

Committee on the Status of Women Recommendations, May 2004

I. Student Issues

Committee members have discussed student issues with undergraduate and graduate students, and staff from ASUN, GSA, Student Services, the Graduate School and the Office of International Students and Scholars. It is clear that a wide spectrum of issues needs to be addressed in order for women students to enjoy access to the full range of student activities offered on campus. Apparently students feel there is a disadvantage to being female, and leadership is still difficult for women students.

Classroom – Men are still called on more, women are more passive.

- Offer teaching seminars to train faculty to deal with gender differences in the classroom.

Advising – Undeclared students are often steered to traditionally female majors and are told that areas like biochemistry might be too rigorous. Students have to make their own suggestions if they want to do something unusual.

- Provide training materials to make advisors more aware of gender stereotyping.

Relationships – abusive relationships, both verbal and physical are common

- Increase information provided to all students about date rape and domestic violence.

Resources – students don't always know what is available

- Provide printed resource lists for students. Have a pop-up screen on E-Paws with resource list.
- Establish a hotline.
- Put a flier in with letters of acceptance sent to undergraduate students.

Emergency housing is not available for women without children

- Develop a system whereby the dormitories could provide emergency housing for a limited time to single students.

Students with Families

Child care is still a major barrier for students with families. They need access to child care with expanded hours, drop-in, and sick child care.

- Expand child care options available to students.

Parental and sick leave is not available for graduate assistants.

- Encourage supervisors to be as flexible as practicable when graduate students need time for pregnancies, childbirth or sick children.

Students who are nursing need space to breast feed and to pump milk in privacy.

- Ensure that buildings to be used by students, such as the new student union and the knowledge center, include areas where students can breast feed.

Driver's licenses issued to international students are limited to 4 years and they are not allowed for spouses. This presents major problems for spouses with small children.

- Work with the Nevada Legislature to modify restrictions for spouses with children.

Information – While a great deal of information is distributed to students, especially at orientation, students do not always absorb it. And there is insufficient information gathered from students while they are here or when they leave.

- Recruit more students for exit interviews, whether they leave before completing their studies or when they graduate.
- Recruit graduate students for exit interviews when they submit their theses or dissertations to the Graduate School.
- Develop statement on what constitutes exploitation of graduate assistants.

II. Faculty Issues

Sexual Harassment Policy – The current sexual harassment policy focuses primarily on ensuring that the institution is protected, instead of protecting complainants. It is important to recognize that protection of complainants is to the benefit of the institution. While it is appropriate for system counsel to be concerned about legal responsibilities and the rights of those alleged to have harassed other, as things stand now the complainant is given the least consideration.

- Establish support structures for any member of the campus community making an official complaint of discrimination or harassment.
- Require an end-of-year report on investigations, complaints and disposition of complaints from the Affirmative Action Officer.

Salary Equity Study – There are a number of questions regarding the salary equity study, most of which will need further information and analysis. Members of the Committee will be meeting with Gena Jones to discuss these issues, and will make specific recommendations after discussing them with her.

Recommendations from WISE (Women in Science and Engineering) Survey – Last summer 17 out of 24 WISE faculty filled out a questionnaire compiled by the Association for Women in Science to assess the professional climate of tenured/tenure track women faculty in science and engineering disciplines at UNR. The completed questionnaires were evaluated by Dr. Suzanna Rose at the Women's Studies Center, Florida International University. The survey revealed that equity issues were a concern to a number of faculty and that active programs to retain women in science and engineering were not in place. Four areas for improvement were identified, including the need for a more positive work environment with greater senior faculty mentoring and support, greater access to resources and skills training for research, more progressive policies concerning child and family issues, and stronger institutional leadership around equity and climate issues.

- Present results and recommendations to the provost and deans
- Have the Provost present the results of the survey, together with recommendations, to the Chairs and Directors.
- Post the results of the survey on the Diversity webpage for UNR.
- Follow the example of other US universities that not only have acknowledged that a gender equity problem exists in academia but have also taken steps to address the issue by implementing practices and policies to improve the professional climate for their female science and engineering faculty (e.g., workshops for senior administrators given by outside consultants providing insight into how either intentional or unintentional departmen-

tal and institutional practices play out in academia to the detriment of women faculty; discussion groups for deans and chairs, led by outside consultants, to emphasize how faculty diversification is important for enhancing, rather than diluting, the excellence of departments, and hence the institution; and long-term commitment to additional workshops and follow-ups).

- Carry out an externally-conducted evaluation and national rating of UNR's science and engineering departments to determine how well each is recruiting, retaining and professionally developing junior women faculty and preventing the undervaluing and short-changing of women faculty in their departments.
- Hold chairs and deans responsible for seeking solutions to increase diversity in their departments and colleges, and to fully develop all the creative talent available, regardless of gender.
- Require upward evaluations of all administrators, including evaluation of department chairs by faculty.

III. Safety

Some women students will not take evening classes because of problems with campus safety. Lighting on campus is still not adequate. The shuttle does not run late enough and doesn't go to the south end of campus. There is an inadequate number of emergency buttons. The safety subcommittee has provided a number of specific suggestions to the campus police department, which is following up on them. The following are more general issues.

- Look into having campus lighting with motion detector switches.
- Provide additional emergency buttons, especially in the parking garage.
- Extend evening times and routes for the shuttle.
- Provide more walking escorts for students in the dorms in addition to campus escort vehicles.
- Concentrate evening classes in a core group of buildings to make it easier to provide security after dark.
- Increase signs indicating location of emergency buttons and phones. There should be a sign at every entrance to buildings indicating the nearest campus emergency phone.
- Have a pop-up emergency button on the campus website giving directions and information.

Locked Offices – Janitorial staff are not allowed to re-open office doors for anyone, and campus police no longer assist if faculty members are inadvertently locked out of their offices. This means that anyone whose keys and ID are locked in their office after hours has no assistance available on campus, a potentially dangerous situation.

- Review current policies regarding access to offices after hours.

911 Dispatch – The use of a central dispatch system on 911 after hours is often difficult. Dispatchers are not always familiar with campus buildings and time is wasted trying to explain locations. This is especially problematic if the person calling is also not familiar with the campus.

- Either provide a campus dispatch center, or ensure that current central dispatchers have access to an accurate and up-to-date map of campus.