Commission for Women
Meeting Minutes
December 6, 2018

Attendance: Interim Chancellor Davis, Rachel Chen, Jamie Coble, Kiley Compton, Hillary Fouts, Melissa Grant, Megan Haselschwerdt, Catherine Luther, Bonnie Ownley, Marla Roberts, Abby Sherman, Melissa Smith, Deborah Welsh, Joel Anderson, Misty Anderson, Jasmine Kreig, Caitlin Lloyd, Mary Lucal, Matthew Theriot, Thura Mack, Rosie Sasso, Christina Moradian, Alyssa Garbien, Nancy Thacker

I. Approval of Minutes

II. Welcome and Introductions

III. Report from Chair – Rachel Chen
   a. Discussion of CFW fund and details to donate ([https://cfw.utk.edu/commission-for-women-excellence-fund/](https://cfw.utk.edu/commission-for-women-excellence-fund/)). We have flexibility in how we use the funds to provide scholarships, acknowledge women scholars, etc.
   b. Rachel Chen shared photos and video from the Paint the Rock event on December 5th, 2018. ([https://cfw.utk.edu/2018/12/05/all-vols-belong-painting-the-rock-in-unity/](https://cfw.utk.edu/2018/12/05/all-vols-belong-painting-the-rock-in-unity/))
   c. Thank you to the panelists who volunteered their time for our discussion on November 7, 2018 re: equity and bully free, harassment free workplaces. Rachel Chen crafted a feedback report, which was shared with panelists, members of CFW, the Provost, and Interim Chancellor Davis.
   d. Thank you to Interim Chancellor Davis for sponsoring two HERS candidates – Drs. Kate Jones and Lisa Yamagata-Lynch.

IV. Updates from Standing Committees
   a. Safety Advisory. Catherine Luther noted the committee is working to develop a survey assessing inclusive language to include on campus documents. Specifically, they are focused on LGBTQ+ and international undergraduate students. They hope to provide suggestions for the addition of questions to be more inclusive of these populations. They met to brainstorm potential types of questions to ask, but they still want to connect with the Commission for LGBT People to finalize 5-7 questions. Megan Haselschwerdt noted they have discussed a few questions focused on relational violence that may be specific to the LGBTQ+ population; they also have referenced a few climate surveys to inform the development of their questions.
   c. Professional Development and Mentoring. Rachel Chen reported the committee helped develop questions for our November 7th panel. The committee is currently brainstorming potential future events. Mary Lucal noted one idea is to host a panel of department heads from academic and administrative groups who are
notable for facilitating inclusive work environments; we may facilitate dialogue around what these individuals do to create an inclusive environment.

d. Equity. The committee recently met with Provost Manderscheid regarding the gender pay gap. They have examined two different salary reports, and neither address gender differences in salary. Bonnie Ownley discussed Lou Gross’s recent assessment on the gender pay gap at UTK. He considered longevity, rank, and field of study and found women earned 80 cents on the dollar. He also found inequities were not present in all departments, rather discrepancies were prominent within specific units. Findings were shared with the Provost’s office, and a recommendation was made to address the specific units. Bonnie Ownley noted this analysis should be done by OIRA every year. The Provost’s office has committed to address the gap by the next cycle of raises for faculty. Bonnie Ownley also suggested we assess pay gaps among staff and students.

e. Awards. Hillary Fouts reported the committee has shared an announcement for two Chancellor’s Honors Awards: UT Notable Woman and Angie Warren Perkins. The announcement will be distributed to commissioners soon. The committee will receive nominations through January and begin reviewing in February. They are also working to edit and enhance our awards to include accomplished students. They will provide a proposal in the Spring.

f. Events. Rachel Chen thanked committee members for their work on our panel and Paint the Rock events. She also thanked for all Commissions and UT members who contributed to painting the rock.

i. Catherine Luther asked if we can paint the rock again, not necessarily in response to a discriminatory event.

1. Misty Anderson noted the Faculty Senate is looking to make painting the rock a recurrent event. They are working with groups across campus to host United at the Rock on February 20th, 2019, in collaboration with the Volunteer fair (theme: remember, serve, and celebrate). They hope to set up a similar fall event (theme: unite at the table, in collaboration with events down pedestrian walkway). Many groups are contributing to this plan.

g. Interim Chancellor Davis thanked commissioners for participating in painting the rock. He expressed pride in faculty, staff, and students for standing together in unity. He really appreciated students standing up and speaking out.

V. Discussion with Interim Chancellor Davis

a. Q: You had a lot of success setting up programs to recruit, retain, and empower women and underrepresented minorities in engineering. What opportunities are there to expand these types of programs campus-wide? Does this kind of effort need to flow bottom-up (from departments and colleges) or top-down?

i. Interim Chancellor Davis discussed these programs in the college of engineering are funded by donors. He noted the college hosts 5-6 weeks of programming that costs $25,000 a week with faculty free labor – all of
which is contributed by donors. He noted some colleges cannot house these programs because financial resources are not available in similar fashion. He discussed believing in these programs, and he recognizes they help us recruit diverse students and engage our faculty. Grant funds may be an option to extend these programs to other colleges. For example, we have an advanced grant that supports our work to enhance programs for minorities within STEM fields. He noted grants may help start new programs, but we will have to work together to find sustainable funds.

b. Q: Is it possible to ‘remove’ (e.g., place them back to be a tenured full professor) some of low-productivity Governor Chair(s) and use the possible vacant positions to recruit more female Governor Chair(s)?
   i. Interim Chancellor Davis discussed his history in hiring 14 of 16 Governors Chairs during his role as Dean of the college of engineering. He noted the Governors Chair program is not a UTK program; it is funded by the state for the UT system as a whole. Thus, the Chancellor does not have discretion or any control over funds. In terms of the current Governors Chairs productivity, he noted they are not non-productive people. He discussed responsibilities of these individuals, including the typical 50% appointment with Oak Ridge National Laboratory; the position is a 50/50 match between ORNL and UTK. He noted the Chairs bring in an average, on the UTK side specifically, of $1.5 million in external funding for research. They also support 5-20 PhD students alone. In addition, they have expectations set by ORNL that are far more demanding than expectations at UTK. The state continues to provide funding to support these individuals, and the dollar amount has not increased since the program’s inception. For the past three years, Stacey Patterson has submitted a request for the state to provide funding to hire two more Governors Chairs a year to expand the program; but, the request has been denied every year by the state. Interim Chancellor Davis noted we could not convert the funds if we desired to hire additional faculty. There are strict requirements for how the base six million dollars provided each year can be used. They are currently in process of hiring a Governors Chair in Data Science.

c. Q: Would you be willing to review salaries and try to address any discrepancies we find in compensation for women?
   i. Interim Chancellor Davis responded yes, absolutely. However, he finds this question to be challenging. During his time as Dean they hired over 100 faculty in the college of engineering. He is in favor of identifying where inequities exist. He is open to the fact we may find out that some colleges have a challenge with inequities and others may not. He noted that the definition of inequitable is challenging, because defining equity across contexts is challenging. The Provost’s office has discussed stepping in to take a first pass at conducting research to identify where inequities
exist. He noted it takes a team to put this together, and he is willing to help. He described his philosophy is to hire everyone at an equitable, competitive salary. He discussed his previous analytic work to establish a baseline for hiring equitably in a way that would push the college of engineering into the top 25. He developed a 16-32 profile, which included faculty median salaries by discipline and rank among colleges ranked 16th-32nd. He noted he would not hire a new faculty below the median ranking, and described the responsibility to maintain equity falls on the Deans and Department Heads, with assistance from the Provost’s Office. Most of his analyses were not focused on gender, but he noted in order to be successful in hiring women (in engineering where women are a minority), they would have to hire at higher salary. He also shared an example to elaborate on the difficulty of establishing equity: For example, take an associate professor who might not have been promoted to full professor after 25 years at the institution due to performance. This associate professor might earn less than new entry level faculty members. Interim Chancellor Davis stated he does not consider this example to be one of inequitable salary earning. He posed the question, how would we implement a system to truly determine there is an inequity? He discussed differences between equity adjustments and merit adjustments. He then offered another example where a faculty member might stay at the associate level for 15 years, then, became much more productive for 3 years to then be promoted to full professor. He posed the question, how do you determine the dollar amount of a raise considering the stagnation that lasted for 15 years? He stated these are challenges of conducting a serious equity analysis, particularly when there is turn over in leadership that might not know the history of the situation at either the department, college or provost level.

1. Bonnie Ownley noted we have attended more to needs of assistant professors going up to the associate level rather than associate professors going up to full professor levels. She noted there now are more expectations for associates to go up for full, but that was not always the case.

2. Interim Chancellor Davis noted as Dean of the college of engineering, he expected associates to go up for full. Once appointed to his interim position, he read the faculty handbook, but could not find any explicit statement of an expectation for associates to go up for full. There are expectations for research, teaching, and service, but not an expectation to aspire to and reach full professor. He noted the faculty senate might need to address this issue.

Q: Has there been any updated policy-making re: anti-bully, equity, and sexual harassment prevention?
i. Interim Chancellor Davis noted we have Title IX programs. We are in the process of hiring a Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion. He thinks we are a few days away from getting to a point where we can move forward in the hiring process.

1. Mary Lucal noted as result of our panel on November 7th, the discussion for hiring a Diversity officer is on the Human Resources next meeting agenda.

e. Q: The university climate feels a bit “iffy” for junior scholars who do research with marginalized populations (i.e., LGBTQ folks, undocumented families) and on topics that some in the legislature/BOT may deem “controversial.” Does this sentiment or concern seem legitimate to you? Assuming we are highly productive, grant seeking/securing professors, what reassurance (if any), as our interim chancellor, can you give those of us doing this kind of work pre-tenure?

i. Interim Chancellor Davis states he hopes our institution values research, and that there is no discrimination or bias in conducting this type of research. He hopes we are above the idea that this research would be discriminated against. If he sees this happening, he stated that he and we should all.

f. Q: I’ve heard that some universities are making explicit their efforts to support and protect undocumented undergraduate and graduate students. I’m relatively new to UT, so I may simply not know how we address these issues, but could you talk about how our undocumented students are supported and/or (hopefully) protected (i.e., refusing to provide their names if ever asked)?

i. Interim Chancellor Davis reported we do not know who our undocumented students are, because we do not ask for that information. As a result, he does not have an answer for this question. Until we are mandated by law, which is pushed by fed government administration, to ask for that information during admissions question, we will not know.

g. Q: Has there been any meaningful conversation about expanding child care resources for UT Faculty?

i. Interim Chancellor Davis asked the Commission for Women to inform his office what we need to evaluate. He stated support for evaluating needs, then we can assess if we can provide resources and determine what needs to be done to provide those resources. He noted it is not a yes or no question, rather, it is a point of cost and how much need is there.

1. Matthew Theriot noted one of the pillars of the ASCEND grant is focused on exploring child and elder care.

2. Megan Haselschwerdt noted the Early Learning Center may be able to provide information on which faculty are on their waiting list.

VI. Adjourn
VII. Next meeting will be Feb. 7, 2019.