



Commission for LGBT People  
March 7, 2016

26 in attendance: Erin Bennett, Danielle Burton, David Byrd, Eric Carr, Mackenzie Cartin, Rachel Cross, Sarah Curtis, Luke Garton, Jennifer Jabson, Joel Kramer, Mary Lucal, Bruce MacLennan, Kirsten Pitcock, Kelley Spencer, Elizabeth Stanfield, Bonnie Benson-Palmgren, Kodee Walls, Zyan Kirkland, Jeremy Haber, Virginia Kay, Melissa Grant, Ali Schroder, Jennifer Dobbins, Michael Porter, Tamara Griffin

- I. Introductions
- II. Minutes for February with Chancellor Cheek
  - a. Approved
- III. Updates after February Meeting with Chancellor Cheek
  - a. The Chancellor will attend a Safe Zone training in April.
  - b. The Chancellor will seek clarification as to the online map and gender neutral restrooms.
  - c. Interest in demographic data of UT employees (self-identifying by sexual orientation, marital status). Human Relations through Associate Vice Chancellor Lucal can provide this data if the CLGBT would like to request it.
- IV. UT Budget and Diversity Funding
  - a. Background: In the week prior, the Senate Education Committee voted to add an amendment to UT's budget that would remove the funding for the Office of Diversity & Inclusion ("federal funds only" when the Office does not receive any federal money) and use it for agricultural extension work in rural Tennessee counties.
    - i. See link for news coverage:  
<http://www.tennessean.com/story/news/education/2016/03/02/senate-panel-moves-swipe-ut-diversity-funding/81218968/>
  - b. What can we do?
    - i. UT is committed to the office remaining intact and open.
    - ii. The budget will next go to the Senate and House's respective Way and Means Committees. Contacting your legislators is a good place to start.
      1. Discuss why the passage of this will affect you, why the Office of Diversity and Inclusion matters to you, the wide variety of "diversity" (rural students, veterans, first-generation college students).

2. It seems like our legislators who are closest to the University (i.e., from Knox County and East Tennessee) are most hostile to UT. This means that they are unlikely to listen to you if your email comes from @utk.edu or if you write a letter on UT stationary.
- iii. Students will be going to lobby the legislature tomorrow.

V. Committees

- a. Membership & Awards Committee:
  - i. February 19 was the deadline for awards. The committee is currently voting, voting for deadline is this Friday.
  - ii. Co-Chairs are both open to returning next year.
- b. Equity & Issues Committee to begin by-law revisions.
- c. Communication & Alumni will coordinate with the Commission for Women ad hoc committee on diversity.

VI. Updates

- a. VolOUT
  - i. Regular meetings are Wednesday nights at 6 p.m., 53B in HSS.
  - ii. Upcoming Drag Show performance as a part of Sex Week on Thursday, April 7.
- b. Pride Center
  - i. Meeting with Chancellor Cheek and DiPietro in the Pride Center: meeting was recorded. Questions focused on the future of Pride Center location, gender-neutral restrooms on maps page, and gender-neutral pronouns.
  - ii. The Coalition of students organizations have issued demands that include that the gender-neutral pronoun article is posted online again, but the Chancellor's office has said that will not happen and has not apologized.
- c. SEAT
  - i. Sex Week Cabaret is tonight as a kick-off event for Sex Week in April.
  - ii. Sex Week is officially one month out, from April 4-8. 25 events including 4 paid speakers, on health, relationships, and sex ed.
  - iii. Schedule on Facebook page.
- d. Center for Career Development has been certified at a bronze level for OUT for Work program.
- e. Tatiana Levit has been hired as a new consultant in office to focus on "special populations," including diverse populations and LGBTQ+ students.
- f. Commission for Women: March 31 event on "Closing the Confidence Gap," with Associate Vice Chancellor Mary Lucal and Assistant Dean Rita Smith, opening remarks from CFW Co-Chair Professor Mary Papke.