**Meeting Time**

January 19, 2024, at 2:30pm

**Location**

~~HCC 310~~ Meeting moved to Zoom format due to weather conditions/snow

**Attendees**

* Ginny Morriss, Assistant Professor of Biology, Chair of Committee
* Melissa Jones, Dean of Students/Associate VP of Student Affairs (ex-officio Committee Member)
* Juliette Landphair, Vice President for Student Affairs
* April Wynn, Associate Professor of Biology, Committee Member
* Randall Reif, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Physics, Committee Member
* Sushma Subramanian, Assistant Professor of Journalism, Committee Member
* Ashe Laughlin, Assistant Professor of Studio Art, Secretary, Committee Member
* Rachael Nolan, Student Committee Member
* Ravi Palat, Student Committee Member

**Guests**

* Alexander Ecklund, Guest Speaker, and Director of Office of Disability Services (ODR)

**Agenda item 1**

Introduction of our new committee member and guests

* Dr. Morriss opened the meeting by introducing committee member, Sushma Subramanian, Assistant Professor of Journalism, who is returning from leave
* Following, each committee member and guest present at the meeting introduced themselves
* Dr. Morriss introduced Alexander Ecklund (Alex), Guest Speaker and Director of Office of Disability Services (ODR)

**Agenda item 2**

Alec Ecklund provided the committee with a presentation highlighting the charge and responsibilities of the Office of Disability Resources (ODR)

* Alec began by introducing the following members of the ODR team with whom he works:
  + Jennifer Uber (juber), Associate Director of Disability Resources
  + Alena Yaseva (ayaseva), Access Consultant
  + Danielle Smith (dsmith24), Assistive Technology Coordinator
  + Greta Kratowicz (gkratowi), Operations & Testing Manager
  + Alec also spoke about ODR’s invaluable student workers
  + He relatedly mentioned that ODR has a full staff and invited committee members to stop by Seacobeck Hall 005 where ODR is located for a visit
* Alex then presented an overview of ODR and noting its’ services
  + Reviews documents, personal narrative and decides which accommodation may help and support students
  + To provide help and support to faculty if there are ever questions about ODR letters we receive and encourage faculty to contact his office if so
  + Serves as a leader on campus for Disability Rights and Human rights partnering with the James Farmer Center
* Alex then discussed the questions, “What is a Disability?”
  + A physical or mental impairment that limits one or more major life activities
    - ODR’s job is to navigate within a specific diagnosis what accommodations are proper and applicable for each student
    - Disability is not always obvious
* He then discussed that UMW has 635 Students currently who have an accommodation with ODR
  + Which is 15-17% of our students
    - Alex also said that there are few schools who have a ratio of students with disabilities this high
    - He then ranked the most common student accommodations, including:
      * Psychiatric
      * ADHD
      * Learning differences
      * Chronic illness
      * ASD (autism spectrum disorders)
      * Mobility
      * Hearing
      * Vision
* Types of Support most often sought by students through ODR
  + - * Testing accommodations
        + Quite location
        + Breaks
        + Added time on tests.
* Classroom accommodations
  + - * Recording
      * Note taking.
      * Using absence accommodations
* Programmatic Accommodations included
  + Reduced course load
  + Opting out of second language due to processing issues
* He then addressed the question: How and when can students access ODR services?
  + Anytime during student’s college career
    - ODR currently has 635 students and Alex expects to grow to about 680 by semester’s end.
* Students will fill out registration forms and receive notice from ODR that review of docs is occurring
* Students will then have a first appointment with an ODR counselor to discuss how accommodation might help a student’s academic career
* ODR accommodation(s) continues throughout student’s academic career at UMW and is automatically renewed
* This may be different from a student’s prior K-12 experience and is sometimes the source of confusion about their accommodation in college
* He then addressed how faculty and staff may help students on a day-to-day basis:
  + Exercise patience
  + Understanding
  + Flexibility
* He asked that we help support ODR
* At events and trainings
* Through Committees, departmentally and in the classroom
* Again, Flexibility is a most important
* Alex then opened the floor for questions (leaving 20 minutes) asking committee members to reflect on our perspectives related to the needs of our students:
* Dr. Reif mentioned that one of his classes had 12 of 48 students currently using accommodation with ODR and that this was not an atypical occurrence in his classes. He also related that it differed how students sought and or received accommodation and that a number of his students did not reach out to him regarding their accommodation, saying it would be helpful for both student and faculty to engage in that conversation.
* Alex said the student responsibility side is especially important. There is an auto renewal which notifies instructors each semester and every semester so students may not be aware that faculty have even been notified.
* Alex also noted that it would be a good idea for faculty to note correspondence and interactions with students related to their accommodation
* Dr. Morris remarked that many ODR students have varied understanding of what their accommodation actually provides them with, which is sometimes at odds with the individual accommodation letters we receive via email
* Ginny also asked how much consultation do students have after receiving their accommodation?
* Alex said that once they are approved, students are not bound to meet with ODR again.
* Also note that the longer they are at UMW the more students understand and can self-advocate for their accommodations.
* Alex also said that students sometimes misinterpret their accommodation to speaking with faculty.
* In which case, faculty should try to clarify how we interpret the student’s accommodation in relation to their specific course.
  + - If that does not resolve the issue, we should have students contact ODR to clarify.
* Alex spoke about some common misconceptions that students sometimes have about their accomodation:
* Exaggerate extended time on exams and or activities.
  + Does not mean that they have flexibility with deadlines automatically as that is a specific accommodation which must be made through ODR.
  + Alex stressed that time management is not the same as extended time on tests and that students may conflate the two.
* That their accommodation is automatic.
* Students must provide written and or anecdotal verification, and meet with ODR staff, prior to receipt of accommodation.
* ODR works with many students with executive function (ADHD) issues and the system they came from may have different accommodations and means of communication with faculty.
* Another common confusing issue is “quiet location for tests”.
* ODR does not guarantee a distraction free environment, most accommodations are for “reduced distraction”.
* Alex said that ODR has some ability to help administer testing, though that space is limited.
* Ginny asked how one may reserve this help as she also has a sizable number of ODR students.
  + Alex said that students can schedule with ODR. Follow website for contact. Students will need to contact ODR to get the ball rolling to begin the process for taking exam at his offices and that ODR will contact faculty about uploading exam as needed.
    - Gretta at ODR testing will return that finished exam to faculty member.
  + The average number of tests administered varies but ranges from 8 to 15 and he expects that when faculty see how successful this program is it may grow more than ODR has capacity in their new space at Secobeck.
* Alex polled student committee members to see if they have noticed any specific needs of students which are not being met and or if the support is well known to students.
* Ravi mentioned that they have noticed that students are more familiar with ODR in general and are aware of how accommodation may benefit them individually.

**Agenda Item 3**

Approval of November 2023 meeting minutes

* + Moved by Randall Reif
  + Seconded by Ginny Morriss
  + Approve – Unanimous consent.

**Agenda item 4**

Choosing speaking for our next meeting

* Dr. Morris asked if committee members had a preference of the following for guest speaker at our next meeting.
  + QEP representative or someone from Safe Zone
    - Randall suggested that we work with whomever is first available for the February meeting and arranging for the other to be speaker at the following meeting in March, if possible.
  + The committee concurred and Dr. Morris said they would contact the speakers and let us know who may attend and when.

**Agenda item 5**

Call for adjournment @ 3:37pm

**Copy of Presentation from ODR**

