

Commission for LGBT People

Meeting Minutes

December 3, 2018

Attendance: Joel Anderson, Misty Anderson, Danielle Burton, Cal Cane, Sharon Couch, Pamela Durban, Danny Glassmann, Diane Goble, Cody Harrison, Allison Heming, Jennifer Jabson, Bonnie Johnson, Mary Lucal, Mitsu Misawa, Joanne Patterson, James Perlow, Tammy Renalds, Jenny Richter, Luke Sciulli, Chris Shuping, Jordan Smith-Porter, Megan Steed, Matthew Theriot, Lizeth Zepeda

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Approval of Meeting Minutes
- III. Committee Updates
 - a. Equity and climate. The committee has made progress on the needs assessment. The Commission for Women and Title IX office have offered assistance.
 - b. Transgender and Non-Binary Issues. The committee is helping organize a clothes closet in the Pride Center. They will have a pop-up shop in Hodges Library in January 2019. The committee is also examining needs for retaining transgender and non-binary students, faculty, and staff. A transgender rights and resources teach-in is being developed.
 - c. Commission for Blacks. An all commissions luncheon will be held on December 10th. To RSVP for the event, please complete the google form here: <https://goo.gl/forms/o2gJuNcM0IMd3PIP2> . Other events include a Meet and Mingle in McClung Museum for Black faculty, staff, and students and Paint the Rock on December 5th at 9am. The CFB is currently examining our peer institutions' diversity offices and gathering information that may be helpful in reinstating a diversity office at UTK. They intend to share their findings with Interim Chancellor Davis. The CFB is also conducting a climate survey regarding "why [Black students, faculty, and staff] stay" at UTK.
 - d. Faculty Senate. They passed a resolution asking Interim Chancellor Davis to reinstitute a Diversity Officer. They are working with several groups to host an event, United at the Rock – Remember, Serve, Celebrate, to be held on February 20, 2019.
- IV. Discussion with Interim Chancellor Davis
 - a. Q: What role do you believe the Commission serves on campus? How do you see our group being of service to the campus community?
 - i. Our group is the eyes and ears for the Chancellor.
 - ii. He noted our group's restroom report was excellent.
 - b. Q: Will you give us an update on the progress of changes to be implemented in response to our report on the availability of all-gender restrooms for transgender and gender non-conforming students?
 - i. He noted the report was the most well written report he has seen in a long time.

- ii. “All Gender” will replace “Family Restroom.” They are assessing what restroom signage can and cannot be managed. They hope new signs will be printed and applied soon, perhaps as soon as January. All new buildings will include “All Gender” restrooms.
 - iii. They also are evaluating coverage, specifically where there is a lack of coverage and what they can do about that moving forward.
 - iv. The campus map on UTK’s website will be changed immediately, once locations are finalized.
 - v. Commissioners noted we must have a label on the signs, not just a picture, in order to incorporate braille.
- b. Q: What is the status regarding implementation of two recent reports related to diversity: The Diversity Champions Report and the VolVision report?
 - i. The Diversity Champions Report has been accepted by the Provost’s office and sent to the Dean’s Council. It will hopefully be implemented soon.
 - ii. VolVision Report. Interim Chancellor Davis noted needed update, including Pillar 6. The first 5 pillars have been updated, metrics for pillar 6 have been developed, and they are pulling that information in order to have it printed and distributed as soon as possible.
- c. Q: We are curious what are your priorities? What is your timeline to complete those priorities? Where do LGBTQ+ related issues rank in your priorities? Are there certain efforts that we may attend to that are more likely to move forward during your tenure?
 - i. Creating a diversity position is a priority. Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion is Interim Chancellor Davis’s preferred title of the position. There is a draft in the works for a position. The first draft of a job description is one to two days away from completion. The draft will be sent to Randy Boyd and the faculty senate for review.
 - ii. A national search would be difficult next spring due to the Chancellor search. Interim Chancellor Davis noted we cannot conduct two searches at the same time without complication. We may be able to do an internal search to fill the position. In an ideal world, we may even set that up before we leave for holiday break. We could implement an interim person to the position as well. There are options.
 - iii. Interim Chancellor Davis believes in this position, that it will happen, but it will not be easy. He noted being a proponent and will continue to be. Believes Randy Boyd can help implement this position. The Provost staff is on board as well.
- d. Q: Can you tell us your perspective of the current climate in Nashville related to diversity and inclusion?
 - i. Interim Chancellor Davis mentioned feeling that we are experiencing a good climate. One that will lend itself well to introducing this position, especially with Randy Boyd’s ties.
- e. Q: What role will the Commissions play in the search process for Vice Chancellor position?

- i. Interim Chancellor Davis noted the commissions would play a major role. There will be a search committee, and our group includes primary people who have information. Everyone should be able to play an active role. “I want everyone to be part of the process – including the legislators.”
- f. Commissioners noted longevity is a key component in drafting a position description.
 - i. Interim Chancellor Davis noted these positions are typically 5-year renewals. He does not see someone coming in as a new Chancellor and saying we do not need this position. As for legislators, we cannot control that too much, he does not see anything bad happening if we approach it correctly.
- g. Q: What will be the Diversity Officer’s oversight?
 - i. It will be a cabinet level position, which includes meeting with the chancellor two hours every week. Oversight of the Commissions has been suggested, and they are still thinking about what that may look like.
- h. Commissioners noted we need to think about our defunded units and our those that serve our most underrepresented students. Consideration for who will oversee them and where they are placed is important. Commissioners thanked Interim Chancellor Davis for his support and help with Safe Zone.
- i. Q: Another issue is space. What is the future of the Pride Center space?
 - i. Interim Chancellor Davis noted commitment to there being a Pride Center. Ideally, the Pride Center will continue on, not need donor support to operate, and will be located in the student union. There is potentially space there. They are working on getting the Pride Center money so donors are not needed for the base budget.
- j. Q: How do you see your priorities and objectives being transferred to the new Chancellor?
 - i. Interim Chancellor Davis noted his priorities are ours, so how will we transfer OUR priorities to the new chancellor? He noted intention to be an active participant in that and will help. If we hire someone who wants to change those priorities, we will have made the wrong decision.
- k. Q: Why an internal search? Is it because of crossed wires with a national search for chancellor?
 - i. Interim Chancellor Davis commented yes. But, another purpose is to not delay the search if possible. The internal search would also assume we have the right person available and willing.

V. Thank you to Interim Chancellor Davis. Adjourn.

VI. Next meeting will take place on February 4, 2019