

SYLVIA C. SPEARS, PH.D.

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

- More than twenty-five years of experience working in higher education at public and private colleges and universities, with more than fifteen years of experience in senior leadership roles.
- More than ten years of full-time teaching experience with a teaching and research interests in the development of supportive and inclusive educational environments.
- Several years of experience leading innovative organizational change initiatives including those related diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.
- Substantial experience as a public speaker, trainer, and facilitator with expertise in developing and delivering educational programs for students, staff, and faculty.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Vice President for Equity & Social Justice 2012 - present
(formerly Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion)
Affiliated Faculty 2017 - present
Emerson College

- Provide institutional leadership for the College's strategic goals and shepherd equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice efforts.
- Serve as a member of the President's Council, working collaboratively with the president and other senior leaders on major institutional priorities and initiatives.
- Lead the development and implementation of strategic plans, policies, programs, and operating structures to advance the College's mission and extend its commitment to diversity and equity.
- Implement programs and processes to enhance the recruitment, retention, and success of students from underrepresented groups and implement similar efforts for faculty and staff.
- Advance the development of inclusive instructional practices among faculty and work collaboratively with faculty in the diversification of curricula.
- Guide the development of workshops and trainings that build understanding, increase intercultural fluency, and create structural accountability for progress toward organizational goals.
- Oversee the Social Justice Center, Elma Lewis Center for Civic Engagement, the Office of Title IX Access & Equity, and the Healing & Advocacy Collective (formerly Violence Prevention & Response).
- Advance the College's commitment to community engagement through the development of partnerships and programs that bring College resources and expertise to bear in support of community aspirations for social change.
- Teach a 300-level Peace and Social Justice course through the Institute for interdisciplinary Studies.

Selected Accomplishments: Successfully led efforts with the Vice-President of Enrollment to adopt test optional admissions, successfully worked to increase the allocation of financial aid dollars in support of increased student diversity, developed and implemented the College's Inclusive Excellence Initiative and Inclusive Excellence Action Planning process, launched the College's first comprehensive climate survey, created the Inclusive Excellence Faculty Fellows Program, oversaw an external review of the College's response to reports of sexual assault, and created the Bias Incident Reporting Program.

Adjunct Professor, Doctoral Program in Education
New England College

2012 - present²

- Serve as dissertation advisor to doctoral students, and as second reader or external reader for a range of higher education students enrolled in a low-residency Ed.D. program
- Taught Promoting Access, Retention and Achievement, a core program requirement.

Assistant Vice President for Academic Initiatives
Ed.D. Program Director/Associate Professor of Higher Education
New England College

2011 - 2012

- Worked with the College's senior leadership, the faculty, and program directors to promote innovative academic programming and implement strategic plan objectives, including those related to diversity.
- Developed and implemented curricular and co-curricular initiatives consistent with the College's mission and strategic goals, particularly related to innovative pedagogies.
- Worked with faculty and Admissions staff to support enrollment and retention activities.
- Led efforts to enhance the diversity of the campus and the infusion of diversity into curricula.
- Served as program director for the College's inaugural doctoral program and taught courses in the higher education administration concentration, including Introduction to Doctoral Studies, Contemporary Issues in Higher Education, Research Methods, and Promoting Access, Retention and Achievement.

Selected Accomplishments: Developed a comprehensive program to facilitate the transition of the College's increasingly diverse body of new year students, implemented new First Year Seminar, and conducted the first review of the College's ESL and International Student Services programs.

Dean of the College (Acting)
Dartmouth College

2009 - 2011

- Served as a senior officer of the College and chief student affairs officer providing leadership for all aspects of the Dean of the College Division.
- Led more than 20 departments and 500 employees in support of the College's mission.
- Acted as senior budget officer for the division, providing fiscal oversight for the division's \$65 million budget.
- Worked collaboratively with academic deans and other faculty in the development and delivery of programs designed to support the academic success of students, particularly those from under-represented groups.
- Worked collaboratively with the Office of Advancement leading all fundraising and development activities for the division, established development priorities, cultivated donors, and stewarded gifts.
- Exercised leadership in addressing key issues and concerns in the student community, including the institution's response to incidents of bias.
- Provided advice and guidance to the President and other senior administrators on issues related to the student body and the community life of the campus.
- Acted on behalf of the President on matters related to the student community and diversity.
- Convened institutional and divisional committees, working groups, and other meetings as needed to address critical issues and campus crisis situations.
- Developed programs that enhanced the quality of student life at Dartmouth.

Selected Accomplishments: Spearheaded the development and implementation of the College's first academic pre-orientation program for first generation college students, received Green Key Award for outstanding outreach to students, received the 2011 "V Warrior Award" in recognition of work toward reducing sexual violence on campus, launched and completed an external review of the division, developed and implemented a new organizational structure for the division consistent with best practices, and implemented hiring policies that included the development of diversity recruitment plans for all position vacancies.

Senior Associate Dean of the College (Acting)

2008 - 2009

Dartmouth College

- Oversaw academic support departments, including the First Year Office, the Upperclass Deans Office, the Office of Pluralism and Leadership, and the Academic Skills Center.
- Served as principal advisor to the Dean on matters related to diversity and campus climate, assisted with all aspects of program management, operations and evaluation of the division, and ensured coordination of programs, policies and services.
- Represented the Dean and collaborated with other senior institutional leaders and staff to advance institutional and divisional initiatives and priorities.
- Served as the Dean of the College's primary liaison to the faculty in advancing the academic mission of the College.
- Convened institutional and divisional committees, working groups and other meetings, as needed, to address short and long-term issues.
- Served on the steering committee for strategic planning for the division.
- Acted as dean-in-charge and senior officer-in-charge in the President's or Dean's absence.
- Served on institutional and divisional senior management teams responding to campus, community, and constituency issues.
- Responded to student, parent, and alumni concerns and resolved concerns, as necessary.
- Represented the Dean and the institution externally and with media outlets, as requested.
- Coordinated institutional responses to bias incidents, breaches of civility and other campus life issues.
- Acted on behalf of the Dean in emergency situations including responding to community concerns and other crisis situations.

Selected Accomplishments: Completed an academic support self-study of Dean of the College programs, revised sexual assault response protocols, conducted program reviews of the Office of Black Student Advising and the Native American Program.

Associate Dean of Student Life

2007 - 2009

Director of the Office of Pluralism and Leadership (OPAL)

Dartmouth College

- Provided administrative, financial, and supervisory oversight of departments under OPAL's organizational umbrella including the Center for Women and Gender, the Office of Asian and Asian-American Advising, the Office of Black Student Advising, International Student Programs, the Office of Latino/a Advising, the Office of LGBTQ Advising, and the Native American Program.
- Supported the coordination of leadership and diversity programs and services reporting directly to the Dean of the College and the Vice-President of Institutional Diversity and Equity.
- Monitored the academic standing of students from historically under-represented groups and oversaw the development and implementation of programs and services to address achievement gaps, enhance retention and foster persistence to graduation.
- Collaborated with faculty and staff across divisions on the development of initiatives to promote student learning and success.
- Analyzed student data for instances of disproportionate representation in academic actions and

disciplinary sanctioning.

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- Served as the institutional representative on the Consortium for High Achievement and Success.
- Monitored the implementation of new programmatic activities including OPAL's leadership and participation in the Economic Equity Initiative and the First Generation Network.
- Served as a member the Dean of the College Assessment Team, conducted program assessments of student learning outcomes, and presented the findings orally and in writing.
- Conducted student community program assessments and climate surveys.
- Chaired the Division's Diversity Committee and the College's Climate Committee.
- Coordinated the Achieving Community Together Response Program, the College's bias response protocol.

Selected Accomplishments: Worked collaboratively with the leadership of Institutional Diversity and Equity in formalizing a bias response protocol (Achieving Community Together Response Program), revised the vision, mission and strategic goals of OPAL to ensure greater consistency with best practices, and established a new programmatic reporting structure for all OPAL advisors.

Assistant Professor, Human Development and Family Studies
University of Rhode Island

2004 - 2007

- Served as a member of the core faculty in the College Student Personnel (CSP) graduate program, a student affairs preparation program.
- Taught undergraduate students in Human Development and graduate courses in the College Student Personnel Program, with particular emphasis on diversity issues in higher education.
- Provided academic advisement for undergraduate and graduate students in the major.
- Supervised undergraduate and graduate students conducting independent research projects and field placements, and served on thesis and dissertation committees.
- Collaborated with College Student Personnel faculty on matters relevant to the graduate program curricula and served on the department's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.
- Collaborated with student affairs practitioners on practicum and internship opportunities for CSP students.
- Taught Diversity Topics in Higher Education, Cultural Competence in Human Services, Legal Issues in Student Affairs, Research Perspectives in Human Development, and Introduction to Counseling.

Selected Accomplishments: Achieved excellence in teaching as evidenced by student evaluation scores ranging from 4.3/4.95 on a 5 point scale, selected as a Research Ethics Fellow, developed and implemented the first Multicultural Competence in Student Affairs Mini-Conference, and was appointed to President Carother's Commission of the Status of Faculty, Staff and Students of Color.

Lecturer, Human Development and Family Studies
University of Rhode Island

1999 - 2004

- Taught undergraduate and graduate courses including Introduction to Personal Development, Introduction to Counseling, Legal Issues in Higher Education, Diversity Topics in Higher Education, Cultural Competence in Human Services, and Research Perspectives in Human Development.
- Provided academic advisement for undergraduate and graduate students in the major.
- Served as faculty advisor for 15-20 students per semester fulfilling their senior field experience requirement and supervised 5-10 undergraduate and graduate students conducting independent research projects.
- Advised approximately 80 University College Human Development pre-majors.
- Collaborated with Human Development and College Student Personnel faculty on program curricula.

Selected Accomplishments: Awarded the Faculty Excellence Award for Outstanding Service by the Multicultural Center, maintained exceptionally high student teaching evaluations, and selected to serve as a Disability Faculty Resource Mentor for departmental colleagues on student accessibility issues. 5

Interim Affirmative Action Officer
University of Rhode Island, Kingston

1996 - 1998

- Reporting to the President, served as a leader and educator in the University community on issues regarding diversity, cultural competence, equal opportunity, affirmative action, and gender equity.
- Monitored the University's affirmative action and equal opportunity programs in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations.
- Monitored all stages of the hiring process for all University non-classified and faculty searches.
- Collaborated with faculty and staff search committees to enhance recruitment of applicants from underrepresented groups.
- Collaborated on ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act initiatives with the University's ADA Coordinator and reported on ADA activities as required by state and federal regulations.
- Prepared federal and state affirmative action plans and presented detailed studies and reports.
- Provided counsel and mediation in informal complaints and investigated formal complaints of discrimination.

Selected Accomplishments: Revised institutional affirmative action hiring procedures, search policies and sexual harassment policies in compliance with state and federal regulations, and participated in the successful resolution of a US Department of Justice review in response to student concerns regarding diversity issues.

Assistant Director of Multicultural Student Services
Bryant College (now Bryant University)

1994 - 1996

- Developed programs and initiatives to support the academic success and retention of students of color and international students.
- Worked collaboratively with academic and student affairs departments and programs to enhance address campus climate concerns.
- Developed and delivered educational programs and workshops on diversity and multicultural issues for faculty, staff, and students.
- Coordinated college diversity awareness events including African-American History Month, Unity Month, and the International Fair.
- Advised international students and the college community on immigration issues.
- Assisted in the maintenance of immigration records in accordance with federal regulations.

Selected Accomplishments: Enhanced orientation and transition programs for international students, and served as the College's primary crisis responder after the death of an international student.

Temporary Staff Assistant/Graduate Assistant, Affirmative Action Office
University of Rhode Island

1994

- Assisted in monitoring hiring processes for compliance with equal opportunity and affirmative action regulations and policies.
- Compiled statistical data for federal reporting and complaint investigations.
- Conducted discrimination complaint interviews.

Tribal Administrator
Narragansett Indian Tribe

1992 - 1994

- Served as senior administrator for the Tribal community's administrative functions.
- Provided oversight for over 3 million dollars in federal grants and contracts, including higher education, adult education, and adult vocational training programs.
- Provided direct supervision to 12 department heads and indirect supervision to 65 staff members.
- Wrote and monitored grants and contracts with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Services and supervised federal compliance audit activities.

Selected Accomplishments: Ensured that all grants and contracts were in good standing with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, successfully negotiated with the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families on foster care and adoption practices governed by the Indian Child Welfare Act, fostered community development, and successfully led an effort to develop a health clinic on Tribal land for the Narragansett Tribal Community.

Personnel Director
Narragansett Indian Tribe

1989 - 1992

- Managed all human resource functions for Tribal Administrative offices.
- Monitored the search process for compliance with Equal Opportunity and Indian Preference in Hiring Public Law 93-638.
- Conducted organizational reviews and revised personnel policies and salary scales.
- Coordinated the administration of health benefits.

Selected Accomplishments: Developed incentives to support the professional development of Native staff consistent with Indian Preference in hiring laws, revised personnel policies, and negotiated a higher quality health benefit package on behalf of the administration.

Other Work Experience

1978 - 1988

- Health and Wellness professional serving in counseling and management roles in New Jersey based health and fitness organizations, including Living Well Inc. and the Diet Institute.

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

2004

University of Rhode Island / Rhode Island College Joint Doctoral Program in Education

Dissertation - Freedom's Children: Students' Perceptions of the Effects of Peace Education in the Form of Kingian Nonviolence.

Master of Science in Human Development and Family Studies

1994

College Student Personnel

University of Rhode Island

Action Research: The Persistence and Completion of Native Americans in Higher Education.

Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communications

1978

University of Rhode Island

MEMBERSHIPS

- Associate Member, American Association of Colleges and Universities
- Leading for Change Consortium, Steering Committee and Past Member
- Consortium for High Achievement and Success, Former Steering Board Member