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# 75-05

**COMMISSION ON CAMPUS DIVERSITY SETS MEETING SCHEDULE,  
INCLUDING DECEMBER 9 PUBLIC FORUM**

AMHERST, MASS. – The special Commission on Campus Diversity at the University of Massachusetts Amherst met for the first time Nov. 12-13 to review its charge and hear introductory presentations.

The independent commission, which met in a private working session, scheduled four additional meetings, including a public forum on Thursday, Dec. 9, from 7 to 10 p.m. at a location to be announced shortly. The commission agreed that groups and individuals interested in speaking at the forum should sign up in advance to ensure a productive session (*see details below*).

Commission Chair Orlando L. Taylor said the 23-member panel will present a final report, with specific recommendations, to Chancellor John V. Lombardi and the campus community at a public meeting in mid-February.

“The university community is to be congratulated for having selected such a distinguished group to address the mission at hand,” said Taylor, vice provost for research and dean of the graduate school at Howard University. “I am impressed with their knowledge, experience and commitment. We will assess the efforts of UMass Amherst to build and sustain a racially and ethnically diverse community, and recommend ways that it can significantly improve its record in this area. We are proceeding in a focused, results-oriented fashion. With recommendations in hand by mid-February, the university can hopefully initiate some immediate reforms in the spring semester.”

Chancellor Lombardi appointed the commission Oct. 15, noting that he is “seriously concerned about the effectiveness” of the university’s current approach to promoting diversity. “There is no doubt that doing the right things will require some new investment, but to make that investment effectively we need some expert guidance,” he said. “We must draw upon the best experiences of our colleagues around the country who face similar challenges.”

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The commission scheduled the following four meetings: Dec. 9 and 10; Jan. 9; Jan. 30 and 31; and a mid-February date to be announced. The public forum will occur on the evening of Dec. 9, and in mid-February the commission will present its final report to the campus community in a public session. The commission agreed the other meetings will be private working sessions. Taylor said these sessions will focus on discussion and analysis of data, the public forum, and interviews conducted with others on campus in preparation for crafting a final report. The commission will post regular updates, including documents it has reviewed, at [www.umass.edu/campusdiversity](http://www.umass.edu/campusdiversity).

### **How to Participate in the Dec. 9 Public Forum**

The special Commission on Campus Diversity will hold a public forum on Thursday, Dec. 9, from 7 to 10 p.m. at a location to be announced shortly. Chair Orlando Taylor said the group wants to hear from as many groups and individuals as possible. To organize a productive forum, Taylor requests that people sign up in advance by Friday, Dec. 3., for the commission to maximize its efficiency in scheduling sufficient time for all interested parties to speak.

To register, please send an e-mail directly to [orlandotaylor@hotmail.com](mailto:orlandotaylor@hotmail.com). and provide the following information:

- Your name
- Affiliation (group, campus department, or other identifier)
- E-mail address

You will receive a confirmation e-mail with further information, including the approximate time you have been scheduled to speak.

Taylor said each person should prepare to speak for a limited time. Presenters are encouraged to submit additional written material following their presentations if they believe it will be helpful to the commission. The material should be presented to the commission in hard copy either at the public forum or shortly thereafter.