2006-2007
Affirmative Action and Disability Affairs Committee
Minutes
Meeting #3
4:00 p.m.
Thursday, December 7, 2006
Brink Hall Faculty Lounge

Present: Linnea Marshall, Chair (Faculty/Library); Steve Beyerlein (Faculty/Mechanical Engr); Ernest Biller (Faculty/Teacher Ed.-Special Ed.); Trish Hartzell (Academic Administrator/MMBB); Marlene Peterson (Facilities); Gloria Jensen (Crd. Disability Support Services); Andy Neukranz-Butler (Human Rights Compliance Officer); Francisco Salinas (Multicultural Affairs); Kenneth Hart (Faculty/Ag. Ext.)

Absent: Harvey Hughett (ITS); Meredyth Goodwin (Dir. of Tutoring and Academic Assistance Programs); Rochelle Smith (Faculty/Library); Jeannie Harvey (Dir. Women’s Ctr); Susan Childers, Debbie Buchanan, Doug Vandenboom, Chase Carter, Charles Chambers.

Call to Order: Linnea Marshall called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. in the Brink Hall Faculty Lounge.

Business:

1) The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.

2) Assistive Technology Room in the Library. At our previous meeting we had discussed the location of the Assistive Technology room in the Library and we wondered why it was on the fourth floor instead of the first. A first floor location would make the room more accessible for people with disabilities and, in the event of a library evacuation, it would be easier to get students who are using the room out of the building. We had speculated that the room was put on the fourth floor to be near the ADA bathrooms which were on that floor. Today Marlene Peterson was able to report to us what she had learned from Brian Johnson, Ray Pankopf, and Larry Chinn in Facilities about the accessibility of the library’s restrooms.

Although only the restrooms on the fourth floor have automatic door openers, all of the restrooms in the Library meet accessibility standards. The standards for accessible doors specify width, hardware, and threshold requirements. Part of that hardware requirement is that the door can be opened with less than a prescribed amount of force. Automatic door openers are not required in order to be ADA compliant, however, at the request of a mobility impaired individual, door openers were installed on the Library’s fourth floor bathrooms.
Marlene was also able to explain to us that the term “universal design” is more appropriate than “ADA accessible” or “handicapped accessible” as it denotes inclusiveness while the other terms convey the idea of distinctiveness or special needs and can have negative connotations.

Trish Hartzell brought us back to the original question. If wasn’t to be close to the restrooms with the automatic door openers, then why was the Assistive Technology Room located on the Library’s fourth floor? This question was posed to Linnea Marshall, since she works in the library. Linnea said that she would see what she could learn and would report back to the committee.

3) Disabled parking permits. At our previous meeting we asked Linnea to write a letter to Parking and Transportation Services asking for dialog on the procedure for issuing disable parking permits on campus. [Note: A letter was sent by Linnea to Kimi Lucus on November 29. That letter was passed on to Stuart Robb who responded on December 4 that he would be happy to talk with us.] At today’s meeting Gloria Jensen reported that she had been contacted by Parking and it was agreed between them that the issuing of disability-related 30, 60, and 90 day parking permits would be transferred over to Disability Support Services. The issuing of short-term, event-related disability parking permits will continue to be handled by Parking. The personnel at DSS will be trained on how to enter the permits into Parking’s computer system and the transfer will take effect in January. As most students who need a disability parking permit will most likely need other accommodations as well, this change will make things more convenient for them.

Based on this information, it was moved and seconded (Ernest Biller, Steve Beyerlein) that the Committee endorse this transfer of the responsibility of issuing disability-related parking permits from Parking and Transportation Services to Disability Support Services. The committee voted and passed this resolution.

The subsequent concern was that information about this change be communicated to the appropriate people who will either need to apply for a parking permit or to refer others to where they can apply for one. Gloria said that this will be part of the discussion between her and the people at Parking in January.

4) Report from the U.S. Dept. of Education Office of Civil Rights. Andy Neukranz-Butler reported to the committee on the Report from the Office of Civil Rights that the University had recently received. Representatives from this office had come to our campus in June of 2004 to review our compliance with the ADA and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and this report contains their comments. The University of Idaho was commended in this report for the level and quality of its services, but there are some adjustments that the university needs to make. There is a meeting scheduled for December 13 to go over the report and both Facilities and Parking will have representatives at that meeting. Conditions that the Office of Civil Rights is concerned about must corrected by the University and therefore this report will have to be signed by President White to signify our commitment.
5) Needs assessment on accessibility of assistive technology. Since Harvey Hughett was not able to attend today’s meeting we agreed to postpone discussion on this topic.

6) Transport van. Andy Neukranz-Butler updated the committee on the transport van. Efforts are being made to get pledges of funds for operating costs for the first year. All funding sources will need to be located fairly soon, as a cooperating agreement is due to the state by March first and this agreement must detail where the operations money will come from. A meeting with Lloyd Mues, Vice President for Finance and Administration, seemed supportive.

Money is needed to cover the salaries of a driver and a coordinator as well as the cost of fuel. Based on the cost of a similar service at WSU, we are planning on needing around $35,000 to run the van for one year. So far about $21,000 has been committed.

Campus offices and departments are pledging money for a year or two. Eventually the van service will need a stable stream of money but these pledges will help to get the service started. Members of the committee offered their ideas and suggestions of potential funding. Additional ideas for funding sources can be sent to Gloria Jensen, Meredyth Goodwin, or Andy Neukranz-Butler.

7) Committee meetings during spring semester. The committee agreed that we should meet at 4:00 on the first Thursday of every month during the spring semester. As necessary we will schedule additional meetings in-between those regular monthly meetings.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m. The next meeting will be Thursday, February 1, 2007 at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linnea Marshall