Meeting Minutes - April 2011

Commission for Blacks

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Minutes for Commission for Blacks Meeting April 6, 2011

Call to Order: Dr. Camille Hall called the meeting to order at 12:00pm.

In Attendance: Camille Hall, Ernest Brother, Wanda Costen, Annazette Houston, Joan Jeter, Charla Cannon, Fritz Polite, Valuri Reid, Rosa Thomas, Maxine Davis, Joan MacLeod Heminway, Charles Houston, Marva Rudolph, Ron Tredway

Additional Guests: Dr. Sheadrick Tillman, Kevin Seymore (Undergraduate Student)

1. Report from the Chair: The chairs of the CFB, CFW, and CFLGTP met with the Provost and the Chancellor. They highlighted that importance of monthly meetings to ensure the commitment of the Provost and Chancellor. From now on all of the commissions and CDI will meet with the Chancellor as a group. BFSA would like to relay its concerns to the Chancellor. One idea of how to do this would be adding the CFB Chair as an ex-officio member to BFSA and speaking on behalf of both organizations when speaking with the Chancellor. Rita Geier will be retiring on September 30, 2011. There have been some problems with the new Banner system. More IT persons have to be hired to help manage the system, making sure those who are scheduled to graduate will be able to.

CDI is compiling a list of qualifications for eventual proposed Chief Diversity Officer for the campus. This list will be given to the Chancellor for review. The CFB bylaws need to be updated. Commissioners should review bylaws and send recommendations for updating term limits to reflect the Chancellor's annual appointments, membership applications, committee responsibilities, and setting dates for the election chairperson. Membership application forms for CFB are available on the home page of the CFB website. If anyone is interested in sitting on the commission next year, he or she needs to complete the form by May 6, 2011.

The DFMP Workshop Save the Date will be mailed out to deans and department heads. BLACK@UT newsletter will be published this month. Information that is emailed to the CFB listserv will be streamlined and limited to pertinent information to CFB.

2. Development Office: Linda Davidson explained that the development office is looking to increase its alumni donors to represent the diversity of UT. In order to increase the diversity of alumni contributors to UTK, the Development Office has increased the diversity of its staff. The Black Alumni Associates have changed and developed into the Black Alumni Council. This organization is made up of young professional alumni. They will be having Black Alumni Weekend May 14-16 alongside the Alex Haley Celebrity Golf Weekend. There was concern raised with the Black Alumni Council visiting campus while students aren’t present. The chair is challenging all commissioners to make a donation to the scholarship of their choice. The CFB will work with the Development Office to add a donation link on the CFB website that will allow site visitors to donate to scholarships that aid Black students.
3. **Human Resources:** Commissioner Ron Tredway offered all in attendance handouts that explained what the Tennessee State health care changes mean for most UT employees. UT pays 80% of health care coverage for faculty. UT’s health care coverage plan is the same as that covering all state employees. UT only makes up a small percentage of state employees. The University has individuals who make suggestions to the state, but they do not have any say in the determined benefits.

Vision coverage has been removed from the new plan. Included in this are glasses and contacts but not medical services for the eye such as cataract operations. Vision coverage was removed, and is being removed by many companies, due to the increase of affordable eye care services at places such as Walmart.

It was suggested that research be conducted and presented to the state about the type of health care coverage offered at the top 25 public universities. A competitive health care option needs to be in place in order for UT to become a top 25 university.

4. **Faculty Senate:** Joan Heminway reported the Chancellor intends to form a taskforce to review *Hilltopics* and assess the need for a more targeted provision combating incivility and bullying. For a more detailed account of matters covered at Faculty Senate meetings, everyone is invited to review the minutes of those meetings on the Faculty Senate website (http://web.utk.edu/~senate/reports/index.html).

5. **Honors Banquet:** The Chancellor’s Honors Banquet will occur on Monday, April 11, 2011.

6. **Commission for Women:** The CFW held a safety forum last week that educated women about how to stay safe on campus

7. **Announcements:** Native American Pow Wow will occur on Friday, April 8th - Saturday, April 9 at Circle Park. Everyone is welcome to enjoy games, songs, and dance.

   Faculty and staff need to complete the Great College Survey

   The Alex Haley Celebrity Golf Weekend will be offering five $1,000 scholarships and three $3,000 scholarships.

8. **Review of March minutes:** After review, the March minutes were approved.

   The meeting was adjourned at 1:09pm.