

## Bylaws of the Commission for LGBT People, with Proposed Revisions for Spring 2016

### I. PURPOSE

- a. The Commission for LGBT People is a body appointed by the Chancellor to advise on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs, policies, and services at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville (hereafter referred to as "UTK"). The Commission seeks to improve the status of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, or Asexual (hereinafter referred to as "LGBT")<sup>1</sup> people on the UTK campus.

### II. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Commission shall:

- a. Recommend changes in policy or procedure relative to the concerns of LGBT people;
- b. Make recommendations concerning new and existing academic, professional development, and extracurricular programs;
- c. Recommend and encourage research to assess the status of LGBT people at UTK and compare their status with that of LGBT people at other institutions and agencies;
- d. Assist with campus-wide initiatives related to diversity and the creation of a diverse, welcoming, supportive, and inclusive campus climate;
- e. Advise and consult with all UTK administrators, staff, faculty, and students on the needs and status of LGBT people; and
- f. Provide information and support to the campus and community for programs and activities related to LGBT people.

### III. COMPOSITION

#### a. Membership.

Regular membership: The Commission for LGBT People shall consist of no fewer than 20 voting members, with a proportionate number of faculty members, exempt and non-exempt staff members, and students, representing the various colleges, schools, and administrative units of UTK. Alumni and members of the larger Knoxville community may also serve on the Commission. Members may apply, be nominated by another individual, or appointed. Appointed members may serve multiple years on the Commission, as determined by their director, department/unit head, or chair of the group they represent.

- i. Ex-officio voting membership. The following members, or their designees, are voting members:

1. Faculty Senate President

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission for LGBT People recognizes that an acronym that includes all identities is impossible because, by naming the identities contained within the acronym, those identities that are not named are excluded. The usage of the "LGBT" acronym does not seek to exclude other identities named within "LGBT," and the Commission includes, accepts, and represents both cisgender, heterosexual individuals as well as individuals of all gender, sexual, and romantic minorities, regardless of how an individual's identity is named. The Commission uses this acronym "LGBT" throughout this document as a means of convenience for writing.

2. Employee Relations Council representative
  3. Student Government Association President
  4. Graduate Student Senate President
  5. Exempt Staff Council Chair
  6. Commission for Women Chair
  7. Commission for Blacks Chair
  8. Council for Diversity & Interculturalism Chair
  9. Graduate Assistant for the Commission for LGBT People
  10. Pride Center Director
  11. UTK Police Department Chief
- ii. Ex-officio non-voting membership. The following members, or their designees, are non-voting members:
    1. Representative from Division of Student Life
    2. Assistant Vice Chancellor for Human Resources
    3. Associate Vice Chancellor for Office of Equity and Diversity
- b. Commission Leadership
- i. After a vote of two-thirds of the Commission, the Commission shall recommend to the Chancellor at least one Chair to head the Commission for LGBT People. In the event of no two-thirds or greater winner, the two candidates with the most amount of votes shall have a run-off election. The Chancellor shall approve the selection of the Chair of the Commission.
  - ii. Two individuals may serve as Chair and Chair-Elect or equally as Co-Chairs.
  - iii. Duties of the Chair:
    1. Timing. The Chair of the Commission assumes responsibilities on August 1 of the academic year through the end of May of the following year.
    2. Committees. The Chair shall request that Commission members serve on the standing committees and may appoint members to committees. The Chair serves as an ex-officio member of all committees of the Commission.
    3. Funding Vote. In the event of a tie vote concerning funding by the Committee Chairs, the Chair shall serve as the deciding vote.
    4. Agenda. The Chair prepares the agenda for each Commission meeting.
    5. Meetings. The Chair conducts and presides over all meetings of the Commission.
    6. Meetings with the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion. The Chair shall meet with the Chancellor as requested. The Chair shall also meet with the Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion regularly to review the concerns and goals of the Commission.
    7. Other Commissions and Council. The Chair shall attend or appoint a representative to attend each meeting of the other Commissions and Council, including the Commission for Women, the Commission for Blacks, and the Council for Diversity and Interculturalism. Such attendance will be in an ex-officio nonvoting capacity.

- iv. Term: The Chair of the Commission serves a one-year term but may serve consecutive terms, as the Commission recommends to the Chancellor. In the case of a Chair and a Chair-Elect, the Chair-Elect shall immediately succeed as Chair after the completion of the Chair's term, and the Commission shall vote for and recommend to the Chancellor the next term's Chair-Elect.
- c. Committees. The Commission's membership shall serve on the following standing committees. A description of the Committees shall be distributed to the Commission at the beginning of each year and will be available on the Commission website. Members may also be appointed by the Chair to each of the following committees:
  - i. Communications & Alumni Committee
  - ii. Equity & Climate Committee
  - iii. Membership and Awards Committee
  - iv. Ad hoc committees, to be formed as needed by the Commission Chair

#### IV. MEETINGS

##### a. Frequency.

The Commission shall schedule regular monthly meetings, at a time to be agreed upon at the beginning of each academic year. Additional meetings shall be scheduled as needed. The agenda at these meetings shall be determined by the Commission itself and may include items placed on it at the request of the Chancellor; a member of the faculty, staff, or student body with a grievance or concern; or of any member of the UTK community with an issue that might demand investigation. All meetings shall be open to any member of the UTK community.

##### b. Robert's Rules of Order.

All Commission meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

#### V. BUDGET

The Commission shall be provided with funds through the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion.

##### a. Funding Requests.

Any individual from the UTK community may request funding by sending to the Chair, Chair-Elect, and graduate assistant, an electronic document including:

- i. The funding required;
- ii. Budget of the event or subject of funding request;
- iii. Any other funding sources applied for or awarded;
- iv. And any other further information requested by the Chair, Chair-Elect, or graduate assistant.
- v. The Commission may use an online form for this request, as the Chair determines will best serve the Commission.
- vi. Timing. Each funding request must be provided no less than thirty (30) days before the funds will be required.

Voting. Voting shall be conducted by the Chairs of the Committees. A majority vote will result in an approved funding request. In the event of a tie vote, the Commission Chair shall decide.

- b. Graduate Assistant, funded by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. At least one graduate student assistant shall be chosen to aid the Chair by attending and taking notes at commission meetings, assisting with mentoring events, or performing other tasks as needed and required.

VI. AWARDS

The Commission shall present a minimum of one award each year at the Chancellor Honors Banquet to recognize a UTK community member who has been significant in advocating for and bringing recognition to LGBT individuals. The Commission shall use the means that it deems best for nominating individuals for awards.

The Commission shall determine the award winner for each award through a vote of the Membership & Awards Committee. The award recipient who receives a plurality vote shall receive the respective award. In the case of a tie, the Commission Chair shall decide the award winner.

VII. APPROVAL AND AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

- a. Approval by two-thirds vote of Commission membership.  
These bylaws shall be approved by two-thirds vote of the Commission membership taken by ballot.
- b. Amendments.  
Amendments to the by-laws shall be approved by a majority vote of the Commission membership.
- c. Effective upon approval by Vice Chancellor for Diversity.  
Both bylaws and amendments shall become effective upon the approval of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion.

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Articles IV, V and VI added 12 December 2006 by vote of the Commission Revised by vote of the Commission 15 February 2007

Revised by vote of the Commission 6 April 2009

Revised by vote of the Commission May 2011

Revised by vote of the Commission September 2013

Revised by vote of the Commission April 2014

Revised by vote of the Commission \_\_\_ 2016