

EQUITY, ACCESS AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE (EAD)

April 18, 2016

Minutes of the Meeting

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

[In these minutes: Update on records privacy at the University counseling and clinics; Update on transgender bathroom/locker proposal; Muslim experience on campus]

PRESENT: Deena Wassenberg (chair), Ann Burkhart, Abbe Holmgren, Tami Jauret, Jeremy Jenkins, Tina Marisam (for Kim Hewitt)

REGRETS: Priscilla Flynn, Naty Lopez, Teddy Potter, Joshua Yuan

ABSENT: Katrice Albert, Jude Fom, Solomon Gashaw, Cynthia Messer, Jeremy O'Hara, Shailey Prasad, Keisha Varma, Kamaori Xiong

GUESTS: Nasreen Mohamed, director of student engagement, International Student and Scholar Services

OTHER: None

Chair Deena Wassenberg convened the meeting and members introduced themselves.

1. Update on records privacy at the University counseling and clinics –

Chair Wassenberg explained that she and Professor Burkhart met with Brian Slovut, director litigation services, Office of the General Counsel. Slovut shared with Chair Wassenberg a draft protocol document outlining the use of campus medical and counseling records and how they are used or disclosed for litigation. Chair Wassenberg explained that the protocol would not be a binding policy, but a document retained by the OGC.

Members discussed the possibility of creating a resolution that would ask the administration to create a policy around this issue. An OGC protocol could easily be changed or ignored, while a policy would empower the OGC to protect student records in the event of litigation.

Chair Wassenberg explained that Boynton Health Services records are protected by HIPAA, while Student Counseling Services and the Aurora Center are covered by FERPA.

Members agreed that they would like to follow up with Slovut in the fall.

2. Update on transgender bathroom/locker proposal -

Vickie Courtney, director, University Senate Office, presented the resolution drafted by Stef Wilenchek, director, GLBTA Office, and provided an overview of the process to move a resolution through committee to the senate. She noted that several other committees had been informed and involved in the discussion and review of the draft resolution. The goal is to have the resolution ready so that it could be voted on at the May University Senate meeting.

She explained that after consultation with both the Board of Regents Office and other administrators, it was determined that it would be most appropriate for this initiative to be implemented by University administration, rather than a Regents policy. This same strategy was used for other initiatives that needed to garner broad support from University community, such as the Tobacco Free Campus effort. Courtney cautioned that the language and format of the resolution still needs to be edited to ensure that it accurately reflects the sentiment of the committees. If it is passed at the Senate, it would then be sent to the President's Office for an administrative response. The administrative response would be reported on the docket of future senate meetings.

The committee members present endorsed the resolution, with the caveat that it be distributed to all members via email for a vote.

3. Muslim experience on campus –

Nasreen Mohamed, director of student engagement, International Student and Scholar Services, was introduced. Chair Wassenberg explained that Mohamed was invited to discuss the Muslim student experience on campus and how it might be improved.

Mohamed explained that her role is to help international students transition into student and campus life. She outlined the following areas that could be improved to impact the Muslim student experience:

- Providing prescribed space for the practicing Muslim students to pray.
- Facilities for the students to wash their feet and hands before prayer. When students use the restrooms to wash their feet water is often splashed on the floors creating a safety hazard.
- Labeling food clearly, such as products that contain pork, to respect dietary restrictions. Members discussed creating a positive climate for free speech. It is important for all stakeholders in the University to be involved in creating a more inclusive campus climate.
- Racism against people of color is an issue that needs awareness in general.

Mohamed recommended the committee speak with Krista Soria, analyst, Office of Institutional Research (OIR), regarding the results of the Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) survey.

Members discussed the following ideas:

- Campus wide announcement regarding the observance of religious holidays.
 - Creating a centralized, inclusive calendar that includes all religious holidays.

- Speaking with University Dining Services about adding more information on food labels. A representative from the Jewish Student Center would also be valuable in this discussion regarding their needs for food labels.

In closing, Chair Wassenberg highlighted some of the topics the committee expressed interest in for next year:

- Parental Leave Policy
- Muslim student experience
- Student record protection
- Transgender student needs
- Possible ways to honor the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. (refer to earlier minutes regarding the decision to discontinue the Pledge Drive but to work with University Relations and other appropriate units to consider ways to honor him)
- SERU and Faculty and Staff Engagement Survey results as they relate to campus climate

Hearing no further business, the committee adjourned.

Jeannine Rich
University Senate Office