

## Introduction and Background

The University of Wisconsin System Initiative on the Status of Women was a one-year project designed to evaluate all aspects of university life as they relate to the status of women students, staff, faculty, and administrators. President Katharine Lyall appointed two ad hoc committees to carry out the Initiative's work. The Committee on the Status of Women conducted a study of employment, including hiring and retention; academic and curricular initiatives; classroom and campus climate; and services available to members of the university community. (Such a study was last undertaken by the 1980 System Task Force on the Status of Women.) The Steering Committee on the Leadership Institute held a pilot summer institute in the summer of 1999.

In its final report, the Committee on the Status of Women identified four key areas of concern: educational opportunities for women students; hiring, retention and promotion of women employees; learning and work environment; and balancing work and personal life. They recommended that each individual institution establish and support a committee on the status of women and that each institution develop a plan to address each area by January 2001.

At UW-Stout, an Equality for Women Steering Committee was formed in August 2000. This steering committee includes representation from faculty, academic staff, classified staff and students. Four subcommittees were established to address each of the four key progress areas. Each steering committee and subcommittee member was provided with a notebook of data, including UW System data and UW-Stout data on female students and employees. The Steering Committee and subcommittees met several times from September through December. The following report summarizes the recommendations from the subcommittees and steering committee members in the four key progress areas.

### ***Key Area: Educational Opportunities for Women Students***

**Charge:** Establish activities and programs that attract and retain more women students to math, science, engineering, and technology fields; develop new initiatives to help women take advantage of changes in technology and increasing globalization; ensure equity in athletic programs; and access to higher education for women who are disadvantaged by economic or family circumstances.

### **Recommendations:**

1). Conduct a one-day orientation session for 7th, 8th and 9th grade girls and selected middle school teachers, administrators and guidance counselors. The orientation session would focus on UW-Stout academic programs in several areas of math, science and technology in which women are currently under-represented. These programs include Applied Math, Applied Science, Construction, Industrial Technology, Manufacturing Engineering, Packaging, Technology Education and Telecommunication Systems.

**Responsible:** Admissions counselors, Program directors, Coordinator for Women's Issues

**Timeline:** Annual, beginning in February 2002

**Funding:** \$5,000 (includes mailings, supplies, meals)

**Priority:** High

2). Develop and administer a questionnaire to identify the reasons that women and minority students leave technical majors and/or leave UW-Stout before completion of their degrees. The questionnaire will assist in determining why students change majors and/or leave UW-Stout to determine if specific issues are influencing their decisions.

**Responsible:** Associate Dean of Students, Retention Implementation Committee

**Timeline:** Ongoing, beginning in Fall 2001

**Funding:** Minimal. Current "change of major" form could be revised to include questions on the reason/s for requesting the change. Exit questionnaire will be developed by Retention Implementation Committee.

**Priority:** Medium

3). Study the establishment of a formal mentoring program open to all women students, beginning with those women students in traditionally-male academic programs. Mentors would include alumni, faculty, staff and other students. Begin by examining programs at other campuses and determining the benefits of such a program and establishing baseline data for measuring progress.

**Responsible:** Educational Opportunities for Women Students Subcommittee

**Timeline:** Feasibility study conducted 2001-02 academic year

**Funding:** \$15,000 (estimated, includes a graduate assistant, clerical support, service and supplies)

**Priority:** Medium

4). Examine issues related to equity in women's athletic programs (Title IX), equity in women's use of technology and the status of economically disadvantaged women students at UW-Stout as these issues were included in the UW System report.

**Responsible:** Educational Opportunities for Women Students Subcommittee, Affirmative Action Office, Internal Auditor

**Timeline:** Report by Fall 2001 (report prepared by subcommittee)

**Funding:** Minimal

**Priority:** Medium

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**Key Area:** *Hiring, Promotion & Retention of Women Employees*

**Charge:** Expand the recruiting and mentoring of women faculty; improve professional development activities and career ladders for academic staff and classified staff women; and develop leadership opportunities for women to move into administration.

**Recommendations:**

5.) Appoint a Coordinator for Women's issues. This person would be housed in the Affirmative Action Office and serve as an advocate for women's issues on campus and as a coordinator/liaison to the various offices and programs that serve women across the campus. This individual would require support from faculty, staff and administrators. Duties of this individual may include:

- assist department chairs/unit supervisors in efforts to recruit and hire women faculty/staff
- monitor recruitment/hiring/retention of women faculty/staff
- meet with female candidates for faculty/staff positions
- conduct exit interviews with female employees who are leaving the university
- monitor campus climate in regard to women students and employees
- work with campus and community to provide services to women
- develop and offer training and educational programs to faculty/staff and students on issues involving sexual harassment, discrimination and sexual violence
- create and maintain a gender resources web site
- chair the Equality for Women Steering Committee and work with subcommittees to implement the recommendations included in this report
- participate in the planning of a proposed campus resource center for special populations
- provide information on existing and future resources for women, including the Women's Studies Committee, Women's Mentoring Program, etc.
- assist in reviewing, developing and updating policies regarding women's issues

**Responsible:** Assistant to Chancellor for Affirmative Action/Search Committee

**Timeline:** Beginning in 2001-02 academic year, for a two-year trial period

**Funding:** \$25,000 to \$30,000 + .50 FTE (half-time position), \$5,000 (services and supplies)

**Priority:** High

6). Provide funding for female faculty, academic or classified staff to attend leadership development seminars each year, including programs offered by Harvard, ACE and the Center for Creative Leadership.

**Responsible:** Chancellor, Research Services – Stout Solutions

**Timeline:** Annual, beginning in 2000-01 academic year

**Funding:** \$10,000 (each year), University Special Projects Fund

**Priority:** Medium

7). Expand women's mentoring program to include separate programming for faculty, academic staff and classified staff.

**Responsible:** Vice Chancellor, Associate Vice Chancellor, Human Resources Office

**Timeline:** Ongoing, beginning in 2001-02 academic year

**Funding:** Minimal, current program has budget of \$1,500 per year from Provost's Office

**Priority:** Medium

8). Form a UW-Stout/Chippewa Valley Chapter of Wisconsin Women in Higher Education Leadership (WWHEL). The chapter will sponsor leadership development activities for women on campus and in the surrounding community. Host WHHEL conference in 2001.

**Responsible:** Assistant to the Chancellor for Affirmative Action, Associate Dean of Students

**Timeline:** Ongoing, beginning in 2000-01 academic year

**Funding:** Membership dues

**Priority:** Medium

**Key Area: Learning & Work Environment**

**Charge:** Develop workshops and training sessions for members of the university community, beginning with administrators, managers, and supervisors; review and improve the system of reporting and responding to complaints of discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence; and establish a wider system of supports for women students and employees.

**Recommendations:**

9). A. Strengthen the role of Women's Studies on campus. Information should be gathered to determine the degree to which women and gender issues are included in general education courses. Explore how Women's Studies courses are integrated into the curriculum at other UW System campuses. Utilize the campus curriculum process to include Women's Studies courses in the existing general education/ethnic studies requirements.

**Responsible:** Faculty Senate, Associate Vice Chancellor, Women's Studies Coordinator

**Timeline:** Ongoing, beginning in 2001-02 academic year

**Funding:** Unknown, may increase enrollments in existing women's studies courses

**Priority:** High

B. Develop a plan to expand the Women's Studies program and related activities on campus. Plan should include specific goals, objectives, activities, timeline and budget. Comparative data from other campuses should be included.

**Responsible:** Women's Studies Coordinator, Women's Studies Committee

**Timeline:** Plan developed in spring semester 2001

**Funding:** Unknown at this time (estimated \$20,000 per year)

**Priority:** High

10). Create a campus climate that is supportive of women. Historically, men have held the majority of positions of power on campus; thus, the structure of power relationships needs continual examination. The climate of the campus must enable women to excel in their respective positions and to obtain leadership positions. To begin discussion and stimulate dialogue around these issues, a series of forums will be held with faculty, staff and students. The recommendations included in this report will also be shared at these forums.

**Responsible:** Equality for Women Steering Committee

**Timeline:** Forums held during the spring semester of 2001

**Funding:** None

**Priority:** High

11). Strengthen reporting of and response to concerns of sexual harassment, gender discrimination and sexual violence. Currently, there are multiple offices that deal with these concerns. It is recommended that:

-existing reporting procedures and interventions be reviewed

-information on reporting procedures and interventions be disseminated widely

- training on procedures and interventions be provided to supervisory personnel
- training on procedures and interventions be provided to all students

**Responsible:** Coordinator for Women's Issues, Assistant to the Chancellor for Affirmative Action, Director of Security and Police Services, Dean of Students, Associate Vice Chancellor, Human Resource Director

**Timeline:** Ongoing, begin discussion in Spring 2001

**Funding:** Minimal

**Priority:** Medium

12). Consider hosting an annual event or developing a publication that recognizes the activities and accomplishments of female faculty, staff and students and recognizes individuals that have advanced the status of women on campus or in the community. May be an expansion of the current annual Women and Leadership Celebration/Women's History Month programs held each spring.

**Responsible:** Equality for Women Steering Committee

**Timeline:** Summer 2001 (planning)

**Funding:** \$3000 (current activities funded by several units on campus)

**Priority:** Medium

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**Key Area:** *Balancing Work and Personal Life*

**Charge:** Expand and improve childcare services and access to them; develop a more flexible workplace through flex-time, job-sharing, and equitable implementation of family leave policies; and provide domestic partner benefits such as life insurance, health insurance, retirement survivor benefits, and sick leave.

**Recommendations:**

13). The campus should conduct a survey of childcare needs for faculty, staff and students. This would assist in determining the need for additional facilities, services and programs.

**Responsible:** Chair, HDFLCES Dept; Director, Office of Budget, Planning and Analysis

**Timeline:** 2001-2002 academic year

**Funding:** Minimal

**Priority:** High

14). The campus should establish an ad-hoc committee on Family Friendly Policies. This committee could review current policies and assist in the development of new policies affecting faculty, staff and students.

**Responsible:** Chancellor, Human Resource Office, Senates

**Timeline:** 2001-2002 academic year

**Funding:** Minimal

**Priority:** Medium

15). The campus should offer a series of workshops that focuses on problems related to work and family balance, including mid-career changes, job sharing, commuter marriages, planning for retirement, etc. Workshops could be offered by faculty and staff with expertise in these areas as well as outside speakers.

**Responsible:** Subcommittee on Work and Personal Life, Professional Development Committee, Optimal Health Committee, Human Resource Office

**Timeline:** 2002-2003 academic year

**Funding:** \$3,000 (for speaker fees)

### **Implementation of Recommendations**

The Coordinator for Women's Issues will meet with the Equality for Women's Steering Committee (and subcommittees) each month (or as needed) to monitor progress and update the recommendations included in this report.

#### **Implementation Timeline – January 2001 to May 2003**

##### **Spring Semester 2001**

- Implementation of Recommendation #4 – Examination of other issues that were included in the UW System report (report due fall of 2001)
- Implementation of Recommendation #5 – Hire a Coordinator for Women's Issues (to begin July 1)
- Planning for Recommendation #8 – Host WWHEL Conference (conference held in November)
- Planning and Implementation for Recommendation #11 – Streamline complaint process
- Planning for Recommendation #9B – Expand Women's Studies Program and related activities
- Implementation of Recommendation #10 – Create a campus climate that supports women (host campus forums)

##### **Summer 2001**

- Implementation of Recommendation #6 – Send women to leadership seminars
- Planning for Recommendation #7 – Expand Women's Mentoring Program
- Planning for Recommendation #12 – Hold annual celebration/recognition event

##### **Fall 2001**

- Planning for Recommendation #1 - Orientation Session for middle school girls interested in non-traditional careers

-Implementation of Recommendation #2 – Survey/conduct exit interviews with students who change majors/leave the university (ongoing)

-Planning for Recommendation #3 – Establishing mentoring program for female students

-Implementation of Recommendation #7 – Expansion of Women’s Mentoring Program (ongoing)

-Implementation of Recommendation #8 – Create WWHEL Chapter/Host WWHEL Conference

-Implementation of Recommendation #14 – Create Committee on “Family-Friendly” Policies

### **Spring 2002**

-Implementation of Recommendation #9A – Explore Women’s Studies Courses in relationship to general education and diversity requirements

-Implementation of Recommendation #1 – Orientation Session for middle school girls interested in non-traditional careers

-Implementation of Recommendation #13 – Conduct childcare needs survey

-Implementation of Recommendation #12 – Hold annual celebration/recognition event

### **Summer 2002**

-Implementation of Recommendation #6 – Send women to leadership seminars

### **Fall 2002**

-Planning for Recommendation #1 - Orientation Session for middle school girls interested in non-traditional careers

-Planning for Recommendation #15 – Speaker series on work/family issues

### **Spring 2003**

-Implementation of Recommendation #1 – Orientation Session for middle school girls interested in non-traditional careers

-Implementation of Recommendation #12 – Hold annual celebration/recognition event

-Implementation of Recommendation #15 – Speaker series on work/family issues

