

DISABILITIES ISSUES COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
APRIL 20, 2011
Morrill Hall Room 238A

[In these minutes: subcommittee discussion; Disability Services update; CCLRT update]

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Dale Branton, Michael Silverman, Joanna O'Connell, Miriam Krause (for Mary Kennedy), Julia Robinson, Donna Johnson, , Kimberly Simon, Sherry Gray, Amber Mayer

REGRETS: Mary Muwahid, Rebecca Anderson, Peggy Mann Rinehart

ABSENT: Frank Symons, Becca Gercken, Carla Tabourne, Susan Rose

OTHERS: Victoria Nelson

Professor Dale Branton called the meeting to order. He noted it was the committee's last meeting of the academic year, and asked that the subcommittees continue to meet over the summer and use the Moodle site to communicate with one another. Professor Branton suggested that going forward, the Disability Services report be submitted in writing. Professor Julia Robinson asked that Donna Johnson, director of Disability Services, report the highlights to the committee and that there be time to ask Ms. Johnson questions. The committee agreed to this process.

Subcommittee Reports/Discussion

The committee discussed use of the Moodle site established for subcommittee communication and postings. Professor Joanna O'Connell stated the site could be accessed through myU Portal or <https://moodle.umn.edu>. She also noted that functionality can be added to the site and anyone can post files to it. Sherry Gray asked that she be added as a site designer. She also mentioned that she would like to set up discussion sections for each of the subcommittees.

Subcommittee for Needs and Services Assessments - Professor Branton stated that he recently met with Ms. Johnson about the committee's plans to establish subcommittees to determine what training on disability issues is required of faculty, staff and students, and to assess the needs of and services being provided to the University community with disabilities. He noted that he wanted the subcommittees to work with Disability Services. He also stated that Ms. Johnson is planning an assessment process for Disability Services.

Professor Branton stated the Pulse Survey data is presently being accumulated and it may have information that is valuable to the Subcommittee for Needs and Services Assessment. He stated he would be looking into the types of questions on the Pulse Survey that relate to disabilities and considering whether the subcommittee should recommend additional questions be added to the Pulse Survey, or whether a separate survey related only to disabilities is needed. He asked subcommittee members to think of questions to ask those being served by Disability Services. Ms. Johnson noted that Disability Services is currently surveying medical students and has almost a 50% response rate. She indicated the subcommittee could review the administered surveys. Professor Branton asked Ms. Johnson to further explain the medical student survey. She stated Disability Services received a Marcus Foundation grant to administer a survey to medical school faculty and administrators in order to identify barriers for medical trainees with invisible disabilities. The survey asked the medical students about their perceptions of Disability Services and if they had used Disability Services. She noted there was a drawing for a gift cards to incent participation in the study.

Professor Branton noted he would also like to contact student veteran's groups to determine if their needs are being met, and he would like to get the list of Disabled Student Cultural Center (DSCC) members in order to gather information from students. He stated the primary goal of the subcommittee is to get feedback from those served by Disability Services and to know their perceptions of the services they received.

Subcommittee for Faculty Training and Student Orientation - Professor Branton drafted a letter to obtain information about training being provided to faculty, staff, and students and asked for committee input on the letter. The letter follows:

Dear Appropriate Person at the College Level:

The University Senate Committee on Disability Issues needs information about whether training in disability issues is provided to all faculty, staff, and students with (the College), either at the college or at the department level. We are aware of no policy concerning this and we believe that the answer is that none is actually required at either of these levels – this is not an enforcement issue of any kind. Rather, it is for our information only, as we contemplate ways in which our committee might foster better understanding of disability issues. Our goal is to save time and effort, through education, on the part of those who might need to accommodate disability issues in the classroom or workplace.

Please tell us about any disability training that is now being given to all members of faculty, staff, or student populations either at a department or College level. If none is provided, simply answer “none.”

Please tell us about any disability training that is now being offered as an option to members of faculty, staff, or student populations either at a department or College level. If none is offered, simply answer “none.”

Miriam Krause suggested in order to gain more information, the required nature of the training should not be emphasized. Instead, the letter should just ask what type of disabilities training is being offered. Kimberly Simon concurred that the required language should be removed from the letter. Ms. Johnson stated the committee should

make it clear that it is seeking department requirements and not University requirements. Professor O'Connell posted the letter to the Moodle discussion forum so the committee could comment on it further.

The committee next discussed the best way to distribute the survey and ensure the intended individuals receive it. Professor Branton suggested using the services of the college. Ms. Johnson suggested using the deans, directors, and department head's list. Professor Branton stated the responsibility should rest with the administrative staff at the colleges.

Ms. Gray asked if the survey could be conducted via UM Survey. Professor O'Connell suggested using Doodle or Survey Monkey to distribute the survey. Ms. Gray offered that if the committee completed its work on the survey language before mid-May, her assistant could help set up the survey on Doodle or Survey Monkey. Ms. Johnson noted that UM Survey has a program that allows those conducting the survey to remind individuals who have not yet completed the survey. It also has accessibility features. Ms. Gray noted that her office had used UM Survey.

Professor O'Connell stated it would be helpful to have a list of those individuals within units who are responsible for ensuring training takes place. Ms. Johnson stated that the Office for Equity and Diversity (OED) has discussed having Disability Services liaisons meet quarterly with departments or colleges. This would be similar to OED's liaison program with the Office of Human Resources. Ms. Johnson also recommended the committee consider asking in its survey:

- What training is required?
- What training is being done?
- What type of training the department would like?

Professor O'Connell stated the committee should consider providing a link to Disability Services on the survey. Ms. Simon stated the committee should break out the sections for faculty, staff and students. Professor O'Connell suggested the subcommittees should meet for further discussion after the committee completed its general business.

Disability Services Report

Ms. Johnson submitted the following written report on the work of Disability Services. She amended the report to state that Gene Chelberg had not presented to the DSCC because he was delayed in Denver. She noted the turnout for the meeting was strong and many people registered for the DSCC.

- Disability Services continues to determine and implement reasonable accommodations for undergraduates, graduate, and professional school students with disabilities as well as faculty and staff with disabilities and medical conditions. More than 2000 students and approximately 900 staff and faculty are currently registered with Disability Services.
- Gene Chelberg, Vice President of Student Affairs at San Francisco State University and Founder of the Disabled Student Cultural Center, presented "Igniting the Power of Disability" on Monday, April 18 at 5:30 p.m. in the Mississippi Room at Coffman Memorial Union. The DSCC, the first

of its kind in the world, is celebrating its 20th anniversary. The event was co-sponsored by the DSCC, Disability Services, and the Queer Student Cultural Center.

- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Day will be held on Thursday, April 28 in Coffman Memorial Union. High school students who are Deaf and/or hard of hearing will learn about services available at the University of Minnesota and will meet with University of Minnesota students who are Deaf and hard of hearing who will serve as student ambassadors.
- Marcus Faculty Education Grant, a collaborative project of Disability Services and the Medical School, received Institutional Review Board approval to administer a survey to medical school faculty and administrators to identify barriers for medical trainees with invisible disabilities. Surveys have been administered to medical students and medical residents and fellows in late March/early April.
- Disability Services Testing Center expects to administer more than 700 finals the week of May 9, 2011.
- Ms. Johnson will conduct an external program review of The Ohio State University's Office of Disability Services on April 25 and 26, 2011 as part of Ohio State's comprehensive program review of its Office of Disability Services.

Parking and Transportation Services Update on CCLRT Construction-

Victoria Nelson, assistant director, Parking and Transportation Services, provided the committee with a brief update of the impact of Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT) construction. She stated the Washington Avenue Bridge would be closing on May 16 and this would increase transportation time. All buses would be rerouted to Pleasant Avenue. She also stated there was a link on the CCLRT website where individuals could find updates on sidewalk and road closures. Professor Branton asked Ms. Nelson what considerations are in place for those with limited mobility. Ms. Nelson responded that the University had considered every angle in planning for the CCLRT construction. But she noted that some of the traffic problems are being caused by Minnesota Department of Transportation construction not CCLRT work. She also mentioned construction on the Biomedical Discovery District Cancer-Cardio Center would disrupt traffic on Sixth Street and 23rd Avenue.

Ms. Gray noted that the Parking and Transportation Services website provides maps of the road closures. Ms. Nelson stated that individuals could register on the Parking and Transportation Services website to receive e-mail updates on the CCLRT construction. Ms. Krause asked where people with low vision could find out ahead of time, which bus routes had changed as a result of construction. She stated the committee should identify the most useful links regarding the transportation changes and provide them to the DSCC. Professor O'Connell stated she would post the links on the Moodle site for committee members. Ms. Krause emphasized the need to insure that those with disabilities received this information, and suggested the committee take steps to facilitate the dissemination of this information during the construction period. She noted the Metropolitan Council website has a link for signing up to receive information on closures due to CCLRT construction. (<http://www.metrocouncil.org/>)

Ms. Nelson also informed the committee that a new bike center was planned in the Oak Street ramp. It will have bike storage space, bike repair, and shower facilities. Ms. Gray

asked if there were plans for a similar structure on the West Bank. Ms. Nelson was not aware of any.

Luka Krmpotich was invited to update the committee on the work of the DSCC, but was unable to attend the meeting. Hearing no further business, Professor Branton adjourned the meeting at 11:00 to allow the subcommittees time to meet.

Dawn Zugay
University Senate