

LGBT COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2007
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM
ADELBERT HALL, ROOM 352

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Sarah Andrews
Mayo Bulloch
Jerry Floersch
Martha Gibbons
Kathryn Karipides

Ryan Keytack
Robert Kinsey
Erica Merritt
Dorothy Miller
Susan Nickel-Schindewolf

Patricia Princehouse
James Sellers
Lynn Singer
Michael Spivak
Sarah Yarry

UNABLE TO ATTEND

Diana Bilimoria
Jane Daroff
Anne Duli
Donald Feke
Joshua Gohlike
Victor Groza

Sabina Hossain
Kenneth Long
Glenn Nicholls
Dean Patterson
Winifred Walter

Guests:

David Maltz
Beth Thompson

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by Lynn Singer, Deputy Provost & Vice President for Academic Programs.

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lynn started the meeting with introducing the new '07-08 co-chairs of the LGBT Committee: Jerry Floersch, Jes (James) Sellers, and Jane Daroff. Jane was unable to be at the meeting but both Jerry and Jes spoke briefly and shared their enthusiasm regarding chairing the LGBT Committee and advancements in LGBT issues on campus since the 1980's, particularly Case Western Reserve University's Domestic Partnership Policy.

Lynn then introduced David Maltz who was visiting the committee. David shared with the members that he was alumnus of the Weatherhead School of Management and was very interested in the LGBT Committee, LGBT concerns, and CWRU's LGBT environment.

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2. **LGBT RETROSPECTIVE**

Jes Sellers led the retrospective discussion starting out with highlights and an overview of LGBT issues and the growth these issues have had starting in the 1970's on the Case Western Reserve University campus. The development of the LGBT committee was born from a melting of formal and informal movements led by various individuals. Jes vocalized a strong statement which focused on the advancement of LGBT issues as a continued result of an individual, after individual effort. These individuals have and continue to guide changes at the University. Jes shared with committee members that sexual orientation began to be addressed on campus in the 1970's through various methods such as a group known as the Gay Alliance Activists, the Lavender Newspaper, and a Community Hotline. The evolution continued into the 1980's with the aforementioned group morphing into the Gay Student Union and further expanding to include women and becoming the Lesbian Gay Student Union, LGSU. The mid-80's also involved adding an anthropology class focusing on tolerance and involvement from student affairs to create an open forum that gathered the university community together to discuss diversity on campus. The open forum led by Greg Davis developed the non-discrimination clause at the University and moved CWRU up the list of tolerant universities. In 1999, Domestic Partner Benefits were available at CWRU and in 2002 Ellen Brown had an article in the Case Magazine, "Beyond Silence" further demonstrating the impact of the individual. A student, Winnie Lei, brought to campus innovative ideas that were implemented such as Safe Zone and the Drag Ball. In 2004, the State of Ohio had on the ballot a ban on gay marriage which passed but the University stated they would continue making available domestic partner benefits. Jes shared about the very effective "Gay: Fine by Me" campaign and its impact. Finally, in 2006, CWRU found themselves in the top 50 regarding their Campus Pride Rating.

Jerry Floersch reviewed the LGBT Mission Statement in light of the retrospective that Jes had given. He reinforced the "4" points of the statement that the committee has kept in mind and that has helped move LGBT issues ahead to determine and prioritize projects.

- 1) Recognition
- 2) Cultural Awareness
- 3) Environment Friendly
- 4) Safety

After review of the mission statement, Robert Kinsey shared with the committee the process, results, and areas of concerns from the Campus Climate Index. The Campus Climate Index is an ongoing project and shows how universities rank. CWRU scored a 3/5 stars and made the Honor Roll. Rob said clearly the weakness (and an area of focus for LGBT) is safety and having better open communication with the campus police. Lynn said the "No's" on the report allows the group to lay the foundation to develop the '07-08 projects.

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3. PROJECTS FOR '07-08

The various projects were discussed among the members and prioritization was addressed. An ongoing project that needs to be given a “home” was Safe Zone. Ryan Keytack shared more details of Safe Zone’s beginnings and right now its biggest challenge; finding a home base and turning it into a training program. The program is too much responsibility for a student organization and needs to have more stability than what a student organization can offer. Ryan stated the ideal place: an LGBT center on campus. Susan Nickel-Schindewolf shared that Safe Zone is an agenda item for Student Affairs. In addition, members interjected that Safe Zone was not just meant for students but also faculty and staff. There was much discussion shared among members about this project, the funding, and how we want to be comparing to equitable institutions.

Jerry, Jes, and Lynn, with agreement from the members, stated the #1 priority is to institutionalize the LGBT and have the organization become part of the University Strategic Plan. Jerry said the next meeting, in December, will be a working meeting. Committee members are to bring a paragraph to the committee, and together, a one page recommendation will be formulated to be presented to the strategic plan task force. In January, the committee will focus on safety and bringing in the following guests to address the members: Richard Jamieson, Vice President of Campus Services, Art Hardee, Director of North Campus Security for Protective Services, and Brian Hurd, Associate Director of North Campus Security for Protective Services. Furthermore, at that point in time, there could be more development regarding the Matthew Shepard Act.

Other items discussed:

- Marty Gibbons shared the need to expand CWRU’s academic component, adding courses, professors to a proposed renamed department of Gender Studies.
- Lynn Singer stated that President Barbara Snyder is in the process of preparing a statement regarding LGBT, and it can be added to the website.
- Beth Thompson, *Allies* Officer, discussed with the committee members the bringing in of a speaker in March of 2008 who would give a lecture at CWRU to provide an opportunity for the university community to educate themselves about bisexuality and biphobia. She is looking for additional financial support and distributed a handout that provides information about the speaker, Robyn Ochs: Bisexual Advocate, Educator, Author, and Activist.
- Michael Spivak shared information about a MidWest Conference. He would like to see CWRU sending representatives to the conference and more importantly, in the future have CWRU host the conference.

The meeting adjourned @ 4:05 p.m.
Minutes by Jennifer Lhotsky.

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NEXT MEETING:

December 2007

E-mail distributed with proposed dates