

BOARD OF REGENTS

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

SECTION: 12

DATE:

March 21, 2006

RECOMMENDATION

MONTHLY REPORT STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

ACTION REQUESTED

It is recommended that the Student Affairs Committee Agenda for March 21, 2006 and the Minutes of January 17, 2006 be received and placed on file.

STAFF SUMMARY

At its January 17, 2006 meeting the Student Affairs Committee unanimously supported the Student Leader Group's position paper calling on the Board of Regents to include gender identity and expression in the University's nondiscrimination policy and EEO statement. In addition the Committee received the University Technology Fee Task Force recommendations as well as an update on the new student center and the annual Martin Luther King Day celebration. The Committee also received a statement from the Student Leader Group expressing concern with the decision of the Board to not include student representation on the Athletic Affairs Committee of the Board of Regents.

The March 21, 2006 agenda includes discussion of the 2007-08 Scholarship, Awards & Grants-in-Aid Proposal as well as an update on revisions to the University's nondiscrimination policy and EEO statement.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

None

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The proposed Board action has been reviewed and is recommended for Board approval.

University Executive Officer

Date

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Board of Regents
Student Affairs Committee

Tuesday, March 21, 2006
9:30 a.m.

Agenda

Room 201
Welch Hall

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|---|----------------|
| 1. Approval of January 17, 2006 Meeting Minutes | Regent Clack |
| 2. Introduction of New Member | Jim Vick |
| 3. 2007-08 Scholarship, Awards & Grants-in-Aid Proposal | Bernice Lindke |
| 4. Gender Identity and Expression – Policy Inclusion | Gregory Varnum |
| 5. Announcements | |
| 6. Other | |

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Board of Regents
STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Minutes of January 17, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT

Regents: Regent Brandon

Administration: Jim Vick, Glenna Frank Miller, Gregory Peoples, Karen Simpkins

Students: Trevor Allen, Kelly Basden, Daniel Cicchini, Sharon Krick, Robert Murkowski, Catherine Perrow, Lindsey Robinson, Hiral Shah, Greg Varnum, Biniam Yohannes

GUESTS

Regents: Floyd Clack

Administration: Don Anderson, Vickie Bagherzadeh, Rosalyn Barclay, Josh Burgett, David Carroll, Jayne Carroll, Peg Carter, Mary Jo Desprez, Kevin Devine, Mike Erwin, John A. Fallon, Becky Figura, Justin Gerboc, Ellen Gold, Cindy Hall, Bob Heighes, Judy Sturgis Hill, Marcus Jackson, Ann Klaes, Jeff Koras, Bernice Lindke, Thom Madden, Cathie McClure, Tamara Miller, Gersham Nelson, Sandy Norton, Theodore Provder, Ken Ruppel, Gretchen Sanchez, Abe Sargent, Connie Schaffer, Chris Shell, Susan Sohn, Cheryl Swanson, Judy Tatum, Paul Dean Webb, Kathryn Wilhoff, Patricia Williams, Kay Woodiel

Students: Christopher Beyer, Aaron Porter, Sam Richardson, Amy Tice

Press: Andrew Cipolla (Echo), Geoff Larcom (Ann Arbor News)

Regent Jan Brandon convened the meeting at 9:35 a.m. Minutes of the November 15, 2005 meeting were approved as presented.

Athletic Affairs Committee

Robert Murkowski, Student Body President, issued a statement from the Student Leader Group expressing disappointment and concern with the Board's decision to not add a student representative to the Athletic Affairs Committee and requested that their response be forwarded to the full Board and to the President. Regent Brandon indicated that the Student Affairs Committee will continue to serve as the avenue for student input to the Board on all items including Athletics related topics.

New Student Center Update

Lindsey Robinson, Campus Life Council representative and Daniel Cicchini, Student Body Vice President, provided an update on the progress of the New Student Center. The project is on target for an early November opening. As the RFP (Request for Proposal) process unfolds, students have been active in the screening process as members of the various RFP selection committees for bookstore, food vendors and other retail venues.

Technology Fee

Connie Schaffer, Chief Information Officer and Robert Murkowski presented the final recommendations of the Information Technology Fee Task Force. Student members of the task force expressed wide support for the recommendations as well as their appreciation for the opportunity to be involved.

Gender Identity and Expression – Policy Inclusion

LGBT Representative Greg Varnum presented the Student Leader Group's Position Paper: Gender Identity and Expression Policy Inclusion which calls on the Board to amend Eastern Michigan University's nondiscrimination policy and EEO statement to include gender identity and expression. Robert Murkowski moved that the Student Affairs Committee support the position paper in preparation for bringing the policy revisions to the Board of Regents for action at the March 21, 2006 meeting. The motion was seconded by Kelly Basden and unanimously approved. Position Paper No. 2006:01 is appended to these minutes.

MLK Day Celebration Report

University Ombudsman Gregory Peoples, co-chair of the MLK Day Planning Committee, presented a comprehensive report on Eastern's 20th annual Martin Luther King Day celebration and its many outstanding programs. Highlights included the President's Luncheon featuring keynote speaker, Justice Alan C. Page and the Beyond Words exhibit in Wise Hall in which six residence hall rooms were transformed into a living museum of words, art and ideas exploring topics of injustice.

Other

- Daniel Cicchini thanked the Business & Finance division for its swift response in correcting the miscommunication regarding the new credit card policy implemented last fall as well as for their efforts to keep costs down for students through the use of zero interest payment plans rather than high interest credit cards.
- Lindsey Robinson provided an update on fundraising efforts for EMU's Habitat for Humanity Eagles Nest Project. The project has surpassed the \$10,000 mark towards its goal of \$65,000 with more than \$2,400 raised at the Build-4-Bucks event held in November. Project members are researching grant opportunities and developing a campaign to seek support from local businesses, community members and organizations.
- Kelly Basden, RHA President, read a statement on behalf of the Student Leader Group in support of the Office of Student Judicial Services in the wake of last November's arson fire that destroyed their offices and formally apologized on behalf of their peers for celebratory statements made in the aftermath of the fire.
- Robert Murkowski expressed appreciation on behalf of the committee for the work of Chief Hall and the Department of Public Safety for their open communication, updates and added security measures in the wake of recent assaults in and around campus.
- Robert Murkowski reported that President Fallon will be attending the February 21 Student Senate meeting. He also reminded the audience of the Staff vs. Student basketball game during half-time of the January 18 men's game and called for the submission of ideas for the time capsule being installed at the new Student Center.
- Hiral Shaw, Graduate Student Organization representative, issued an invitation to the Graduate Student Research Fair on March 27. Proposals are due January 20.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Teri L. Papp
Student Affairs Committee Recording Secretary

Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Regents
January 17, 2006

Position Paper: Gender Identity and Expression Policy Inclusion
Presented by Greg Varnum, LGBT Representative

The Student Leader Group calls on the Board of Regents to amend Eastern Michigan University's nondiscrimination policy and EEO statement to include gender identity and expression.

In EMU's Mission Statement we make reference to maximizing "educational opportunities and personal and professional growth for students from diverse backgrounds" as well as providing "a student-focused learning environment that positively affects the lives of students and the community." If we are truly committed to these statements, then we must back them with our willingness to protect people with diverse backgrounds and do our best to stop negative affects on the lives of our students. If a person is called to express themselves in an honest manner and if that expression represents a variation on the societal norms of gender, then here at EMU they are not being protected and they are taking a risk. We are currently forcing members of our community to choose between being themselves or lying about who they are. By just about anyone's standards, that creates a load of stress unfair to put upon anyone paying us to be here.

People have argued that our inclusion of sex in our nondiscrimination policies should be good enough. While we appreciate that thinking, the courts disagree, and as long as they continue to rule on how our policies will be interpreted in lawsuits and other legal matters, we will choose to side with them on that argument being false. The top attorneys in the country are warning that categories like "sex" and "gender" will prove inadequate over time. The trend and the best practice is inclusion of the air-tight language "gender identity or expression."

Others have said that EMU should wait until the issue of gender identity and expression cools down. This argument is both illogical and irresponsible. What good can come from offering protections after they are no longer essential? If we are serious about protecting our faculty, staff and students we will do what we can when they are most in need of policy protections. And that time is not after an issue has cooled down. With a recent FBI report showing that Michigan ranks third in the nation in hate crimes and another recent report from the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs showing an increase in hate crimes in Michigan against individuals based on gender identity and expression, there seems to be no better time than the present.

We trust that this Board of Regents does not share the sentiment of some people who think that EMU should wait and see what other universities do first. What kind of climate would be created if this Board of Regents told the students attending EMU that it was best to sit down and see what everyone else was doing? As I'm sure you are aware, that kind of climate does not produce leaders, it produces lemmings, and we are confident that our tuition dollars are not being wasted on learning how to become educated lemmings.

Even if someone feels that EMU should assess what others are doing, we can take an encouraging assessment of that now. Over 100 of the leading corporations in the United States have expanded their nondiscrimination policies to offer protection based on gender identity or expression. Those corporations include Sears, which now operates in the same holding group as Regent Antonini's former employer Kmart. Another such corporation is Regent Sidlik's current employer, DaimlerChrysler. There are also several universities and colleges in our area doing the same, including Kalamazoo College, University of Illinois and Ohio State University. The fact that over

50% of these major corporations and universities began offering these protections in either 2004 or 2005 shows that this is a national trend on the rise. Even governing bodies here in Michigan have this language, such as the cities of Ann Arbor, East Lansing, Grand Rapids, Huntington Woods and our very own Ypsilanti thanks in large part to the activism of EMU students.

The Student Leader Group will work to introduce at the March meeting of the Board of Regents revisions to the Equal Employment Opportunity and Nondiscrimination policies to include "gender identity or expression". We ask for the Board of Regents to support these revisions. Thank you.