

Ubuntu Meeting, Sept 14, 2012 noon-1pm.

Those in attendance: Jamie Nekich (chair), Jan Rauk, Radhika Sehgal, Rochelle Smith, Tasha Dev, Jordyn Wright, Liz Morin, Sara Simmers, Samantha Hansen, Leathia Botello, Heather Gasser, Carmen Suarez, Robert Neuenschwander (for Susan Bender), Julia Keleher, Suzette Yaezenko. We did have a voting quorum with 9 of 9 voting members present.

Agenda for the meeting was to 1) introduce the newly formed Ubuntu committee, 2) introduce ourselves, 3) vote to alter the voting structure of the committee, 4) revisit the 'domestic partners' letter drafted in Spring of 2012, 5) discuss progress on the Ubuntu website, and 6) start discussing goals/projects for the 2012-2013 year.

Jan Rauk moved to alter the voting structure so that when a vote is needed in the committee all members present at the meeting will have a vote and decisions will be made by the majority present and voting. This was seconded by Radhika Sehgal. All voting members of the committee voted on this proposed change and it was passed unanimously with each of the following voting in favor: Jamie Nekich, Jan Rauk, Radhika Sehgal, Rochelle Smith, Tasha Dev, Jordyn Wright, Liz Morin, Sara Simmers, and Samantha Hansen. This change in voting structure will be in place from September 2012 until May 2013.

The committee explored what course of action to take this fall about the letter drafted last spring by the 'Domestic Partners' subcommittee, chaired by Heather Gasser. This letter was slated to be sent from Ubuntu to the Faculty Senate and President this fall. The letter was written in Spring 2012 and outlined inconsistencies between policies the University implements regarding domestic partners and statements of their values as laid out in the FSH. In addition, the letter documented what has happened in other states/ other universities and the actions of the City of Moscow with respect to extending domestic partner benefits and urged the President to take action to provide medical benefits for domestic partners.

In the summer of 2012 the President approved changes to the University of Idaho medical plan to include 'Plus One' benefits. This change will allow University of Idaho employees to add one individual living in their home to their medical plan. It essential extends medical benefits to domestic partners. The committee decided to 'rewrite' the letter started last spring to commend the President on his actions regarding this important issue. In addition the letter will urge the president to address other inequities that might exist in employee benefits such as access to the student recreation center and low fee academic courses.

Jorydn Wright will take the existing letter and rewrite it to include these changes. The newly written draft will be circulated to the committee for comments and then presented to the President this Fall.

The committee also addressed the need to focus on finishing up the website that was started in the Spring of 2012. The content needs to be written, we need images and photographs and individuals who can help update the content regularly. Heather Maib (no longer on Ubuntu) worked to establish the site in Spring 2012 has agreed to help in the initial stages of this. Tasha Dev, Lethia Botello, Jordyn Wright,

and Jamie Nekich will work as a team to get the website up and running over the next 4 weeks. Both Lethia Botello and Jorydn Wright have web authorship training, Tasha Dev has worked on developing similar documents at her prior institution.

Our final order of business was to begin to suggest plans for the future. We ran out of time to fully explore all our ideas so will return to this business in October. A few ideas suggested were the following:

- Carmen Suarez suggested that we have a liaison between the President's Diversity Advisory Committee and Ubuntu. This Advisory committee is 50 people comprising 6 subcommittees. The entire advisory committee meets at the beginning and end of the year and a liaison could join those two meetings. Samantha Hansen sits on the President's committee and on Ubuntu and agreed to act in the role of this liaison and report back and forth.
- Samantha Hansen suggested that Ubuntu might want to be involved in plans that are emerging to require safety and sensitivity training for all incoming U/I freshmen. She also raised concerns about housing issues and retention with respect to U/I being able to extend more welcoming and inclusive living arrangements. Julia Keleher mentioned that there may be ways to coordinate with the LGBTQA office on this issues as well. The committee will return to these discussions.
- Jamie Nekich mentioned issues that had been discussed but not completed from last year including trying to establish a 'dream act' at U of I. Currently undocumented students who graduate from Idaho high schools are treated as international students and have to pay increased fees to attend college. Taya reported that 14 states have laws that eliminate the added fees if students meet specific criteria --- such as attending a state HS for at least 3 years and graduating. Among the states who have adopted Dream Acts are Utah and Washington.
- Jamie Nekich also encouraged the group to be thinking about any programming or education that might be of interest to be sponsored by Ubuntu. The idea of hosting/ co-hosting an educational event for implementing during the 2012-13 academic year was on the table last year. Also, Jamie Nekich has interest in getting to concept and philosophy of Ubuntu more and more into the vocabulary of the campus. Ideas about how this might will be another topic to explore further. We will keep active the idea of hosting/ co-hosting an educational event for implementing during the 2012-13 academic year.

The committee adjourned at 1pm. We will meet again the second week of October.