

## **ERAC Committee Meeting February 2015 Minutes**

### **Catharine Patterson, Learning Assistant in Disability Support Services**

Catharine Patterson spoke to ERAC regarding the American Disability Act Event.

The weeklong celebration the week of April 6 will include a three-day interactive exhibition, a Freewheelers wheelchair basketball game and a screening of the movie, "The Theory of Everything." The committee has invited faculty to present related research, as well.

The committee would like ERAC to get involved and to help spread the word. They will need serious volunteer help; ERAC members should consider if they can help or if they can encourage others in their areas to help. The committee will reach out to faculty members to talk to their students and promoting this event through social media. JoAnn DeSalvatore suggested that we put it into HR's Spotlight.

### **Heather Hosfeld, Assistant General Counsel of Lehigh University & Karen Salvemini, Equal Opportunity Compliance Coordinator**

ERAC welcomed Karen as LU's new EOC Coordinator. Heather and Karen discussed Lehigh's newly revised Harassment Policy.

"Going back six months, we put together a committee to look at the policy and make sure we are aligned with best practices. The committee met a few times and put some changes together. One of the very minor changes was adding a table of contents to make it easier to navigate. Prior to this revision, there was a harassment policy and non-discrimination policy and what we came to realize is that they both serve the same function but the non-discrimination policy did not have procedures in it. So we have combined the two.

If you have any questions, contact Karen Salvemini. We can do targeted education in specific areas if there are many complaints/harassments.

Who has an obligation to report? In the case where students have come forward to somebody but said, 'I don't want this to be taken any farther,' we have an obligation as faculty/staff to report any type of complaint from students related to this.

Any supervisor has the obligation to bring something forward, as well. This does not mean that we will act on everything, but we want to make sure, if nothing else, that they are getting resources.

Putting specific time frames in the policy has also been added. Investigation process should last 60 days.

We added government contact information. Individuals always have a right to go out to the government. We also put in a list of general resources. If you have any other additional resources please let us know.

The last part that was added was the reporting tree to try to simplify the process. If there is ever a situation where someone feels unsafe or in danger, always go to the police.

We have already met with the Student Senate and will discuss this at a special faculty meeting and with the CEC. We will also do a virtual town hall. We are going to post this to the CEC blog and get it out there to see if it is understandable.

We will also be designing a brochure that condenses the information. Sexual assault is a very complicated issue. The advocates' primary role is to be that person who is available to talk to the students, to get them

the resources they need. What we say from a confidentiality standpoint – ultimately yes – in certain circumstances we cannot keep it confidential. We may have an obligation as an institution to go forward to keep campus safe.

The timing of all the changes will be approved based on the feedback on February 27 to OCR. Once we get the comments back we have 45 days to go to our Board. Realistically, April/May it will be done.”

**All committees and working groups need to provide a brief, written statement by Friday, February 20, to Carla and Bob.** If anyone has an urgent or timely update please share now.

### **Events Committee**

ERAC has partnered with Zoellner for two March shows. Normally, the show is \$50-60 per seat; with the ERAC discount, it will only be \$16. Info was emailed today. Knowledge @ Noon session on Ergonomics on February 19; currently, 55 people signed up. 106 Phantoms tickets sold for the April 11 event. 26 Iron Pigs tickets sold already and this event is not until June.

### **Awards Committee**

The Awards Committee is on track with getting the information out regarding the ERAC Distinguished Service Awards. The Spotlight article should include what we are looking for in terms of an award recipient. Employees need to understand what the award is and who should be nominated to the Distinguished Service Award.

### **Membership/Election Committee**

Membership/Elections will be meeting this week. Last year we suggested that every ERAC member should nominate someone to be on the committee.

### **Campus Climate Committee**

Tonight is the Diversity Retreat. Henry Odi is gathering various diversity & inclusion working groups to talk about campus climate. Three ERAC members will participate and report back.

### **REACH**

We have two REACH groups and one of the groups is very active. They have expressed an interest in starting a Young Professionals Group. Two of the members are going to take the lead on that initiative and possibly set up a meeting with Human Resources.

### **Communications**

New Employee Orientation attendees seemed very interested in the new events that are going on via ERAC. Communications has a meeting scheduled for tomorrow.

### **New Business**

Carla attended a Lehigh 150<sup>th</sup> Planning Committee meeting that looked at the success of the Lehigh-Lafayette events in preparation for the University's sesquicentennial celebration. The Sesqui Committee is going to be planning an opening event in October and a closing event in May that will be comprised of various campus-wide events. The opening will tie in to President Simon's inauguration. Individual groups have a chance to come up with their own events. Is this something that we should take a look at? How could ERAC be involved in the 150<sup>th</sup> celebration?

Chris Halladay, AVP Human Resources, is very interested in promoting a positive relationship between HR and ERAC. He is planning to attend future meetings to get a sense of who we are and what we are doing. He likes what he has heard and seen so far.

**Open discussion on Membership** – The Membership and Bylaws committees met and want to start a discussion about recruiting members for next year and growing the group with more members. Katie shared the feedback she received during the small-group meetings, and the general feeling is that ERAC is doing a lot of great things, but some members feel overloaded. Katie put together the notes and a sample of how we could increase our membership numbers. What if we all had one committee and served as a campus liaison/campus rep? We would have to decide if we are going to change committees each year. There was a suggestion to go to 28 members from 18 members. We need to think about how many people are working within a committee. Is it time to talk about reconsidering the number of committees? Is three too much? We need to come to a conclusion for that by next year's cycle. We need to figure out what initiatives we are going to keep. We need the committees to determine which specific initiatives we take into the year.

An unofficial vote was taken to determine if there is interest in pursuing increasing ERAC's membership. All present were in favor.

Each committee needs to come up with a list of the work that is done throughout the year and the number of committee members you anticipate this will require. Please submit priorities and numbers by Friday, February 20. This information will be used to consider how to restructure.

The next meeting will be held 10 a.m. – noon, Wednesday, March 11, UC Faculty Lounge East.

Ashley Baker made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Clara Buie seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

Submitted by,  
Morgan Nelson,  
ERAC co-secretary