

Affirmative Action and Disability Affairs Committee Meeting  
Minutes  
2008-2009 Meeting #7  
May 14, 3:30-5:00

**In attendance**

Ernie Biller  
Gloria Jensen  
Laura Putsche  
Harvey Hughett  
Marlene Peterson  
April Preston  
Yvonne Wright  
Heather Gasser  
Brenda Kotewa

**Business**

1. Representatives of offices within the University gave reports regarding AADA accomplishments and issues that AADA should address next year.

2. Heather Gasser of the Women's Center discussed the AADA letter of support for the student who was a victim of a hate crime and the non-discrimination policy that was accepted into UI policy. She also provided an update regarding the absence policy for student-parents. She said that Jennifer Whitney took the resolution to the ASUI president, who took it to the UCC. She suggested that next year, the AADA might provide a letter of support. Heather said that the AADA needs to address students of color more than it has, and suggested that the committee work with Mark Edwards or someone from that office.; perhaps that person could address the committee. She ended by discussing the event that she and April Preston co-hosted regarding the Women's Center Conciliation Agreement. She mentioned that the committee should review the provisions in that agreement as it has been some time since they have been reviewed.

2. Harvey Hughett suggested that the committee write a proposal to Chris Brink regarding approaching donors to donate money for students with disabilities. He said that this is not on donor's radar. He also asked whether there was a special equipment fund for students with emergencies. He mentioned, for example, a student whose wheel chair was stolen. April suggested that financial aid might be of assistance in such cases (short-term loans). Harvey suggested that perhaps there could be a fund raiser to help with such emergencies.

Harvey said that Dan Comden's visit went smoothly and that he will send the report to AADA members when it comes in. He added that the university can then begin addressing the issues he proposes right away and will not have to wait until next year.

He suggested that AADA address support for technology next year. He pointed out that computers across campus are replaced periodically and many still function, and suggested a request be made that they could be donated for assisted technology purposes. He said that if space is available (at DSS, for example), they could put the computers there as long as all students have access to them.

3. Gloria Jensen of DSS discussed a problem with departments creating on-line classes: many are not functioning for students with disabilities. She said that making them accessible is not on many departments' radar. Many on-line video classes, for example, are not scripted. Many departments believe it is DSS's job to do that, but she pointed out first, that it is the departments' responsibility to make those courses accessible, and second, DSS does not have sufficient resources to do them all. She added that the Psychology department has made their classes accessible. Ernie suggested that next year, AADA might invite them to a meeting to discuss what they did. April suggested that since every new class must go through UCC and other curriculum committees, accessibility might be included in the evaluation of on-line courses in the future. Existing courses could then be redesigned as the need arises. Ernie added that departments must be continually reminded of the accessibility issue due to turnover in people who design and maintain them. April then mentioned that web designers often know about accessibility issues and set them up accordingly, but then department administrators who are responsible for maintaining them are not aware.

4. April Preston mentioned as one of the accomplishments the approval of the AADA's proposed non-discrimination policy, which set the stage for others. She suggested for next year that AADA support mandated sexual harassment prevention and training, as the understanding and support of administrators is important. She also suggested that AADA advocate diversity recruiting, and Heather added that we also include the recruitment of students of color.

5. Brenda Kotewa had been asked to provide a student perspective. She suggested that campus tours for incoming students include TAAP, DSS, CAAP, and the Women's Center. She also mentioned that there should be greater awareness of student AT scholarships, and that AT labs should be added to campus maps. Another suggestion she had was that AADA support increased scholarships and other resources for underserved students, such as non-traditional students, students of color, and students with disabilities. Heather added commuter students. Finally, she suggested that we advocate sending someone to the disability conference. Gloria said that she has attended in the past, but that funding may not be available in the future. Brenda said that she appreciates the collaborative efforts of the committee, and that we address issues that apply to not just the particular populations that each of us represents.

6. Other suggestions included: 1. Heather suggested that AADA address gender neutral restrooms and that these be identified on the campus map, 2. Ernie suggested that we contact the University communications (Tanya Thompson) to provide an update regarding AADA accomplishments so that the community knows that there is a body that addresses these issues.