

WOMENS' STUDIES
ADVISORY BOARD RETREAT 9/20/2008 1:00-4:00pm
MINUTES

Meeting called to order in the WCTR programming room: 1:05pm

Attendees: M. Bernstein, M. Desai, A. Garey, B. Gurr, K. Holgerson, F. King, K. Labadorf, N. Naples, I. Semaan, E. Simien, C. Spurlock, H. Turcotte, Amy Milton (CWEALF Representative)

- 1) Welcome by M. Desai, WS Director and introductions of attendees
- 2) WS and OMIA Restructuring: OMIA will cease to exist after December 2008. The dismantling process began last summer when President Hogan announced that the cultural centers will fall under the newly created office of Assoc. Vice President of Diversity and Equity that will report to him. He also announced the appointment of Dana McGee to this new position. The academic institutes and international programs may likely fall under the jurisdiction of CLAS. A task force, originally formed by Ron Taylor to examine interdisciplinary studies, was charged by the Provost to make recommendations about possible structures to house the academic units of OMIA. The Task Force, chaired by Shirley Roe, will make its recommendations by December 2008. The task force is composed of the Directors of the Multicultural Institutes, Women's Studies, International Affairs, Center for Caribbean and Latin American Studies, and UNESCO-Chair; Margaret Lamb; Sam Martinez, and Ernie Zarekzadeh.

The WS faculty at its May 07 retreat had agreed to revisit moving into CLAS as a department. The taskforce is aware of this and hence has included this proposal in the various configurations.

Restructuring presents opportunities as well as challenges for WS, with the main challenges being the state budget cuts of 3.5% and the hiring freeze which prevents us from reopening our failed search from last year.

3) WS Board Reconstitution

With a new Director on board, the core faculty addressed several programmatic issues last year, one being the reconceptualization and reconstitution of the WS board from a Programming Board to an Advisory Board. The Advisory board will consist of core

faculty, affiliate faculty, one grad and undergrad representative, K. Labadorf (library liaison), Directors of WCTR (K. Holgerson) and The Rainbow Center (F. King), and two representatives from the larger CT community, i.e., from QUELF and PCSW. The board is composed of 5 sub-committees: strategic vision, curriculum, the annual conference, awards, and development. Each member of the board will join one or more of the sub-committees and recruit members from outside the board to assist them in meeting the goals of each sub-committee. The full Board will meet twice a year while the sub-committees will meet as needed to accomplish their goals.

3) Subcommittees and Plans for the Year

Strategic Vision Committee – In the immediate term, this committee will be responsible for thinking about the future of WS in the context of OMIA restructuring, the new Academic Plan, and the Diversity Plan.

The long term charge of the committee will be to provide strategic vision for the program in its new structural position.

The WS faculty will be meeting with the new Dean of CLAS on Oct. 6 to present him with their vision for WS and to hear his ideas.

Chair: Nancy Naples

Members: I. Semaan, A. Milton, M. Bernstein, M. Desai

Curriculum Committee – This committee will address current and future curricular changes and consolidations.

Its first task will be to complete the reorganization of the WS major into the 3 concentrations worked out by the core faculty: transnational feminism, sexualities, and health/science. These concentrations reflect the foci of the University as well as the interests of faculty including developing LGBT studies. It will also explore the possibilities of joint Masters with Professional Schools and a PhD program. Core faculty have already undertaken some research towards this end.

Chair: M. Breen appointed by unanimous decision

Members: M. McComiskey, F. King, H. Turcotte, K. Labadorf, N. Naples, M. Desai, I. Semaan, J. Linnekin (by email). N. Naples nominated Janet Barnes-Farrell and K. Libal as members.

Conference Committee – plan and help with the annual conference, including applying for funding, developing themes and list of keynote speakers.

Chair:

Members: B. Gurr, K. Labadorf, C. Spurlock

Awards Committee – will review the applications for the 3 annual undergraduate awards and two graduate awards, one research and one teaching, given by WS and present the awards at the annual graduation party.

Will also explore with the Development Committee future awards such as a Named Alumni Award (e.g., Swin Cash)

Chair: A. Garey

Members: K. Holgerson, E. Simien

Funding Raising/Development Committee – raise money through Foundation or fund raisers for awards, conference and particular programming. Suggestions were made to looking into funds with health focus (CT Health Fndn). E. Simien's partner is President of a fund raising committee—may be able to advise. Get alumni and Irene Brown involved.

Chair: M. Asencio appointed by unanimous decision

Members: F. Dussart (by email), K. Hurley

Additional discussions regarding:

- The possible WS move to CLAS 1) all affiliates were asked to promote WS's position about the reorganizing in their departments and on campus to both shape the conversation and to temper any possible resistance 2) Setting up a conversation with CLAS Dean to discuss the stability of the WS budget 3) Affiliate faculty were advised to address their concerns and support for WS directly to the Task Force Chair, Shirley Roe and 4) All core and affiliates of all Institutes and WS to meet and discuss ideas of future restructuring 5) Tapping into alumni and student energy for support.

- CLAS Dean's interest in consolidating departments into 4 areas; poverty and inequality, gender, popular culture and health.
- The C&C Committee meeting and President's plan to adjust courses to adapt to the 3.5% giveback; consolidating departments, "sunset" certain grad programs that graduate less than 6 PhD's/year, no additional courses, and reevaluation of gen eds with possible elimination of courses due to depts. competing for students. Also discussed was the .5% portion of the rescission going back to the President for honors program.
- Talk around campus about forming a grad student union and that it should be supported by faculty. Grads are feeling vulnerable at the time and aren't actively pursuing a union.
- Organizing a subcommittee or a possible goal of an existing committee to pursue a Women's Studies Oral History Project.
- M. Desai to update Board/Core/Affiliates on task force meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 3:05pm