appreciated, however no exceptions can be made with regard to prohibited behavior. For additional information on appropriate email communications, employees should refer to the University’s Appropriate Use Policy from the Office of Information and Technology. Ms. Brown read and explained the Statement on Consensual Relationships. This policy does not address whether or not employees who are on a lateral level may date; however, this should be discussed since it affects their conduct in the work environment. The University policy applies to student peer-to-peer sexual harassment as well. Students are not as forthcoming as adults. In certain situations the department of Student Affairs is used as a co-investigator to help students feel more comfortable in speaking to the Compliance Officer. Since September 2007, the University has provided employees an additional mechanism for reporting incidences via a toll free number and a website. This is in compliance with the Conscientious Employee Protection Act (CEPA). This does not take the place of reporting to the Compliance Office. Gender discrimination and sexual harassment are the top two claims that employees file law suits against their employers. • This presentation helped Council members understand the University policy on sexual harassment and what is considered inappropriate under federal and state law. Online training and tutorials are also available to employees. Ms. Brown’s office is located in Presidents Hall and she always has an open door policy. 	

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COMMITTEE REPORTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Father Ziccardi said that since the committees did not have time to give their reports they please forward the minutes of their meetings to him so that they can be shared with the Council via email for input or comment. • Father Ziccardi asked that each committee gather before leaving to plan and determine a time for their next meeting. 	
CLOSING PRAYER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Father Ziccardi offered the closing prayer. 	
ADJOURNMENT	The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.	

*Respectfully submitted,
Father Anthony Ziccardi, Co-Chair, Human Relations Council*

AZ:mf