

Commission for LGBT People
Meeting Minutes

November 4th, , 2019

Attendance: Lettie Flores, Kayla Irwin, Joel Anderson, Tom Cervone, Sharon Couch, Casey Darby, Mary Lucal, Will Martinez, Tammy Renalds, Megan Venable, Merrill Walker, Sara Walters, Janelle Coleman, Jeremy Mobley, Lorna Hollowell, Jeremy Gilbert, Danielle Johnson

- I. Welcome and into
- II. Approved the October Minutes
- III. Upcoming Events:
 - A. Anti Bullying: Dr. Leah Hollis to UTK March 4-6 for events concerning bullying in higher education. Reach out to Dr. Jabson-Tree for more information
 - B. Pride Center Friendsgiving: November 12 5pm-7pm. FBCC. They will provide the turkey, bring side dishes.
 - C. New Employee Orientation, January 21st, February 17th, and March 16th. UT Culinary Institute and Creamery 8:20-8:30.
- IV. Today's Objectives:
 - A. Updates from the Co-Chairs
 - 1. Trans Student Health Task Force meetings
 - a) Funds have been secured. Goal is to have an on campus helathcare conference for healthcare providers to train on transgender health.
 - b) We are trying to get representatives, students and organizations around the community, that identify as trans. We are working on getting a speaker to come in December 2019.
 - 2. Facilitated the Intergenerational Dialogue Panel, co-sponsored by Pride Center and the Commission
 - a) We will need to work on advertising for the next panel (comments by Mary Lucal).

- b) Commission for Blacks meeting was scheduled at the same time which may have impacted attendance.
- 3. Dr. Jennifer Jabson-Tree provided a presentation to the Student Health Center
 - a) 50 attendees. The presentation went really well and staff asked a lot of questions, which is great!
- 4. Law School-Lambda Legal Society: They reached out to us regarding getting gender inclusive restrooms in the law school building. They received positive support from law school admin.
- 5. The Law School is also interested in us, the commission, hosting a talk on how to process the latest hate speech from the Sevier County Commissioner. Please reach out to us if any of you are interested in participating in any way.

(1) HR may be interested in participating (Mary Lucal)

B. Updates from other commissions, student groups, etc.

- 1. Equity and Climate
 - a) We need a co-chair for this committee. Both co-chairs have stepped down and once left the university. Kayla looked through the by laws but there is not a specific guideline on how to handle this situation. If any member of the commission is interested in stepping into the role of co-chair please reach out to us.
- 2. Communications and Alumni
 - a) No updates
- 3. Membership
 - a) No updates. Stephanie sent out new poll. They will meet next week.
- 4. Transgender & Non Binary Issues
 - a) Qcloset! Still need volunteers but there is no longer a need for clothes.
 - b) Qcloset organizing event, Trans & Non binary committee, Dec 10th, 2-5pm
 - c) If you have clothes you would like to donate please consider the organizations below:

(1) Appalachian Outreach program in Maryville

<https://appalachianoutreach.org/>

(2) Smokie's Closet on campus
<https://appalachianoutreach.org/>

(3) The University's "Free Store"
<https://sustainability.utk.edu/programs/free-store/>

5. CFB

a) The leadership team on the commission is really looking into invisible labor. They came up with a strategy. Each subcommittee will work on one big goal.

(1) UT Black Faculty & Staff Initiative

(2) Build Black faculty and staff community

(3) Create connections

(4) Collaborate resources

b) Working on creating a workshop or retreat in the Spring to focus on these three goals.

c) NO December Meeting.

6. CFW

a) Women's Leadership Summit, 130 in attendance, went really well. Discussing next steps. Please email Dr. Chen if you have any ideas for the next leadership summit or speaker suggestions

b) March is Women's Month

c) Anti-Bullying Event in March with Dr. Hollis. If you want Dr. Hollis to visit your department please reach out now.

7. CDI

a) The Provost and his cabinet attended most of the October meeting.

(1) They discussed a hiring initiative to diversify the University. They assured us this included LGBTQ+.

b) They do have funds available for sponsorship. If you have an event or activity and would like CDI to be a sponsor please email Dr. Erin Darby, co-chair for CDI. The Trans Student Health task Force plans to apply for funding.

8. SGA

- a) Natalie, SGA President, hosts Chat with Nat. This event sits down with student organizations to discuss and identify student issues. They are working to make sure student representation is real throughout campus.
- b) They use social media to get information out (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc).

9. Mentorship Program

- a) Pride center has had requests from potential mentors about helping out. However there are more mentors than mentees reaching out.
- b) Q: What does Mentorship mean? Flores indicated that it was an Informal process inclusive of faculty staff and students. If someone identifies as LGBTQ on campus they would offer support on surviving and navigating the community.
- c) Kayla will check on our website for a mentor and mentee applications.

(1) The Mentee and Mentor applications can be found on the CFLGBT website under Programs
<https://cflgbt.utk.edu/mentorship/>

10. Faculty Senate (Joel Anderson)

- a) Now that ODE (Office of Diversity and Engagement) is back and faculty senate has been created they are discussing who the faculty senate is now and how not to compete with commissions and students
- b) They have an idea for a potential resource library regarding diversity resources.
- c) Student organizations will work with depts in student life. This will allow people that are familiar with working with students to be involved.
- d) Invisible Diversity Panel idea. Discussing who we are targeting, when to have, what the panel will consist of, etc. This panel is still a work in progress.

C. Discussion: Commission work and goals moving forward

1. We need to make sure commissions are communicating and utilizing the ODE. We want to synthesize the efforts.
2. Lettie asked: Are we (Jennifer and Lettie) meeting the commissions needs? Are we feeling effects of historical traumas on campus and in the community?

- a) Before ODE the commissions worked together to fill the gap because we did not have an Office of Diversity and Engagement.
- b) We are in a place of transition again. We are trying to establish the culture. The ODE also working on establishing their own culture. We have to create processes and have them in place. The ODE has been hiring and filling positions. Dr. Janelle Coleman is available through the ODE to assist the communications and council. Please reach out to her if you need any additional support.
- c) One of the attendees, Mary Lucal, said they feel CFLGBT has been responsive to their ideas and concerns.
- d) Last year the commission consisted of mostly staff and students. CFB feels the same way. CFLGBT lost a lot of faculty and students last year.
- e) CFW consists of more faculty. This is likely due to Dr. Rachel Chen reaching out to her network and recruiting faculty.
- f) Some hourly staff may not be able to participate as much as they would like, exempt staff does have more flexibility.
- g) Lettie proposed an idea to share health research with the commission and/or with faculty? She asked if the commission be interested.
- h) Could we revisit what the commissions and councils are and what the focus of each is?
- i) Dr. Coleman said they are working on a Spring Retreat for all of commissions. Each commission has different goals and focuses. The retreat will be a great way to bring all of the commissions and council together.
- j) Could there be exhaustion of revisiting the commissions because of chancellor turnover? We could rebrand ourselves to campus for all faculty, staff, and students.
- k) Tom Cervone made the point that the Commission has changed since he was involved in the first year of it, ten years ago. The rooms were filled at the meetings but now not so much. He recommends students seek guidance however we have set backs such as the Sevier county commissioner, that make students hesitate about reaching out.
- l) There could be fear on campus from students all the way up to leadership. We have to push forward. The Chancellor will have to continue to drive this initiative. We need to communicate around campus.
- m) We must focus on building trust and relationships on campus to

build up our commissions. The defunding in 2016 broke a lot of trust. It is important to recognize this. There is an idea of doing a newsletter regarding diversity. The new Diversity Action plans will be posted to each college's website so there will be clear visibility on the initiatives each college is taking to welcome diversity.

- n) We have to recognize that we are ranked very poorly on the LGBTQ+ campuses and also make campus aware of how data is collected on these surveys/polls.
3. Final Thoughts from Dr. Lettie Flores- Jennifer and Lettie hope they are doing a good job and if you have any suggestions or comments please reach out to them directly.
- a) They received a lot of positive feedback and appreciation from the commission!

D. Meeting Adjourned.

***Next Meeting will be December 2nd, 2019**