



Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, November 11, 2014 Commons Multipurpose Room

Present

Armstead, Ally
 Avila-Andino, Marlin
 Bailey, Christina
 Bonner, Stacey
 Boyce, Kim
 Boyd, Barbara
 Brassil, John
 Brown, Kenneth
 Burnett, Karen
 Carlson, Robin
 Choate, Corey
 Crimi, Cathy
 Darling, Shelley
 Dixon, Michele
 Dumas, Lydia
 Engstrom, Steven
 Furlong, Kara
 Hamilton, David
 Hammock, Patrick
 Hammonds, Deborah
 Harrell, Rachel
 Jeter, Wynn
 Johnson, Faye
 Kissinger, Lauren
 Kovash, Michelle
 Lassiter, Lynn
 Loveless, Stephen
 McKinney, Rhonda
 Nodini, Sylvia
 Pickert, Donald

Pring, Michael
 Pulcini, Ally
 Rager, Dottie
 Richter, Andy
 Rider, Jill
 Sanchez, Monica
 Sauer, Matt
 Schmittou, Lorna
 Seezen, Karen
 Shepherd, Justin
 Smith, Susie
 Sridaromont, Melissa
 Stokes, Kiley
 Street, JJ
 Uson, Rae
 Weisbrodt, Cathy
 White, Lolita
 Williams, Anthony
 Woche, Melissa

Sent Regrets

Ahler, Melissa
 Clark, Maura
 Foutch, Leslie
 Loudon, Jeff
 Martindale, Allie
 Miller, Jean
 Moore, Stacey
 Murphy, Lori
 Nelsen, Scott

O'Hara, Mark
 Pepper, Ronnie
 Poynter, Lisa
 Roberts, Janet
 Siegel, Charlotte
 Soren, Carol
 Williams, Tara
 Wilson, Cliff

Did Not Attend

Boshers, Chris
 Brady, Al
 Carney, Kathy
 Dean, Mary Ann
 Deike, Jan
 Ely, Courtney
 Feyes, Katie
 Gore, Blake
 Grimes, Jesse
 Henderson, Eugene
 Johnson, Judy
 Jones, Eric
 Kennedy, Nickolette
 King, Amanda
 Latham, Vickie
 Lester, Frank

Morgan, Rachel
 Nightengale, Cynthia
 Parkinson, Kyle
 Piatt, Beverly
 Reynolds, Dana
 Riddle, Dawn
 Rose, Susan
 Smith, Jennifer
 Smith-Borne, Joell
 Stanard, Ray
 Teaford, Jeremy
 Thomas, Anna
 Williams, Dustin
 Wilson, Jonathan
 Young, Deirdre

Guest/Visitors:

Grant, Deb (HR)
 Lockett, Midori (HR)
 Nordberg, Traci (HR)
 Peterson, Petey
 Thomson, Jaclyn (HR)

8:30 a.m. President, Michelle Kovash, welcomed all new members and called the meeting to order. If any new members have questions, please reach out to Michelle Kovash, Rachel Harrell or the Membership Committee.

Thanks to everyone who attended the Chancellor's Reception on October 30th; it was a great event.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Motion to approve October meeting minutes approved.

Our member of the month from October was not the meeting last month, so we will recognize him this month. It is a past president and still active member John Brassil.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Rules and Administration, JJ Street

- Updates to operations plan and appendix are live in the website
 - Most of this was wording changes to emails and things like that.
 - Another round of updates will be done in the spring.

Membership, Jill Rider

- The committee met in October.
- The USAC website roster has been updated.
- We just completed a big round of off cycle elections and have lots of new members.
- Our next committee meeting will be in December.
- We will now be recognizing birthdays with emails and in the powerpoint at USAC meetings.
- Please welcome new members at your table!

Communications, Kara Furlong

- There is a new Member of the Month page on USAC website for the past year's worth of Members of the Month.
- The committee will meet soon to discuss newsletter.

Michelle: Thank you to everyone who worked to get the Member of the Month information complete and up on the website.

Events, Michael Pring and Wynn Jeter

- The Event Committee met last week.
- December 19th is the Employee Celebration/Holiday Giveaway/Turkey Toss. We will be partnering with MCSAC to share a table to recruit members and give out information on USAC and Kroger cards. We are seeking volunteers to sit at the table. Please email Michael Pring to sign up to volunteer.
- The next USAC blood drive is January 9th, 2015. We are hoping to partner with LGBTQI Life to also do a clothing drive. We are also hoping to establish a competition with University School of Nashville.
- Thanks for participating in the Second Harvest event.
 - The Member of the Month for November is Carol Soren. She made contact with Second Harvest and stepped up as a point person.

Staff Life, Michelle Kovash in place of Al Brady and Andy Richter

- Nothing to report this month.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Benefits: upcoming retirement administrator updates. HR is talking to supervisors and managers now. HR wasn't ready to announce changes until December, so they will be here next month.

Traffic and Parking: Nothing to report.

Athletics: Nothing to report.

**Guest speakers: Stephen Loveless and Petey Peterson,
Program Coordinators at the Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,
Transgender, Queer and Intersex Life**

Rules for Participation

Please participate in the conversation and ask questions.

We won't have problems with political correctness.

We want to educate.

Respect: Mutual respect is important.

Ouch/Oops : Words can hurt us and sometimes we say the wrong thing. If something we say hurts, say ouch/oops.

Confidentiality: What is said here stays here, what is learned here will hopefully leave here. Try to think about the concept not the person's story.

Empathy: Even if this is foreign to you, put yourself in the other person's shoes.

Self-care: We will talk for 45 minutes but if you need time to yourself please take it.

Share: If you find yourself being the only person talking, step back a second.

Pronouns 101

- She, her, her: feminine
 - He, him, his: masculine
 - They, them, their: Gender neutral
 - Ze, zir/zem, zirs/zes: Gender neutral
 - Ze, hir, hers: Gender neutral
- Start meetings by asking gender pronouns.
 - Take a minute to introduce yourself around the table with your name, pronouns and favorite winter activity.
 - This can seem a little cumbersome, but practicing this simple thing makes individuals on our campus more comfortable and makes sure you do not mispronoun them.
 - Some people use their name as a pronoun also.
 - If you'd like to write your pronouns on your nametag, USAC will print them on the nametags for the next meeting.

LGBTQI Life Office

- Serves all gender identities and expressions
- Some of their programs:
 - Safe Zone: Tools to be an ally for faculty/staff/students
 - Out in front: Annual leadership conference
 - Speak Out: panels with LGBTQI people who talk about their experiences at VU
 - Straight Facts about LGBTQI Life: customizable workshops from 45 min to two hours
 - Engage: involves students on spring break
 - Lavender Graduation
 - National Coming Out Week
 - TDOR
- Student organizations supported: Vanderbilt Lambda Association, Owen, VUSN, OUTLaw, GABLE, Peabody Q.Ed., LBGTMMD

Binary Gender Model (two options)

1. Male, man, masculine, one sexual orientation (marry women)
2. Female, woman, feminine, one sexual orientation (marry men)

More Inclusive Gender Model

- *Biological sex*: male, intersex, female
- *Gender identity*: man, trans*, woman
- *Gender expression*: masc., ando., fem.
 - The pronouns we decide to use are often based on how someone projects themselves (how they wear their hair, colors, etc.)
- *Sexual orientation*: women, all/both, men

The Genderbread Person, revised

“Ask me about my identity”

- If you have “when, why?” kind of questions, maybe just Google.
- If you are asking out of respect, or to provide a safe space for the person, preface with that.
- Ask with a sense of care and understanding, ask in private.

Trans*

- Transgender is a broad term for people whose gender identity, expression and/or behavior is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth. “Trans” is shorthand for “transgender.”
- Trans* includes transgender, transfeminine, transmasculine, Trans Man, Trans Woman, Agender, two spirit, multigender, etc.

Cisgender privilege

- Living without ever having to face, confront, engage in, or cope with, or think twice about most of the things in this discussion. Cisgender people can address these phenomena, but social, political, and economic forces do not require them to do so.
- Cisgender= Gender identity, biological sex and gender expression align
- Not questioning your normalcy with regard to your gender or your body.
 - Note that other people do this on a daily basis.
- Validation from culture in which you live, including friends, family and partners.
 - Individuals on a daily basis get incorrect pronouns. Recognize that someone’s living experience is different.
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Institutional Acceptance

- People are being hurt or even murdered for expressing themselves.
- Policies: On forms in your office, do they have check M or F?
- What can we do institutionally to make change and create a more equitable place at Vanderbilt?

Allyship

How to take action:

- Name it, claim it, and stop it! (correct with care, speak up and say that’s it’s not ok to use anti-gay language)
- Get help (go to LGBTQI office)
- Give emotional first aid (be an ally WITH someone, not FOR someone. Ask the person if they need help before asserting yourself in a situation.)
- Easy does it (use humor, don’t personalize), ask.

Be a Trans* Ally

1. Use the term cisgender as opposed to normal.
2. Do not use transphobic slurs like “tra*y” or “shemale.”
3. Use the name individuals give you, don’t ask their “real name.”
4. Always use the desired pronouns of an individual.
5. Do not claim someone’s gender identity is fake, nonexistent, immoral, or a result of illness or trauma.
6. Don’t ask questions about a person’s anatomy.
7. Do not ask to see photographs of a person before they transitioned or ask invasive questions about their lives before they transitioned.
8. Never out a trans* person.

Trans@VU website: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lgbtqi/>

- FYI: Gender identity and expression are protected at Vanderbilt. Not in all of Tennessee.
- Our website has:
 - Information on documenting how to navigate name changes, housing for students, etc. Working on gender inclusive housing and restrooms.
 - Tools for allies
 - Upcoming LGBTQI Life Events
 - **International Transgender Day of Remembrance-** Thursday, November 20th 7pm Edgehill United Methodist Church
 - Remembering people who have lost their lives in the trans community and allies
 - **Home for the Holidays:** Friday, December 5th 1:30-3:00 K.C. Potter Center
 - Holiday party for students’ chosen families
 - January and March Safe Zone workshops

Questions:

Q: *The Q in LGBTQI: Queer. That word was seen negatively. Is it not that way now?*

A: Younger people have reclaimed it. We are trying to respect the line between its history and current usage. Queer includes all gender identities and expressions. It is used in academic settings also. It is also used to explain beyond that also like political issues/shopping/etc.

Q: *If a student/employee is transitioning, what can we do?*

A: Update their uniform, nametag, and paperwork. Think/ask, what would make their environment more comfortable? Ensure restrooms are comfortable and accessible. If they have brought it up, ask if there’s anything else you could do.

Q: *Are you adding the A to your office name?*

A: LGBTQAA+ is used by Lambda. “Gender and sexuality resource center” is used at many higher education institutions. We aren’t adding letters right now. We might change to gender and sexuality center long-term. We work with all identities and expressions, and allies. We just make that clear on our materials.

Q: *What do you say to someone who says, “You’re just choosing to be that way, right?”*

A: So what if they are making a choice? Respect their choice. We are all individuals and can live our lives in whatever way we want. I don’t need everyone to act like me but I do need them to have mutual respect for everyone in the Vanderbilt community.

Q: *What about religious point of view?*

A: Mutual respect. I won’t say anyone’s faith is right or wrong. I will respect your beliefs and I hope that you will respect mine. You can also reference VU policy; it is part of you doing your job to respect this.

Michelle: Thank you to Stephen and Petey. If you can go to the Safe Zone training, it is valuable. As part of my goal as president and for what we can do as a Council, **we are proposing bylaw changes** to have more inclusive gender language.

Revision One

Article IV, Section 4

Replace current language with: "will serve the unexpired term of the resigned vice-president, through the beginning of their elected term".

Revision Two

Article IV, Section 4

Replace current language with: "will serve the unexpired term of the resigned secretary, through the beginning of their elected term".

Revision Three

Article IV, Section 4

Replace current language with: "will serve the unexpired term of the resigned treasurer, through the beginning of their elected term".

Revision Four

Article V, Section 2

Replace current language with: "will solicit from each representative their preference for service".

Current bylaws can be found at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/usac/about/bylaws.php>.

- Motion approved to move on to second reading in December was passed.
- By law changes require three readings.
- Email JJ Street, Michelle or usac@vanderbilt.edu to express any concerns. You can also put in a comment through as anonymous using the comment form on website.

Next USAC Meeting: Tuesday, Dec 19th at 8:30am in Kissam Center, Room C210A.
Our guest speakers will include Rick Ohmer (retirement updates) and Randy Tarkington (work-life balance, fun over the holidays).

Meeting was adjourned at 9:49am.

For more information about the council, please visit the [USAC website](#).