

Chancellor's Report
2007-2008 Academic Year
Persons with Disabilities (PD) Committee

Submitted by Chair:

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The PD committee has been active in the 2007-2008 academic year; it met on a monthly basis starting in December of 2007.

Goals and Outcomes for the PD Committee:

1. Define the mission of the committee. Although the Chair contacted past chairs of the committee and the Provost office, no additional information was available in addition to the following: "The charge to the Committee for Persons with Disabilities is to advise the Provost on MU programs, services, and policies which affect disabled students, faculty, staff and visitors."
 - The committee discussed helping the Chancellor be aware of critical issues to ensure MU is welcoming and inclusive of persons with disabilities.
 - The committee would like to see MU become a universal design learning environment such as with the University of Arizona, University of Minnesota, and the University of Southern Illinois.
2. Address campus issues related to disability. The following three subcommittees were formed to address the following:
 - ADA Policy-reviewed areas where the University was noncompliant.
 - Student Issues-held an open forum in February 2008 for students with disabilities to voice their concerns regarding campus accessibility such as transportation problems.
 - Employee Issues-created a survey for all employees to learn more about how disability issues affect the work lives of MU faculty and staff. It has been submitted to IRB.
3. Address the ongoing problem of "invisibility" of persons with disabilities at the University and coordination of resources.
 - Will have a booth at the Fall Employee Wellness Fair including packets of information of University resources
4. Create a Sharepoint Site.
 - This was created for the committee to communicate electronically including posting committee reports, agendas, and meetings.
5. Address transportation needs:
 - This is an ongoing issue that the committee will continue to look into including the lack of transportation for faculty/staff with disabilities.

6. Address campus facility needs:
 - Will invite Vice Chancellor Gary Ward and Director of Planning, Design and Construction, Larry Hubbard, to a committee meeting.
7. Address technology needs:
 - To encourage the University to not purchase software/hardware that is not accessible to everyone.

PD Committee concerns:

1. The PD committee has no funding which makes it difficult to carry out its activities. For instance, a student forum was held which included advertising and food costs that other units (e.g., Student Disability Services and the Learning Center) had to pay for and were not compensated.
2. The student representatives from MSA and GPC were invited to each meeting; however, not one student representative attended any of the meetings.

The PD Committee's additional areas of concern for the University:

1. The University is not fully compliant with ADA policy.
2. The University lacks a universal design learning environment.
3. The University lacks an organization for students with disabilities.
4. Persons with Disabilities remain "invisible" at the University and are often not acknowledged in diversity initiatives.