Presidents Commission on the Status of Women
Tuesday, November 12th, 2019
12:30-1:30 pm, Lamson Tower Room

Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Jess Dutille, Wendy Palmquist, Melinda Barnsley, Hannah Hounsell

• Welcome
• Review YWC Feedback
  o A record 70 participants ended up joining us for the YWC
    ▪ We saw an uptick in high schoolers attending the event, which might have been helped by the ECP sending out flyers to local schools
    ▪ We discussed the possible need to consider expanding the conference to Merrill if we have 70+ participants again
  o Jess will have a student worker compile the feedback into a comprehensive report for us to review
  o Overall, the feedback is positive, and the participants focused on the positive takeaways they had from YWC
• Lactation Room Materials
  o Jess received Chantalle’s lactation resources to update
  o The Hyde Lactation Center is currently locked; Wendy isn’t sure where the key is
    ▪ We discussed if it’s even necessary to lock the space because it could be an accessibility issue for people to have to hunt the key down before using the space
    ▪ Jess will reach out to Business/Communication disciplines about the space; if we can’t find a key, we will reach out to Physical Plant
• Diversity Space
  o The Commission discussed the current situation with the Diversity Space in the HUB being given to Greek Life without consideration for the groups who were using and counting on the space. While we understand that the Greek Council was promised a space dedicated to Greek Life and it has been communicated that Student Life & the Greek Council were unaware the space was being used as the Diversity Space, we are concerned that there isn’t a single space on campus solely dedicated to Diversity. As of now, there has been discussion that a lounge in Speare will be shared by Pride/Diversity and the Honor Society, however there are issues with this proposal (mainly related to safety and privacy).
  o We discussed ways that we can team up with Queer Council to bring out concerns forward in a formal, coordinated way to campus administration. Jess will reach out to Liz Ahl about what can be done to bring these issues to light. Mainly, we want to put together a timeline of ways that diversity has been
systemically and institutionally cut throughout the years and the reasons why there need to be institutional/ formal resources, spaces, and processes for diversity:

- There is no active Commission on Diversity, so there is no formal work being completed and issues being resolved by an officially recognized group
- The mural in the Diversity Space was scraped off; this sends a visible message to students in one of our most visited buildings on campus
- Students have been systematically marginalized with cuts to resources for diversity over the years – can we compile a timeline? Where can we find the resources to compile this?
- We have been told that “diversity is everyone’s job” – but we need training, resources, compensation and time. It ends up being no one’s job when it’s everyone’s job.
- We used to be nationally ranked in terms of diversity (Can Wendy provide information about this?)
- Students have come forward about marginalization to Jess & others, hoping for these issues to be dealt with by administration. However, it’s clear that there is no formal process to deal with these issues and when they are dealt with, they are downplayed or ignored (recent issue with the white supremacy signs around campus)
- We don’t have institutional resources and we put this work on the backs of students, staff, and faculty who have other jobs to do. They are already spread thin. Additionally, when infrastructures are built on the backs of students, faculty, and staff, these things collapse when individuals leave the university. Students turn over in four years. This is not sustainable. We are putting students’ lives, education, safety, and comfort at risk.

• Emergent Issues