

Meeting Minutes: Diversity Committee April 7, 2017

Present: Angela Palmer, Kevin Carmody, Angela Roman, Joy Pufhal, Mark Schuelke, Jacob Schrot, Lindsay Barber, Matt Chaney, Lottee Halm, Nicole Martin, Victoria Bosen, Courtney Lyczynski, Danielle Moore, and Dawn Fox

Absent: Cindy Horn, Angela Garrey, and Nicholas Campau

Guest: Dr. David Pilgrim

Introductions:

Introductions were shared.

Presentation from Students:

Lottee, Nicole, Victoria, Courtney, and Danielle presented their assessment findings regarding LGBTQ+ needs on campus. Their efforts included on site visits to CMU and GVSU to view and learn about their existing LGBTQ resource centers. The students found that there is currently no Safe Place training opportunities for faculty or staff. Housing Services provide Safe Place training to their Resident Advisor staff as a piece of their larger RA training prior to every Fall semester. This student group facilitated focus groups with DSAGA, AEGIS, and College of Republicans to assess the need of a LGBTQ center. Both DSAGA and AEGIS provided the feedback that we needed more resources on campus for the LGBTQ+ community and that they would love to see a center on campus. The College of Republicans provided the feedback that we had enough resources on campus and did not need a center. The students also asked for feedback from faculty members about a potential center and most felt that there was a need for one. The student group found and discussed needs for the Ferris LGBTQ+ community and those needs are as follows: a Housing policy for transgender students, a name preference policy, accommodations for athletes (i.e. locker room space, etc.), gender neutral restrooms, Safe Place development, and continuing education.

Lottee will send Angie a copy of the students' assessment findings and Angie will forward to the members of the committee.

The committee discussed the approval of a new name change policy for the university. Joy communicated that she will try to get a copy of the policy to the committee, will invite Elise Gramza, Director of the Registrar's Office, to our next meeting to share information regarding practices of name changes and preferred names, and will work to have this information as reference and/or a resource during Orientation.

Dr. Pilgrim:

Dr. Pilgrim has offered for his office to pay for any future Safe Place training opportunities for faculty and staff. He communicated that the Alliance Group may be a good resource for this committee. He would like the origination of a LGBTQ center to not only be a safe place for the community but to also be a place to learn (have an educational component). Dawn Fox has offered to facilitate training/workshops/dialogues. Dr. Pilgrim encouraged the committee to utilize current resources for training opportunities such as the Faculty Center or the Staff Center for Training & Development.

Review Meeting Minutes:

A copy of the minutes from the meeting held on March 3, 2017 was sent out prior to the meeting for review and is attached to the agenda. If anyone has edits, please contact Angela Palmer.

Review of Committee's Goal:

Goal is to accomplish Goal 2(F) of the Ferris State Diversity & Inclusion Plan by establishing an LGBTQ Resource Center within the Division of Student Affairs similar in structure to our Veterans Resource Center by Fall 2017.

Progress to Date:

Progress of the committee thus far includes:

- Relaunch of Student Affairs Diversity Committee in December 2016
- Set a goal to create a LGBT Resource Center to open by Fall 2017
- Gather information, interest, and seeking partners
 - Two committee members attended MBLGTACC Conference
 - Benchmarking of LGBTQ Centers and other similar student resource centers
 - Partnered with students in Social Work Methods class to explore the need for and interest in a center
 - Met with student leadership of DSAGA and AEGIS
 - Met with faculty and students currently leading Safe Zones
 - University has created a Preferred Name Policy
 - Made progress with creating gender-neutral restrooms

LGBT Resource Center Vision:

Joy shared a copy of a draft she created which highlights our vision in regards to a LGBTQ center. These highlights are based on feedback from assessment efforts and benchmarking efforts.

Moving Forward: LGBT Resource Center- Next Steps:

We will form three groups to work on/assess the following:

1. Location- Physical Space
2. Education/Awareness and finalizing a name for our center
3. Staffing – creating job description(s)

Joy passed around a paper and asked that everyone assign themselves to one of the working groups.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for May 5, 2017; however, this is a commencement day so Joy has changed the meeting date to April 28, 2017. Angie will send out an updated invitation.

Submitted by: Angela Palmer
Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Student Life