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Minutes, 2/6/2008

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
February 6, 2007

Time: 12:00 PM
Place: Hodges Library, Room 605

Present: Alan Chesney, Amy Davidson, Rusty Drummer, Tiffany Hedges, George Hoemann, Joel Kramer, Erik Leander, Mary Lucal, Marti McClard, Suzanne Molnar, Becky Morgan, Jenny Moshak, Gina Owens, David Patterson, Marva Rudolph, Tina Shepardson, Renee Smith, Dawn Szymanski, Roger Weaver, and Lynn Woolsey.

Call to Order: George Hoemann welcomed everyone and the meeting began at 12:05 PM.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

A) Approval of Minutes from November 5th, 2007
Minutes approved at 12:06 PM.

B) Discussion of Chancellor Crabtree's Resignation
George Hoemann recommended that the commission consider issuing a statement of commendation in recognition of Chancellor Crabtree's central role in founding the commission.
The commission will attempt to identify candidates for the chancellor position who would be sympathetic to the commission's goals. Once this list is compiled, it will be submitted to the university's search committee for consideration.
Dr. Hoemann reported that President Petersen has yet to respond to a letter expressing the commission's concerns regarding Dr. Petersen's stance on UT System hiring policies. The commission voted to be officially on record as awaiting an adequate response.

C) Discussion of the Senate Faculty's Vote to Institute a Safe Program at UTK
Concern was voiced that the resolution's language, though inclusive, was perhaps also too general. Concern was also raised as to whether the establishment of safe zones would imply that some areas on campus are "unsafe zones." Several members of the commission noted that "unsafe zones" are, in fact, an unfortunate reality of the campus climate. In general, the commission is encouraged by the progress made on this front.

E) Awards Committee
The Awards Committee has issued a call for nominations for the newly established LGBT Advocate Award, LGBT Student Leadership Award, and the LGBT Research Ally Award. To date, the committee has received few responses. The members of the commission were encouraged to continue to inform students and colleagues of the call for nominations.

F) Communications Committee
The commission will continue to host brown bag lectures and the LGBT film series throughout the semester. The communications committee will continue to request funding from the Ready for the World Initiative for future events.
Films will be presented with captioning at all future events.

G) Equity Committee
The committee is continuing its research into the availability of domestic partner benefits at peer institutions. This project will soon expand to examine the availability of benefits at Fortune 500 companies active in east Tennessee. After this report is completed, the committee will examine protective rights available to students on campus.
Jenny Moshak met with the Alumni Association. The meeting was successful in raising awareness of the concerns of the LGBT community.

H) Other Business
Dr. Hoemann notes that the commission should begin to shift some of its focus on student issues. Adding inclusive language to admissions paperwork and the welcoming statement is a primary concern. The commission should raise the issue with the Diversity Committee, the Enrollment Management Committee, Provost Holub, and Richard Bayer of Enrollment Services.
It was suggested that housing services and the student conduct policy also be reviewed.
The commission's executive committee will compose a "State of the Campus" report on LGBT issues with the intent of establishing a baseline of goals to meet in the coming academic year.
An internship is available through the Stonewall Democrats. The commission's web site will be amended to include a section for internships and job opportunities available to students.

Adjournment: 12:58 PM