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## H&H Committee Mid October Meeting Details

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Date: Tue, 21 Oct 97 16:36:22 EDT  
From: Gary <GARYB@URIACC.URI.EDU>  
Subject: Minutes for H&H Meeting on 10/20/97  
To: Bill <wjb@URIACC.URI.EDU>

Minutes for the meeting of the Committee to Eliminate Homophobia and Heterosexism  
Monday, October 20, 1997

1. Meeting called to order at 12:00pm.
2. Minutes for the 10/6/97 meeting were approved with no changes
3. The following people were in attendance: Bill Bartels, Holly Nichols, Andrew Winters, Amy Black, Melissa Lovering, Casey Johnson, Marina, Gary Burkholder, Lois Cuddy, Al Lott, Carla Pickering and Brie Taylor. Laurie Johnson stopped in briefly, as she was administering flu shots.
4. Bill distributed a summary of the feedback comments from the survey and briefly reviewed the contents. A total of 15 responses were received from 27 mailed (snail mail or email) surveys. The discussion opened after this (I will apologize in advance if I left out critical information. I tried to be as meticulous as possible, but the conversation became intense at times)  
Lois: Gave a synopsis of her experience as a member of the committee. At the time of its origination, the student group was not meeting, and there was a need to address climate issues relevant to lgb persons. Her question was: has that function been met?, giving examples of OUTFLICKS, the Symposium, the Safe Zone Campaign, and the existence of an active student group. Perhaps the committee is no longer necessary.  
Andrew: There needs to be a stronger institutional commitment. Fluctuations in participation and attendance are exacerbated by volunteer efforts. There are is the disruption of the consonance caused by the question: In or Out? We need to look at the establishment of university commitment as a focus.  
Lois: Perhaps put this under the umbrella of the Multicultural Center?  
Andrew: Could be one way. There are other models out there that should be looked at.  
Lois: Why are there not more students participating on this committee? She posed the question to the alums sitting at the table. If students don't feel it is important, and faculty and staff have no time, then is the committee important or not important? Why are people here?  
Casey: When I came to school, there was lots of activity with the GLBTA. There were a great many things going on at that time. Now, in bringing up the experiences of the group last year, it becomes intimidating for a student. I never heard about H&H meetings until the symposium.  
Carla: I wasn't at the H&H at its inception, but I saw the brochure and the Safe Zone campaign. She can see why students might not know that we exist. If the committee went away, she isn't sure that the successes would remain. The committee serves as a means for all kinds of people to meet on these issues. There isn't much else to plug into. Maybe we need to redefine what the focus is.  
Amy: I remember being the only student. I pushed myself to go. I was scared to say anything. It was very intimidating. The group did a lot of things at the administrative level, and she didn't understand the dialogue that was going on much of the time. We need to discuss our goals. During the first year, I was pretty clear on goals. Now, I am not so clear.  
Lois: Originally, the committee was to let people know that this was a safe place, there would be support for those who chose to come out.  
Bill: Statement of purpose, we would all probably agree that it is valid. What are the specific goals? We get to program goals, people have good ideas but we don't have people with time and commitment to put the programs into place.

Amy: It still feels very isolating to be on the symposium subcommittee. Time is still a factor. If there were other things going on, then I wouldn't feel upset.

Lois: I felt the same way last year. Why am I doing this? Others aren't doing much.

Gary: About the symposium. I put so much time and effort into it, got little or no support. I felt bitter after it was over. Perhaps it should be discontinued as a committee function?

Casey: Frustrating to look forward to doing the symposium on my own. I am not comfortable about asking for help. I don't have experience, I am new. I just want people to help.

Andrew: Institutional commitment would help here. Let the symposium pass a year, and see if it has been missed.

Carla: Symposium is great, and it has gotten better and better. Do others not see what time is required? As wonderful as the symposium has been, this is not a vehicle meant to sustain it. Group maybe wasn't intended for this.

Holly: I've gotten institutional support. Asked for a clarification from Andrew.

Andrew: An institutionalized program dealing directly and solely for LGBT concerns, that would make decisions on how to apply budgetary moneys for LGBT efforts on campus.

Lois: There is a center for conferences on campus, there is a large fee associated with it that might prohibit its use. Can we do it? A suggestion to not send out the call for papers yet until we decide.

Casey: If the committee doesn't want to oversee, that's fine. But we need a brainstorm to understand where to go.

Lois: We should make a decision soon.

Amy: We need to come to agreement. As organizers, it is difficult. Even with the guides, each year we need to start from scratch.

Al: If postpone a year, it might lose momentum. We need to make a commitment to do it.

Lois: Maybe it won't happen, people will see what is going on. These two people are doing an impossible task.

This where I stopped taking notes, and the discussion focussed on the future of the symposium. There were a variety of viewpoints, from we need to make a commitment and do it to we should not do it and figure out what to do. There was general agreement that the decision ultimately belongs to Casey and Amy, and they are going to talk about this amongst themselves in more detail. There was some discussion about having a meeting next Monday, but there was no firm commitment to do so.

5. Meeting adjourned at 1:15pm. The next meeting is on November 3, 1997.

## Summary of H&H Questionnaire Results

Of 27 who have at one time or another attended H&H, there were 15 Responses (11 by e-mail, 3 by phone, one by snail mail). Of these, one said he would be at the meeting on 10/20/97 and give his responses there, and one (by phone) left no message.

### 1. Still interested?

Yes 12      No 1

### 2. Why/why not?

**YES** -- play vital role  
-- important  
-- people care enough to be active  
-- essential  
-- all the original reasons  
-- as long as there is focus and people w/ energy  
-- committee is like family and I believe in its goals  
-- believe in need for H&H.

**NO** -- Would like to be active, but must be realistic about other commitments.

### 3. If interested, but not attending, why?

-- scheduling conflicts  
-- have had to have other priorities - some personality issues - need more institutional commitment  
-- can't leave work  
-- work now on Bay campus  
-- on leave this year - scheduling conflicts last year  
-- no time given other responsibilities  
-- personal issues  
-- working on tight book deadline (for last three years!)  
-- attending has been difficult.

### 4. If scheduling is problem, when could you meet?

-- Not Friday  
-- Friday at 2  
-- TRF 11-2 are best - otherwise Mondays, late afternoon are possible.

### 5. How effective do you think H&H has been?

-- Successful considering the support we have had, need more fac., staff, student support  
-- Given our small support, we have accomplished an incredible amount in our 6 years  
-- Symposium has been good, we move slowly, effectiveness fluctuates  
-- not sure we're that effective anymore - maybe original objective are out of date or people are too busy, but if so continuation should be questioned  
-- fairly good - needs more participation from me and others to make it happen  
-- Symposium is getting better every year - not sure about other stuff  
-- not as much in last year or so as before.

other comments?

- disappointed, especially with faculty  
it might help to solicit ideas from past members and sympathetic supporters. I think we could get some fresh directions from them.
- I think we need to discuss what our goals are. We need more ideas, more programs, or even some PR of some sort. There are very few students on the committee, which may cause some students to stay away from the committee. Maybe some recruitment of new members (students, staff, and faculty) would be helpful. I feel like the committee is stuck, if it is going to last, we need to DO something. Maybe pick one issue a year to organize around. I think the committee and our members are wonderful and resourceful, so it would be a shame if it became defunct.
  - Through the years we have struggled with some terrific students, staff and faculty making our fight on campus one which is now recognized. Energy shifts, people come and go, but the need to keep H&H alive is essential. Could the immense planning and leadership of our annual symposium intimidate our membership because of its demands? Something I feel should be discussed.
  - is there a way to do outreach to new faculty/staff/students who might be interested?
  - Sorry I can't be more active.
  - I know of several new faculty, gay and straight, who are interested in learning more about the committee. I think, like all committees, one has to rely on new energy while former members make new choices about where they are putting their energy or try to replenish their energy (sorry, the metaphor is rather mechanical sounding.) I'll let these people know about the next meeting, and I hope this will affect the attendance. I think the committee might also consider working more actively with other related undergrad and university committees--either by having representatives on certain strategic committees or instead of having separate meetings all the time, combining meetings with groups whose goals are related.
  - Somebody who shall remain nameless said last year that meetings used to be more fun.... be that as it may, I think that more social things (must have opening/closing potlucks???).... bringing articles and items to meetings that people have spotted (our own little sharing time -- poking fun at self here), conversation, anecdotes --time for chat. The one thing I have noticed was that the experience of coming to meetings \*in and of itself\* used to me more nurturing because there was at least a little time for talking, sharing, free ranging ideas..... Just my 2 cents. As I began, I hesitate to offer input since I am unable to do much except moral support this year.....
  - plan to get back in next semester (though I will still be completing tasks for publication till about March.
  - Perhaps a periodic update of the organizations activities will help to include those who cannot physically attend the bimonthly meetings.