President’s Commission on the Status of People With Disabilities  
February 9, 2016  
Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Bonnie Barlow, Wendy Beckwith, Sylvia Foster, Karen Gilbert, Linda Guttman, Erica Hochberg, Georgia Kerns, Jeff Parsons, Tobey Partch-Davies, James Piet, Kei Saito, Lonn Sattler, Mike Shuttic, Judy Stevens, Catherine Welter

I. Minutes and Announcements
  • Members voted to approve the December minutes as written.
  • Freda Smith will be speaking next week along with producer of film “Lost in Laconia”. Tobey will send around more info.
  • Institute on Disabilities is sponsoring a program with filmmaker Dan Habib who will talk about his documentary film “Intelligent Lives” on March 31, 4-6pm, MUB Theater II.

II. Current Business/Concerns
  • Regardless of the student’s status, there are no fee barriers to students seeking assistance with Disability Services for Students for veterans. However, veterans who are non-matriculated and are in a pre-admission status, do not pay all of the student fees, therefore, are ineligible to receive services from Counseling Services, Health Services and may not utilize the equipment and activities at the rec center. Health Services will provide services to the preadmit student with the expectation that the student will pay for all services out of pocket. There are approximately 25 students who are in this predicament.
  • To be eligible to receive funds through the GI Bill, veterans must be in the process of being admitted. However, academic credentials appears to be the biggest barrier to matriculation for veterans.
  • Due to a recent change in university policy, all students taking 12 credits or more (including pre-admit veterans) are being charged the full time fees making them eligible to access all student services.
  • Once a student is granted matriculated status and takes 5 credits or more - they are fee assessed.
  • UNHM does not face this dilemma as veterans may be registered into the general studies associate degree program, which then places them into matriculated status. Durham no longer has a general studies degree program.
  • Admissions is aware of the issue and they along with others, are working on a resolution. Karen and Lonn will continue to keep the commission updated.

III. Work Group Meeting Time. Report Outs Were as Follows:
  Programming Work Group
  • After discussion, members voted to appropriate $400 from the budget for the upcoming program Darkness and Light. CED, Discovery, Military and Veterans Services offices will also be contributing funds. The event is scheduled for March 22.
  • The commission will be listed as an event sponsor for MUB Lecture featuring speaker/performer Mandy Harvey who is coming to UNH on Feb 17th.
  • Mike is recruiting students for the Disability Student Panel discussion coming up on March 1st.
  • Sylvia will send out the info sheet on upcoming programs.

Accessibility Work Group
• Lonn reported that a few issues have risen during the pilot season for the Snow Route. Two concerns were lack of availability of plow drivers and snow brushes used during the wet and heavy snows have clogged up. Facilities is working to resolve these issues.

• Wendy has assembled an updated audit of accessible features for all campus buildings. Some campus buildings have set aside space for “areas of refuge” as a safe harbor for persons who are unable to manage the stairs during an emergency situation. These refuge spaces are equipped with identifiable signage, an emergency phone and are fire-rated for a 2 hour window of time.
  o New building codes that emerged around the time that Paul College was built require areas of refuge.
  o They will be working on creating a resource list and assuring that areas of refuge are properly identified and signed.
  o Two criteria used to identify need locations for the refuge areas are: (1) whether or not a campus building is a highly used academic building and (2) data from student course registrations (supplied by DSS).

**Communications Work Group**

• Concern was raised that the commission has received only 1 nomination for its commission award. After reading the one nomination to members, members did not feel that it qualified for award status given the brief statement provided.
  o The nomination period ends at midnight on February 18. Members were asked to help spread the word to encourage nominations.

• Group has added new program listings and news items to the web site along with the Snow Route notation.

**IV. Updates from Other Groups and Offices**

**CED Advisory Council**: Sylvia reported that the group is working on a system to recognize in a more formal way, staff who volunteer for membership on commissions/councils. Suggestion was made to place supervisory recognition letters in staff member’s personnel records.

**Task Force on Community Preplanning Group**: Task Force members reviewed the final report and key findings submitted by NH Listens. Jaime will be meeting with University Communications to discuss strategies for releasing the report findings to the full community. The next phase will involve writing the action steps. It was noted that the report gave little mention of disability-related issues and concerns. If a special focus group cannot be assembled, then it would be essential for this commission to have representation on the writing group for the action plan to assure the voice of persons with disabilities continues to be part of discussion on future changes/plans and/or recommendations.

Respectfully submitted, Janice Pierson