

Minutes of the Senate Anti-Discriminatory Policies Committee for 17 April 2009
6061 Forbes Towers

In Attendance: Mark Lynn Anderson, John Baker, Patricia Beeson, Lisa Bernardo, Carolyn Biglow, Jerome Branche, Paula Davis, Lynn Fitzgerald (Chair), Emilia Lombardi, Carol Mohamed, and Cindy Popovich.

Excused members: Anthony Bauer, Deborah Brake, Dorothy Hawthorne-Burdine, and Paolo Palmieri.

Lynn Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 9:40 AM.

Announcements

Chair Fitzgerald announced that the Faculty Assembly had approved the committee's new mission statement, and that the statement was now viewable via the Senate webpage.

The committee has elected new officers for the coming year, with Anthony Bauer becoming chair of the committee, and Mark Lynn Anderson re-elected committee secretary (pending confirmation from the Senate of his re-election to the committee for a second three-year term).

Fitzgerald also relayed an announcement from Katherine Seelman regarding the October 26, 2009 visit to the School of Law by Senator Tom Harkin, who will be delivering the 2009 Thornburgh Family Disability Law and Policy lecture. Harkin has been an instrumental figure in the passage of key disability legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). His lecture is scheduled for 1:00 PM.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the ADPC for 20 March 2009 were approved after a seconded motion.

Transsexual Healthcare

There was a short discussion of the memo to the committee from committee member Emilia Lombardi regarding the current exclusion from employee healthcare coverage for all procedures related to transsexual surgeries. These exclusions might include counseling depending upon interpretations of the current policy. Fitzgerald pointed out that GID is a recognized diagnosis by AMA. Lombardi mentioned that she is starting the process of addressing this issue with ADPC because she is a member of this committee and because it is a discriminatory policy. The university's response so far has only been that there will likely be no change in the current coverage during the coming year. John Baker suggested taking the issue up with the Director of Benefits, John Kozar. The discussion concluded with Cindy Popovich's suggestion that our committee lend its strength to this important issue by having the committee chair be a visible part of our inquiries. Fitzgerald concurred.

Racial Diversity Among the Faculty

Fitzgerald suggested that, for this final meeting of the academic year, the committee revisit the issue of increasing diversity of our faculty. The discussion that followed was informal and wide ranging, but two main areas on interest emerged: the issue of teaching cultural competency to faculty through workshops on diversity, and the need to develop retention strategies for faculty from underrepresented groups, particularly the need for sustained and effective faculty mentoring to tenure and beyond. These will be topics important for the ADPC during the coming year.

New Business

There was no new business.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 AM.

Submitted by Mark Lynn Anderson, 8 September 2009