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Meeting Minutes - October 2011

Commission for Blacks

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Minutes for Commission for Blacks Meeting October 5, 2011

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

In Attendance: Camille Hall, Maxine Davis, Ron Tredway, Marva Rudolph, Joann Jeter, Philippa Satterwhite, Richard Stokes, Fletcher Njororai, Nanette Rodgers, Lilia Neville, Denelle Brown, Patricia Jones, Mary Papke, Jenny Moshak, Will Parrott, Avery Howard, and Meshia Thomas.

Guest: Verniece Shillingford, Knoxville College

1. Review of September Minutes: After review, an e-mailed change was previously updated and the minutes were approved.

2. Report from the Chair: The Chairs of the Commission for Blacks, Commission for Women (Mary Papke), and Commission for LGBT People (Jenny Moshak/Tom Cervone) met with Provost Martin on September 21, 2011. The following topics were discussed: Adding a statement about “civility” to the course syllabi; adding a diversity officer position to the campus administration. The Provost made an inquiry to the LGBT co-chairs regarding candidate interest in coming to UTK within the LGBT community.

Dr. Hall requested a CFB representative to serve on the planning committee for the Black Issues conference; the decision to offer monetary support will be discussed at a later date. Dr. Hall stated lunch was provided to allow 20-30 minutes for each committee to meet and develop two goals (i.e., following adjournment of the regular meeting).

3. Fall Festival: During the UTK Fall Festival Rosie Sasso of the Commission for LGBT safeguarded the Commission for Blacks materials. Rosie later delivered the materials to the Chair. Joann Jeter represented Commission for Blacks at this event. Dr. Hall thanked Rosie and Joann for their assistance. Michell Greenidge will send a follow-up e-mail to Rosie and Joann.

4. Bylaws: Dr. Hall stated the proposed changes would address the growth and development of the Black faculty, staff and students. These are the recommended changes: (1) dissolving the Research committee; (2) adding a “Bylaws” committee; (3) adding an Executive committee, compromised of committee chairpersons; the committee would hold monthly meetings; and, (4) combining the Faculty/Staff/Administrative Concerns and Student Concerns Committees. There were some concerns expressed because each of the groups have different areas of concern. Some commissioners proposed subcommittees if the CFB combined the Faculty/Staff/Administrators & Student Concerns committees. Ron Tredway suggested changing “concerns” to “interest” committees. The proposed changes were unanimously approved.

Additional recommended changes include: Executive Director of Human Resource Management should be Vice Chancellor for Human Resources (or his/her designee); and updating “Multicultural Student Life”.

5. Council on Diversity and Interculturalism: The Chair requested all CFB representatives e.g., Avery G. Howard, student representative and ex-officio members Marva Rudolph and
Maxine Thompson-Davis who regularly attend the meetings to represent the Commission for Blacks at CDI meetings. Mr. Howard reported the “civility statements” had now been added to the UTK A-Z menu (Avery raised this concern in the September CDI meeting). Dr. Rudolph reported the Chancellor’s website is currently under revision in order to promote and bring diversity statements to the forefront.

6. Student Concerns Committees: Avery G. Howard announced a spring forum on October 27, 2011, at 6pm, in the University Center Shiloh Room. Mr. Howard reported that the forum will address the principles of civility and how to bring civility awareness to all students. Mr. Howard explained the forum will serve as a way to receive feedback from students regarding the civility principles and how the principles represent students. Ron Tredway suggested this committee reach out and recruit graduate students to join this committee.

7. Human Resources: Ron Tredway announced open-enrollment benefits for faculty started October 1, 2011 and will close at the end of October. Commissioner Tredway reported that The Employee Engagement Survey will begin on November 1, 2011 and be open for two weeks.

8. Announcements: Denelle Brown announced the Knoxville Opera Goes to Church on October 9, 2011. October 12, 2011 is the 2011 Diversity Summit. October 14, 2011 is the Black Faculty & Staff Event. Maxine Davis announced the 2012 Congressional Internship; application deadline is February 12, 2012, for more information visit www.studentlife.utk.edu/congressionalinternship.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:43pm.