

The UW-L response to the report of the Committee on the Status of Women in the University of Wisconsin System entitled “Equality for Women in the University of Wisconsin System: A Focus for Action in the Year 2000” was compiled through the efforts of several groups including: Women’s Advisory Council, Organization of Campus Women, ALANA (Asian-American, Latino, African-American, and Native American Association), Women’s Studies Department Chair, Human Resources office, Affirmative Action Officer, Provost and Deans’ offices. In order to streamline the efforts of these groups, a small working group of four comprised of Jennifer Wilson, Human Resources Executive Director, Al Thompson, Assistant to the Chancellor for Affirmative Action and Diversity, Sandy Krajewski, Chair of Women’s Studies, and Dorothy Zeisler-Vralsted, Assistant to the Provost/Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs prepared the enclosed progress report.

The UW-L progress report was written to address the “five principal areas where further progress is needed at both the UW System and institutional level” and include:

1. Educational Opportunities for Women Students
2. Hiring, Promotion and Retention of Women Faculty, Academic Staff, and Classified Staff
3. The Learning and Working Environment
4. Balancing Work and Personal Life
5. Organizational Structure

Educational Opportunities for Women Students

According to the statistics provided by the Director of Institutional Research, the

number of women students at UW-L has increased consistently over the past four years. Specific colleges are active in recruiting female students and furthering their graduate training. The College of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Teacher Education (HPERTE) has cultivated a relationship with two historically Black colleges and universities (South Carolina State University and Claflin University) resulting in positive placements for Black women graduates from our campus. Two of UW-L's Master of Science level graduates are now employed at these two universities and both are actively pursuing their doctoral degrees. In addition, HPERTE has four Black female graduate students enrolled from the two South Carolina institutions mentioned above.

In a further attempt to provide educational opportunities for women at UW-L, "The Diversity Strategic Plan" contains a strategy that states "All UW-L faculty and staff will be able to further their education, whether it pertains to career development or not. The university will support its employees who choose to further their education." In order to ensure the implementation of this strategy, the Executive Director of Human Resources shall provide a report to the Women's Advisory Council covering tuition fee reimbursement and academic/non-academic tuition remission for the past academic year and summer session. Deans and Division Officers are not limited to this policy in providing educational assistance to women faculty in their departments. Many of the Deans have found other ways to encourage and support professional development including professional development grants and support to conferences such as those hosted by UW System Women in Science Program.

An important educational program for students on campus, especially women, is our Women's Studies Department. In the program's 25 years of operation, fourteen of

those with department status, Women's Studies currently has 50+ minors, an extensive list of course offerings, an active Women's Studies Student Association, a recently renovated Resource Center and its thirteen year old, award winning Self-Sufficiency Program which prepares low-income students to succeed in higher education.

Additionally, the Department offers a variety of gender-focused multicultural events including its year-long Multicultural Women's Film Festival. Women's Studies attributes its success to strong campus support including a visible, accessible Department suite alongside other academic programs in Wimberly Hall. The Department Chair receives a half-time release, the highest percentage of release time of the four-year comprehensives.

The university also participates in the Women in Science Program which helps science faculty to develop and creatively use pedagogical techniques that encourage learning for both genders.

In an effort to attract future women students in the sciences, the College of Science and Allied Health has sponsored a program, "Girls in Science." This is the second year for the annual program which consists of two days of workshops for girls who have just finished grades 6-8. The girls participate in several hands-on activities from a variety of science and mathematics fields. UW-L faculty and staff teach the 2.5-hour workshops. UW-L students work as assistants in the workshops and as resident assistants. The class sizes are small to allow a higher degree of interaction between the students and instructors. The purpose of the grant is to nurture the scientific interests and talents of the girls at a time when research shows they are in danger of hiding their ability and losing their interest and confidence.

Hiring, Promotion and Retention of Women Faculty, Academic and Classified Staff

In the “Diversity Strategic Plan for the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, 1999-2008,” Goal #1 states “Represent women in the UW-La Crosse workforce in proportion to their current availability in relevant job pools. In addition, work to increase their future availability as potential employees.” Individual colleges have responded to this goal as the College of Science and Allied Health has hired 11 women in tenure-track positions over the past two years. The College of Health, Physical Education, and Teacher Education has hired eight women within in tenure-track appointments over the past three years.

In the area of administration, the Colleges have also responded to increase the experiences of women in administration, often using interim positions to provide supportive administrative roles for women to develop skills and exposure as possible permanent administrators. The Dean of the College of Science and Allied Health appointed a woman faculty member as Interim Assistant to the Dean for the 2000-01 academic year. The Provost/Vice Chancellor appointed a woman faculty member as Interim Dean last year for the College of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Teacher Education. The Dean of the College of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Teacher Education appointed a woman as Interim Associate Dean, a woman to assist with graduate student recruitment and retention (this position also acts as a diversity facilitator within the Office of Affirmative Action), and a woman to serve as the Director of Student Teaching and Internships. These three appointments were all made in the 2000-01 academic year. In the College of Liberal Studies, one of the two Associate Deans is a woman and this year’s interim position is also filled by a woman. Also in the

College of Liberal Studies, five of the thirteen department chair positions are held by women.

During the past year, UW-L has lost several senior women administrators due to retirement and/or new job opportunities. These included the Chancellor, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Information Officer, and the Interim Dean in the College of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Teacher Education. With several searches completed, we can report that one senior administrative role was filled by a woman. This was the Dean of Student Development and Academic Services. At the mid-management level, while UW-L lost a woman in the role of Director of Career Services, her interim replacement is a woman. Further, the male director of Multicultural Student Services has been replaced with a female director (African American).

Promotion statistics for women faculty over the past two years indicates a steady career advancement.

1995-1996	4 women promoted to associate professor 7 males promoted to associate professor 1 woman promoted to professor 6 males promoted to professor
1996-1997	3 women promoted to associate professor 2 males promoted to associate professor 1 woman promoted to professor 4 males promoted to professor
1997-1998	3 women promoted to associate professor 5 males promoted to associate professor 4 women promoted to professor 4 males promoted to professor
1998-1999	3 women promoted to associate professor 7 males promoted to associate professor

	1 woman promoted to professor
	4 men promoted to professor
1999-2000	4 women promoted to associate professor
	5 men promoted to associate professor
	2 women promoted to professor
	2 men promoted to professor

Promotion for Classified employees is tightly regulated by Department of Employee Relations (DER) rules. Classified employees on our campus are notified of State promotional exams that are required for classified promotions to new positions. When applicants are certified by the Department of Employee Relations (DER) for promotional positions, the certification list is expanded for women where the vacant position's classification is underutilized for women (more women are added to list of applicants to be interviewed). When classified staff and supervisors talk about promotion they often incorrectly identify the reclassification process as promotion. DER does not consider position reclassification as a promotional opportunity. It is instead a case of classified positions experiencing changes in duties and increased responsibilities resulting in reclassification of the position to a higher level if appropriate. Most classified women on campus are classified in the Administrative Support Classification series. This classification series is currently being reviewed by DER to update the classification specifications and to determine the appropriate pay for the group.

Academic staff women have assumed a leadership role as the Chair of the Academic Staff Council for the last two years has been a woman. Also, academic staff positions have increasingly been filled by women. The number of academic staff members that are female are 52.8 percent of the total academic staff.

Although UW-L does not have a formal mentoring program in place, Dr. Betsy Morgan, Chair of the Psychology Department, has begun sending first and second year faculty a kind of “Everything You Need to Know about How to Succeed at UW-L, but *were Afraid to Ask*” series of informational email messages. This informal mentoring has been under the guidance of the Provost’s office and is in response to a need for a wider network of colleagues outside of the traditional departments. (The need for a broader community of peers is particularly important for women faculty and faculty of color.) Short in length, they take on topics like UWS and UW-L retention requirements, what to do if a student plagiarizes, campus rules about final examinations, etc. This unique approach to exposing faculty to campus rules in a gradual and timely (retention information given a month before the portfolios are due) fashion, allows newer faculty to learn what they need to know as they go instead of during new faculty orientation. It also is an opportunity for newer faculty to ask questions of someone outside their major department, something that is valuable for a variety of reasons. For many faculty, UW-L is their first academic appointment after graduate school and receiving information in an ongoing exchange throughout the semester can be very important to their success.

The Provost office has started monthly socials for new and probationary faculty in the 2000-01 academic year. The socials are another opportunity for new faculty to establish networks outside their departments with their peers. Organizers of the socials have established childcare during the socials thus encouraging the attendance of faculty with families. Again, the need for a wider community of peers is of especial importance for women faculty and faculty of color.

The Learning and Working Environment

Goal #2 in the “Diversity Strategic Plan for the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, 1999-2008” states “Foster institutional environments and course development that enhance learning and a respect for gender diversity.” The university response to the goal has been to hire a campus trainer and facilitator whose responsibilities include training, facilitating, and coordinating diversity training resources; collaborating with off-campus resources; surveying and analyzing needs; maintaining compliance with all requirements; and maintaining a cooperative relationship with the Office of Student Development and the Office of Affirmative Action and Diversity.

Other examples of an improved learning environment include the research grants awarded to women faculty in which the College of Liberal Studies has awarded 10 grants (out of a total of 17) over the past 3 years to women faculty. Within the College of Science and Allied Health, the Dean informally surveyed female professors about climate and the consensus was that climate for women in the college had improved and was continuing to improve. One of the faculty members commented on the Dean’s recent appointment of a female Assistant to the Dean instead of another white male. Several of the faculty noted the support from the Dean’s office over the last three years in making certain that females and minorities were interviewed for vacant positions. In other colleges, efforts to improve the learning and working environment included granting leaves and stopping the tenure clock to accommodate pressing family concerns.

The Organization for Campus Women at UW-L is a 20 + year old group that provides opportunities for networking and information sharing, leadership training and social gatherings for women across ranks on campus. Faculty, academic staff and

classified women come together several times a semester for educational programs on subjects of interest across ranks.

Balancing Work and Personal Life

An ad hoc Chancellor's Family Friendly Committee was created in 1996 in response to a proposal from two female faculty members to survey the campus on their perceptions of the family-friendliness of the campus. The survey work group was expanded to include women and men faculty and academic staff. As a result of the survey report, the Human Resources office initiated a Family Friendly web site (<http://perth.uwlax.edu/ff/ff-home.html>) for potential or current employees, providing a copy of the report, broad resources, policies, and web links. The evaluation by the UW-L four-member Family Friendly Committee and the Chancellor's Women's Advisory Council, as well as unsolicited feedback from campus, has been very positive. The site is updated periodically with new links and information. It is also a direct link from the UW-L vacancy listings web page and the Human Resources home page. The Family Friendly Committee serves as an advocate for family issues in the workplace.

At the request of the committee, the Provost and Chancellor are supporting the attendance of four faculty at the College and University Work/Family Association Conference, entitled "Focus on Women Faculty." After attending the conference, these UW-L faculty work with the Family Friendly Committee and other campus groups to develop and host a conference at UW-L to examine family issues such as working mothers, domestic partner considerations, multicultural definitions of family obligations, and elder care. Other efforts to balance work and personal life include creative maternity

leaves as well as arranging family leaves for new, untenured women faculty and subsequently extending the tenure clock.

Organizational Structure

In 1992, the Chancellor created the Women's Advisory Council that reports directly to the Chancellor regarding issues for women that develop on campus. The committee consist of members appointed by the Chancellor and represent all four major classifications (student, faculty, academic staff, classified), the Affirmative Action officer, Organization of Campus Women chair, Vice Chancellor, and Chancellor. Appointments are made for three-year terms with staggered terms. The functions of the council are to raise issues regarding women, study the issues and problems, and make recommendations for action. The Council's contributions to Plan 2008 are reflected in this document.

Areas of Concern

While there are many positive indicators of women approaching equality on campus, there are also several areas that the university might address in the future. The campus should seek to fill vacant senior administrative positions with females. The institution has recognized this and began to address the situation through the creation of administrative internships, grooming women for leadership roles through appointments at the mid-management level, and the development of non-credit bearing courses on women in leadership, to name a few initiatives.

Paralleling the low numbers of women in senior administration are low numbers of female representation in key campus committees. Committees such as Faculty Senate, Senate Executive, Committee on Committees, Joint Promotion, Joint Planning and

Budgeting, Graduate Council, and Bylaws provide faculty with leadership opportunities whether through serving as chair or undertaking a key committee charge. Further, for those female faculty members unable to become chair in an especially male-dominated department, committee membership provides campus visibility in addition to leadership opportunities. The role of department chair is difficult to duplicate but key committees can keep someone competitive in administrative searches. The fact that female membership on important committees appears to be on the decline in light of increasing numbers of women on campus signals a potential problem that should be tracked quantitatively and qualitatively.

One last area of concern is placing [recently hired, assistant professor] female faculty in administrative positions before promotion and tenure. While the placing of these female faculty in leadership roles is to be commended, a balance needs to be struck between the academic goals of teaching and scholarship and administrative demands.