

Affirmative Action and Disability Affairs Committee Meeting  
Minutes  
2008-2009 Meeting #1  
October 9, 2008, 3:30-5:00

**In attendance**

Marlene Peterson, Facilities  
April Preston, Human Rights Compliance Office  
Gloria Jensen, DSS  
Meredyth Goodwin, TAAP  
Julie Lang, Parking  
Kristin Henrich, Library  
Linnea Marshall, Library  
Heather Gasser, Women's Center  
Laura Putsche, Soc/Anth/JS  
Trish Hartzell, MMBB  
Ernie Biller, AADA chair and ACTE

**Business**

1. Committee members in attendance introduced each other.
2. Laura Putsche was selected to be the committee recorder.
3. The purpose of the AADA committee, as described in the Faculty-Staff handbook, took place. It was emphasized that the committee should make presentations to the Faculty Council, as this would provide an opportunity to make our accomplishments known and to get our voices heard.
4. Ernie Biller (chair) mentioned that he had attempted to contact students listed as members of this committee, but had received no responses. He also mentioned that he inquired of Faculty Council whether AADA committee members could find students to serve, but he has not yet received a response. Some members wondered whether the inclusion of students on the committee was new as they did not recall students participating in the past. Committee members discussed how difficult it can be to get students to come to committee meetings in general.
5. Heather Gasser of the Women's Center discussed the LGBTQA sponsored rally on Friday, October 10 in support of the student who was recently the target of homophobic hate speech. She also asked if whether it is under the purview of this committee to address the student code of conduct and whether it could be amended to include hate speech oriented toward sexual orientation and gender expression.
6. April Preston gave a presentation regarding the role and function of the Human Rights Compliance Office. She explained that there are two major areas of concern within the office: 1. Reviews, audits, and advice regarding compliance related to diversity and human rights including affirmative action, equal employment opportunity, harassment and discrimination and 2. educational opportunities to assist in affirmative action and dealing with discrimination. She explained that the purpose is not only to refrain from discrimination, but also to be proactive about encouraging diversity, and to deal with not only direct discrimination, but also adverse impacts (that is, unintended consequences). Among the office's goals are to encourage valuing diversity, which involves more than race and gender, but also disabilities, veterans, etc., and to reduce harassment through education. She further discussed how the AADA committee can help, including the following: 1. Request and promote training opportunities within departmental meetings, classes, search

committees, etc., 2. discuss human rights within respective colleges [and units] to maintain awareness, 3. speak up when members observe human rights violations, and 4. assist with recruiting and retention efforts in minority hires such as orientation efforts within departments, mentoring programs, and social connections, 5. Elaborate on the anti-discrimination policy to include gender identity/expression. April additionally discussed resources associated with human rights, such as the Faculty-Staff handbook, the HRCO website, the Diversity Plan, and the Strategic Plan.

7. A general discussion then followed, which included the following:

- a. efforts to recruit minority students and ties to recruiting minority faculty.
- b. Operation Education, a pioneer program, which provides resources and support for veterans and their spouses.
- c. further discussion of discrimination and hate crimes, including:
  - i. the student code of conduct does not include gender identity and expression
  - ii. the lack of institutionalized mechanisms for responding to hate crimes as well as a centralized location to deal with them
  - iii. a suggestion that faculty, who are in contact with students, could bring up in classes, etc. issues that arise, such as the recent hate crimes incident
  - iv. the need for a mechanism through which students can report hate crimes in a timely manner
  - v. the possibility of incorporating these issues into Core Discovery courses
- d. The committee decided to draft a formal response to the recent hate speech incident and send a copy to the UI president
- e. Ernie Biller requested that committee members submit to him ideas and suggestions for future committee business via email, and other members suggested that such suggestions be submitted to all members as they might inspire further ideas.

8. The next meeting is scheduled for November 13.