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Commission for LGBT People

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11-3-2008

## Minutes, 11/3/2008

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**  
**November 3, 2008**

**Time:** 12:00 PM

**Place:** Hodges Library, Room 605

**Present:** Joseph N. Anderson, Melissa Bartsch, Toby Boulet, Donna Braquet, Connie Briscoe, Alan Chesney, Amy Davidson, James DeVita, Ben Doty, Rusty Drummer, Lars Dzikus, Leslee Fisher, Julian Hendrix, Robert Hinde, Pam Hindle, George Hoemann, Joel Kramer, Erik Leander, Mary Lucal, Sibyl Marshall, Suzanne Molnar, Jenny Moshak, Jenny Richter, Marva Rudolph, Lynn Sacco, Tina Shepardson, Renee Smith, Terrell Strayhorn, Meshia Thomas, Roger Weaver, Ed White, Pia Wood

**Call to Order:** 12:00 PM

**Old Business:**

The offensive t-shirts mentioned at the last meeting are being sold by independent vendors who are not affiliated with the university. The athletics department held a meeting with the jumbotron operators to remind them what is and is not appropriate to display. The department, however, declined to offer an apology. A statement will also be read at all games to affirm that the university respects the dignity of all members of the community and does not support hateful speech in any form.

**New Business:**

**A) Welcome**

Minutes approved at 12:01 PM.

**B) Report from the Chair**

The Safe Zone Initiative has completed its report and has been sent to the chancellor. The co-chairs of the task force will be meeting with Chancellor Simek later in the month. Copies of the report are available on the Commission's Blackboard site.

Chancellor Simek will attend the Commission's January 12th meeting.

**B) Awards Committee**

No update.

### **C) Communications Committee**

The committee intends to host an LGBT/Ally social on February 12th in the library.

For October 2009, the committee is considering hosting a symposium concerning religion as it relates to LGBT issues. The committee is also considering hosting a panel to discuss the election results and the effects it may have on the LGBT community.

### **D) Development Committee**

The committee held its first meeting in October. They will meet with Alumni Affairs to look into establishing an external source of funding for the commission.

### **E) The Equity Committee**

The committee has gathered a list of businesses that maintain contracts with the university. Research into domestic partner benefits provided by these business will soon begin.

The committee will also look into a list of equity issues raised by the Lambda Student Union.

### **F) Membership Committee**

No update.

### **G) Resource Center Committee**

The committee had its first meeting in October. They will meet again to map out a framework to develop a strategic plan to implement a resource center on campus.

James DeVita noted that the resource center project will have a much broader focus and more responsibilities than the program that will be implemented under the Safe Zone Initiative.

### **H) Daily Beacon Column**

The Daily Beacon published an editorial criticizing the chancellor's diversity commissions and negatively characterizing the LGBT community as a whole. The chairs of the three commissions wrote a letter in response. The Beacon published the response letter. At an SGA forum last month, several members of the commission discussed the editorial in question as it relates to diversity on campus.

**I) OED Discrimination Complaint Flyer**

A recently distributed flyer outline complaint procedures for discrimination failed to mention LGBT people. Marva Rudolph noted that revising the complaint procedures will require additional compliance from the chancellor, the general counsel, and the board of trustees. However, several members of the commission expressed frustration with the fact that, despite the recent changes to the OED statement, the degree of protection provided to LGBT people remains ambiguous.

**J) Other Business**

Zeta Phi Beta hosted a presentation regarding the interracial LGBT experience at UTK. The event was a success. Pam Hindle reported that several members of the audience told her that the presentation positively changed their views of LGBT people.

**Adjournment:** 12:58 PM