Affirmative Action and Disability Affairs Committee Meeting
Minutes
2008-2009 Meeting #2
November 13, 2008, 3:30-5:00

In attendance
Harvey Hughett, ITS
Trish Hartzell, MMBB
Kristin Henrich, Library
Gary Machlis, Forest Resources
Edward Harrington, RRT
Brenda Kotewa, graduate student
Yvonne Wright, CDHD
Heather Gasser, Women’s Center
Linea Marshall, Library
April Preston, HRCO/HR
Julie Lang, Parking
Marlene Peterson, Facilities
Meredyth Goodwin, TAAP
Gloria Jensen, DSS
Laura Putsche, Dept. of Soc/Anth/JS
Ernie Biller, AADA chair and ACTE

Business

1. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved with one grammatical correction.

2. Harvey Hughett discussed student computing fees and that money is available for informational technology needs, including disability support. The possibility of an outside consultant to assess technological needs was discussed. It was also suggested that someone, possibly from the AADA committee, visit the University of Washington to look at their system, as it is viewed as one of the best.

3. In response to the action items from April Preston’s presentation at the October 9th meeting, Heather Gasser discussed that the student conduct code currently addresses only sexual orientation and not gender identity. Another committee member brought up the issue of how we encourage understanding of the goals among the general population given ignorance and fears since laws and policy currently do not protect gender identity. Another asked whether the University of Idaho non-discrimination policy could be more inclusive than the law. Someone mentioned that members of this committee are likely to be more understanding of this issue, and that it is more controversial among the larger population. Inclusion in the UI non-discrimination policy might help educate the general population. A motion was made that the committee propose to Faculty Council that the UI non-discrimination policy be amended to include gender identity and expression. The motion was carried.

4. With regard to training opportunities regarding rights and responsibilities associated with human rights, April Preston suggested that if committee members know that individuals within our offices and departments could benefit, we should let her know. Ernie Biller suggested that this be raised in Faculty Council as an announcement. April also mentioned that people who experience harassment often do not know what to do.
5. One person mentioned with regard to increasing diversity in recruitment that departments and offices should consider where positions are advertised. Another person mentioned that research shows training that occurs only at the department level is not as effective as training that occurs at higher administrative levels. Heather Gasser added that we should ask Mark Edwards to speak to AADA regarding this issue. Another added that recruitment of minorities in his office (IT) has been difficult due to low pay and stereotypes of northern Idaho. Ernie suggested we first learn what the standard practice is in hiring and efforts to recruit people from diverse populations at UI so we can determine gaps.

6. Gloria Jensen discussed the mission and activities of Disability Support Services. She mentioned that a problem for the UI campus is that many buildings are old and have problems with disability access. Funding is limited, so the UI cannot address many of the needs each year. Meredyth Goodwin discussed TAAP and the services it provides. Gloria then discussed recent accomplishments and ongoing challenges, including the communication of rights and responsibilities to students and faculty.

7. A motion was made that Harvey Hughett begin the process of contacting a consultant for possible IT assessment with regard to disability support.

8. In new business, Gary Machlis said that the committee should make a statement to the UI administration to ensure that diversity, as described in the Strategic Plan, be included in the consideration of review criteria for prioritization. The committee then prepared a statement that was sent to administrators.