

MINUTES

Senate Diversity Task Force

Monday June 20, 2016, 3PM

Humanities Center Conference Room Upstairs from the Pride Center, Melrose Hall

Members and Liaisons Present: Beauvais Lyons, Bonnie Ownley, Brian Ambroziak, Monica Black, Samantha Murphy, Donald Black,

Members and Liaisons Absent: Bruce MacLennan, Joanne Hall, Lou Gross, Jennifer Fowler, Jonathan Clayton, Michael Porter, Chesnea Skeen, Kristen Godfree, Tamara Griffin.

1. Approval of the Minutes from June 13, 2016. Brian and Monica moved and seconded. Approved.
2. Recent Updates:
 - a) Samantha Murphy from the Teaching and Learning Council is now a member of the task force replacing Michelle Kwon, who has an appointment for this year at Harvard University.
 - b) The Pride Center Forum was a success to the extent that it served to identify the work that the Center has been doing, and to help the broader university community express concern and support the work of the center and the needs of the LGBTQ+ campus community. The event generated media coverage through Channel 10 and the Mercury.
3. Report from Angie Batey on the Pride Center Steering Committee. Angie emailed prior to the meeting to report that there are fifteen faculty and staff members who have agreed to serve. She has also been in communication with Vice-Chancellor Vince Carilli as he works with the Pride Ambassadors.
4. Recommendations for Future Actions.

The committee drafted a resolution for consideration by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee in support of the Pride Center, a final version of which was approved the next day:

Resolution in Support of the UTK Pride Center

A resolution from the UTK Faculty Senate Executive Committee (approved June 21, 2016)

WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Faculty Senate passed a recent resolution in support of the UTK Office of Diversity and Inclusion,

AND WHEREAS, recently enacted Tennessee Public Chapter 1066 has resulted in the defunding of the UTK Office of Diversity and Inclusion which has caused drastic cutbacks to the UTK Pride Center resulting in the loss of its director, a graduate assistantship, and imperiled the Safe Zone Training program for faculty, staff and students,

AND WHEREAS, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) members of our university community, like members of the LGBT community nationally, are at high risk for hate crimes – as evidenced by the recent events in Orlando, Florida and abundant statistical evidence – and because we want our campus to be a place where the wellbeing of all members of the community is a paramount concern,

AND WHEREAS, parents of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students seek a campus setting that will provide resources and a community supporting their needs,

AND WHEREAS, a diverse and inclusive campus helps the university recruit and retain qualified students, faculty, and staff, enriches the educational experience, and can only enhance our university's reputation,

AND WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee's stated diversity goals are to create a campus that is "Welcoming to all and hostile to none," while also making diversity and inclusion a key part of the Vol Vision 2020 Strategic Plan,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the UTK Faculty Senate Executive Committee urges Chancellor Jimmy Cheek to show his commitment to our university's declared values by making possible the immediate reopening of the UTK Pride Center, and by reestablishing a director, expanding the operating budget, providing a larger and enhanced space for gathering, employing a Graduate Assistant, and reinitiating Safe Zone Training.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Chancellor Cheek convey this resolution to UT President Joe DiPietro and the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees.

5. Preparations for BOT meeting.

In addition to distributing the resolution at the BOT meeting, Beauvais arranged for the printing of the Pride Center brochure to distribute to all board members with the goal of identifying the issues raised by Public Chapter 1066. In addition, Beauvais printed rainbow UT Diversity Matters Fans for the meeting.

6. Next Task Force Meeting: Monday July 18, 3pm at AA215D

7. Adjournment at 4:15pm.