

In September 1998, Katharine Lyall, University of Wisconsin System President created an ad hoc Committee on the Status of Women in the University of Wisconsin System. In October 1999, the committee responded with an extensive report and five broad recommendations to be implemented at each individual institution and at the System level.

- 1. Expand educational opportunities for women students** by, e.g., establishing activities and programs that attract and retain more women students to math, science, engineering, and technology fields; developing new initiatives to help women take advantage of changes in technology and increasing globalization; and ensuring access to higher education for women who are disadvantaged by economic or family circumstances.
- 2. Increase the hiring, promotion, and retention of women faculty, academic staff, and classified staff**, by e.g., expanding the recruiting and mentoring of women faculty; improving professional development activities and career ladders for academic staff and classified staff women; and developing leadership opportunities for women to move into administration.
- 3. Make the learning and working environment more welcoming to women, and especially women of color and women who identify as lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered**, by, e.g., developing workshops and training sessions for members of the University community, beginning with administrators, managers, and supervisors; reviewing and improving the system of reporting and responding to complaints of discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence; and establishing a wider system of supports for women students and employees throughout the UW System.
- 4. Provide conditions that allow for balancing work and personal life**, by, e.g., expanding and improving childcare services and access to them; developing a more flexible workplace through flex-time, job-sharing, and equitable implementation of family leave policies; and providing domestic partner benefits such as life insurance, health insurance, retirement survivor benefits, and sick leave.
- 5. Create an effective organizational structure for improving the status of women in the University of Wisconsin System** by establishing a UW System office on the status of women; supporting the establishment of committees on the status of women

at each UW institution; and mandating that each institution develop by January 2001 a plan that addresses the key areas for progress identified in this report.

In cooperation with this last recommendation, Carol Sue Butts, Provost of UW-Platteville created an ad hoc committee to study the environment for women at UWP. Following is UWP's Status of Women committee's report on programs that are already in place at UWP and on suggested programs to enhance the campus climate for women, focusing in turn on each of the 5 recommendations from the System report.

1. **Expand educational opportunities for women students**, by, e.g., establishing activities and programs that attract and retain more women students to math, science, engineering, and technology fields: developing new initiatives to help women take advantages of changes in technology and increasing globalization; and ensuring access to higher education for women who are disadvantaged by economic of family circumstances.

## **PROGRAMS IN PLACE TO EXPAND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN**

Engineering is a thriving program at UWP, and while the ratio of women to men in these majors is still low, it is increasing. Much credit for this is attributed to UWP's **Women in Engineering Program** which is headed by Tammy Salmon who is in a half-time position as Director. The program is located within the College of Engineering, Mathematics, and Science and provides support to women enrolled in the college through a variety of programs and services. An information network has been developed through the **Mentor Program** and a local chapter of **The Society of Women Engineers (SWE)**. This network provides the opportunity to:

- \*meet with other students and professional men and women;
- \*learn professional skills;
- \*develop friendships with other students;
- \*learn how to make the transition from college to a professional job;
- \*learn how to help themselves and others;
- \*learn interviewing techniques;
- \*learn about campus resources;

- \*learn about harassment and equality in the workplace, with respect to the issues of both men and women;
- \*work one-on-one with an academic advisor;
- \*develop leadership experience and skills.

**The Women in Engineering Program** provides outreach to both young men and women to increase their awareness of the opportunities available to them within the engineering profession. The Director and engineering students visit grade, middle, junior, and high schools to discuss career options within the engineering profession. The outreach presentations are designed to be highly interactive and informative to any age group.

**The Women in Engineering Program** also offers two, one-day career days where activities and discussions of the day are designed to introduce young women in high school to the engineering profession. Professional women engineers and current UW-Platteville engineering faculty and students facilitate the program. Students have the opportunity to interact with other high school and college students who have similar interests, to learn about different engineering professions, and to participate in a design project that emulates the engineering process.

**The Women in Engineering Summer Institute** is a one-week interactive summer residence program designed to give female students the opportunity to visit one of the top engineering schools in the country. Students are introduced to the many fields of engineering and learn about some of the job skills that may be required in the various engineering disciplines. Students work in teams with UWP professors, UWP alumni, professional engineers, and UWP engineering students. Highlights of the 2000 Summer Institute include visiting John Deere Dubuque Works, Miller Brewing, Rockwell Automation, Harley Davidson, and Waukesha Engine. Students also participated in taking a computer apart, creating a marble launcher, and learning about how an engine works.

**The Chapter of the Society of Women Engineers** has been quite active on the UW-Platteville campus. In 1999/2000, the paid membership increased from 45 members to 60. In 1997, the membership was as low as 25 members. **SWE** is involved in a variety of activities such as visits to the Dubuque Schools to talk about engineering with 5th graders, helping local girl scouts earn a badge, and bringing speakers from places such as Miller Park to UW-Platteville for lectures. Recently, the **Women in Engineering Program** received funds from Alliant Energy and Madison Gas and Electric Co. to create a **Mentor Center**. The Center will be utilized by potential students, current students, and alumni. It will provide:

- \*a consistent location for formal and informal meetings
- \*a resource library with textbooks, exam files, professional literature, periodicals and employment opportunities

- \*a place to promote current women engineering students and visibility for women alumni accomplishments, both professionally and personally
- \*program space for women in engineering precollege programs (i.e., Career Day and Summer Institute)
- \*daily study and tutoring facility for current students and a relaxed environment for socializing and networking with alumni
- \*an on-line mentoring web site, laptop computer with accessories to use for outreach presentations, lockers, and storage area

The implementation of the **Mentor Center** will assist in recruiting high quality women students, providing support to current women engineering students, and provide recognition to the accomplishments of alumni. These goals will ultimately lead to an increased network of women engineers and place more women into engineering positions. An existing area in Ottensman Hall near the Engineering departments has been chosen to house the Center.

UW-Platteville has a program in **Women's Studies** headed by Dr. Laura Wendorff to whom the University gives a .25 appointment as Program Director. To fulfill general education requirements all students must complete a course that is designated as a gender studies course. This requirement is in addition to the mandated ethnic studies requirement. Insofar as we know, UW-P is one of the only campuses in the UW System to require all students to complete coursework in gender studies. Students may minor or achieve a certificate in Women's Studies. In 1999, the **Women's Studies Program** received a grant to make the database **Gender Watch** accessible through the University Library web site. The data base provides information and access to educational materials in women's studies.

The Office of Continuing Education offers **Expanding Your Horizons**, a non-campus program to 7th and 8th grade girls. This 8-hour program provides an opportunity for girls to explore career opportunities. Continuing Education in partnership with UW-Extension also sponsors **Connections** for women on campus and in the Platteville community. **Connections** is a once a month luncheon series that includes programs of interest to women.

Courses taught by means of **alternative delivery** such as Extended Degree (print-based), on-line, and interactive television allow many women who are time and/or place bound to take courses without having to commute to campus.

The Athletic Office offers a workshop on **Women in Leadership** for women athletes. In addition, the office sponsors sports camps for women during the summer months.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN**

- \*Investigate the benefits of increasing the number of evening course offerings and expanding course offerings to weekends to promote access for nontraditional women students
- \*Publicize the Women's Studies Program minor and certificate through such strategies as flyers, interviews through campus media, reserving a section of women's studies for freshmen (male and female) during summer registration so that students may be exposed to the program early in their careers,
- \*Evaluate the number, variety, and accessibility of Women's Studies courses to underclassmen (male and female)
- \*Review existing courses for those that might meet requirements to be added to the list of courses acceptable to fulfill general education gender studies requirement
- \*Encourage faculty to include a gender component/unit in existing courses where this would be appropriate
- \*Explore the possibility of expanding the Women's Studies Program to a major perhaps through collaboration with other system campuses
- \*Implement a program to support nontraditional women returning to college to complete degrees
- \*Encourage the remaining two colleges to reevaluate position assignment in order to establish half-time recruitment positions similar to the Director of Women in Engineering in the College of EMS  
*the persons in these positions would carry out activities and programs focusing on programs in which women are underrepresented (e.g., Computer Science, Criminal Justice)*

Worthy of note, the School of Education is considering a similar program to recruit and retain men, specifically men of color.

- 2. Increase the hiring, promotion, and retention of women faculty, academic staff, and classified staff,** by e.g., expanding the recruiting and mentoring of women faculty; improving professional development activities and career ladders

for academic staff and classified staff women; and developing leadership opportunities for women to move into administration.

## **PROGRAMS IN PLACE TO INCREASE HIRING, PROMOTION, AND RETENTION OF WOMEN**

Dean Richard Shultz of the College of Engineering, Mathematics, and Science has conducted several **focus groups** with women faculty and staff. From the initial meeting he gleaned categories of sexist behavior that the women experienced within the college environment. He sent a memo to the entire college faculty and staff listing these behaviors with anonymous examples for clarity and credibility. His cover memo was not accusatory but ended by encouraging the readers to read the memo carefully and engage in open communication with colleagues regarding these issues. The issue was also discussed at a faculty meeting of the entire college. Dean Shultz continues to meet with the women faculty and staff to keep the lines of communication open.

Senior women faculty have established a **women's email distribution list**. It is serving as an informal communication network for disseminating information. One use that garnered immediate results was announcing the names of women faculty and staff who were interested in specific faculty governance positions. The first year that the distribution list was active the number of women on the Faculty Senate increased from 3 of 16 to 9 of 16. The number of women on most other governance bodies, while still under 50% has grown significantly since the institution of the women faculty distribution list.

In addition, the email networking has led to **informal social gatherings** for female faculty and staff several times each semester. Such gatherings have allowed women across campus to become acquainted, to feel more connected, and "at home" at UWP.

Dean Sally Standiford of the College of Liberal Arts and Education has established a **Support Staff Luncheon** which occurs several times each semester. At least one of the lunches is paid for by the dean while the others are "brown bag lunches" with the college providing beverages and desserts. Some of the luncheons are strictly social; others are forums during which support staff are able to discuss common problems and solutions. Still others include a formal program on issues such as women's health and investing for retirement. Several of the support staff have indicated that while they have worked in the same college for many years, they have never met.

They also indicate that the luncheons increase morale by making them feel recognized and appreciated and by giving them an opportunity to have the dean's ear.

All new faculty are assigned **mentors** for at least their first year on campus. Research indicates distinct advantages to women and persons of color being mentored by women and persons of color respectively. A new mentoring program is being established that will attempt to match new women faculty with senior women faculty, new faculty of color with senior faculty of color.

**The Patricia Doyle Women's Center** headed by Theresa Johnson in a half-time position as Director provides a gathering place for men and women on campus. The Center serves as a source of information about women's issues and sponsors numerous events during the year such as the **Women's Night Out**. This event gave women an opportunity to learn yoga, relaxation, to enjoy massage therapy, to get blood pressure and cholesterol checked, to participate in an Indian drum circle, and to learn swing dancing. In addition the **Women's Center** sponsors a reception for new women faculty and staff each semester.

Though the ratio of women to men on campus in full-time faculty and administrative positions is low, it is increasing. Women fill the positions of Provost, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Education, Assistant Deans of all three colleges, Director of the School of Agriculture, and Chairs of 3 academic departments. In addition, the directors of Multicultural Services, the Student Success Center, and Housing are women. (See Appendix A)

## **SUGGESTIONS TO INCREASE HIRING, PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF WOMEN**

Presently the Affirmative Action Officer is a .5 position with a .5 assistant and a .5 LTE (Limited Term Employee) who works with statistical information. The officer is also the University Personnel Officer. Therefore the committee makes the following suggestions:

- \*hire a full-time Affirmative Action Officer to raise awareness of women's issues, to increase visibility and communicate importance of the position and the seriousness with which UWP takes women's (as well as minority) issues, to prevent the appearance for potential conflict of interest that may exist when the personnel officer and Affirmative Action Officer are the same person, among other duties this officer would:
- \*provide consistent leadership, continuity, and a "home base" for women's issues
- \*provide continuing education on sexual harassment

- assertiveness training skills for responding to harassment for men and for women
- continual training for department chairs, DRB chairs, and Search and Screen chairs regarding Affirmative Action and sexual harassment
- review and evaluate the mechanisms in place to create accountability and insure compliance with existing policies and laws pertaining to flex time, family leave, tenure clock, promotion and other issues

\*reinstate the position of Assistant to the Chancellor for Women’s Issues who among other duties would:

- oversee the University Women’s Council, charging them with the yearly gathering of descriptive data and anecdotal evidence regarding the campus environment, monitoring change, and making suggestions for improvement
- in collaboration with the Teaching Excellence Center, educate and encourage women faculty to apply for grants from internal and external sources

\*hire a consultant to look at salary equity issues

**3. Make the learning and working environment more welcoming to women, and especially women of color and women who identify as lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered,** by, e.g., developing workshops and training sessions for members of the University community, beginning with administrators, managers, and supervisors; reviewing and improving the system of reporting and responding to complaints of discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence; and establishing a wider system of supports for women students and employees throughout the UW System.

**PROGRAMS IN PLACE TO MAKE THE ENVIRONMENT MORE WELCOMING TO WOMEN**

The Student Activities Board at UWP has established governance positions to enhance the campus environment for women and for students of color. **Directors of Women’s Issues** and

**Diversity Issues** are Cabinet Members. Each of these directors chairs committees charged with providing programs for and about women and persons of color.

The Office of Student Affairs requires regular programming in the Residence Halls. Students involved in the **SHARE program (Student Housing Advocates for a Rape-free Environment)** speak to hall residents regarding sexual assault. During new student orientation and freshmen summer registration sessions on diversity and safety issues are presented.

Other previously mentioned resources such as the **general education requirement of a course in gender and a course in ethnic studies**, as well as the **Women's Center** serve to enhance student's understanding and tolerance of those different from themselves.

One popular course that meets the general education gender studies requirement is **Women and Health**. One unit covers health concerns for women who identify as lesbian or bisexual.

#### **SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN**

- \*Expand the student programs to include programming for faculty and staff to decrease sexism, racism and to increase tolerance of alternative lifestyles
- \*Create new and update existing faculty and staff lounges which might increase a feeling of community
- \*Provide a unit on sexual health within the required general education course Fitness and Assessment that includes information regarding sexual health issues for students who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual

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| <p><b>4. Provide conditions that allow for balancing work and personal life</b>, by, e.g., expanding and improving childcare services and access to them; developing a more flexible workplace through flex-time, job-sharing, and equitable implementation of family leave policies; and providing domestic partner benefits such as life insurance, health insurance, retirement survivor benefits, and sick leave.</p> |
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#### **PROGRAMS IN PLACE FOR BALANCING WORK AND PERSONAL LIFE**

The UW-P nationally accredited **Children's Center** is a beautiful new facility that provides inexpensive high-quality day care to children of students, faculty, staff, and community members. It provides flexible scheduling and a supportive environment for children and parents

which in turn enhances access to educational and employment opportunities for women, minority families and nontraditional students. The center served 65 children ages two through six during the 1999-2000 school year. There are presently 16 children on a waiting list to be enrolled.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR PROVIDING CONDITIONS THAT ALLOW FOR BALANCING WORK AND PERSONAL LIFE:**

- \*Coordinate a collaboration among UWP, the Platteville Community, and the UWP Foundation to establish continuing funding for the Children's Center that would allow for a possible facility expansion, increased hours, and infant care
  - encourage local day care providers to be licensed in infant care through scholarships for necessary courses, extension programs, or other incentives
  - Work with local area resources to explore the possibilities of establishing an infant care facility in the Platteville community. These resources might include:
    - Platteville Business Incubator
    - The Small Business Development Center
    - Platteville Area industrial Development Corporation(PAIDC)
  
- \*Ongoing programming that helps all faculty but specifically single faculty and staff to network with others
  - Campus clubs and special interest groups that are housed and advertised on campus similar to student organizations*
  - Increase the number of college, department, university social events for faculty and staff*
  
- \*Encourage working units to evaluate workload as they take on new programs, duties, or initiatives to eliminate outdated, unnecessary programming so that faculty and staff do not become consumed by their jobs
  
- \*Avoid overburdening single faculty and staff, or those without children, while maintaining an effort to accommodate faculty and staff with children

**5. Create an effective organizational structure for improving the status of women in the University of Wisconsin System** by establishing a UW System office on the status of women; supporting the establishment of committees on the

status of women at each UW institution; and mandating that each institution develop by January 2001 a plan that addresses the key areas for progress identified in this report.

### **PROGRAMS IN PLACE IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE TO IMPROVE THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE UW-SYSTEM**

Women from UWP have participated in and reaped benefits from System Programming such as the **Women's Consortium**, the **UWS Women in Science Program**, and the **Women's Leadership Conference**. Allowing probationary faculty to **stop the "tenure clock"** for family leave is a valuable option to faculty with unexpected responsibilities at home.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:**

- \*Raise awareness of family leave among faculty and staff
- \*Implement measures to increase Exit Interview participation

**In closing**, the University of Wisconsin-Platteville has numerous programs already in place to improve the status of women on campus. We need to share our ideas within our own community so that others on campus may take advantage of what has already proven successful. For example, the Women in Engineering Program in the College of Engineering, Mathematics and Science is highly successful and should be modeled in the Colleges of Business, Industry, Life Science and Agriculture (BILSA) and Liberal Arts and Education (LAE).

Student Governance and Student Affairs have a tradition of programs on Women's Issues and on Diversity Issues with administrators and student governance officers charged with such continuing training and consciousness raising. Faculty and staff governance and administration could model similar programming.

Obviously, many of these initiatives require resources, specifically, additional personnel. Current restrictions on allocation of positions make providing additional personnel difficult. We encourage a consideration of a System-wide initiative to improve the status of women that would include increased allocations of positions for such personnel. With this in mind, our strongest

recommendation is to hire college and university personnel whose job it is to help us improve our campus environment for women and thereby improve it for everybody.