

Commission for Women
April 5, 2007
Minutes

Attendance:

Pam Hindle, Tabbatha Cavendish, Melissa Hage, Mary Papke, Brandice Green, Lyndsey Hulen, Tammi Brown, Mary Evans, Margaret Crawford, Louis Gross, Lillian Mashburn, Diane Pitts, Wendy Syer, Anita Monroe, Melanie Feltner-Reichert, Sarah Rose Peacock, Chuck Maland, Jane Redmond, Deb Haines, Jocylyn Milton, Nancy Goslee

Pam Hindle called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. The agenda was as follows:

Agenda:

- I. Review of March minutes.
- II. Faculty Senate report.
- III. Upcoming CFW, Ready for the World, and Appalachian Semester event: Dr. Gail Palmer presents "People of the Smoky Mountains, Gone but Not Forgotten".
- IV. Mentoring Table Programs and other events.
- V. Committee Reports
- VI. Campus Climate Discussion
- VII. Old business/new business

I. Review of March minutes

- Minutes approved at 12:05 p.m. with minor corrections.

II. Faculty Senate Report

- 3 topics to cover
 - On the topic of the creation of the LGBT Commission: we still do not include sexual orientation in our formal non-discrimination policy.
 - Of the AAU schools that the Chancellor wants us to be a member of, 61 of 62 include sexual orientation. Texas A&M is the one that doesn't.
 - The faculty senate, SGA, and GSS have passed a resolution to change this, but it doesn't move pass the administration.
 - The resolution has been forwarded to the Board of Trustees, but they will not do anything without the administration making it known that it is important to them.
 - Syer: How do other universities get by this? We aren't the only conservative school.
 - Papke: It doesn't matter who has it and who doesn't – it's the right thing to do!
 - Papke suggested that all the commissions post their support of this resolution on their respective websites.

- The Board of Trustees
 - The Board had a meeting about 1 month ago. All Chancellors spoke about issues regarding safety, particularly housing.
 - Place Properties has had safety issues with the student housing they run on the Chattanooga campus. This same company may purchase Knoxville Place. It is uncertain if this is a good decision given the issues in Chattanooga.
 - There was also discussion about changes to the high school requirements for admissions – XAP
 - Students are trying to establish a university student council meeting with the president.
- Family Campaign
 - Might be appropriate for the CFW to encourage participation and use of funds to make UT family partner friendly.

III. Dr. Gail Palmer: Gone But Not Forgotten

- She will be giving a presentation on campus in the Hodges Library auditorium at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 17th.
- Hindle spoke about Palmer's background and what her presentation would include.

IV. CFW Brown Bag Mentoring Table (Cavendish) & Other Events

- Cavendish explained the idea behind the Brown Bag Mentoring Table
 - Goal: to bring mentors and mentees together using various topics that would be interesting to a wide variety of students.
 - There will be a table twice per month in a central location.
 - The topic will change for each table, and specific faculty, staff, and students may be invited as discussion leaders and mentors due to expertise or experience with a particular topic.
- Cavendish encouraged all CFW members to attend the tables as mentors.
- Reminder about the Chancellor's Honors Banquet
 - Next week (Wednesday, April 11th)
 - Hindle complimented Redmond on her continuing expertise in planning and coordinating the event.

V. Campus Climate Discussion

- Hindle noted that there has been a lot of discontent expressed recently on this campus and would like to discuss that issue.
- Gross added that some of the associated issues have had effects on the junior faculty level.
- Haines commented that she has heard issues expressed by graduate students, mainly concerning the lack of communication of expectations.
- Gross added there have been meetings in which specific faculty members have complained about how other faculty treat their graduate students.

- Papke suggested that the CFW could co-host some programs such as “Intercultural Intersections” and others that would help improve climate.
- Hindle would like to see some of this presented on the Agricultural Campus and, in addition, would like to see this information trickle upward.
- Gross mentioned that there really is no formal grievance procedure for staff beyond that for harassment. Haines recalled talking about this problem before and that it was a funding issue. Mashburn reminded the Commission of this issue from a few years back. Currently, there is no official procedure for staff grievance. Mashburn and Hindle had promoted the Exempt Staff Council in the past. Non-exempt staff have some protection but exempt does not.
- Redmond felt that the real disconnect is with the students. She spoke about why students leave the university.
- Hindle asked Redmond how they could find out the reasons. Redmond responded that sometimes she receives notes from parents, counselors, and sometimes from the students, explaining their situations.
- Gross noted that approximately 70 of the students who left last term and didn’t return this term filled out a survey. Several students commented that they didn’t know how rigorous college was. Haines asked if there was a pattern in the responses. Redmond said there were not any patterns.
- Haines brought up the problems associated with cultural lines of communication. Cavendish and Redmond both argued that living and working with different people is important.
- Milton reported that the BCC is featuring different posters every month highlighting different cultures. “We all have a rich heritage and rich culture and we all have a common denominator of abuse and misunderstanding.”
- Redmond commented that the idea of acceptance and diversity is obvious in the BCC and IHOUSE, but truly getting out to the whole campus community remains a challenge. Maland added that many students at our university are from Tennessee and, specifically, Knoxville. They don’t get out much.
- Hindle reminded everyone of the good news about the new dean of the College of Agricultural Science and Natural Resources. The new dean is a woman.
- Evans asked Redmond if she is concerned about diversity on campus regarding the revamping of scholarships. Redmond replied, “YES”! Papke clarified that the scholarship issue was not brought about by UT but, rather, by legal mandate.
- Redmond stated that the problem would be with those students just above the financial guideline who would otherwise have received Geier monies.

VI. Old Business/New Business

- None.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p. m.

Minutes submitted by Tabbatha Cavendish on May 1, 2007