Commission on the Status of Women

November 14, 2023

Meeting Minutes

1. Meeting started at 10:01am by Samantha Clifford
2. Land Acknowledgement: Northern Arizona University sits at the base of the San Francisco Peaks, on homelands sacred to Native Americans throughout the region. We honor their past, present, and future generations, who have lived here for millennia and will forever call this place home.
3. Welcome
   1. Attendance:
      1. Samantha Clifford, Heather Rist, Laura Umphrey, Carrie Bieging, Avi Callan, Katie Hill, Laura Levandowski, Megan Meyer, Rosalicia Cordova, Sanjam Ahluwalia, Molly Jisa, Nena Bloom, Carli Anderson, Frances Riemer, Rachel Billowitz,
4. Laura Umphreys from Ombuds
   1. Office is an informal, independent, confidential space that is available to graduate students, staff, faculty
   2. Can discuss career progression, standards of conduct
   3. Have had 70+ visitors to the office
   4. Research shows that venting in the work environment is not as beneficial, the Ombuds office allows for discussing without creating a negative work environment
      1. Trying to help create a way for other offices to change rather than workers feeling like they have no ability to affect change
   5. Allow for 3rd party facilitation of group discussions
   6. Annual report for the public at the end of each year
5. Commission Upkeep
   1. Conversation about what to do when requests come in between meetings?
      1. Discussion about how to allocate funding and when a vote needs to happen.
      2. Discussed adding “Sorry the Commission cannot fund xyz event next week, the commission needs to have at least a month lead time to ensure that funding can be voted on” to the lexicon
   2. Advantages/disadvantages of survey voting with/without discussion of request?
      1. How many is need for a quorum of votes if there are 135 people on our list?
      2. Discussion about who can vote and whether changes should be made to the bylaws to reflect such
      3. Discussion about how involvement looks for different campuses and people
         1. Discussion about adding a welcome message to the website
   3. Becoming DEI informed is a developmental process and one in which we are always learning. If we hold people to perfection, we exclude people from the table and make our campus spaces unsafe for growth, learning, and discussion. That was one of the primary things we discussed, creating spaces with enough psychological safety to call people in and continue to challenge people to acknowledge their own bias and grow.
6. Updates of sub-committees, confirm chairs, event updates, suggestions for additional or changes 2023-2024
   1. Tri University CSW- Samantha, Heather, Molly, Sanjam.
      1. Goal to set up a tri-university CSW collective. In addition, it was suggested from Sanjam that we encourage a reproductive rights task force that is student led. Please let Sanjam know if you would like to be involved in the task force. We are organizing a tri-CSW Spring event at Hat Ranch tentative April 19th.
   2. Fundraising – Lauren Copeland-Glenn and Nena Bloom.
      1. Have met with Foundation and they will work towards finding donors to endow the scholarship.
         1. Carrie Bieging volunteered to join the committee
   3. Programming – Samantha Clifford, Heather Rist, Laura Levandowski, Melissa Griffin
   4. Child-care - Frances Riemer, Voucher program pilot ends 2024, and a new building needs to be found. Do we want to continue this as a subcommittee if so, who would like to be included?
      1. Discussion about advocating for financial assistance for staff/faculty with regards to childcare and other issues
      2. The childcare facility will be moving locations soon
         1. NAU staff might be able to be paid for volunteering there–Katie Hill will verify HR policy rules
   5. Work life balance- Do we want this as a subcommittee if so, who would like to be involved? Part of HR and equity across campus.
      1. Discussion about interviewing staff and faculty about the burnout they are experiencing
      2. Discussion about coordinating with Staff advisory Council and Employee Assistance and Wellness
   6. Reproductive health: Chair: Sanjam Ahluwalia, Rachel Billowitz, Meredith Brown, Laura Levandowski, Sneha Vissa, Frances Riemer, Heather Rist, Samantha Clifford, Mariah Castillo
      1. May have a meeting at the end of the semester, or early in the Spring to plan events and work for the Spring
      2. Menstrual products are in progress of being restocked across campus currently
      3. Discussion about what can be done as employees of NAU to advocate for ballot measures and other issues
         1. Cannot do anything political as a representative of NAU, so nothing in work role. Outside of work as a private citizen, you can engage in any political activity you choose.
      4. Discussion about if volunteer hours can be paid under the employee volunteer program (see above)
   7. Chairs, please share meeting dates/times for subcommittee meetings
   8. Bylaws- passed last semester but Heather and Samantha will update in light of new VP for Inclusion, and we are also working on CSW processes. Will bring the new version to the commission for a vote when draft is completed.
7. Approval of September and October Minutes
   1. Vote will occur at the December meeting
8. Other items
   1. Message from CIP: CIP invited [Tazbah Chavez](https://www.tazbah.com/band) to NAU for Her-Story Month. We settled on Thursday, March 21, 2024 as her visit date. Tazbah is an Indigenous writer and director, and she has contributed to the success of many Indigenous led films and tv shows, mostly notably Reservation Dogs. Opinion the best Reservation Dogs episode is “[Wide Net](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt20697110/?ref_=ttep_ep5)” where the Aunties go to an Indian Health Services Conference, and Tazbah wrote and directed the episode. We invited her to NAU to share her journey into Hollywood, how she remains connected to her Indigenous communities, and what inspires her to write strong female characters. We would love for CSW to collaborate. CIP will be requesting money for Tazbah’s travel.
   2. Does anyone have any ideas of events we could organize in partnership with CIP?
   3. Heather and Samantha to go through list serve to confirm membership- making it a Qualtrics and have commissioners choose a subcommittee to serve as voting member. Information only and non-voting member if not on subcommittee.
   4. CSW commissioners- use Community Engagement Time to volunteer (DV shelter) Faculty can volunteer but not eligible for CET. Who would like to volunteer to organize events monthly.