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Minutes, 10/3/2007

The Commission for Lesbian, Gay Bisexual and Transgender People at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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Minutes
Commission for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) People
October 3, 2007

Time: 12:00

Place: Hodges Library, Room 605

Present: Melissa Bartsch, Chris Hodge, Donna Braquet, Rusty Drummer, Leslee Fisher, Trey Fogerty, George Hoemann, Erik Leander, Marti McClard, Becky Morgan, Jenny Moshak, Gina Owens, David Patterson, David Payne, Tina Shepardson, Renee Smith, Stephanie Swain, Roger Weaver

Absent: Alexis Boylan, Connie Briscoe, Ted Brown, Alan Chesney, Ed Cortez, Amy Davidson, Pam Hindle, Wes Knott, Mary Lucal, Suzanne Molnar, Jane Redmond, Mitchell Ronningen, Marva Rudolph, Lynn Sacco, Ashe Smith, P.J. Snodgrass, Dawn Szymanski, Victoria Thomas, Maxine Thompson, Nikki Walles, Ed White, Lynn Woolsey

Call to Order: George Hoemann welcomed everyone and the meeting began at 12:00 PM.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

A) Approval of Minutes from October 3rd, 2007

Minutes approved at 12:01 PM.

B) Adrienne Dessel - Knox County School Research Project

Adrienne Dessel introduced her dissertation research project. The project will examine public school teacher attitudes towards sexual orientation. The project intends to open a dialogue between public teachers and members of the LGB community. Ms. Dessel asked members of the commission to consider participating, and to inform other members of the LGB community about the project.

Ms. Dessel informed the commission that transgender issues will not be directly examined in order to limit the scope of the project and keep it manageable.

However, Ms. Dessel expressed her hope and intention to include transgender people in further work on this issue.

C) Curriculum Review Committee Report

The curriculum Committee met the previous week, and decided upon four short-term projects. The first involves giving some thought to structuring an LGBT program and to consider what curricular content would be included. The second will seek to coordinate with other existing commissions and groups to determine ways in which LGBT curricular content can be included in their projects. The third will look into the inclusion of LGBT content in existing curricular programs. The fourth will attempt to identify faculty who would be willing to work with students on LGBT projects.

It was suggested that these endeavors should not be presented purely as 'altruistic' projects, but rather, as a means of increasing the presence of UTK and putting it on par with the majority of other major universities.

D) Awards Committee Report

The committee has come up with the following possible awards: Faculty/Staff Advocate Award, Student Leadership Award, and an Ally Research Award.

The committee would like to come up with a monetary prize to be included with the awards, though a source of funding will need to be established.

E) Communications Committee Report

15 people have agreed to attend the workshop so far. The film and brown bag series will be continued through the spring. The committee plans to bring in a speaker to discuss how to bring LGBT issues into the classroom.

Continuing work on Voices of Diversity with plans to meet with the other commissions to discuss including them in the project.

Committee is planning a meeting of the Pride Alliance. This is not officially sponsored by the commission, but will be an alliance of LGBT and allied faculty/staff/students that will serve as an alternative to the commission in matters of advocacy and activism that are outside the commission's purview.

F) Equity Committee Report

Committee will assemble a Situation Solutions Report to examine and respond to any reported inequities on campus. Committee is looking at how other schools have implemented domestic partner benefits to determine a viable means of implementation for UTK.

G) Membership Committee Report

No update, though commission members were encouraged to continue inviting potential new members.

H) Resource Center Report

No update.

I) Other Business

The commission has been invited to set up a table at the Worlds AIDS Day event.

The communications committee agreed to handle it.

Concern has been raised that gender identity is still not included in the hiring policy. The commission was encouraged to maintain and insist upon the specific inclusion of transgender people in their projects and programs.

Adjournment: 12:56 PM