

**Commission for Women
Minutes
Thursday, September 6, 2007**

Attendance:

Pam Hindle (Chair), Kathryn Ellis, Maxine Thompson Davis, Katherine Howland, Fadia Alvic, Kasey Baker, Lori Epperson, Joy DeDensi, Adrienne Dessel, George Hoemann, John Nolt, Mary Papke, Jane Redmond, Wendy Syer, Kerri Lovegrove, Rosa Thomas, Jenny Richter, Cheryl Travis, Margaret Crawford, Tammi Brown, Deb Haines, Mary Frances Wedekind, Paris Hooks, Deb Glenn, and Lennisa Mostella.

Pam Hindle called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. The agenda was as follows:

- I. Introductions**
- II. Approval of May 2007 Minutes**
- III. Sexual Assault and Prevention – Adrienne Dessel and Laura Widman**
- IV. Women of Color Summit – Lennisa Mostella**
- V. Women, Science, and the Academy – Deb Haines**
- VI. Report from the Faculty Senate – John Nolt**
- VII. Committee Signups**
- VIII. Old Business/New Business**

- I. Introductions** – The meeting began with around-the-table introductions of all those in attendance. Pam Hindle started and mentioned that she celebrated her 30th anniversary at the University of Tennessee in August. She would like to think of herself as “well-seasoned.” Hindle also introduced Kathryn Ellis, the new CFW Graduate Assistant, who is working on a Ph.D. in History. Hindle mentioned that she has asked Ellis to research and write a history of the CFW, so members should expect to receive e-mails and calls in search of information. Finally, Hindle mentioned that the minutes from the May 5, 2007 meeting are not yet ready for distribution because there are a couple of gaps in them. Hindle and Ellis are working to collect the necessary information to complete these minutes and will send them out next week along with the minutes from today’s meeting.

Following Hindle’s introduction, the remaining participants briefly introduced themselves and mentioned their position/department on campus.

- * Lori Epperson – IT
- * Jenny Richter – Equity & Diversity
- * Adrienne Dessel – 3rd year Ph.D. student in Social Work
- * George Hoemann – Chair of the Commission for LGBT People
- * Joy DeSensi – Exercise Science
- * Mary Papke – Ready for the World, Graduate School
- * Jane Redmond – Chair of the Commission for Blacks, Student Affairs
- * Maxine Thompson Davis – Dean of Students
- * Kerri Howland – Thornton Center
- * Fadia Alvic – Independent Study
- * Kasey Baker – Ph.D. student in English
- * John Nolt – Philosophy, President-Elect of the Faculty Senate

- * Wendy Syer – Center for International Education
- * Paris Hooks – Women’s Coordinating Council
- * Kerri Lovegrove – Advisor to Women’s Coordinating Council
- * Mary Frances Wedekind – Student Health, Rosa Thomas’s assistant
- * Rosa Thomas – Student Health
- * Tammi Brown – College of Business Advising

(Other attendees came in after the introductions)

II. Approval of May Minutes – Hindle again briefly stated that the May minutes would be sent out next week.

Hindle took this opportunity to briefly mention a few other topics. First, she noted the new Spousal and Domestic Partner Hiring Program (information sheet available at the back of the room). She expressed the CFW’s appreciation of the Provost’s support for this program (<http://provost.utk.edu/memoranda/20070824.shtml>).

Second, Hindle mentioned the “Enrollment Surge for Women” article from *Inside Higher Ed* available at the back of the room (<http://insidehighered.com/news/2007/08/07/enrollment>).

Third, she pointed out an article in the August 2007 issue of *eTorch* that introduced the Chancellor’s Associates. She is concerned that only three of them are women. Mary Papke asked whether the list in the article is of all the Chancellor’s Associates or only those who have been newly appointed. Papke believes that if the article is only introducing new Associates the big picture may be more equal. Others in the room expressed their belief that that may be the case. Hindle said that she hopes so. Hindle also said that Ellis would scan and send the article to members to read.

Finally, Hindle commented on a [cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com) article about a 15-year old girl at Penn State who excels in Math. She found the article interesting.

III. Sexual Assault and Prevention (Adrienne Dessel and Laura Widman) – Hindle briefly introduced Adrienne Dessel (Laura Widman could not attend) who came to share information from a study they have conducted about sexual assault incidence and prevention at the University of Tennessee.

Dessel distributed copies of “Sexual Assault Incidence and Prevention at UT: Review of Two Independent Study Projects” (Report Completed September 5 , 2007) for attendees to follow along on. [See attached handout.] She began by explaining that the report deals with two independent projects. She worked on the first, dealing with rape prevention, an independent study project with Dr. Cheryl Travis. She and Laura Widman collaborated on the second project, which deals with UT sexual assault prevalence, as an independent study with Dr. Rebecca Bolen. She became interested in these issues when she learned that the 15%

prevalence of completed rape has not changed in the past twenty years despite research and intervention work.

The study “Rape Prevention Programming on the UT Campus: An Analysis of Cultural Messages” was a qualitative study conducted last year. Dessel wanted to find out why there had been no change in the prevalence of sexual assault. She also wanted to look at whether there were cultural messages in UT’s rape and assault prevention literature and programs that perpetuated rape myths. She noted that there were 5 key findings in the study: 1) more messages directed toward women than men; 2) more responsibility directed toward women than men; 3) majority of messages implicate alcohol use in rape; 4) mixed messages regarding rape myths; and 5) limited programming. Regarding the third finding, that alcohol appears to more of an issue in rape perpetration for men than for women. Finally, Dessel noted that the intent of the study was to see what can be done to improve rape prevention programming on campus.

Dessel and Widman conducted the second study, “UT Sexual Assault Prevalence Study,” using a convenient sample of students in Psychology courses at UT. They gathered data in computer labs that were staffed by trained GAs. They used a 30-item survey and coding adapted from a Mary Koss survey. Statistics on Prevalence, Incidence, Student Knowledge, and Victims of Childhood Sexual Abuse from the survey are on the handout. The data shows that 39% of women report being sexually assaulted and 24% of men admit to perpetrating sexual assault since August 2006. Dessel and Widman then tried to determine the relationship between programming and incidence.

Dessel is primarily interested in prevention. She explained that this is only the second time this data has been collected at UT. She directed the attendees to look at the “Suggestions for Efficacious Prevention Programs” on page 3 of the handout. She said that most programs have problems and it is difficult to come up with the best plan. There have been a couple of good studies that are cited on the handout. She mentioned the “Don’t Take Risks” poster that used to be up around campus – it was found that this poster really perpetuated rape myths so it has been removed from campus. This is proof that change can happen.

The floor was opened for questions. Kerri Howland asked Dessel whether she had heard of Mentors and Violence Prevention (MVP). Dessel said yes, it had been mentioned on an earlier draft of the handout. Howland stated that the SEC is mandating that certain teams on each campus pay to have MVP come to speak with women athletes. In her experience with female athletes, she has seen that many of them do not know what is/is not sexual assault. Deb Haines asked about the definitions of sexual assault and Dessel noted that the survey used in the second study was designed to capture information about types of assault and tactics. The questions were designed in a way to allow for different understandings of the types of sexual assault.

Hindle followed with a question about what UTK is doing about this violence. Maxine Thompson Davis mentioned that a new Safety, Environment, and Education Center has been created to educate campus citizens on issues of violence, alcoholism, and drug use. There is always more work to be done. Davis also said that she has not had a chance to look at Dessel’s subcommittee’s report. Howland is on the committee and believes there is good representation

(includes UT Police, Safe Haven, etc.). Davis thinks the subcommittee's information needs to be forwarded to the Vice Chancellor's office.

Paris Hooks asked Dessel what types of programming are specifically recommended. Dessel again referred to the handout and said that she and Widman tried to **bold** the options. She said that they believe it is not effective to use a "one shot" approach, and that programming needs to be more in-depth, target men, and be mandatory for all freshman men and women.

Papke shifted the discussion slightly by mentioning the open forum held in the spring. She also mentioned a new Ready for the World program supported by the CFW, CFB, and LGBT, to be called "Intercultural Intersections." The program will target specific groups with films and brown bags followed by discussion. The goal of the program is to encourage students to interact, stimulate thought and thoughtful actions, and share ideas. One idea is to ask women athletes to come back to campus to discuss the issue of violence against women – these are people the students can relate to. Films such as "Hate" and "Bend It Like Beckham" will be shown to address issues of gender, sexuality, hate, etc. The program should be rolled out in late September or early October. Baker added that they are going to try to include creative elements that are non-threatening (poetry slams, films, etc.). Anyone interested in participating should speak with Papke, Kasey Baker, or Pam Hindle.

Papke expressed her hope that the three commissions (Women, LGPT People, Blacks) could come together for a forum on hate speech/free speech. The issue is timely in light of the preachers who come to campus and offend many (one has been between HSS and Hodges this week). George Hoemann pointed out that there was a letter in the student newspaper (*Daily Beacon*) from a straight, white male who was offended by the preacher. Hoemann says that we are all targeted and that helps to bring us together. It starts with a negative, but we can turn it into a positive. Hooks added that she has been impressed to see so many students responding to the preacher with their opinions. Papke would like to bring students together to talk and to disseminate information about hate speech. Hooks added that it might be useful to hand out fliers to students letting them know when these preachers would be coming to campus.

Dessel finished the discussion by promising to send her handout for electronic distribution to CFW members.

IV. Women of Color Summit (Lennisa Mostella) – Hindle introduced Lennisa Mostella who attended the meeting to give an update on plans for the Women of Color Summit 2008

Mostella distributed an "outline" of the plans so far. [See attached handouts.] The date being considered is March 11 (March 4 is an alternate). Possible locations are still under consideration, but it is tentatively scheduled for the University Center. The theme of the summit will be "Empowering Women: Ingredients for Survival in the 21st Century" and there will be four general topics: Health and Wellness, Financial/Legal, Relationships, and Professional Development/Career Paths. They are hoping to have 200-300 attendees, most of whom will come from the target groups (UTK and community).

Mostella noted that they have a current list of keynote speakers they are considering, but they are open to suggestions as well. Howland said that she has some great suggestions she will pass along. Mostella also said that they currently have four committees and that they still need people to serve.

Papke said that if they want to have students attend the summit it really should be held in the University Center for accessibility reasons. She also said that she hopes “women of color” is broadly defined – Mostella said it is inclusive of everyone (very broadly defined).

Before moving to the next issue on the agenda, Hindle let everyone know that the meeting for October will be held on Tuesday, October 9, because she will be out of town the previous week. She said that the Board Room has been reserved and she hopes this will work. Hindle “appreciate[s] people rolling with [her].” Papke asked that we send out a list of all the meeting dates for the year.

V. Women, Science, and the Academy (Deb Haines) – Deb Haines gave a brief update on the “Women in Science” symposium being held on campus on October 15-16. The symposium is being organized by Dr. Jan Musfeldt and is supported by the Chancellor, Math Department, Chemistry Department, and Physics Department.

The symposium will meet for the entire day on the 15th and part of the day on the 16th. It will include outside speakers and is specifically directed at postgraduates and graduate students. The goal is to create a dialog about what is expected in the academy. They hope they have a P.R. flier in the next week or so. There is no registration fee for the symposium and it will meet in the Shiloh Room of the University Center.

VI. Report from the Faculty Senate (John Nolt) – Nolt attended to give a brief update of the issues being addressed in the Faculty Senate and to get feedback from the CFW.

The first issue Nolt mentioned was the spousal/domestic partner guidelines noted by Hindle at the beginning of the meeting.

Second, Nolt reported on efforts to create a childcare facility at the Cherokee Campus. The Faculty Senate passed a resolution recommending this at their April 2007 meeting and the recommendation was passed to the Chancellor and Provost. The Faculty Senate has not heard back from either, probably because there are still questions about who administers the Cherokee Campus.

Third, another resolution passed in April to study the possible implementation of a wellness program on campus. Nolt is not aware of any action by the Chancellor regarding this.

Finally, Nolt mentioned Lou Gross's gender and salary study (reported on at the May 2007 CFW meeting) that was approved by the Faculty Senate at the April meeting. The Faculty Senate asked the Chancellor and the Provost to provide written reports about the inequities by September 1. The Chancellor said there was no need to wait and that he would ask departments to report on reasons for inequity immediately. Nolt pointed out that Denise Barlow says there have been some adjustments made to female salaries effective August 1 to address inequities.

The Faculty Senate is holding their retreat tomorrow – equity and diversity are key topics to be addressed.

Nolt asked what concerns he should take to the Faculty Senate from the CFW.

- * Cheryl Travis said that she would like to see a study similar to Lou Gross's once the salary adjustments have taken effect.

- * Rosa Thomas thinks there should be a push for childcare on campus, not just at the Cherokee Campus. Wendy Syer agreed, but added that although she could not speak for the administration, she believes it should be subsidized. She assumes that the lack of childcare on campus comes from financial concerns more than a lack of space. When the Work and Family Committee looked into the issue a few years ago, Syer says they announced that there were openings at the UT Childcare Laboratories with no waiting list for most ages. The problem, however, was that the price was too high for many people, including many UT employees. Nolt asked if we didn't already have this and Syer said no. Nolt wanted to know if this was because of space, money, or something else, but Syer wasn't sure. Deb Haines asked whether the CFW should have a committee look at this issue and it was agreed that it should. Hindle asked if the CFW could send a proposal to Nolt for presentation to the Faculty Senate and he agreed to this.

Nolt concluded by encouraging the CFW to give input and bring these issues forward.

VII. Committee Signups

Hindle reminded everyone that she had sent out a description of the CFW's standing committees. She then passed around sign-up sheets for the committees and let everyone know that she appreciates their efforts and willingness to participate.

VIII. Old Business/New Business

There was no other business to discuss.

Jane Redmond made a quick announcement that Ruby Dee will be on campus Monday, September 24 as part of the Legends series.

Pam Hindle adjourned the meeting at 1:09 p.m..

Submitted by Kathryn Ellis