President’s Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities
February 10, 2015
Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Wendy Beckwith, Chandler Bullard, Kevin Ennis, Sylvia Foster, Felicia Fowler, Jill Hall, Georgia Kerns, Jeff Parsons, Tara Scholder, Judy Stevens

I. Minutes and Membership
   ▪ The December minutes were approved as written.
   ▪ Kia has stepped off the commission due to a class rescheduling, and Felicia Fowler will be the new representative of the Graduate Student Senate. Felicia’s field of study is therapeutic recreation.
   ▪ Janice reminded members that the membership renewal and recruitment of new members is now underway. If anyone was thinking of stepping off the commission, they were asked to notify the co-chairs.

II. Discussion on Awards and Student Panel Event
   ▪ There is only 1 nomination received. Upon discussion, there was consensus that the commission will forego presenting an award this year.
   ▪ In light of the excessive snowstorms and curtailments, members also thought it prudent to reschedule the panel discussion from February 23 to a later date in March.
      o Sylvia will contact Kathy to inquire about student availability and will also check on MUB room availability.
      o Once the new date has been set, Sylvia will send out the event flyer for members to disseminate to their departments/offices/groups and contacts.
   ▪ Wendy made a motion to allocate up to $500 of the commission’s budget for expenses associated with videotaping the panel discussion. Members voted to approve the motion.
   ▪ Georgia will send out an email to members asking for 2 volunteers to serve on the Awards Review Task Group. Members also started the list of values and criteria they want represented during the upcoming discussions:
      o Awards should honor those students, staff and faculty who help change policy to improve the campus climate for persons with disabilities. Awardees also serve to empower and advocate for others who are unable to speak for themselves. These advocates seek to build awareness of complex issues as well as the challenges of living with a disability. Some awardees have also demonstrated sustained activity and research in disability-related areas of study and activism.

III. Updates From Commission Co-chair’s Meeting
   ▪ Members reviewed the notes from the Co-chair meeting.
   ▪ All commissions are being asked to bring forward (1) their recommendations for improving communications between various governance groups, (2) a list of data/reports that are needed to assist the commission in achieving its goals, (3) a clear description of the terms education and professional development opportunities and the types of programs that would contribute toward improving the campus climate, and (4) a list of programs/trainings connected to inclusive excellence that are already in place across campus.
   ▪ With regard to improving communication, Georgia reported that having the joint co-chair’s meeting has been very helpful in bringing all the commission voices together. Others felt that we need more positive stories that showcase progress for people with disabilities, in addition to honoring staff and students for the work/research they have done on improving the overall climate at UNH and the lives of persons living with a disability. Promotion of the Accessibility Map would also be helpful.
      o Wendy and Judy will check on the status of the new closed-circuit broadcasting system that replaced Catvision TV.
Members were asked to begin looking for ideas on creating a better messaging system for constituents to be able to reach the commission. Members also need to work on bringing more awareness about the commission and its work to the wider community.

- Jaime Nolan made a brief appearance at the meeting to encourage all commission members to attend the Q & A Session that President Huddleston will be holding immediately following his state of the university address. She also asked members to notify her with any concerns they may have. To improve communication with her office, she will also be sending out periodic emails to commission members on current news or with general talking points on specific issues.

- With regard to the collection of data, members would like to collect more data on staff and faculty with disabilities, but due to confidentiality issues this information is difficult to obtain.

  - There is no system in place to assist employees with mobility issues in the event of a safety/emergency evacuation. A list should be made available to Fire/Police departments on the building/room locations of these employees.
  - The commission should be made aware of comments submitted by individuals reporting problems on campus through the accessibility map application.
  - Suggestion was made that we include a membership slot on the commission for a representative from Facilities. We may also want to include representation from the Fire/Police Departments to assist us with our working group goals, or invite them to provide updates to the full commission each semester.

Respectfully submitted

Janice Pierson