

DISABILITIES ISSUES COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
MARCH 10, 2004

[In these minutes: Approval of January 28, 2004 Minutes, Endowment Updates, Conference Updates, Other Business]

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

PRESENT: Harold Pickett, chair, Bobbi Cordano, Marilyn Bruin, Robert Dexter, Patrick McNamara, Ken Myers

REGRETS: Kathleen Ball, Maureen McManus, Karen Nelson, Julie Sweitzer, Felicia Hodge, Elizabeth Lightfoot, Christopher Johnstone, Roberta Juarez

ABSENT: Harvey Carlson, Virgil Mathiowetz, Carrie Bloss

OTHERS: Victoria Nelson, Laurie Wilson

I). Dr. Pickett called the meeting to order.

II). The Committee unanimously approved the January 28, 2004 minutes.

III). Dr. Pickett reported that the NAPI (Needs Assessment Project 1) Work Group submitted a letter to President Bruininks requesting representation from his office on the Work Group. Bobbi Cordano interjected that she was under the impression that the Work Group may even be elevated to the position of an actual advisory committee to the President. Associate Vice Provost Jerry Rinehart plans to talk with President Bruininks regarding making NAPI an advisory committee. Hopefully at the next meeting, the status of the Work Group will be able to be clarified.

IV). Endowment Fund Updates:

- Bobbi Cordano announced that the MAEF (Marshall Access and Education Fund) has exceeded the quasi endowment threshold of \$10,000. Currently, the fund has received donations equaling approximately \$13,000. The goal is have the fund at \$25,000 by the end of the fiscal year.
- Robert & Gail Buuck donated \$105,000 into an endowment fund, which has been

designated for undergraduate students with physical disabilities. Disabilities Services plans to distribute \$4,000 in scholarship monies to students with physical and sensory disabilities starting in the fall of 2004 and another \$1,000 will be put towards programming.

Ms. Cordano also reported that Disabilities Services plans to do send out a fund-raising letter to individuals on campus that have shown support for disability issues in the past.

A member suggested that Disability Services piggyback on the capital campaign for student scholarships, which President Bruininks is preparing to launch. Ms. Cordano will look into this further.

V). Bobbi Cordano briefly reported on the MLA conference she recently attended in Atlanta. From Ms. Cordano's perspective the conference was beneficial in terms of networking. She was able to secure names of faculty members at the University who have an interest in various aspects of disability issues. Ms. Cordano plans to follow-up on these leads.

Next, Ms. Cordano reported that the Center on Aging in conjunction with Disability Services, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, the Center for Bioethics and the Institute on Community Integration were chosen as part of the President's 21st Century Initiative to host a conference in the spring of 2005. Details on this conference will be forthcoming.

VI). Other Business:

- A member asked Ms. Cordano if the new provost structure will have an impact on Disability Services. Under the new structure, the Office of Multi-Cultural and Academic Affairs will continue to report to Robert Jones, Sr. Vice President for System Administration. However, the major change under the new structure is that the GLBT program, which in the past had the same reporting lines as Disability Services, will now report to Associate Vice Provost of Student Affairs Jerry Rinehart. Because the changes are relatively new, Ms. Cordano expects to be able to provide a more comprehensive report on how the new structure is working in approximately 4 - 6 months.

According to Ms. Cordano the important question to ask in terms of the new structure is whether it will be able to do the work of diversity and provide access for students and employees at the University. Ms. Cordano expects that any strategic planning around issues of diversity and access at the University be institution-wide discussions, including participation by this Committee.

- Ms. Cordano stated that one of her major concerns over the past 3 - 5 years is that resource allocation to the Disability Services offices on the coordinate campuses has

remained fairly stagnant. She believes that students with disabilities should be having equitable experiences across the system regardless of which campus they attend.

Additionally, Ms. Cordano noted that when she visits the coordinate campuses people at various levels are extremely interested in talking with her about Disability Services issues and what is going on at the Twin Cities campus. She believes this face-to-face exchange helps to build administrative support for the work that Disability Services does, and creates an opportunity not be afforded by any other venue.

Dr. Pickett suggested holding a Disability Issues Committee meeting at Crookston and charged Renee Dempsey, Senate Staff, with exploring the logistics of this idea. Ms. Cordano suggested the Committee's visit be coordinated with a visit by the President or Sr. Vice President for System Administration Robert Jones as a way to draw community based support and attention.

- There is a concern on the Crookston campus that some of its students with disabilities are having a difficult time finding employment once they have graduated. The transition from school to the work force is a struggle for many students, and opportunities for their employment are too limited. Ms. Cordano had not heard this concern expressed before. She agreed to follow-up with her staff on this issue.

VII). Hearing no further business, Dr. Pickett adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate