President’s Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities
September 15, 2015
Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Wendy Beckwith, Mariah Bellington, Doug Bencks, Chandler Bullard, Cathy Coakley, Sylvia Foster, Linda Guttman, Erica Hochberg, Georgia Kerns, Jeff Parsons, Tobey Partch-Davies, Mike Shuttic, Judy Stevens, Catherine Welter

I. Minutes, Membership, Leadership, Bylaws
   • Members voted to approve the May meeting minutes as written.
   • Members were asked to bring forward nominations for students, staff and faculty who may have an interest in serving on the commission.
   • Mike Shuttic volunteered to fill the vacancy for the second co-chair position.
   • A second representative is needed for the Awards Steering Committee.
   • Members voted to approve the revisions made to the commission Bylaws. The changes reflect the repositioning of Jaime Nolan’s job responsibilities, which now include overseeing the commissions (along with the president).

II. Update on Budget
   • All commission budgets have been reduced from $3,000 to $1,500.
   • To encourage more collaboration among the commissions and with other campus groups, a separate pool of funds has been set up for joint programming/events. Commissions may seek additional funds from this pool when the program/event expenses exceed $500.
     o The Advisory Council for Community, Equity and Diversity will administer decisions for fund allocation from this pool.
   • Georgia reported that she received a request for support from the Women’s Studies program for their November program “Elect Her: NH Feminist Leadership Summit”.
     o After deliberation, members took no action on the request. Members had concerns that the event may not be representing the specific needs of this commission since the focus of the program is on women and does not seem to encourage persons with disabilities.
     o Georgia will seek additional information and report back at the October meeting.

III. Update from Disability Services for Students (DSS)
   • As the recently hired director of DSS, Mike said that he will be working on making improvements and streamlining procedures over the next year. As the office has been understaffed for several months, there has been a longer-than-usual waiting period for students seeking approvals for course accommodations, which has resulted in the delay for letters being sent to faculty.
     o To assist with the delays, he will work on sending email notices to faculty assuring them that the Request-for-Accommodations letters will be coming soon.

IV. Announcements and Updates
   • There is interest from the Department of Recreation Management and Policy to bring local film artist Thi Linh Wernau to campus to talk about her documentary Darkness and Light: A Human Conversation with Eleven Wounded Veterans.
   • Commission is listed as a sponsor for two MUB Lecture programs. Members were asked to assist in promotion of the events. Flyers and additional information will be going out soon.
Kevin Briggs and Kevin Berthia who will talk about their suicide prevention program, scheduled for Sept 30th.

Spencer West, author and humanitarian, scheduled for Nov 18.

Tobey provided background information on a grant proposal that she submitted over the summer with support from Georgia’s department, Jaime Nolan, NE Passage, IOD and other campus offices. The Transition Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities comes from the Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education. The purpose of the program is to support model demonstration programs that promote the successful transition of students with intellectual disabilities into higher education, and creates a meaningful credential for students upon completion of the program.

UNH will need to develop a comprehensive curriculum program along with internships, workstudy positions, and extra-curricular activities for students.

They expect to admit approximately 10 students the first year. Students would not live on campus the first year but would transition to residence halls the following year.

The grant would not cover student tuition costs but will pay for services provided.

V. Discussion on Commission Work Groups

- Members will revisit the priorities and goals for the coming year and determine if current working groups need to be revised. A few ideas that emerged from the discussion included the following:
  - Work on developing buy-in/connections with other non-commission personnel/offices on specific areas of focus to complement the skill sets of persons on the commission as well as increase financial resources for larger projects/programs (i.e. accessibility map, recruitment of faculty and staff with disabilities).
  - Work with student groups (i.e. Best Buddies, Occupational Therapist Association (SOTA), Active Minds, Eyes Open, etc), to promote their interests.
  - Include staff and students from UNH Law School.
  - Work on increasing awareness of issues using various social media tools. Increase awareness of Americans with Disabilities Act video posted on HR website on requesting accommodations for staff/faculty with disabilities. Use this link to view the video http://www.unh.edu/hr/key-topics-supervisors

Respectfully submitted
Janice Pierson