Commission for Women
Meeting Minutes
September 6, 2018

Attendance: Rachel Chen, Jamie Coble, Kiley Compton, Hillary Fouts, Melissa Grant, Megan Haselschwerdt, Catherine Luther, Abby Sherman, Melissa Smith, Jenny Ward, Jennifer Webster, Deborah Welsh, Sharon Couch, Joel Anderson, Izetta Slade, Jennifer Richter, Shea Kidd Houze, Matthew Theriot, Jill Malolepszy, Mallory Schweim, Thura Mack, Nancy Thacker

I. Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 12:01 pm by Rachel Chen, Chair.
   Welcome from Rachel Chen.

II. Introductions from commissioners and guests

III. Approval of May 2018 meeting minutes

IV. Chair Report
   a. Update from first meeting with Interim Chancellor Davis. Hillary Fouts (past co-chair) and Rachel Chen reported Interim Chancellor Davis was very supportive of our group and mission. He will support two candidates to attend the Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) institute leadership training this year. He also indicated strong support for the Chancellor’s Awards given by CFW. He was open to the idea of amending the nominee rotation categories for the Notable UT Woman award.
      i. Rachel Chen reported that we have secured $1000 each for the Notable UT Woman award and Angie Warren Perkins award. The office is working to develop a continuous fund that would support a recurring financial award.
   b. Update from first meeting with Provost Manderscheid. Rachel Chen reported he expressed strong support for our group and mission.
      i. Provost Manderscheid inquired about current priorities and issues he needs to be aware of. Rachel Chen noted the gender pay gap issue and discussed the report/summary of findings Lou Gross and colleagues crafted from recent research on this issue. Rachel Chen will share the summary with commissioners as well.
          1. Hillary Fouts noted the findings indicated certain departments have greater discrepancies than others; but distinct departments were not reported. The report is public record and can be found on the Faculty Senate website.
      ii. Rachel Chen reported also discussing HERS candidates with Provost Manderscheid. Rachel Chen encouraged commissioners to consider applying and/or nominate others who might benefit from the leadership training opportunity. Many UTK faculty and staff have previously served as HERS awardees; commissioners discussed possibility of previous HERS awardees gathering and working together at UTK.
1. Deborah Welsh provided a description of the HERS institute leadership training. It is a residential leadership development training for women in higher education. There are around 80 participants, faculty and staff, per year from across the U.S. Deborah Welsh noted there has been a large push for women to advance into administrative positions.

iii. Rachel Chen reported discussing the limited number of female Governor chairs (15 total, one female) and Chancellor’s professors with Provost Manderscheid. She asked if it is possible to recruit more women for these positions. The Provost responded recruitment influence for governor’s chairs is beyond his power at this time. However, he will support future hiring of excellent women in faculty positions.

1. Deborah Welsh noted the Provost has previously talked about cluster hiring, including his supports on clusters with more diverse groups.

c. Rachel Chen reported Interim Chancellor Davis will join us during out December 2018 meeting, and Provost Manderscheid will visit in February 2019. There will be a welcome party for the Provost on Thursday, September 13th in Strong Hall at 4:30 pm.

d. Rachel Chen reported sub-committee assignments are forthcoming.

e. Rachel Chen discussed potential speakers to visit CFW meetings. She encouraged commissioners to consider speakers that may be relevant to the issues they are addressing within their committees.

i. Matthew Theriot reported the Provost’s office is supporting a faculty member from Texas A&M to visit in January and discuss invisible labor issues. She will meet with administrators, faculty, and staff. Information about her visit will be distributed in the coming months.

V. Revision of by-laws

a. Commissioners voted to approve proposed revisions of the CFW by-laws.

i. Approved unanimously (20 for, 0 against, 0 abstain)

VI. Review of CFW priorities for 2018-2019

a. Revision of by-laws, completed.

b. Commissioners discussed policies related to leave or modified duties after the arrival of a child. Hillary Fouts reported students are most often left out of policies. Previous efforts to address this issue focused on graduate assistants, because they are paid employees. Current policies in place address taking a leave of absence from graduate study. However, Hillary Fouts stated graduate students have reported not taking a leave of absence because they would lose health insurance. Hillary Fouts noted Lisa Yamagata-Lynch may be able to update us on efforts related to this issue at our next meeting.

i. Jennifer Richter noted differences in policies for leave vs. accommodation.

ii. Rachel Chen asked commissioners which population(s) we want to focus on.
1. Commissioners responded desire to focus on staff and graduate students.
   iii. Hillary Fouts discussed the history of this issue and work previously done by the CFW. A few years ago, the CFW influenced new policy for modified duties for faculty. She noted faculty may take use of the policy only twice, so future advocacy may be directed there as well.

c. Promoting leadership. The CFW may address this priority through the HERS institute, collaboration with the Provost’s office for mentoring program, and UTK leadership program.
   i. Sharon Couch discussed engagement with Leadership Knoxville, a leadership program in the community.
   ii. Matthew Theriot noted the UTK Leadership program is designed for faculty and staff; they accept 18-20 participants per year; a call for applications will go out in the spring. He discussed the SEC Academic Leadership program designed for tenure-track faculty. Also, last May the Provost’s office hosted a leadership day targeted at underrepresented faculty; Matthew Theriot noted they can do more events like that in the future.
   iii. Deborah Welsh noted the original UTK leadership program included only women participants. The program was later broadened to include men and women, but women participants reported experiencing a unique value in gender-specific activities. Deborah Welsh suggested there could be activities focused just for women within the larger program. Matthew Theriot responded the Provost’s office is open to hearing from our group on ways to enhance the program.

d. Awareness around sexual assault and misconduct
   i. Ashely Blamey, Title IX coordinator, may be able to collaborate with us on how to increase awareness and events to support these issues.
   ii. A Title IX panel will occur Thursday, September 13th, in the Alumni Memorial Room at 4 pm.

e. Advocating for pay equity. Rachel Chen will send the summary of findings from Lou Gross to the commissioners. Hillary Fouts noted we may collaborate with the faculty senate on this issue as well.
   i. Sharon Couch discussed importance of educating faculty, students, and staff on how to negotiate with employers. Empowering individuals is important.

f. Women’s History Month. Rachel Chen stated the events committee will help organize and promote events. She encouraged commissioners to think about opportunities and share as the month approaches.

g. Women@UTK [HERO@UT] Newsletter initiative. Rachel Chen discussed creating a newsletter and featuring notable CFW members. She asked commissioners for feedback on this idea.
   i. Deborah Welsh noted the HERS institute has a similar initiative titled SHEROs.
   ii. Sharon Couch noted the idea is great for increasing awareness of underrepresented groups and the Commissions and Council.
h. Rachel Chen reported the American Association of University Women (AAUW) representatives (Knoxville Chapter) have requested to offer a negotiation workshop for the UT campus. Rachel Chen will invite them to a CFW meeting to discuss their ideas.
   i. Megan Haselschwerdt discussed we may also consider supporting a lecture series on navigating tough discussions to be had with department heads on various issues (family planning, sickness/injury, and pay equity). Commissioners indicated support.

VII. Adjournment: Rachel Chen adjourned the meeting at 1:06 pm.

VIII. Next regularly scheduled meeting: Thursday, October 11, 2018, at 12 pm on the 6th floor of Hodges Library, room 605

Minutes submitted by: Nancy Thacker