Annual Report
2011
President’s Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities

Membership: Amy Redman, Kathy Berger, Jill Gravink, Peter Macalaster, Bruce Mallory, Josh Moran, Edie Posselt, Lonn Sattler, Dirk Timmons, Terri Winters, Anthony Zizos, Cathy Coakley, Wendy Beckwith, Jennifer Vanderminden, Sylvia Foster, Janice Pierson, Judy Stevens, Jan Zrebiec

Co-Chairs: Dani Adler and Carol Swiech

Activities for the year
1. Clarified membership so that particular offices rather than specific individuals were represented.
2. Finalized the video project, *The Diversity of People with Disabilities at UNH*. This video is now on the Commission website. Seven students, faculty and staff tell of their experiences at UNH and UNH Manchester. We are exploring ways to utilize the video as a training tool.
3. Hosted a panel presentation of students with disabilities at UNH. Invited faculty teaching particularly pertinent courses to encourage their students to attend as part of the class. We filled the Strafford Room.
4. Co-hosted (with the MUB) a presentation by Marc Elliott who told his story of living with Tourette’s Syndrome and a gastrointestinal condition. This event filled the Strafford Room.
5. Conducted an inventory of the blue lights on campus which was submitted to Affirmative Action and Equity.
6. Created a campus map showing accessible routes, including stairs, parking and grades which is posted on the UNH website. The map was a collaborative effort between the Commission, Affirmative Action and Equity, Disability Services for Students, Northeast Passage, and the UNH Energy and Campus Development GIS Group. The map will continue to be improved so that it shows accessible routes within buildings and temporary obstructions such as construction sites and possibly a narrative section about each building. The Commission is looking at all the advertising and marketing the map.
7. Explored how the commission could support veterans on campus. An ad hoc group was formed to work with other campus constituencies to improve veterans’ support services. Not all veterans have a disability but most of the offices that currently serve veterans are represented on the commission and those members have an interest in the topic.
8. Reviewed the recent ADA Amendments and how the changes impact UNH.
9. Looked at various standard measures of disability in order to tell a story that links education, employment and poverty. Finding consistent measures of disability is difficult because different sources use different definitions of disability.
10. Participated in an informative presentation on assistive technology by Diana Petschauer, Information Technology Specialist in the DSS office. This topic was new to many members and generated lots of discussion and questions.
11. Explored the possibility of conducting a survey about people with disabilities at UNH. After considerable research, it appears as though no institution has conducted a campus-wide survey of both students and employees. UNH has some information on self-identified students who have registered with DSS. We have limited information on faculty and staff with disabilities, other than anecdotal information. The commission decided to do a survey that is aimed at employees. The University of Missouri has recently conducted such a survey and has graciously given us permission to let us use theirs as a model.
12. Participated in the President’s Commission Review Process by attending monthly meetings and a retreat in January, and creating recommendations to the President.
13. Met with a student to lend support as he attempts to start a student organization for students with disabilities.

Goals for next year
1. Continue to improve upon the accessibility map by including additional information about building interiors and temporary obstructions.
2. Introduce the topic of universal design to the commission and look at ways to incorporate the principles of universal design into programs, instruction, and physical access.
3. Conduct a survey at the end of September of faculty and staff with disabilities. The results of the survey will be used to provide additional directions for future Commission activities. A subgroup of the Commission will be working over the summer to refine the questions, secure IRB approval, and work with the Survey Center to mount the survey at the end of September.
4. Co-sponsor, with the MUB, a presentation about with psychiatric disabilities.

Respectfully submitted June 3, 2011,

_____Daniela Adler_______________  __Carol Swiech_____________________

Daniela Adler, Co-Chair                     Carol Swiech, Co-Chair