

2010

Meeting to begin the process of gender neutral bathrooms 2010

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Riley,

As I mentioned to you in the Library, Emily and I went ahead and met without you and discussed not only your GN proposal for Adams but also other things that we are working on or will be working on in response to the recommendation to offer gender neutral bathrooms in residence halls. Here is a quick summary from Emily and my meeting today:

- 1) Your proposal to convert the bathrooms on the first floor (north and south) Adams to gender neutral is wholeheartedly endorsed by Emily, me and HRL; I will notify the appropriate folks of such and will order new ADA compliant signs for those bathrooms; Adams 1North will eventually be occupied and we will need to make sure that those assigned residents are informed of the gender neutral bathroom on their floor
- 2) Emily and I reviewed the floor plans for the new Hillside residence hall which includes two immediate gender blind/gender neutral options that were included into the designs early on in the process, and a third possibility in relation to specific gender neutral living clusters: each floor of Hillside will have one gender neutral bathroom unit with a shower; each RA room will have a bathroom “in board” to the room thus providing a gender neutral option for those student staff members; each floor contains two “end modules” that are clusters of 12 bed spaces (6 double rooms) around two single lockable bathroom compartments
- 3) Emily and I discussed the possibility of immediately converting all non-shower residence hall bathrooms labeled as “unisex” to gender neutral. I hope you will endorse that action, but I will not proceed with that until I hear back from you. With your consent, I will order the new GN signs and will give you an inventory of all existing unisex bathrooms that will be converted in residence halls. Based on models used at other schools such as Oberlin, UVM, and Emerson, I would suggest that you consider pursuing this in all academic and support facilities at URI. I would be happy to assist with that conversation in any way you wish if you wish.

Other gender neutral bathroom conversions in residence halls will need to be approached in a purposeful and thoughtful fashion that takes into consideration operating requirements/needs of our department, cross cultural issues, resident expectations, and programmatic connections to name a few things. We will need to assemble a partnership to work on these issues together, and I look forward to those discussions.

Please let me know how and when you wish to proceed, and please let me know if you approve of us converting all “unisex” bathrooms to gender neutral designation.

Best,
Chip