

# Commission for Women

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2012

### 1. Call to order

Mary Papke called to order the regular meeting of the **Commission for Women** at **12:00 noon on Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2012**, in Hodges Library Conference Room 605.

### 2. Roll call

The following persons were present:

Mary Papke  
Katherine Henry  
Leigh Schlactus  
Taryn Norman  
Thura Mack  
Ron Tredway  
Jenny Moshak  
Joy DeSensi

Rachel Chen  
Caitlin Nolan  
Leigh Shoemaker

### 3. Approval of minutes from last meeting

The minutes from Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2012, were approved.

### 4. Open issues

#### a) Report by the Chair

- i. Knoxville's March for Women will take place on Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012, and will complement the Washington D.C. March. Participants will gather between 10:00 and 10:30am at the TVA fountains next to Market Square. The March will proceed down Gay Street to the Federal Building and then back to the Women's Suffrage statue on the Square.
- ii. Mary Papke commended the efforts of the Communications Committee, especially Leigh Shoemaker, for bringing the Commission into the technology age with the new website and the *Facebook* and *Twitter* sites.
- iii. Leigh Schlactus introduced Katherine Henry, the future Chair of the Women's Coordinating Council (WCC).
- iv. The Commission wants to continue to develop its outreach with different groups of women on campus. We will continue work with the WCC and reach out to undergraduate students via this organization. The Commission also wants to reach out to graduate student women through Joy DeSensi and set up a mentoring program. Caitlin

Nolan will talk to Panhellenic about working more closely with the Commission. We could organize a reception to reach out to women staff on campus and host another luncheon to reach out to women athletes and women in athletics. Mary Papke would like to balance membership on the Commission in order to reflect the wide diversity on campus.

- v. Mary Papke will continue to press for information on the progress of a Campus Diversity Office (a Vice Chancellor position). Jenny Moshak said that Camille Hall announced at the Commission for Blacks that a search committee has been established, which Bob Rider will head. We want to make sure that the Commissions are actively involved in this search process.
- vi. The Provost expressed interest again in establishing a stronger student/faculty relationships statement than currently appears in the faculty handbook. The Commission will continue to work on this revised policy that will emphasize the ethical issues involved in faculty/student relationships and establish a series of best practices.

#### **b) Report of Committees and Faculty Senate**

- i. Jenny Moshak reported from the Commission for LGBT People. 260 people were photographed for the iO Tillet Wright project. Over 100 people attended her presentation at the Carousel Theatre. Jenny Moshak is working with the Knoxville Museum of Art to display the photos. Mary Papke also suggested having a display in Hodges Library and commended the Commission for LGBT People for their publicity of these events.
- ii. Jenny Moshak reported for Vince Anfara from the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate approved a resolution to push for Domestic Partnership benefits, including health insurance and thirty-three other benefits. The Senate is now waiting for a response from the Chancellor.
- iii. The Lavender Graduation celebration will be held in the Mary Greer Room on Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2012, 7:00-10:00pm. The slogan for the event is “Come As You Are and Graduate As You Are.” People can RSVP via *Facebook* or the Commission for LGBT People’s website. There have been thirty RSVPs so far. Rainbow tassels can be obtained at the Outreach Center, and they are free. Mary Papke reported that she has already been invited by a student to attend the event.
- iv. Jenny Moshak reported for the Commission for Blacks. The Commission is planning to reach out to African-American staff on campus about training and funding opportunities available through the University. They discussed holding a brown bag lunch to advertize these opportunities.  
Ron Tredway concurred that people are not educated enough about HR128. HR is looking to start tracking participation in HR programs. The Commission for Women can coordinate with HR to reach out to women.

#### **c) Other Business**

- i. Mary Papke reported on the status of new Chairs for the three Commissions for the upcoming academic year. The Commission for Blacks is in the voting process. The Commission for LGBT People will vote soon. Mary Papke offered to stay on as Chair of the Commission for Women and to mentor Joy DeSensi and Thura Mack to take over. Joy DeSensi nominated Mary Papke’s slate, and Caitlin Nolan seconded. The slate was

voted in. Mary Papke will work with Joy DeSensi and Thura Mack to brainstorm plans for next year.

- ii. Email Taryn Norman if you want to serve again on the Commission or to offer nominations. Mary Papke commended everyone's efforts and the progress the Commission has made the past year.

- iii. Caitlin Nolan raised the problem of sexual assaults on campus, and she asked that the Commission advocate for change and a stronger reaction from campus officials regarding such incidents. She expressed concern about the safety of campus if such acts of violence are taking place even during the day. She felt that the alert email utilized victim blaming rhetoric. It was suggested that we could invite an officer from The University of Tennessee Campus Police Department (UTPD) and Knoxville Police Department (KPD) to come to a meeting so that the Commission can express its concern and ask what is being done to change the climate.

Mary Papke reported that there are some jurisdictional issues between the UTPD and KPD, especially regarding the Fort Sanders area. Jenny Moshak reported that some University buildings are in Fort Sanders. Caitlin Nolan will talk to KPD and the Family Crime Unit.

Leigh Schlactus reported that UTPD offers a Rape Aggression Defense twelve-hour Course. They usually offer a class once a month or so, but they will also set one up if you have five or more people interested.

- iv. Usually the Notable UTK Woman display goes up in April, but Mary Papke worries that students are too busy to pay attention to such a display at the end of the semester. She suggested we move the display to September, when new students will be on campus, and complement this display with an electronic component. Leigh Shoemaker asked if the Chancellor's Banquet winners are announced via Media Relations. Ron Tredway says they are announced after the banquet. Leigh Shoemaker will update the Commission's website.

Rachel Chen suggested that we could make September a month of celebrating and advertizing women's achievements on campus. We could have half of the library case celebrate the Notable Women winners and then half the case to advertize upcoming Commission events.

Ron Tredway suggested getting women veterans involved in the Commission. Mary Papke said she would like to represent the wide diversity of groups of women on campus. Although we have limited money, we could hold a welcome reception open to all interested in women's issues on campus.

Rachel Chen suggested holding a fundraising event for inner-city mothers. Mary Papke suggested such an event could be organized in conjunction with the University Faculty Women's Club.

Email your ideas to Mary Papke, Joy DeSensi, Thura Mack, and Taryn Norman.

- v. Caitlin Nolan suggested developing the Women's Center. Leigh Schlactus reported that the current Women's Center is moving down the hall on the third floor of the University Center, which should make it more accessible. They have been guaranteed a space in the new building. There is a problem of funding and staffing. Mary Papke suggested that we could ask the Campus Diversity Officer applicants if they would ask for a Graduate Assistant who could help with such staffing issues.