Committee on Access for Persons with Disabilities Spring 2014 Meeting, April 1 2014

Present: Omar Al-Azzam, Matthew Simmons, David Danforth, Gary Willhite, Stacey Grunewald, Linnea Barton, Owen Williams, Laurie Wilson, Regrets: Miller, Cousins, Hannah, Wieland

Williams facilitated the meeting. Minutes from November COA were approved.

David Danforth updated the COA with regard to Facilities progress on the Physical Access Survey completed in spring of 2012 by Roberta Juarez, U of M System Accessibility Consultant. Danforth indicated that he will be working to meet not only the Federal standards but U of M standards. He has not had the chance to review all areas of the report, but indicated that designated science lab safety items are priority for this summer. Most are low cost, easy fixes. More substantial cost items in the report cannot be undertaken w/o more funding. Wilson reaffirmed Juarez’s recommendation to use the report to seek needed accessibility upgrade dollars and HEAPRA dollars where appropriate. UMC gets a very small percentage of system funds for these purposes. Wilson suggested that Danforth work with Brian Dingmann who was present when the access visit was done in the science labs as well as one of our students who uses a wheelchair to seek input regarding locations for adjustable height lab stations. Danforth also reported that recent changes to U of M processes now require that all building permits pulled be reviewed by Roberta Juarez.

**GOALS project (Gaining Online Accessible Learning through Self Study)** is still on the table and available to UMC as a benchmarking and planning tool for conducting a web accessibility self-study. COA reaffirmed its support for the GOALS effort and encouraged its review by Academic Affairs and IT with OSD sooner rather than later. Barton can provide additional info and answer questions. Wilson will seek to have it placed on the proper agendas for review this spring. The GOALS program comes out of the National Center on Disability and Access to Education. Engaging with this process would help UMC to develop a process for meeting established standards in electronic learning environments, build faculty instructional resources and contribute to the overall strategic planning process.

The recent U of M DS system meeting focused on accessibility standards and system compliance efforts with electronic learning environments. The U of M is just beginning to acknowledge the needs in these areas. Increasing litigation brought against universities across the U.S. regarding access concerns is motivating efforts to address vulnerabilities.

Constitution and Bylaws Committee provided feedback to COA on the request to add CAL as a member of the Committee on Access. Constitution and Bylaws asked for COA to have more discussion and suggested that the VCAA should be considered to help advance the accessibility agenda. This item will be carried forward for discussion once the new DS staff person is selected.

Wilson and Barton provided updates on training activity since the last meeting. Wilson answered a question related to admission of qualified students with disabilities. Students are admitted based on the same criteria as non-disabled peers and must also meet subsequent criteria for entrance into programs. At the time of admission to UMC, it might not be known if the student’s program choice is feasible and further exploration of that would be appropriate with the student.

Wilson and Barton submitted a compact request to fund training personnel from the U of Washington DO-IT project. Trainers are highly skilled with electronic learning and work to create communities of practice on a campus. It would be entirely compatible with knowledge gains from GOALS, but needs campus buy-in.

Update to reported staffing change as of 4/2/14: The .5 nine month OSD position being vacated by Wilson will be filled with a 1 FTE by combining the .5 nine month FTE currently held by Barton, whose current appointment will be changed in a yet unknown way. Some replacement of the counseling .5 FTE is expected but not confirmed. Barton is identified for temporary OSD transition coverage. No gain in either OSD or counseling seems planned.