Affirmative Action and Disability Affairs Committee Meeting
Minutes
2008-2009 Meeting #5
April 9, 3:30-5:00

In attendance
Julie Lang
Trish Hartzell
Harvey Hughett
Yvonne Wright
Linnea Marshall
Marlene Peterson
April Peterson
Heather Gasser
Joanie Kurt (Media-Comm)
Cindy Johnson (Creative Services)

Business

1. Meeting brought to order by Julie Lang at 3:30. Ernie Biller our Chair was at a Leadership Conference in Boise Idaho and requested Julie Lead the meeting. Discussion of which agenda item would work to begin as attendance was low at that point. Due to low attendance we did not want to begin with Policy on Family Absences. We did not have a copy available of our March minutes so we moved on to some old business regarding Human Rights Compliance Office, April Preston shared.

2. April Preston provided follow-up comments regarding her Human Rights Compliance Office presentation last year. New developments that have occurred regarding the sexual harassment prevention training are that Mark Edwards, Director of Diversity and Community, and Valerie Russo, Women’s Resource Specialist for the Dean of Students, have both joined the effort in developing a plan to provide this training. They are exploring setting up the training as “mandatory” and are discussing many avenues and options for providing it to faculty and staff. April requests support from this Committee in order to bring the issue before Faculty Council. She would like the Committee to endorse the training and proposed having the topic brought up again under New Business at our next meeting.

3. Julie Lang also suggested some New Business for our next meeting’s agenda. She suggested getting an update on the status of the Vandal Access shuttle. Of particular interest are the possibility of evening and/or summer use of the shuttle, possible use of employee contributions towards funding of the shuttles, and whether there is a need for use of the shuttle to attend after hour classes or events, or whether there might be a need for dial-a-ride services.

4. Harvey Hughett gave an update on the proposal to bring someone to campus to help with an information technology needs assessments particularly as it relates to assistive technology. He has contacted Dan Comden with the University of Washington who is the manager of the Adaptive Technology Lab. Mr. Comden is willing to come for a site visit the week of April 27th but will confirm his availability with Harvey tomorrow. It is expected that he will arrive late afternoon, stay at a hotel that night, and then Harvey would take him around the campus the following day. Some suggestions for his visit were with the web development staff, the Center for Teaching and Innovation, Distance Education, computing labs, Disability Support Services and Information Technology Services. It was suggested that he should meet with at least two students with disabilities with possibly Meredyth or Gloria providing
the names of the students. Someone suggested he might want to look at computing needs in Student Housing also. If so, Leo Stevens, a Network Specialist with University Housing, could be contacted for the referral of a student to be interviewed. It was also suggested that Mr. Comden might possibly meet with the AA/DA Committee. The cost for the trip and consulting effort would be approximately $3000 with the student computing fees being used to pay for the cost. Mr. Comden would then provide the University with a follow-up report regarding his findings and recommendations.

5. Heather Gasser provided a second quick overview of the presentation made by Jennifer Whitney at last month’s meeting. The presentation showcased the need for change in University policy regarding student absences and how to make it more inclusive of students who have children. Heather would like to know whether the Committee would be able to support the proposed change to policy. It was suggested that Ernie could send out the question over e-mail for a Committee vote. If approved by our Committee, the request would be sent to Faculty Council for their approval and it was suggested that Jennifer should attend that particular meeting. If the Faculty Council approved of the change, the proposal would then need to be presented at the next General Faculty Meeting next November. If final approval was received at the General Faculty meeting, then implementation of the policy change could occur by Spring semester 2010.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marlene Peterson
Personnel Services Coordinator
Facilities
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